

May 3, 1985

George Cornelius

HOW MY ATTITUDE HELPS ME MAKE INDIVIDUAL WORK EFFORT

All of us know that we cannot awaken if we take life for granted. This shows me that I am asleep. Many things happen before I begin to think. This Work is to make me think and nothing is worse than to pretend that I already know as this stops everything real in all directions of my development in the Work. My vanity and pride are like a solid piece of concrete. They are hard to penetrate. We can observe the results of the two, but not see them. False personality gets in my way and tries to make me realize that the Work is not really speaking. There is a saying 'to transmute lead into gold'. But the Work adds that I must already have some gold to make gold. This is called magnetic center, and magnetic center is the first sign of a different kind of being. I find in the Work everything can become useful once the Work has begun to penetrate into one's being and understanding.

As Mr. G. once said to us, all life can become our teacher but in order for this to happen my attitude to myself and other people and the Work must change. I find by many observations that having a sense of I can gradually change personality and this is the first step necessary in the education of my development. One type of attitude is to listen to your voice intonation during your time here for the next three days. We have many attitudes that we talk from, and not from understanding. And yet we imagine we behave consciously and talk from understanding. That is why it is necessary to separate from and not identify with acquired attitudes.

Conscious effort, associated with attention, lies beyond the level of mechanical effort and is needed to transform my daily life in the Work. If I listen to the Work only and don't practice what I observe, nothing changes. How do I go about throwing away the negative I's thoughts and emotions and keeping the good ones? Of course, I must realize that in order to do this I must utilize all four bodies. This is to be reborn from the natural body to the spiritual body. By this I try to keep the Work alive within me and this makes it possible to

How my attitude helps me make individual Work effort con't.

observe that I can be in a state of sleep, a physical working state, or a state of self-remembering - self-awareness, and finally with great effort objective consciousness. This requires a great deal of attention. This means we must work against our undeveloped soul. Remember by working on myself is not an addition of what I am, but a transformation of what I am or can be.

May 4, 1985

George Cornelius

HOW DO THE EFFORTS OF A GROUP HELP TO ASSIST IN
THE TRANSFORMATION OF ENERGY?

In order to put a group into a better situation in the Work, we must put ourselves under influences that do not come from life. Instead they must come from the circle of conscious humanity. Our emotions and affections for the Work help us to make the necessary connections. To experience these connections with truth and meaning for the Work, the above kind of experiencing must be based on group understanding, which helps us to cease being a one-sided man. Everything you do consciously must be accomplished through the proper use of the centers. This allows a ray of light to shine into our own inner darkness. This means being shown how to appropriate the right kind of energy to think and act differently.

May 5, 1965

Michael Smyth

THY WILL BE DONE

For the sake of a form in linear time, by which to study these ideas on the three lines of Work, we focused our attention on a different line each day. But, in actuality, the three lines exist simultaneously.

First, and foremost must be the first line - Work on myself. Everything comes back to that. Without it the other two lines are meaningless. For example, when engaging in a task where others are involved, which is the second line, such as working in the Movements class, or moving the rock pile like we did this morning,, I need to remember how I am with them. This first line must be uppermost. How I treat them is my business. How they treat me is not my business. My weaknesses are my concern - their weaknesses are not my concern.

The third line of Work is said to be "Work for the Work itself". The Work itself, one can look at as God, His Endlessness. Now one asks, "how can I serve God?" In a way, it is rather egotistical to think the 'I' can serve God.

What I have to do in terms of real service to this Work is to make myself serviceable, service - able; able to serve. We can't serve unless we have a serviceable mechanism. If our car doesn't run what service can it be? If I come to serve something higher but don't know how, what good does it do?

So the third line of Work must be rooted in the first two lines. We must have work on ourselves, and also this Work can't be done alone.

One aspect of the third line of Work in terms of being serviceable is having a skill. You bring a skill to the Work. It could be carpentry, music, etc., and you make it available for the Work. You could, though, be of service just to the form of the Work without working on yourself. You could give money, or have some political power that could be of benefit to the form, but without your own inner work it can't be called the third line.

Thy Will Be Done con't.

Being that this is a Fourth Way School and we don't go into hibernation or seclusion, the skills that we do being come from life. This Work is Work in life.

So, practicing this Work with the three lines in mind, our service can be of benefit both to the growth of my own individuality and serve the Higher. You become good food to the Higher, such that you can be eaten by the Higher. As something to ponder today as we work on our task let us take a quote from the Lord's Prayer - They will be done. Remember it is not my will be done, but Thy will be done.

Conscience

Consciousness & Conscience are similar in their respective spheres, one being in the intellectual center, the other in the Emotional Center.

consciousness is knowing all together.
conscience is feeling all together.

Ignorant conscience is not based on inner understanding it is based on feeling that one is right and better than others.

Real conscience is the same in all people and speaks the same language - but it is based and is out of Reach. Personality has grown over it and as a result our feelings, our sense of ourselves is shifted to personality.

To feel altogether would mean that we were one but personality is divided into little bits, as I was. That is why you now feel in one way and now in another way, but separately and not together - and without even Remembering.

To awaken conscience you must begin to see the contradictions in yourself. But if you try to see contradictions in yourself all the time as one reason you will get nowhere.

The more you choose you are by the more
in you catch glimpse of yourselves as a
life. If you choose different movements of
your life, often a time you take a glimpse of
yourself even a second, at the moment.

But they
also proceed from form developing. In fact
development depends upon spheres. Only spheres
can lead a man out of the state he is in.

To break a habit it is necessary to observe
nearly even a long period and from there
no fall and you are is going. It is
necessary to get both sides of a habit
getting the see the central direction since a
habit is broken if cannot learn again.

It is
also account of. The action is to prevent
"mean from feeling" Conscience that is form
"All together"

In place of having "Real Conscience" a man has
a woman + stupid life, of indifference in every
kind of weakness, of sleep, of ignorance, of passion,
lack of effort, of drifting etc etc

It is not necessary for the Board to know it directly

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You can change your mind that is theory
 changing the book in your mind, touch the
 intellectual part of the Intellectual Center,
 apply in your own work the B.C. why will
 think by itself the negative emotion
 The person of B.C. derives from the Higher
 Intellectual Center. You must know that the
 Book teaches that Man was made in body
 with Higher Centers but want the sleep. He
 once knew what he do directly but now
 in this state of sleep, he can only get to
 system he was by indirect methods. 1917
 that is left now is change of mind. Change
 of mind starts the whole process. The necessary
 at this time is important to keep the book
 naturally being in contact not only by con-
 stant action. The book is a circle of
 ideas that you have to jump to catch hold of.
 Jump means to make effort. If you are
 using the book merely as means of education
 and then you are not making this effort

Nature uses us--- this is a fact that Mr. Sordjiff spoke of at length in All and Everything. If you have the proper appetite and digestion this view from the real world will be all you need to convince you of the strange relationship that Man, as a generic species, has to our Earth, our part of Great Nature. What we lack, in our present state, is a real, all-around understanding of what this means based on pure, experiential observation. This kind of observation requires, in the process of its development an unbiased, unprejudiced look at what use Nature is making of us, and what use she could make of us, should we "wake up". As we are, most of us, that is, you and ^{me}, are relatively small and completely unimportant pawns in the great cycle of Cosmic Life. Although each of us is sure that our own life is important (at least to us), on another scale it simply doesn't signify, UNLESS....

And this "unless" is what THE WORK, our work, is about. Unless we wake up. Try to quiet all the inner clambering for a moment and ask yourself, "What does that really mean, to wake up?" What does it mean, to see. What does it mean to work--- for what, for understanding? What would it be to work for UNITY and then in to work for myself and be of use to the Earth. Except from what I've read, I really don't know with certainty, in the scheme of Great Nature, what role the Earth plays. And if I ask myself seriously I am in danger of falling into the camp of the so called Environmentalists who spend their lives and energies in trying to correct some local (and not so local) ecological and population problems on this Earth. At the same time, it is true, that if one particular problem be solved, some other problem would arise because of it and since the real cause has not been seen and not about the plight of mankind, and hence of the Earth is considerably aggravated. The fact is, there is a law of human nature that should be formulated that if I eat, you starve

or more generally, if you/I live in paradise (on this earth), someone else will be obliged to live in hell (equally on this earth). Such is the mechanical law of human nature.

Now, Mr. Gurdjieff spoke of another human possibility. The possibility that, through ones own efforts, but with help from a higher level of thought received from more experienced people, some, a very few, may be able to go beyond the ordinary limits of man's lower nature, his mechanical nature. With the help of higher forces which manifest right here on Earth we can begin the true service that Man was born for---- to serve as a practical link between the planetary world and our own world, that is, The Earth. This is the theoretical part of it, laid down over the centuries in many sacred books. But how does this great idea touch me as I am surrounded by my own subjective egoism? If I but lift my sight for a moment there is Nature--- I am immersed in it, I am a part of it, and it can serve as a very great teacher---- Can I, then, be a serious student of Nature---- a real pupil, conducting a real study? First of all I need the idea from another level of thought, that I am something of a micro-cosmic copy myself. As above, so below---- a truly isoteric formulation of should I wish to penetrate deeply into its meaning I may find myself confronted by a closed gateway, as the Bible puts it, seeing through a glass darkly. I am aware that there is something important to be understood I sense that some very bad mistakes have already been made, and if I let this impression touch my feeling part, I will be afraid. But for once, fear can initiate a new and useful movement in my psyche. I shall need a new organ of perception in order to see more wholly what is to be done. The key lies in the attention, a more complete attention, one coming from the body, the mind, and the feeling part so that every impression may receive the special sensitivty and perceptivity of a unified attention. one that can remain in front of a natural phenomenon, until the glass clears and the Truth, begins to appear, relative to my limited ability

to perceive it. But our attention is not of this quality. In order to acquire it we need two things. The first is to understand that all events both here on Earth, and everywhere in ~~our~~ Universe, operate according to two Laws i.e. the Law of Three Causes, and the Law of the Octave. Even a slight experience of the operation of these laws leaves one in no doubt as to ~~ones~~ position with respect to them. This direct experience of scale helps one to evaluate ones own place more realistically in the cosmic process.

The second is to take a more careful look at the way we judge every phenomenon, both inside us and in the world outside. If we are honest we must acknowledge that we are not able to be unbiased, not able to have the truly experimental attitude that can accept all data no matter how contrary it may seem to our preconceived notions. And so, here we are, such as, indeed, we are! Using, as it were, a fine telescope from the wrong end and seeing everything doubly reflected backward! I am actually peering at the reflection of my own eye and I take it to be a view of the world! Go outside now and try to see a natural phenomenon as it really is. Do I understand what I am seeing? Do I know why it is like that, other than what I have read or been taught? So, how will I turn the telescope around. I must begin a very precise training---- a precise training of the attention under a strict discipline, both inner and outer, in order to bring into balance the various parts of myself who, through wrong education, indulgent personal habits, and uncorresponding conditions of life, have become an unfitting vehicle for higher service to Great Nature. Should I feel drawn to that school (perhaps through contact with medicine, animals, plants, geology) I will find it a tough one indeed, one that is total, that is not personally sympathetic to me and my subjective opinion and the initial step will need to be the bringing into balance of all my parts, a very great step for me but on the scale of nature, only the initial step on a stairway leading, where? This question will remain a philosophic one, UNLESS.....

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LET IT TURN AND KEEP IT TURNING

Negativity is all around us on this planet... one might say it seems to be the main product of the planet at times. How can our work be different, or more precisely, how can we use the results of our work, our impressions of ourselves to promote a positive world both within us and without? How can we immediately turn what we see about ourselves into new energy for our work without having it dissipate by feeding into our negativity or the negativity of others? And also in general, how can we gather more impressions of ourselves during the day so we really have a harvest of impressions each day rather than just barely enough to eat for dinner?

I wish to do this work, because it is the way toward self-evolution, and self-knowledge is a prerequisite in order to become a real man or woman. Suppose I actually see something about my behavior. For example, I see how critical I am about myself and other people. What takes place as a result of this observation? Do I become more critical or can I try to be uncritical and continue to be present? What is work here, and what really is the result of my observation? Very often my attempts and what I see may lead to negativity or analysis of myself... is there something wrong here or is this what is supposed to happen? I believe the answers lie in two areas.

Firstly, we need to develop our ability to conduct uncritical self-observation and keep an attention to this intention during the day. Further, we must have something to focus our observation on, something with enough interest and substance to be observable. Secondly, can we find the ability to turn everything which we experience, especially the negativity we notice in ourselves or others, to turn it around to work for us, to turn it into the affirmative energy of work? The latter might be one of the important functions of Work, to be able to transform the energy of unconscious negativity into the conscious affirmative energy necessary for the planet's growth.

The area which I suggest for today for self-study is that of our mechanical habits of movement, feeling and thinking. Each of us has characteristic habits of feeling; for example, a situation which we face, such as cooking which has to be done, we respond inwardly in the same emotional way each time. Maybe it makes us nervous or we may even look forward to it because it takes us out of the hot sun. The same habitualness is true of our physical movements and our thoughts. Try to have something within you today, a still point, which is able to allow an uncritical observation of habitual behaviours in any of these areas, allowing the behavior to go on without changing it.

Two suggestions may help as a means of bringing out these habitual patterns of emotion, and works also for habits of thought and movement.

I need to slow down in whatever I am doing... this is a struggle, but it brings to the foreground the different motors which keep me wound up. At other times it is necessary for me to speed up or struggle to approach a task differently at the beginning, with a clear intention. I must experiment with myself.

Secondly: whenever I remember work, at any moment, I sense my body immediately. When I sense myself, a limb or my whole body, it adds another center to the struggle to awaken. It is a direct experience through my body of my existence at the moment. My body always has a posture, which may tell me secrets about my inner states which words cannot completely do.

Take one of the following ideas to ponder:

1) When you actually observe something about yourself, are you ever thankful for it, whether what you see is "good" or "bad"? Does "good" and "bad" have a place or real meaning in "correctly conducted self-observation?"

2) Do you react to your observation, particularly if it is unflattering?

3) What is your real understanding and attitude toward self-observation? What are its elements?

4) Why does Mr. Gurdjieff call His Book an "impartial criticism of the life of man"?

5) Can I learn to have a separate place in my being, not my personality with its likes and dislikes, its subjectivity, but something really separate and impartial which is not immediately caught up in the first impression which grabs me? Will it always be this way? How does the sly man get around this problem?

6) Where does the idea of acceptance fit into self-observation? What is it? What does acceptance really feel like in me?

7) Through correctly conducted self-observation all our habits of every center might become matter of fact to us, like an open book which we have read so many times it begins to lose its charge. Does all of you want this?

8) Consider that Beelzebub says three forces are necessary and inherent in everything: Holy Affirming, Holy Denying and Holy Reconciling. What in us is the Denying Force? Is there a difference in taste between it and being negative? What is negativity? Is it useful? Do I understand it for myself?

Russell Schreiber

August 1, 1986

PAYMENT

We know one of the great Work ideas is that man must pay for his existence. I understand and accept that all material things have a price. Costs for things in the outer world is no mystery; I have experience in something called gainful employment. It is from this ordinary experience that I learn why material possessions cost money.

In the world of Work ideas payment for my existence is a mystery to me. I know it relates to my ordinary problem of self-support and support of others. But I know little about payment as related to my inner life. My teachers have told me that my inner life requires payment, but how much of this have I acquired on my own? If I am sincere, I know that I must come to learn much more about inner life payment so that this knowledge can be my own.

Indeed, if I am to have an inner life, does it have the same rules of payment as does my outer world of ordinary work? I need to be clear about this, that is, how I can and do pay for my existence during my daily activities. But, moreover, how can I increase my payment for inner life development? Is it real to separate inner and outer world payments? How does the sly man make inner payments through the use of the ordinary world of work?

Today, during our participation in the activities, let us observe: how am I paying for my existence? Choose an observation to speak about at the Theme Meeting. Include something about how I can increase the payment for my debt to my inner life.

July 30, 1986

SINCERITY

Two passages from All and Everything:

"Before beginning to study his mechanicality and the principles for a correctly conducted self-observation, a man must decide, once and forever, that he will be sincere with himself."

"The being impulse sincerity was atrophied to such a degree that they no longer had the possibility to be sincere, and not only with other beings, but even with themselves."

WHAT IS THIS BEING IMPULSE SINCERITY WHICH IS ESSENTIAL TO MY WORK, YET ALMOST IMPOSSIBLE TO ATTAIN?

One of the ultimate aims of the work must be sincerity with myself and with others. Sincerity is not an attribute I can possess; rather, it is a result of a force from the higher that can pass through me.

Sincerity is becoming myself -- no small thing to hold as an aim. What is the first step?

I see that I am not sincere, and that I have only at best a vague notion of what sincerity might be. I pretend that I am interested in other people when actually I am concerned only with my self-emotions, my narrow inner life. I value how I appear to others more than I value how I am inside. I follow the path of least resistance always and in everything, and if anything should happen to prevent my automatic associations and reactions flowing, I resort to indulging in negativity to calm the resulting disturbance.

When I see these same tendencies in another person, my first

The word itself, "sincere", is derived from "Ceres," goddess of agriculture, e.g. cereal, create, crescendo, increase, sincere -- all come from a common root which means "to grow". Literally, sincere means "of one growth" or "of the same growth", hence the notion of sincere as pure or genuine.

HAVE I REALLY LOST THE POSSIBILITY OF BEING PURE OR GENUINE?
Sometimes I try to be sincere...

"I did not intend for things to work out this way."

"I was sincere when I said you could stay with me indefinitely."

"I am happy that you got what you wanted."

Sometimes I pretend to be sincere...

"It would be less than honest if I didn't tell you how I feel."

"I really think you should be aware of the facts in this matter."

"I'm sorry to have to tell you this, but..."

Sometimes I take myself off the hook by substituting cheap feelings for real experience:

"I regret that you feel that way."

"I know I'm right, no matter what they say."

"I feel guilty that I ever mentioned it."

In spite of all of this there seem to be moments when I approach a different state, when I am more sincere, when there is a connection between what I wish and how I am. I am working with a student on arithmetic; playing with a child; tending a sick animal; listening to music; doing Movements. What is different here? Is there something I can cultivate? Can I find a place to begin to regenerate this atrophied being impulse sincerity?

Beelzebub says this being impulse has atrophied because we do not allow ourselves to experience and suffer the consequences of our unbecoming existence.

Michael Smyth

July 28, 1986

STANDARDS

My attitudes toward physical work are a reflection of my attitudes toward my inner work. It is all one. Therefore, I begin by observing how I work at physical tasks. Can I challenge myself?

Work in itself has two main aspects:

1) Quantity, which is related to production -- results -- and possibly a compromise of both standards and quality.

2) Quality, which is related to extra effort and other real aspects, such as beauty, economy of time, durability, intelligence, and especially interest in the process per se. As someone once said, "I'm so lazy I can only afford to do a job right the first time."

Here I have a practical opportunity to notice and observe many pointers to the way I work. I can get clues by examining my last job to see the way it was done so that I can experiment with some of those facets in my current job. For example, each job has its own requirement of time, the speed at which it is done; this I can vary to see how I respond. I try to observe what is happening here and now. Other aspects:

- Did I bother to plan it? (Am I mentally lazy?)
- Did I enjoy doing any process?
- What effort did I put into it to do the job well?
- Did I finish the job and leave all the tools out for someone else to clean up and put away?
- Were the results going to be seen and therefore I did it better?
- Was I aware of those working with me, their requirements, how my work related to theirs, (did I get in their way?) And so on.

All these and more I can take as additions to my job to learn more about my attitudes toward work, keeping in mind that they may tell me something about my approach to my inner work.

Dr. John Lester

THE FOUR ASPECTS OF WORK IN GROUPS

There are four things that you can learn by working with a group or a center. The first is fearlessness, that you are not overawed by anything. Gurdjieff wanted for us that we not go about with cowardice in our bones and blood, but that we should be able to speak like a man, like a human being. So if what you say is wrong, it's wrong -- who cares? Speak it and you are not betraying yourself. It's when you try to please other people that you betray yourself.

The second thing that you need to learn is respect: "Respect that which is to be respected." In our age we have very little respect. There is no respect for many things such as the activities of the Work; they need to be respected. All of us need to be aware of how to do that. The part of us that has to practice the respect is our bodies. We have to bring our bodies to the place where they don't just flop about when they want, how they want; they look and they see for themselves what needs to be respected. You remember Belim's ass? It was Belim's ass that saw the God in the burning bush -- not Belim, he didn't. His donkey did -- and we've each got a donkey, so let your donkey feel the respect that it needs to feel. Perhaps when we work at the Movements you can understand what I'm saying. There is something in the Movements that absolutely compels us to respect them.

The third thing is resourcefulness. You have to put your Work first and your life second. Now that doesn't mean that you immediately go off and leave your wife and family destitute and not pay your debts and all that kind of thing. It simply means that you have priorities, duties and obligations that you must discharge -- but you put your Work first. It takes a lot of practice because for many generations we have put our ordinary lives first. We've been conditioned that way from the time we were children. So it's very important that we learn how to put our Work first, and in order to do this we need to be resourceful. The chapter "The Material Question" at the end of Meetings with Remarkable Men gives you an example of how to do that. Money is important only inasmuch as you have to have it to do what you want to do. But first decide what you want to do and start doing it -- and then get the money to do it. You see, don't put the money first, because that belongs to life.

The fourth thing, which is the most difficult and the least understood, is responsibility. Beelzebub speaks of "the being of a responsible being." So what is that? I don't have it. I'm afraid to take responsibility for my own life; afraid to take the responsibility for my own Work. But until we are able to do that we can never be responsible for anything else.

It is our privilege to work with those four things; they are well worth working for.

July 26, 1986

MAKING DAILY WORK AIMS AND POSITIVE ATTITUDES AS THE KEYS TO ADJUSTMENT
FOR CONDITIONS OF THE THREE LINES OF WORK.

Mr. Gurdjieff states in All and Everything that there is in our life a certain very Great Purpose. And we must all serve this great common purpose. In this lies the whole sense and predestination of our life.

The above quotation is the basis for why I am a three-brained being: in order to work on myself to pay the debt of my existence. Many, many times Mr. Gurdjieff, when teaching at his evening dinner meeting, used to speak about the above theme heading. It is necessary to have some kind of ordering or pattern to my daily experiences in order not to loose force. My starting point is deeper self observation. This, if accomplished by the right set of "i's", will lead to the taking in of impressions which give a different quality of food to the centers. This will allow me to see my buffers and work against them.

Mr. Ouspensky used to state that Consciousness is knowing all together, and Conscience is feeling all together. I may experience these two aspects of the Work when a certain shock is given. In most instances false personality and buffers keep me from seeing real Conscience. Mr. Gurdjieff once said as long as I have buffers and self-justification I will not have the fire to make change.

An example is the chemical retort with its many metallic powders constantly shifting, which in some respects is like myself when I am shaken by the daily events of life. When the retort is heated the powders can be fused. My daily work can fuse the complex Powders to form an individual group of "i's" which gradually makes a transformation. Mr. Gurdjieff used to call this "Cleaning My Machine".

My main reason for attending this Seminar is to acquire the feeling of real Fourth Way Work and to keep the Work alive in myself. By this I mean what is stated in the Gospels: love of myself, love of my neighbor, and love for the Work and God. Love is associated with my will; I do not will what I know.

Work efforts first must be received by the intellectual center then transferred to the emotional center where I can begin to see myself associated with the Ray of Creation which affects all of my Being. I or anyone else has the potential for working all day or night, but can I be aware of the feeling of "I" as I work with other people here at the Seminar? I begin to realize that there is only one solution to my problems and that is change of attitude and by remembering to work on myself which must be accompanied by work in regard to others.

ONLY THE CONDUCT BASED ON CHOICE IN FRONT OF POSSIBILITY IS
SIGNIFICANT.

Only the conduct based on choice in front of possibility is significant. Originally this was all the theme I planned to give. It is a very important theme, one that we were given to work on for an entire week at a seminar at Claymont. I'll read it again: "Only the conduct based on choice in front of possibility is significant." Try to hold this sentence before you like a koan -- ponder it, bring it before you at every opportunity. Work with it with all the guile and slyness you can muster.

Look at the three nouns: conduct; choice; possibility. What do each of these mean? What about "significant" and finally the all important "only"? What does it mean to have a choice? What state must you be in to be able to choose? What does it mean to be in front of possibility? Possibility of what? Is understanding required to be able to have possibility? How is a choice made -- who makes it? Notice that it is conduct that is significant -- not ideas, intentions, etc.

This sentence can be worked on for a long time. You have one day to see if you can come to anything on it.

LYING AND THE GURDJIEFF WORK

The overall theme for this seminar has as one of its aspects to understand what is meant by words and phrases used in a work vocabulary. This is very important if we are ever to understand one another.

The Work defines "lying" as speaking of what you do not know as if you did know. We do this all the time, of course -- not only in our use of words specifically connected with Gurdjieff's ideas, but even with the ordinary words we constantly use every day, we assume that we and everyone else knows exactly what is meant. Beelzebub speaks of two of these words in All and Everything: "world" and "love". Only a small amount of investigation is needed to verify what He says and also to show that we really understand almost none of the words that automatically pour out of our mouths day and night. The pill of the sly man may be small but it is very concentrated.

For example, what exactly does "to suffer" mean? If you honestly examined your associations with this word you will find nothing very clear. Furthermore, your neighbor may have very different associations. In fact, what we need to do first of all is to free ourselves from our associations with words and phrases, and then, only after that, try to find something in our actual experience we can relate to as a start -- remembering it is only a start.

Today many, many words are used in a very one-centered way. Take the word "brother". Say it to yourself. Hear it. How could it really be identical with the word "sibling"? And yet it is often equated with that mechanical meaning. Father, mother, brother, sister -- they are loaded words -- down through the ages they have meant something to millions and millions of human beings.

Gurdjieff used many most peculiar words just so we couldn't define them instantly with another set of words and thus deceive ourselves that we knew what we were talking about -- or what He was talking about! He wished for us to start from our own authentic experience -- not our associations in whatever center. But we need to know what our associations are or we will never be able to discard them.

Furthermore we do have associations in all three centers, and sometimes one is uppermost, sometimes another. Take "duty" or "obligation". My feeling more often than not says "duty" is doing something I don't want to do -- or not doing something I do want to do. But my mind sees it differently. It can be fired by impossible ideas, imagination, illusions, more so in the past even than nowadays. For example, many young men have considered it a noble duty to be willing to die for king and country. Marital fidelity used to be a powerful aim viewed as a duty. Even today in our weak way we give a little lip-service to this concept now and then regarded as a duty. And persons strongly moved by a "cause" they can identify with, usually political, will engage in murder, arson, et cetera, from what

is actually a misplaced sense of duty. But when Gurdjieff speaks of the Five Obligolnian Strivings he is concerned with a motivation from a much deeper place in us. Not our doings but our being, our Essence.

Take the word "normal". Beelzebub speaks over and over of our abnormality, but what is normality? We use the word as if it were synonymous with habitual or customary. It is not. If our lives were normal we would be in an infinitely better place for starting this Work. As it is, our lives are built on fantasies and so our work willy-nilly begins there too. But we need to notice how we misuse the word "normal" and ponder its real meaning.

The last word I will suggest here is "wish". We are here, we say, because we have a wish. But when I ask myself what is my actual experience of wish, it is all very amorphous, vague, not exact. Wish is not the same as want, nor is it need or desire. Where is it in me? How strong? For what do I wish? We have been told that "not until wish becomes need is it changed into the magical evocative," so I must know what I wish for, that it may become a real need. Experience it, not define it with more words.

Today question the words you use -- not all of them, but a few. For instance, when I remember myself, what exactly do I remember? How? Here are a few words to ponder in addition to those mentioned:

- | | |
|-----------|-------------|
| - death | - justice |
| - being | - trust |
| - freedom | - conscious |

Perhaps you can think of others yourself. Choose one. How does your thought see it? Your feeling? Your instinct? Remember -- it is experience within myself I must begin with. Don't "make up" an answer.

Mrs. Staveley

July 25, 1985

IDEAS

In this teaching we are given many new ideas. We are told to ponder them and examine them in the light of our own experience. Bennett advocates "persistently and with great determination occupying one's mind with a specific clear notion so that we can penetrate into it in depth." For example, by constantly holding the idea of God alone, one may come to understand the meaning of life.

What is the importance of ideas? What gives ideas their force in human life? Without ideas a man is bankrupt and lives a subhuman existence. His life has no meaning; his days are an empty routine; he has no basis for understanding another person's life experience or his own life experience. He is ruled by the demands of body and ego; his point of view is always purely subjective. He lives only on the horizontal plane and is unaware of other possibilities.

When a man is touched by a new idea, such as, "The Kingdom of Heaven is within," he is momentarily awakened. His attention is drawn out of the life of body and ego. In attempting to understand an idea, he must abandon his purely personal outlook; he must include the experience of others; he must scrutinize and question his own experience. In this process he contacts the vertical line of development.

No real work is possible without ideas. For example, consider the idea of having sensation of oneself. We have all experienced sensing, even before encountering the idea in this teaching. However, until one understands something about the notion of sensing, one cannot really work at sensation. The idea of working with sensation helps us to connect with the purpose of this aspect of the work and may actually help to channel our force into a better quality of effort.

Let us study our relationship to ideas by choosing an idea and working with it today. Where does the force of an idea come from? What in me connects with the idea? What is the effect on my experience of holding this idea while working at my tasks today?

The unexamined life is not worth living.

Remember yourself always and everywhere.

The ~~only real~~ struggle is with ourselves, only with ourselves.

"The greatest intentional suffering comes from the effort to compel yourselves to be able to endure the displeasing manifestations of others towards yourselves."

He who can be can do; he who can do can be.

Change is the only constant.

All Nature is in travail for the birth of man.

As above, so below.

In time, everything becomes its own opposite.

We perceive reality topsy-turvy, and every repeated impression evokes sensations of pleasure and enjoyment.

Push; pull; pause.

All is for our neighbor.

July 26, 1985

NOW

One of the most striking formulations of the work is that it is a way of preventing my past from becoming my future. I see that I have been living under the foggy notion that I will be undergoing some kind of change for the better sometime in the future, and the result is that I become the victim of the disease of tomorrow, taking on the attitude -- unconsciously -- that the future, not the present, is what is to be valued.

The Work does bring us the idea that we can experience a rebirth, a transformation to become a new-man. But when do I become a new man? Is it something that will happen to me in the future, or is it an experience that takes place in the moment, when I am present? Do I have any experience of that which is new?

"New" means never having existed before. The only thing I can experience that has never existed before is the present moment -- the "now". In fact, the root of the words "new" and "now" is the same, and also forms the basis of the words novice, novel, Noel, the Spanish nuevo, meaning new, and surprisingly "nueve", nine, which is the end and beginning of the enneagram.

Newness is not the future, it is only in the now; it is possible for me only to the extent I can be present in the now. This means that it is the experience of taking an impression that makes it new, not the impression itself. As it is said in Ecclesiastes, there is no new thing under the sun.

But to experience anything new, to begin to become a new man I must be more present in the moment, now. What prevents this? For one thing, there is no room in me for anything new. I am full -- mostly of myself and self-emotions. My habitual thoughts and feelings that confirm the way I see things or the way I want things to be; having to have it my way. Being right -- all of these shut out anything new, and are held in place by tensions of one kind or another.

How can we be in the present, aware of this moment of our life? Not something that has happened five minutes ago, but right now. What

is happening right now? It is new to me, never quite the same as any other moment in my life.

In observing this newness, I find that it takes more than just thinking about it. It is almost like taking the first breath of my life. A long, slow breath that I can sense throughout my whole body. To think about how it might be, or how it has been in the past isn't it. It is not as if the past experience has not occurred, or that my future expectations won't happen, but that I place too much stock in them right now.

So how can I be in the now, right now? It is kind of silly in a way, considering that whether I am aware of it or not, I am wherever I am every moment. If this is the case, where am I during the moments of my life? What stands between me and the present?

I find that I am either dreaming about what I could become or that I am praising myself about what I have done before. One example is having a conversation with someone who is trying to tell me something. Whatever they are saying sparks my associations of similar things that have happened to me, or thoughts about how it would be if I were to experience what they have experienced. I am never really interested in who is talking to me or what their actual experience is. My mind is like a magnet that grabs hold of any association that comes along. It takes me away from the moment. If we could allow the associations to pass through without grabbing hold, it would be possible to be aware of the newness of my life.

NOW, this present moment, can be defined as the intersection of horizontal and vertical time. The point of the cross. Horizontal time is the span of our life from birth to death. Vertical time can be thought of as all the different levels of reality that are happening simultaneously.

The more one is present to this moment, the more one's preoccupation with horizontal time fades away. And the sense of vertical time, of connection with the higher, increases. For someone who could live his life completely in the present, the concept of horizontal time would be almost irrelevant. Perhaps that is why

the old Navajos had no word in their language for time. There was only NOW.

But in my case it is rare to be here now. why? Often I find myself searching for a way to convince myself that it's better to be in the present. why is it better? My time is mostly spent rehashing the past or daydreaming about the future. Why my aversion to the present? Is it because, in my sleep, nothing really of interest or of value is happening right now? No real impression coming in? And could it be because of an attitude that now is not really the time to make an effort to be present -- better to wait until something more significant is happening? The moment that was "now" a moment ago is gone forever. What opportunities went with it? What have I missed in my life by not being here now?

What would be possible if I were deeply into this moment? What is required to be here now? The first steps include quieting the mind, listening, sensation, relaxation.

How would it be different right now if I were quiet enough inside to be aware of the functioning of my body as well as the influences passing through me? If I don't value being in the present moment, what is the point of work on myself?

Men's Group

July 24, 1985

ENNEAGRAM STUDIES

Today Eric Davis spoke to us about the Diads and Triads within the Enneagram. We learned that on the left hemisphere of the Enneagram we attribute the properties of potential, real imagination or visualization, understanding, and others. On the right hemisphere of the Enneagram we attribute actualization, fact, knowledge, and others. What is important to us about this study is to understand our relationship to the Enneagram. Through our Aim, through our "I" we bridge the dichotomy of the Diads. It is our task to actualize what we visualize.

The Triads, representing the three forces, tell us how this actualization takes place. We have an idea, an intention; we can visualize the results of the actualization of this idea or intention; but without a plan, without a "how", nothing happens. The Work is such a "how", and the work is always practical.

So today try to notice what is needed at your job, try to see what is the next step. There are always little things that need to be done that we skim over, that we assume someone else will do later. Today we decide to take on one of these as an aim -- but choose a small aim, something that can be completed today. Visualize your task and how it can be carried out, and then actualize it. In this small way we try to practice fulfilling our function as human beings.

THE WORK IN LIFE OR A LIFE IN WORK?

Gurdjieff's Work has been equated with the fourth way. The first three ways for man to regenerate himself, the way of the fakir, the way of the monk, and the way of the yogi, are always relatively available to those who wish to find them. The fourth way is not always accessible, but appears in the world from time to time when there is a special need, a task connected with the evolution of humanity that needs to be accomplished. When this is done the fourth way disappears from ordinary life or, as is said, "it goes underground" again.

The Gurdjieff teaching, as do all authentic teachings regardless of whether they be first, second, or third ways are methods to help man transform his level of being from that which he is to that which he could be. If the fourth way is truly a genuine way, then it, too, exists for the same purpose. In today's world, in just about any large city in the United States, there are groups of people, small or large, claiming to be fourth way schools, or on the fourth way, and also claiming to present the teachings of Gurdjieff, though the material they present may be widely--even wildly--dissimilar and bear little resemblance to anything Gurdjieff could possibly have said.

Most people who are, or consider themselves to be, followers of Gurdjieff's teaching were introduced to it, not by Gurdjieff's own writings, but by P.D. Ouspensky's book In Search of the Miraculous. This account was recommended to novice searchers in the early days after Gurdjieff's death as being an accurate representation of some of the true ideas that Gurdjieff had brought to the West-- ideas described as "dynamite" by many first generation students who have written or spoken about their experiences on first encountering them.

In the Search, on the subject of the three "ways" as a means for the development of man's hidden possibilities, Ouspensky quotes Gurdjieff in the following words:

"At the same time the beginning of the fourth way is easier than the way of the fakir, the monk, and the yogi. On the fourth way it is possible to work and to follow this way while remaining in the usual conditions of life, continuing to do the usual work, preserving former relations with people, and without renouncing or giving up anything. On the contrary, the conditions of life in which a man is placed at the beginning of his work, in which, so to speak, the work finds him, are the best possible for him, at any rate at the beginning of the work. These are the man himself, because a man's life and its conditions correspond to what he is. Any conditions different from those created by life would be artificial for a man and in such artificial conditions the work would not be able to touch every side of his being at once."¹

The idea that the fourth way is shorter and easier than the traditional three ways and that following this way, or path, does not necessitate going aside from one's ordinary life, nor require any renunciation, has a strong appeal to modern man who is not much attracted by the idea of self-sacrifice. You start from where you are. This, of course, is a fact-- the well known Chinese aphorism is correct: The journey of a thousand miles starts from the spot under one's feet. What did not register so readily in the minds of those reading these words in Ouspensky's book is that he used the phrase "in the beginning" no less than four times in this one paragraph. The implication of this is that later on, after "the beginning," something else could and would be required. Ouspensky, however, says no more on this point in his book and, in general, those who consider themselves followers of Gurdjieff's teaching seem to assume that one's everyday life, just as it is, is an adequate foundation for their Work. In any case, it is assumed that there is no difference in level.

But in his own book, All and Everything, it is very clear that Gurdjieff-- or is it Beelzebub?-- has not a good word to say about the way "the strange three-

1. In Search of the Miraculous, P. D. Ouspensky, pp. 48-49

brained beings on the planet Earth" live their lives. Beelzebub tells us no less than 22 times in his Tales, that the main cause for all the sad results on the ill-fated planet Earth are the "abnormal conditions" of external being existence established by us ourselves, by the way that we live our lives. No one can possibly doubt that the planet Earth is at this time in very sad case and that for the causes of this we, humanity, are indeed responsible.

It is over forty years since Gurdjieff died. There are very many of us who, considering ourselves his pupils, cannot be called beginners, and also in many of us there is at this period a disturbing conviction that our Work needs to be strengthened, intensified. We really need to examine this. Ouspensky does tell us also in the Search, quoting Gurdjieff, that what is needed in the fourth way is understanding. Are we asking ourselves the right questions regarding this disturbance we experience as to the quality of our Work? Do we need to understand in a different and deeper way the ultimate end and aim of real work and how it relates to our lives, here and now?

If the study of a teaching is over-balanced by the intellect with little or no grounding in actual experience, as can all too often occur if Work is kept separate from the potential richness of life experiences, the experience of the vertical or the sacred dimension will be missing. Then one's Work can become compartmentalized in the realm of ideas and the student of the teaching experiences frustration, fear and even guilt. Many pupils in Work centers are caught in this trap. They feel and say, "there is something missing in this Work," more often they think that there is some fatal flaw in themselves. There is a flaw of course, not in the Work itself, nor in the pupil, but in the pupil's understanding of the Work. The flaw in understanding is that lives and Work must be united on a higher level. There is an ancient poem that says something about this very beautifully:

As rays go towards the earth from the sun
So a ray goes from God to each thing's heart.

On this ray the thing hangs together with God,
And through it feels its origin from God,
No such ray goes sideways from thing to thing,
Only many confused flickerings.
You cannot know the thing by these flickering lights,

A dark separating wall will always be between.
You must ascend to God on your own ray,
And on the thing's ray return again.
Then you see it as it is, not as it seems,
When you yourself are in concord with God. 1

When I see my ordinary life truly as it is now, as reflected in All and Everything, I see it is unsuitable material for a transformation of being. It is corrupted, starved, misused. When one wishes to make a garden, one must prepare by clearing away the collected rubbish of years, the stones and the weeds, and then build up the soil so it can support a strong, healthy growth. Just so with the human psyche which needs to be fed on three levels, three qualities of food, of which the fine food of impressions is the most important. Also, the soil and the psyche both need to be fed and kept under healthy influences. The bottom line of Work is, and always must be Work on oneself to prepare the soil in which a soul can grow. My life and myself as I exist at present are the field for my Work.

At this point the Work needs to be actualised. One definition of the Law of Three is: The higher (my Work) blends with the lower (my life) to actualise the middle, which then becomes either higher for the preceding lower, or lower for the succeeding higher. We really need to begin to do what we understand. To try. One can be disheartened looking about one, really seeing oneself, awakening to all the damage that has to be repaired, damage not only to

1. Wisdom of the Brahmins 1857, Friedrich Ruckert.

ourselves but to the planet we exist on as well. But this is where we are obliged to begin-- to make conditions corresponding to what our Work requires. A "Work" that is lost in the realm of imagination, oblivious to the wreckage all about us of our beautiful planet, as well as the human wreckage, is a travesty of Work.

Before a teaching can take root and grow, we must make a corresponding place for it, first inside oneself and after, outside. Two thousand years ago when Jesus was asked by his followers, "How should we pray?" He gave them what is called the Lord's Prayer. In this prayer we ask, "Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done." To how many does the thought occur that if ever the Will of the Creator be realized and the Kingdom of Heaven come to this Earth of ours, then it is we who must bring that about? This is the beginning of a new age. It is now or never. The Creator and Nature have completed their task. Now it is up to us. If conscience is actually a divine impulse and the "representative of the Creator in us," then are we not equipped to make a new beginning in our Work and bring it into our lives in reality, or rather our lives into the Work? The task is vast and each of us is infinitesimally small-- but together-- ?

Gurdjieff told Ouspensky that there is need of a common language in order that human beings may be able to understand one another. All teachings and religions require this, need a scripture inspired from the highest level which can be trusted in principle to serve as the unifying factor and a basis for beliefs and practices in those teachings and religions. In Beelzebub's Tales we have such a Scripture prepared by its author with great toil, in the hope that it would be used for the benefit of a distracted and disintegrated humanity, particularly here in the West. Those who use this Scripture as it was intended to be used find that they do indeed, after a long period of study and practice, have amongst themselves a common language based on understanding. Real communication begins to be possible. It is interesting to remember that for some centuries the Christian Bible was such a unifying factor in the basic principles for Christendom also, in spite of squabbles over doctrine and ritual. Even now, religions can serve for many individuals as a "hearth of hope and reconciliation in their desolate existence", (1)

as, Beelzebub tells us, the teachings of Mohammed do for his followers. Our Christian Bible lost its unifying power when all the many new translations began to be made. Let us hope we will be able to use the original version of All and Everything, or Beelzebub's Tales to his Grandson, prepared and approved by Gurdjieff himself, for a very long time, refusing to allow them to be diluted and changed under the pretense of improving them.

In his Tales Beelzebub is utterly scathing about us, the unfortunate three-brained beings breeding on the planet Earth, and leaves us not a rag to conceal our lacks and failings. Nevertheless, the Tales leave a reader with a powerful and vivifying impression of sanity, health, and hope. How does it do this? Perhaps by giving us recognizable glimpses of ourselves that bring us to a point of acknowledgement-- but with a sense of relief and without self-blame or self-castigation-- of the overwhelming distance that exists between what we are and what we could and should be, what the plan of the Creator for mankind is. We have got ourselves into this sorry mess by not fulfilling that plan, but we can work to repair the situation.

When listening to, or reading, Beelzebub's Tales, one can sometimes feel a vicarious moment of impersonal shame at the dismal state of mankind at present, and at other times, experience a longing for a state once known but now forgotten, a healing state of genuine aspiration, perhaps. But aspiration or wish alone is not enough. As said above, the foundation of Beelzebub's teaching is Work-- Work on oneself. This Work is aimed toward being able to experience the extremes of one's two natures simultaneously, acknowledging that they exist, and then setting about to correct what needs to be, and can be, corrected in order to approach the necessary balance and harmony.

Soon after one accepts the necessity of actualising what one has understood and begins to practice it, another step begins to appear. It grows out of a new relationship that is possible with others. The student begins to see and really to understand that he is not alone. With the poet John Donne he can see and say, "I am involved in mankind." This is a comprehensive involvement. If this experiment of an evolving humanity, of which I am a part,

fails and is consigned to the junkheap of the universe, which seems possible at this time, then I go with it. No longer can I be content to work for my own personal advancement alone. The element of service to a responsibility much greater than my tiny self, namely to humanity as a whole, must be present. Gurdjieff was the very embodiment of this kind of service in the way that he lived his own life and in the way that he represents Beelzebub. His own words in the chapter From the Author put it this way:

"...thanks chiefly to the commandment inculcated in me in my childhood, enjoining that 'the highest aim and sense of human life is the striving to attain the welfare of one's neighbor,' and...this is possible exclusively only by the conscious renunciation of one's own."¹

This is where we begin to understand what fourth way Work should be now and to ask how we can begin to make conditions in our ordinary lives that nurture work, are not inimical to it. As a particle of everything that exists, but in particular as a particle of that part of creation that the Creator counted on as a future help for Himself in the government of the expanding universe we have, as individuals, to prepare a ground for Work. Studying Gurdjieff's writings makes what needs to be done very clear. But I must see, equally clearly, with my own seeing, how to bring my Work and my life together in a right relationship, and to see the vertical dimension of the sacred which needs, and must be given, the first priority in the way that I live my life. This requires of each of us that we find and begin to trust our own conscience so that we can be directed by it. If I find myself justifying how I live my life at present, then I am denying that "still small voice" of conscience sent to remind and disturb us. I have to upgrade my everyday life, take responsibility for that. Only after a long continuing practice of Work in an ascending direction that has become the first priority in the way that he lives his life, can the "man in quotation marks," which is our state at present, become "real man."

1. Beelzebub's Tales to his Grandson, p. 1186.

Gurdjieff says of his teaching that it could be called esoteric Christianity. In its essence an esoteric tradition gives direction for putting a teaching into practice, making it effective as a regenerating force. In the idiom of today you could say it has an aspect of "how-to." For centuries, even millennia, this "how-to" has been considered dangerous for ordinary man, and it has been guarded in great secrecy in monasteries, or in areas remote from the world of the everyday. It is the how-to of Christianity, and perhaps the Sufi's and other traditions as well, so long guarded in secrecy, that Gurdjieff went into the monasteries to find and bring out for ordinary man to use. We are ordinary man. This is the time that all esoteric traditions are being made accessible to mankind, but for a short time only. Because it is the destined time, and Gurdjieff was who he was-- the teacher for this age-- he was given that for which he asked. And what he found in the monasteries he brought to us in All and Everything.

Although it is no longer necessary, or even possible, to go apart from the world in order to carry out the task of mankind-- namely, becoming that which he was meant to be,-- something can and must be transcended, left behind. In the brief description of the first series of his writings, Gurdjieff puts his aim like this:

To destroy, mercilessly, without any compromises whatsoever, in the mentation and feelings of the reader, the beliefs and views, by centuries rooted in him, about everything existing in world.

In the chapter From the Author Gurdjieff speaks of the idea that appears in all religions, in all teachings, in all traditions, of the "death" of a man to what he is, which he calls "the first liberation of man." He says:

The expression which has reached us from ancient times, "the first liberation of man," refers to just this possibility of crossing from the stream which is predestined to disappear into the nether regions into the stream which empties itself into the vast spaces of the boundless ocean.

To cross into the other stream is not so easy-
- merely to wish and you cross. For this, it is first
of all necessary consciously to crystalize in
yourselves data for engendering in your common
presences a constant unquenchable impulse of
desire for such a crossing, and then, afterwards, a
long corresponding preparation.

For this crossing it is necessary first of all to
renounce all the what seems to you 'blessings'-
- but which are, in reality, automatically and
slavishly aquired habits-- present in this stream
of life.

In other words, it is necessary to become dead to
what has become for you your ordinary life.

It is just this death that is spoken of in all
religions.

It is defined in the saying which has reached us
from remote antiquity, 'Without death no
resurrection,' that is to say, 'If you do not die you
will not be resurrected.'

The death referred to is not the death of the body,
since for such a death there is no need of
resurrection.

For if there is a soul, and moreover, an immortal
soul, it can dispense with a resurrection of the
body.

Nor is the necessity of resurrection our
appearance before the awful Judgement of the
Lord God, as we have been taught by the Fathers
of the Church.

No! Even Jesus Christ and all the other prophets
sent from Above spoke of the death which might
occur even during life, that is to say, of the death
of that 'Tyrant' from whom proceeds our slavery in
this life and solely from the liberation from which
depends the first chief liberation of man.¹

1. Beelzebub's Tales to His Grandson, pp. 1232-1233

Was it not to obtain this liberation that man in former ages went apart from the world into those monasteries, or into jungles, deserts or caves? "Repair the past, prepare the future," Gurdjieff told his pupils. Here on the spot in which we find ourselves we must learn to discriminate between what is worthy in our lives and discard what is worthless, distinguish the true from the false and the real from the illusory.

Gurdjieff says, "We are not doing anything that Nature is not doing, but we are trying to do it consciously." The organs and the systems of one's body work in a wonderful harmony, though each one-- heart, lungs, kidneys, etc.- - is autonomous. It is the same with what we call the ecology of the planet. Everything supports and feeds everything else. Only mankind, the maverick, has not so far accepted his responsibility.

My Work can no longer be considered as on the same level as my everyday life. Work, as having a higher dimension than ordinary life must always be first. No longer can I think in terms of the Work in life, but strive to build ultimately a life in Work. A normal life, a becoming life. Furthermore, I can no longer live by second-hand opinions, by hearsay, but need to verify everything myself. In order to do this it is indispensable to have help from others on the same path as myself. For example, I must learn to work to be trustworthy so I can recognize the quality of trustworthiness in others. Like Belcutassi (1), who was obliged to ask for help from his friends and acquaintances, since he doubted the accuracy of the conclusions he could come to by his own unaided efforts. In other words, I must find my own individuality, but I need help from other individuals, and they from me.

The fourth way is here, specifically in Gurdjieff's teaching. The task is certainly here. Will there be a "critical mass" out of humanity at large to carry out the task? If so this "critical mass" will be united, not by an exterior means or organization, but from understanding, from the inner vertical dimension- - really from what Gurdjieff calls "love of consciousness" --love of the Creator, love for His plan, love for mankind, and it follows, love for one another. First,

1. Beelzebub's Tales to His Grandson, p.294

the understanding which comes from digesting the ideas; then we must revalue our values, free ourselves from old and outgrown attitudes; and finally, to live and practice a real Work. This is a task for individuals, individuals who have learned to understand of, from, and by themselves; at the same time they help and serve, as well as being helped and served by other individuals who have the same wish and aim.

A. L. Staveley
Two Rivers Farm
June 1992

Saturday, July 23, 1988

MAINTAINING MY VESSEL

Most of us have had the experience of the planet as either a part of an extension of our own consciousness. We have had the sensation of experiencing the planet as an organism. Occasionally I think we get the connection that enables us to really relate our own lives and our own functioning to a larger presence that is not out of this world, isn't other-worldly, but is quite concrete.

I was lying up in the woods last night thinking, since George had mentioned to me that I would be saying something when all of us were together, what exactly it was that I would say. And I looked out of the back of my tent through the screen and up at the trees, seeing the stars reflecting through the trees, and I got a bit of a reminder of what I'm talking about now. If you just look around you right now you can see that there's a difference between this hill up here and what happens down in the valley. There's a transition between the forest and the open land. And there's an interaction that takes place that was quite concrete to me in the moment. I was really hot lying there in the tent, feeling the heat and becoming aware of the coolness blowing through the trees, and this stimulated in me the awareness that there's a dynamic that is present, there's a constant interplay or interaction between the different elements in the environment here, just in this small corner of the planet. Another view of the same thing comes to my mind when recently I was seeing the sheep grazing across the grass and a sort of pouring forth with the contents of their digestion.

This all seems kind of mundane in a way as I hear my own words come out, but I think nonetheless it's worthy of reflection and I'll try to bring it together in a way that we can use something from it today. These different aspects of the planet, the different aspects of the environment in which we live -- which I really think we take for granted -- are all maintaining themselves. They don't require any intention, they don't require anything beyond themselves in order to continue to function in this really remarkable way, all of which, when it happens -- as it continues to happen and unfold -- constitutes this organism that I'm talking about, this planetary life -- planetary being, really.

I want to take one third example because I think it's slightly different enough to give yet another perspective. When I go to the ocean, there's always the awareness of the tide coming in and out -- it's like a great breath, almost literally

breathing in the waters coming across the tide flat. And there's all these little organisms that are poking their little tentacles out trying to glean something out of the water as it brings the food in. And then the tide goes back out again and it takes the waste away. And again there is an extraordinary interconnectedness in this process. It's not quite like the forest that we are immediately in and its interfacing with the grassland; and it's not like this relationship between the sheep and the grass and the manure and the building up of the soil, this interconnectedness we see there. It's a third aspect of the same thing, where it's happening automatically and without intention in a sense. It doesn't require anything of itself, the process simply unfolds, it's self-maintaining.

If you can really think about it, if we can together go beyond the intellectual concept and just enter into this process in our perception, we can see aspects of our own possibilities, our own interconnectedness with this larger sphere in which we live. And yet for my own part, when I really contemplate this and try to see how I can fit in, I always feel I come up a bit short. I can't quite see how something that functions so perfectly can make space for me. How can I integrate into this thing in a way that has a significance and has an appropriateness?

And what I conclude and what I would like to think about today and to investigate, to experience, to investigate through my experience, is how I can bring myself to a point where I can provide what's needed, where I can come to understand what is required to maintain my own organism, my own body in the same sense that this planet had, and we are speaking in a rational sense, if we were able to extricate our influence from this organism, how can I come to understand what's required in order to maintain my own body,

I don't know if it's as clear to you as it is to me, how I feel that I fall far short of being able to truly maintain my own organic functioning in a way that is anywhere close to the degree of maintenance, the degree of balance that happens in the whole world. I feel that each one of us has certain assets and certain liabilities. Some of them are birthrights and some of them are what we acquire through the way in which we live. And in our own system we have this recognition that when I use the term "I", I'm not referring to this body. This body is something that I have as a responsibility, it's something that was given to me. And if I am able to maintain it -- and for each of us that's going to mean something quite different -- I can use it as an instrument for myself. I think that what we really want to look at today is the ways in which we come into contact with this body that is not "I".

If we take what I just said as words and just look at it through the intellect, it wouldn't have any significance at all. But if we can go beyond the words into the reality that I know we all are aware of, we come up against quite a large dilemma, because I really am not my body and yet I am really incapable of fulfilling any of the ideas that we have talked about in the last few hours, last night and today, without the body, without this instrument. And my own feeling is that it's through my connection with my own body that I will be able -- God willing -- to go on beyond myself in any sense whatsoever, that I would be able to be of use either to my family, my friends, my community. And while I don't think any of us believes that we would cease to exist, our bodies will cease to exist, so I think all of us recognize that there is a necessity to maintain this instrument in the best way that's possible to us in any given moment.

A practical way I think that we can work with this idea -- and I do think that it's possible to practically work with it, not just from the point of view of observing, but also to begin to learn more and more about how we can go beyond ourselves -- is through observing the functions of the body. And I'm not speaking about medical functions like, you know, eating and digesting, urinating, so on, but about the functions that we know of -- sensation, the experiencing of my body through its physical presence; and thinking -- mostly what I think about when I say "I", when I think, you know, I'm in my head -- and that which I experience through my feelings, through my feeling capacity. There really is something for us in the work that we can do practically at any moment in time, even as we sit together here in the present instance, we can see where these different functions of my body are in relationship to each other and we can try to use those aspects of this instrument as a way of coming into contact with this question about how I can best maintain this vessel.

Dr. Bruce Milliman

Monday, July 25, 1988

LISTENING

When George walked into breakfast this morning, his first comment was, "Sounds like a beehive in here!" That was not the only comment; there were a number of things that have pointed to this. I thought it would be good for us to address this situation we are in right now. There's a lot of noise here among us. And rather than approach it directly, I thought we would do something with listening today.

There are different aspects of listening that we can look at. First of all, there is external listening. There's listening to the sounds of nature -- we are surrounded. Many of us here are not blessed with living in a place like this; we live in cities. And there are sounds which are all around us which we could be open to. Also the issue of listening to other people as they speak, and not only as they speak but as they make gestures -- all kinds of things come into it. And another aspect of listening which we can look at is listening inwardly. We have been talking in these last few days about conscience. Conscience -- this little voice in us that we can learn to listen to.

While we are working at listening, it's necessary for us to be able to deal with some of the things that make it difficult for us to listen. The most obvious one to me is talking, and that includes external as well as internal talking. We are full to the brim with ourselves. It's very difficult to listen. And I thought that, rather than make it a general thing that we work all day with this subject, we choose a time to work during practical work sessions today. In conjunction with this, what is necessary talking? When is it really necessary for us to speak? So that we can be open to listening so that we are able to listen.

And I want to do one other thing with this theme, and that is an exercise. We'll either do some stops or just decide on your own how to work in this way, whatever is best in your situation. But I want to show you a little something you can do fairly quickly at different times in the day, which will give us another opening into the subject.

So can we just take a minute right now and put your attention on your solar plexus center so you have some attention on yourself. As you do this, you listen to the sounds around you. When you establish the contact with yourself and you

listen, then you go further and you try to be aware that all these sounds that you are hearing are really only ripples on the ocean of silence. You try to be aware that silence is behind all the sounds that we hear. So you put your attention on the silence behind the sounds.

Now you don't have to take long to do this during the day. It can give you something to work with.

Elan Sicroff

Tuesday, July 26, 1988

HOW DO WE COLLECT IMPRESSIONS?

DR. LESTER:

We are told we take active impressions. What constitutes an impression? What channels do we take them in by? What is the scope of the channels that we use? Are there more channels than we are aware of? And perhaps we can bring examples of the ones that we have used or observed. I think we will leave it like that, basically in question, and bring as much material as we can of what impressions are and how they enter us.

DR. MARON:

As a way of working with this, you may take a stop at every half hour. First notice your breathing and then come to the question.

Dr. John Lester

Dr. Myron Maron

Wednesday, July 27, 1988

PRAYER AND WORSHIP

I propose that today we take the theme of Prayer and Worship. I don't think it will be an easy theme to observe. But I think it would be a good thing to try to see how prayer and worship come into the work -- whether prayer and worship come into the work. There's not a lot I can say about this, particularly now. But I think it's very important to bear in mind that it's the sort of theme where it's very easy to imagine and to wiseacre and it would be preferable if this afternoon we had a silent hour rather than an hour of wiseacring. But we are in particularly favorable circumstances to make observations on this theme so I hope that it won't be silent.

MR. CORNELIUS:

I'd like for you to take it one step further: take a pen or pencil and paper and write down your observations during the silent period (3:00 - 4:00). This will give you something to do then. Not necessarily to read that paper during the time of the theme discussion, but to put it on paper so that you can actually have the centers working in a different way than they would be if you were waiting to express yourselves here during the theme discussion period.

MR. BENNETT:

One thing I would like to add in a practical way: I think it will be useful if we had a half hour stop and if we all had a half hour stop on the same half hour.. So if we take the hour and the half hour all through the day as our stopping period and in that stop we try and be aware of the rest of the group. If you notice it's the time don't be shy of telling somebody else.

Mr. George Bennett

Thursday, July 28, 1988

BREATH

When I was first considering giving a theme we had a visitor and the visitor suggested a question to me, which is: what is the difference between man and plants? I thought about that considerably and it took me to the realization that a major difference between man and plants is breath. This process of breathing is an active process that we take very much for granted. It's something that's so simple yet something that none of us can function without. When an infant enters the world, the first thing he does is to take a breath, and then he carries that breath with him in that vessel until the last moment of his being here in that manifestation in this world and then that breath leaves him. And if any of you have been present at that moment when the breath either leaves a human or an animal then you know the exchange of energies that takes place at that point in time. So it's a very, very simple act that we do, to breathe. And yet it's something that probably we are all almost completely unconscious of.

I remember something that struck me greatly some years ago. I was overhearing a conversation with this gentleman who was explaining something -- I don't recall what he was talking about, but he was saying how simple it was and how absurd it was that we had to teach each other, that it was as absurd as trying to teach each other how to breathe. Since that time I've come to learn that breathing isn't all that simple. We might think we are breathing but most of us probably breathe very little. We are holding our breath. So there's a lot that goes along with just this act of breathing.

What I would like you to look at today is just that: what takes place when we breathe? I'm not going to specify what plane, it can be just on the physical level. There's so much that's occurring when you breathe that goes into how your vessel is maintained, what our habits are, so much that you can see. There doesn't seem to be much point in looking at what we take in with our breath until we first study this process. Obviously there is a lot that is associated with air, with what comes in and what goes out, with the inner and the outer, but all those things I think we could talk about this afternoon. What you are looking at is the process; what you can see in that process is up to you.

I would like us to continue stopping on the half hour as we did yesterday. And just for that time -- not during the rest of the day -- I would like us to breathe with some consciousness. On the in-breath, say "BE"; on the pause, "HERE"; and the out-breath, "NOW". That should not be continued throughout the day; only at the stops. Also it's very important that when you are bringing attention to your breathing you don't try to change it. You are not to do anything with it; you are simply to see what's taking place.

MR. CORNELIUS:

In addition to what Lynn has said, think about what is breath. When I was travelling in Afghanistan and Konya, meeting with the Sheik and Gurdjieff, the remark they made to me was, "We use 95% of our breath, you use only 5%." What is my reason for not utilizing more of it? It's all exhaled. The potential is there for using it. Maybe later on there are different exercises, different kinds of exercises that can be accomplished, but no one ever asks me -- just like when the Sheik and his wife arrived, nobody greets them, no one pays any attention to what they are here for, nor asks them many questions. I know you have troubles, your own inward troubles associated with the Work. I would like to see you talk to them more about this or say something about what is troubling you as she said last night, maybe you are male and female and you don't have any troubles, but you do have troubles, I can assure you of that. So go about your work.

Lynn Milliman

Friday, July 29, 1988

WHAT DO I WANT? CAN I SEE WHEN I AM TEMPTED AND CHOOSE TO GO WITH WHAT I VALUE?

Today is Friday. It is the next to the last day of this 8-day seminar. It's probably the most important day for my work. Those of you who have heard Eric Davis talk about the Enneagram may recall that Friday is the day of the Two Gods, a God and a Goddess, Fria and her brother, representing the opposite forces. It's a day of temptation. We either remember why we came here, why we are here, or we can get caught up in realizing that there's only one more day to go. The temptation to think it's almost done or even that it is done. The third DO has been sounded; I felt it myself last night during George Bennett's talk on Conscience. So today I have to keep in mind the three octaves that are involved, the most important of which is the one that has just begun. This is what I need to direct my inner work toward today.

I wish to be aware of temptation; I wish to observe what tempts me and at that moment I wish to remember: what do I want? What is important to me? What do I value? Another word for value is love and in a moment of temptation today I would like to remember what I love. I don't know what conscious love really is. In order to find out what conscious love is I have to make an effort to love, especially when some part of me wishes not to, not to love, not to make this effort. So I would like to keep before myself today that question: what do I want? But not only for myself, for everyone here, for this place for which we can give thanks, and for the greater work.

My attention is important, because it is what I value that I want to keep my attention upon. Maurice Nicoll makes a frightening statement early in his Commentaries, Volume I: "Where your attention is, there is your soul." When you possess your attention there is your soul. The development of my soul, the development of my ability to direct my attention, the ability that I have to see when I am tempted, because unless I am tempted I cannot work. So the focus of the theme today is: what do I want? Can I see when I am tempted and choose to go with what I value?

It has been very useful for me this week to have a stop every half hour. I would suggest that we do that again today and keep in mind what we value.

Mrs. Caroline Kimmler

Saturday, July 25, 1987

DO I CARE?

I find myself here for a week of work. Today is the first day. I know it is very true that what I have to offer and even what I may get for myself from this week is dependent upon how I start. I have taken great trouble to get off work, to collect my clothes, to organize my transport. In brief, I have taken great care for the needs of my physical body for this week. How have I prepared for my inner work? Have I thought about it; have I an aim? Am I serious; have I been active about it? In short, did I, and do I care? Have I left all decisions to others?

What does it mean to care? Caring is a practical aspect of love. In Views we are told to start loving animals, plants and even inanimate objects. But I can't help comparing the care and trouble I have taken over my bodily needs in coming here with how uncaring and incompetent I am with objects outside myself.

I will observe today my inner attitude towards not only my jobs, but all forms of life and all levels of life associated with my jobs. For example, the plants, weeds, spades, forks, cups, plates, towels, dish cloths, food, and so on. Perhaps I can see how I care for those objects and jobs which I especially like in a very different way from those I dislike. Can I try to like the jobs I dislike and see then the extent of my caring? Do I miss caring for some things I don't even see?

I remember carrying a heavy Bible into a room where the table was covered with things. There was no surface on which to put it down, except on the sofa. My Jewish friend said, "Wait until I clear a piece of table -- you can't put it on the seat." She had great respect, and cared for her possessions and her own life.

We have all watched real professionals at work at various occupations in life handle their tools and jobs. I have even had the fortune to watch one or two professionals of Life. They cared.

But first I must see just where I am myself, without changing anything deliberately for the better. Do I have any inner care as shown by my outer manifestations?

Dr. John Lester

Sunday, July 26, 1987

SILENT COMMUNICATION

We are all engaged in practical work here together, either in the kitchen or in projects like the path, the fish pond or the children's barn. There are two ways we can organize these practical projects. The first is that we can discuss the project among ourselves; we can each give our opinions about the way it should go and try to arrive at a consensus about the way we are to proceed. Or we can organize the project in silence, by forming a mental image together of the finished task.

So today, let's take the theme of silent communication and try to organize our activities by forming a picture of the outcome. At the same time, while we're working, we can try to avoid unnecessary talking.

Now the next activity we are going to engage in as a community all together is eating lunch. Let us now form a mental image together of the way we are going to set about eating the meal.

(PAUSE)

That's all I want to say about the theme now; you've all engaged in this kind of exercise at some time or another.

Mr. George Bennett

INNER FIRE

At one time or another we all directly experience the state of being "stuck" and find that not only are we "stuck" but we are also lacking any inner fire with which to get unstuck. Generally this experience is not a problem when we meet together in these seminars, especially in the beginning, as there is a surge of energy that comes when many people are gathered together to work. But this state does not last long enough to get us to Heaven. Sooner or later we must look elsewhere for "fire".

Perhaps you are one who meets new situations or new tasks with enthusiasm and you call that enthusiasm "fire". Eventually that enthusiasm wanes and the interest sags. What was once a joy, a marvellous challenge, is now a chore, an albatross around the neck or merely a distracting discomfort. But was that enthusiasm ever really related to the inner "fire" that is needed for work on myself? What is this inner "fire"?

When a man sets himself an Aim, instantly a force, corresponding in strength to that of his Aim, arises against him. One experiences a friction; an uncomfortable, unaccustomed friction. Everything in one wants to avoid friction or to escape from conditions producing this friction at all costs. But if one compels oneself to make the effort anyway, something of the energies generated by this friction goes toward the development of a new force in me -- friction -- fire -- transformation -- But it all begins by having an Aim; otherwise these forces remain in their unmanifested, potential state.

We aim for the impossible so that we can attain the possible. Our long-term aims can be supported by short-term tasks. Choose a task for yourself toward your Aim that is attainable today. For example: If my aim is to study my mechanicality, I set myself the task of not permitting the body to sit between now and lunch. If my aim is to cut through my egoism, I can decide to affirm, "We are Children of the Common Father," on the hour. If my aim is to engage my mind at my physical job, I can set myself a counting exercise for 10 minutes out of each hour.

Remember you Aim.

Jeffrey Viers
Linda Cattadoris

Wednesday, July 29, 1987

BEING RIGHT

"Being right" is something I am all too familiar with. There are a million ways to be right, and these ways fill my thoughts and actions. We all know them well. They come up time and time again in theme: "I know the right way to pound a nail;" "I know the right way to cook chicken;" "I know the right way to explain an idea;" "I know the right way to take care of the children." I have worked harder, studied longer, or suffered more and I am right. And further I want you to know I am right. And often I am right. So that's where we come to the key point -- well, so what?

What I want us to look at today is what happens to me and to the world I exist in when I am locked in my rightness. What happens to us then? What is lost? What disappears? I don't want you to change anything, but just watch and see what takes place when you are caught by being right.

In addition, another way to work with this, what Elizabeth Bennett said yesterday in theme discussion about not explaining would fit very well with work on today's theme. If we could take that upon ourselves today to not explain, and see how that helps us.

We are here in the middle of the week; we have taken time away from our lives. Somehow when we come here on these work weekends we tend to get lost in them. We have separated ourselves from the world, which has its advantages; it also has its disadvantages. I believe that many of the people who come here, perhaps all of you, have a real familiarity with the sense of urgency that Mr. Bennett talked about a long time ago. The urgency continues. Dr. Lester mentioned it earlier this week in relation to the world and I think we bring that with us here. But then, when we have gotten into the week, gotten involved in our personal sicknesses and our personal problems or conflicts, that we may have lost this sense of urgency and how it connects back with the world.

I was hoping that we can keep in mind that looking at this being right goes beyond just an exercise, it can function as a severe limiting factor in the ecological sense that may not always be visible, and so importantly, can create tunnel vision or the narrowing of possibilities. So if we can just keep that generally in mind.

Lynn Milliman

Thursday, July 30, 1987

HOW CAN I BECOME AWARE OF QUALITY?

We don't have much problem with seeing form. We come equipped to know the world of quantity. We have even taken our natural ability to know quantity and have developed sophisticated techniques to sort out complicated details about quantitative dimensions. Work on the quantitative dimension is not the focus of the work of this seminar.

The Work demands attention to the discovery of quality in life. We don't readily know qualitative dimensions. We need to become more aware of qualities. Let's begin the quest to understand quality. Our theme today is: How can I become aware of quality? Make an observation during practical work, or an observation of a relationship, or an observation of something about myself or something in the field of my attention that speaks to quality. Can I be bold enough to identify the quality?

Ben Hitchner

Friday, July 31, 1987

MORE

The theme for today is what we spoke of briefly two nights ago, which is the word "more". Lord Pentland gave us a talk on that at the first seminar we ever had here. And when he said that word, he -- I have never checked it, but he had, and the etymology of the word "more" has the same root as the word "magic" does. And I think if you look here at this incredible scene that nature has provided us, and you look at the group of people that you've been with for the past week, it doesn't take very much imagination to see the magic. It's an invitation to dance. And all it requires is to come out from the row of old maids or old men against the wall and to dance. The "more" is not going to come from out here, because nothing more can be provided. So the "more" comes from us.

And I would hope that you wouldn't take that to mean more in the sense that I have to push myself to do the most serious, concentrated work I can do -- although that is an aspect of "more". But you don't usually make a very attractive dancing partner when that's your approach. You tend to be more of an attractive dancing partner when you make yourself look good and you have a smile on your face -- or at least that's my experience.

So I would like you to look at that. What more is it that you can do, or is it what more can you be? And the only concrete thing I would say, because I think you can all find your own way to deal with that, is I would suggest, if you've been stopping every half hour as a group -- and it seems to me most of you have been -- whatever else you are planning to do during that time, if you could just sit for 30 seconds and collect yourself and do the exercise Elizabeth showed us this morning, where you affirm: I WISH; I CAN; I AM.

Leonard Charles

· FOOD FOR EMOTIONS -- A POSSIBILITY

In his fable, or allegory, comparing man as he is -- man as we are -- to a horse, carriage and driver,* Gurdjieff says the most unfortunate of the three parts of what should be a whole man is the horse, which represents the emotional or feeling part of our whole. He says, amongst other things, the horse is uneducated and neglected, has received only abuse and thrashings, been kept tied up and given food unsuitable for its real needs. Deprived of all interest and aspiration, its inclinations must inevitably be concentrated on food, drink and the automatic yearning towards the opposite sex.

There is a good deal more, but this is surely enough to begin with, if it is in truth a fair representation of our feelings as they exist in us at this present moment. Is it? A fair picture that is?

E-motion. That which moves me. What does move me as I, a typical human being, stand today? And towards what am I moved? One has to admit that food, drink and sex in one form or another takes up a lot of anyone's interest and hence, time and energy. Even when not immediately engaged with any one of them they occupy a lot of thought, and getting them, or the money to pay for them, does take time and nervous energy. Not only that, but when pursuing any of these interests one's various parts seem as much together as they ever are. More so, for example, than when I am listening to a lecture, learning a skill, or even engaged in strictly body activities, for instance washing or eating. A body can do many even complicated things, such as driving a car with the rest of the whole fast asleep and dreaming to all intents and purposes. All this can easily be checked and verified by anyone. This is not news, since we've heard it often, although we do not face it -- do not take it into account.

It might be well, however, to consider the food quite unsuitable for the horse's real needs. And what is the quality of that food? Again, it is no news that there is a great preponderance of junk food -- even dead food, synthetic food -- in what we find on our plates at meal times. The food the emotions require is of a finer quality. It is first of all air and after that all the impressions that pass through us, and here, too, only junk food is available. Take just by themselves the sensory impressions that one might experience in any city. Cacophony, ugliness, the harsh astringent air made by burning oil, etc. The only refuge from all this is to retire into an inner fantasy world, and if you really look at people's faces on city streets, you will see a reflection of your own retreat into an inner world of daydreams. We live in an unreal fantasy world as we must if there is no real food to nourish us. The trouble is human beings grow to love the things they get used to. We develop a tremendous inertia against any change even when we can see the change would be to our advantage. We do not want to be disturbed. It has always seemed to me that this peculiarity of human nature -- not wanting to be disturbed -- accounts in large part for why Jesus was crucified. He disturbed people then, and would now if we really listened to what He said. It seemed to His contemporaries that the only way to get rid of

* All and Everything, Chapter "From the Author"

that disturbance was to dispose of its cause! So they did.

People today, including me and anyone who chances to read this -- that is, you -- don't like being disturbed either, but our situation is different. Our planet is sick, and since we can find no single person to blame for this, we are obliged to see that we are responsible -- in fact are its sickness. The planet is not a fantasy and sooner or later if we do not voluntarily pay attention to its needs we will be compelled to recognize the hard way the uncomfortable fact that its needs and ours are the same. If we continue to live parasitically as we do at present, not replacing what we destroy, sooner or later our host will perish. Is this the disturbance we are trying to get away from? Trying not to see?

This may seem to be getting a long way from the food our feeling center is being cheated of, but perhaps not so far as one might imagine. It is the emotions in us which can be and are disturbed. Is it possible that to allow the disturbances we so strenuously try to avoid might give us a better quality of food for the poor horse? Gurdjieff highly recommends remorse of conscience which, one may recall, was in ancient times called "the agenbite of inwit", and indeed one can, if one has any sensitivity, have an experience of inner gnawing when the predicament of our earth and our own inevitable connection with it, forces itself on our attention. It is not comfortable. It does not please what Gurdjieff calls our "evil inner god, self-calming."

That inner god is nourished by all the self emotions, self-love, self-importance, greed and envy -- in short by the whole tribe of demons which occupy the space in us by rights belonging to and feeding real feeling, real emotions. We live in our one-man universes, alienated from all around us. Once again -- this is no news -- but up to now we have refused to see it, or rather, to acknowledge responsibility for this predicament we are in and the consequent plight of the earth.

But suppose we did acknowledge it? Suppose we went a step further and decided it is time to do something about it? To come out of this one-man universe, this fantasy, into the real world? One thing is certain. It would have to be a matter for individuals, or a few individuals working together in agreement. No way could it be organized from the exterior for the many. Those who have read and studied Gurdjieff's ideas for years, especially if grounded in All and Everything, may well find they have taken in by a process of osmosis certain things that extend their understanding at least a little. Practical ways of extending the borders of the world we imagine we live in to awaken us to the world we really live in.

If I ask myself what am I living for and face the fact, that is if I am honest, that money and sex just about sums up my motivation -- unless, that is, one goes on taking what amounts to dreams and imagination, empty talk and ideas-without-manifestation, as reality -- then I will have to admit I need a new and more powerful motivation, a real aim to help me pull myself up out of the morass I'm mired in along with everyone else.

What could such an aim be? Here is one idea. Beelzebub says several times that the Creator expected that human beings would come to a point where they could help Him take care of the expanding Universe. Now, what was the first task entrusted to us? Was it not the care of our own Earth and all the creatures who share it with us? Isn't this the place to begin? And is not remorse our inevitable experience if we look to see how we have carried out our duties to date? A real and powerful remorse might be like the river Hercules used to clean out the Augean stables. A word of caution: a river would be a pretty big tool to handle for little people such as ourselves. No good trying something beyond our powers and getting discouraged. Gurdjieff says to try small things first. He also tells us he teaches Haida Yoga and that in Russian "Haida" means "Do it now." For sure the time to read and discuss about the end and aim of my existence has gone by. I need to ask myself, the essential myself: What am I for? And to insist on an answer. I ask from essence and hope to be answered from the same place.

And then I need to start to live it.

EXPANDED CAVE JUNCTION SEMINAR TALKS

given by Ken Pledge in July 1987

1. DEVELOPED FROM THE TALK ON "TRUST" - THE FOURTH TALK

Because this day has been a hard day for all of us, I have not really been able to prepare anything to say this evening. But if my 'years' of 'preparation' are any good at all, I will be able to trust that I will find something to say.

As it happens, George has asked me to talk tonight about this very word 'trust'. Now by definition a word is something that *communicates a meaning by its usage*. If we want to clarify for ourselves the meaning of a word, one possible procedure that immediately suggests itself is to collect together and examine a number of situations in which that word is used meaningfully, and then to set ourselves the task of distilling out of them the factor of common meaning that pervades them all. I suppose, if anybody could be credited with originating this comparative method, it would be Socrates. In the first volume of his book *The Dramatic Universe* this kind of approach was christened by Mr.B. the method of 'progressive approximation', by which we begin with an initially vague notion of the meaning, and gradually get nearer and nearer to a clear and sharp picture. In the second volume, which is the most achieved work of art of the four, it has become transformed and refined almost out of all recognition - much as Mr.B. himself had, during the intervening period - and reappears under the heading of 'the emergence of value'. It there becomes seen as a sensitive and artistic technique, and in fact he illustrates it by quoting Michelangelo's famous words about gradually *freeing* a fine piece of sculpture from the coarse stone that initially surrounds it, until finally it *emerges* - like Michelangelo's *David* - complete, finished, perfected, an unique work of art in its own right.

Those who have some acquaintance with the will-language of *Systematics*, will see that the method itself is the working out of a 2-1-3 triad of *concentration* of the essential meaning (3) out of the inessential material in the examples (2) by the affirming action of our own wish to 'make sense' of them all (1). Gurdjieff in *Beelzebub* calls it the 'Reason of Understanding', and explains its workings in much the same terms. Mr.B. himself became highly skilled in the action of this triad, and you will recognise it as the basis if the technique used in the theme-meetings. The reason why it is not so easy to apply as it first sounds, is that it must be preceded by a 3-2-1 triad of *freedom* to first bring the (2) and the (1) together and start the ball rolling. An artist like Michelangelo has this freedom (3) in front of a slab of stone (2), and so for him it is not 'just' stone at all. It is a kind of reservoir of opportunities (2) for him to 'create' (1) by cutting it gradually away, a multitude of wondrous works of art (3) some finer, some coarser. If this special kind of awareness, this special connection with the stone, is not there, he cannot even begin to 'create' anything at all. Indeed, to come to that freedom he must have previously done the *work* of engaging himself actively (1) in reiterated 1-3-2 triads of *interaction* or 'active struggle to overcome the special difficulties' involved in becoming able (3) to work in that particular kind of artistic medium (2), almost certainly learning with the help of a specialist teacher already adept in the skills involved. But let us attempt to apply this method to elucidate for ourselves something of what 'trust' means. To do so we need some authentic cases of its use that we can all agree about.

For example, the Prophet Mohammed (on whom be peace), before he became a prophet, was a camel-driver, and the woman who owned the camels found that, unlike most camel-drivers, he was a man whom she could trust. He was known to be a man of such personal integrity that he was called *el amin*, which means 'the trustworthy'. And so she married him. She found a good man, and she married him. And when, later, he was tortured by self-doubt and unsure whether or not his prophetic mission was genuine, she did not fail him but comforted him and helped him to overcome his own initial uncertainty. So he could trust her, just as she could him.

Taking another example, we might say that these beams, and all this wooden structure above our heads 'can be trusted' to carry the roof, so that, because of them, the roof does not fall in on us. This tells us that there has to be some condition of stress and strain for the word 'trust' to have the meaning it has - something hazardous, some kind of demand to be met.

To take another example, I have thought for a long time that the usual way people interpret the word 'faith' is a mistake. My reason for this is that when, in the Gospels, Jesus is asked about faith, at that point there occurs the episode of the healing of the centurion's servant. The centurion sends Jesus a message, in which he says: "I am under somebody, an officer of higher rank than myself, and below me there are men of lower rank. And when I say 'Go' they go, and when I say 'Come' they come. It must be the same with you. So just say the word, and my servant will be healed." And Jesus says, in effect: "He's got it exactly right. He knows what faith is." Now if you think about this particular illustration, you can see that really the word translated as 'faith' ought to be translated as 'trust'. The men *trust* their officer to give them the right orders, and the officer in his turn *trusts* that the officer above him gives him the right orders. That is the way a chain of command, of authority, works. And we can also see that this is closely connected with the word 'duty'. I don't have to remind you that Gurdjieff attaches so much importance to this word in *Beelzebub* that, whenever he uses it, he spells it out in three different languages at once, to make sure that everyone gets the message.

But let us take a concrete example. Suppose that you are asked to give a reading of a difficult book like *Beelzebub*. It then becomes your responsibility to first find out what part of *Beelzebub* it is that you are being asked to read. And having accepted the task it then becomes your right to say to whoever set it: "If you are going to ask me to read that piece of *Beelzebub*, I must have time to prepare myself to be able to read it properly." Then you would go away and you would read it through, perhaps two or three times, practicing how to say the difficult words and speak the long sentences, so that it all flowed smoothly when the time came. That is what it means to be in a position of trust, and what you must do. It is really exactly the same as that for all of us, for everything that we have to do here. I have to try to carry out my job, and you have to try to carry out yours, and in this way we can all benefit.

If you are given a task, then it is really the responsibility of the person who gives it to you to be satisfied that you can do it, that you have the capability. In this connection there is a telling line in Idries Shah's book *Caravan of Dreams*, in a brief section which is simply headed 'Work'. It runs: "If you are working at something you cannot do, you are not working." When I first read it, I realized that no one had told me this before, and that it was, when

you saw it, quite obviously true. It is nonsense to give someone a task to do which is simply beyond or outside his capability.

To give an example from my own experience: I have to tell you that, when the time finally came and I had bought the plane-ticket to come here, and the only things remaining to do were to get the visa and pack, and arrange for the lady up the road to look after the cat for three weeks, and leave the necessary number of tins of catfood on the kitchen table; and when I saw that the moment was inevitably going to loom up at which I was going to have to do what I am doing now - I grew very apprehensive. I knew I couldn't get out of it. I came into that state that Doctor Johnson described by his famous remark: "Nothing concentrates the mind so much as the knowledge that you are going to be hanged next Thursday." I knew I could really trust myself to do it because lecturing to people and explaining ideas is my profession, but that didn't prevent me from feeling that I might nevertheless find myself tongue-tied when the time came - drying-up like an actor who forgets his lines on the opening night because he gets an attack of stage-fright. In connection with this, the Sufis simply say tersely: "Fear is all you need." It really means the same as Johnson's remark about being hanged next Thursday. But why is this 'fear' needed?

The thing we have to grasp here, and then hold on to with both hands, is that it is really just this initial fear that makes the task interesting, because it is what gives the situation the taste of uncertainty, of what Mr.B. calls the awareness of *hazard*. Because you are apprehensive about whether you can pull it off or not, you are *put on your mettle* with regard to it - which is an old alchemical way of saying that you have certain qualities in you, just as different metals have, for doing certain things, and if you 'have the mettle' to do something it corresponds, as I was saying earlier, to having the capability. 'Trying' a metal, means putting it to the test to see what kind of metal it is. Roughly speaking, different metals react with and dissolve in different acids, which correspond to different external situations, different kinds of difficulties. (The one metal that comes through all these tests with colours still flying is gold, which is why it is called the noblest metal.) So a task puts you to the test. Your capabilities are tested. When that begins to happen to you, what you are confronted with becomes a challenge and, because you have burnt your bridges behind you, it becomes a challenge towards which you have no choice - you must respond to it or go under. And the harder the task, the more likely it is that you *will* go under. That is the hazard of it.

Talking about alchemy like this reminds me that the concentration of the mind that Johnson spoke about is allegorized in the alchemical tradition by the imagery of 'reuniting the beads of mercury'. If you have ever been at school, and have seen what happens when mercury (which is the only metal to be liquid at ordinary temperatures) flows about all over the place, then you will recall actually seeing that when a large blob of mercury is formed by the coming together of a lot of little beads rolling about separately, they all just go "blip", lose their separate identity, and instantly become one single smooth and shiny whole. It is very striking, in the suddenness with which it happens, and in the transition from the rapid motions to the state of stillness. In concentration of the mind what happens is just like that. Instead of random thoughts and ideas flowing about in your head like the little beads of mercury, you are suddenly possessed by one single overwhelming affirmation that brooks no denial: "I am to be hanged next Thursday". Instantly all other ideas vanish.

In *Beelzebub* the kind of action that is manifested here is called 'the aggregation of the homogeneous', or the 'second-grade' cosmic law *litsvrtsi*. In systematic terms it is a 2-3-1 triad of *identity*. Why does Gurdjieff call it a 'second-grade' law? It is because the outcome of its action, the final affirmation (1) of the 2-3-1 is static and limited. It doesn't go anywhere. But the final (3) of *concentration* 2-1-3 - which is a form of the process of blending and refining that Gurdjieff calls 'harnel-miatznel' - can be unlimited in its potential for further transformation, so this is a 'first-grade' law.

The *litsvrtsi* triad results because an *ordering force* acts in the situation. This force is the (1) in a 3-1-2 triad of *order* and, like the 3-2-1 triad, it brings together the (1) and the (2), but it brings them together *in the reverse sequence*, and so the *consequence* of them is different. In the case of the beads of mercury what happens as a result is inevitable. It is a 1-2-3 triad of *expansion*, and is what is happening when the separate beads all go 'blip' and are swallowed up by the large blob they form into. The (3) is now used up in producing it. In 1-2-3 the *qualitative progress* of 2-1-3 is absent, because there is no effortful action separating finer from coarser, only a sudden *quantitative change* that happens effortlessly by itself.

When the ordering force, the (1) of the 3-1-2 triad, is removed or weakened, the parts fall apart again. You may remember in your schooldays, seeing what happens when a magnet is held underneath a piece of paper and iron filings are sprinkled on the paper. They all leap into position and take up the very shape of the magnetic force-field it provides, manifesting *litsvrtsi*. When you take the magnet away, they fall apart again, and can again move about freely, but without any pattern to them. This happens when salt dissolves in water and the forces between the atoms that hold them into the crystalline pattern are weakened, or when people go away from a group-meeting, or a talk like this one I am giving now, and fall into casual conversation. While we are alive, our bodies hold together, but when we die, the constituents of our bodies disintegrate into their component parts. Mr.B. used often to quote the last words of Gautama Buddha: "*Impermanent are all component things. Therefore work out your own salvation with diligence.*" 'Component things' are things that are only held together by the law of *litsvrtsi*. They are not like those 'treasures laid up in heaven, which are incorruptible', that Jesus spoke of. Those treasures are referred to in the second part of the Buddha's last message, and are attained as results of the inward action of triads of concentration.

This law of *litsvrtsi* appears in all manner of forms: in the formation of large blobs of mercury from little beads, in the cohesion of the atoms in crystals, in herd-behaviour (birds of a feather flock together) and social interactions between people in the mass, such as crowds. In the lowest worlds of the human will, it can take terrifying forms, as when a whole nation falls under the hypnotic sway of a dictator like Hitler and the people in it lose their own separate identity in affirming the greatness of the nation, or the empire, and, of course, of their glorious leader. Then armies march about, and great rallies attended by crowds of people are held, in which people sing together rallying-songs and national-anthems and the like. A football crowd is really a relatively harmless tribal rally of this kind. But, as it did in Hitler's Germany, the ordering-force itself can become corrupted, turning *litsvrtsi* into something that seems like an end in itself. It is not an end, it is only a means. Ends do not belong to the conditioned worlds, they come from the unconditioned world, from 'heaven'. In that world beginnings and ends are indistinguishable, because if they were distinguishable this would be a

condition of limitation. This is why "I am *Alpha* and *Omega*" means "I am from the unconditioned world" - Alpha and Omega are the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet. The relevance of all this to our theme of trust is obvious enough. We can see that things which are held together in a *litsvrtsi* form can only be trusted as long as the forces that enable them to do so are still present and able to operate strongly enough. Sooner or later those beams holding up the roof, unless they are inspected and replaced or protected from rotting and decay, will collapse and the roof will fall in.

I can remember to this day Mr.B. saying, twenty years ago, in a tone of utter undeniable certainty: "We cannot live without challenges." I can hear him now, telling us that Toynbee, in his *Study of History* had really seen that this is in fact a general law (Toynbee calls it 'the law of challenge and response') contributing to the rise and fall of cities, states, nations, races, and even entire civilizations throughout historical time. Why did Mr.B. say this? I can remember even the words of his explanation: "Because if we ignore this law, if we avoid challenges, if we evade our obligations, the interest, the spice of life, goes out of it. Our lives become tedious and boring, and so we *ourselves* become tedious and boring." So this is something we have to learn to do: we have to learn to take tasks that we are given as challenges, and to respond to them, then they become exciting and interesting - because then we find out what we are made of, what we are capable of. It stretches us.

In fulfilling the mission or carrying out the task, we enter into the possession of our own powers. In performing the task to the utmost perfection of which we are capable, we are perfecting both our own powers and the ability to use them, and so we are perfecting *ourselves*. This is why Gurdjieff lays such emphasis on the words 'striving' and 'self-perfecting' in *Beelzebub*. In one of Mr.B's public lectures in London in the 1950's someone in the audience asked if there was anything in Gurdjieff's ideas that corresponded to the ten commandments of Moses. Mr B. replied: "Yes, there are, and you will find them in *Beelzebub's Tales* - they are called there 'The five Obligolnian Strivings of Ashiata Shiemash'." Clearly the word 'Obligolnian' comes from the word 'obligation' first of all, and the '-olnian' (unless it is Armenian, and Gurdjieff was half-Armenian) is simply tacked on to give us the taste of a different idiom, an unfamiliar language that is at once both our own and not our own.

When we start to take tasks that we are given as challenges, little by little we begin slowly to grow up to where we can take *anything* in life as a challenge. And then it is not just something given to us by our teacher to develop our powers: Life *itself* becomes our teacher. Then, and finally, we don't *need* a teacher. This gradual transformation in the process of the law of challenge and response is why the Sufis say: "The only purpose of a teacher is to make his pupil able to do without him." The aim is to be free - to become an independent source of initiative, and to find for yourself that task which best fits your own developed and perfected capability. It seems strange, to those of us who were privileged to know him, that Mr.B. himself found this so very difficult to do. But he is quite frank about it in *Witness* and elsewhere. For years he leant on other people and distrusted his own powers and insights. When he went back to Gurdjieff after the War, Gurdjieff tried very cunningly to break him of it, by so overloading him with tasks to do that eventually he saw in a flash that he must say "No", and choose for himself what he would do and what he would not do. But, although he seemed so, he was still not completely

free even when I knew him back in the 60's at Coombe Springs. It was, I think, Idries Shah with his new broom who finally forced him to become completely free, and only then did he see what he must do, what task best fitted his own peculiar capability. This was when he saw that he must start Sherborne, and suddenly - you can read about it in *Witness* - everything became almost miraculously easy. Circumstances conspired to enable him to bring everything together, and all kinds of people turned up to give help where it was needed. But then, of course, he died. He had, after all, finally broken free a little too late to fully achieve all that he set out to do, and things fell apart again, as things held together by a powerful ordering-force in some form of *litsvrtsi* - and Mr.B. himself was the ordering-force of Sherborne - must inevitably do.

It is important to be clear about these things. We cannot do without leaders who act as ordering-forces in undertakings like Sherborne. Without Churchill to lead us English in the war against Hitler, we would probably have gone under. He was the very archetype of an inspiring war-leader. You have only to read some of his wartime speeches to see how he carried out his task up to the hilt. The students at Sherborne sometimes had to attend long meetings in which they found themselves listening to Mr.B. simply discussing what to do about the drains. And of course all the work had to be organized and arranged and everything paid for with real cash. At the end of *Beelzebub* Gurdjieff says that, because of the way people are, there will always be some who are masters and others who, in relation to them, are simply slaves. And his advice there, in the last chapter, is that we should first of all aim to become masters rather than slaves - leaders rather than led.

But in his second book *Meetings with Remarkable Men* Gurdjieff presents another picture, or series of pictures, of what it means to be some unique type of the 'remarkable man' that this work is concerned to evolve: "*He can be called a remarkable man who stands out from those around him by the resourcefulness of his mind, and who knows how to be restrained in the manifestations which proceed from his nature, at the same time conducting himself justly and tolerantly towards the weaknesses of others.*" In Robert Graves' introduction at the front of Idries Shah's book *The Sufis* which, when it first came out in 1964 we were all asked by Mr.B. to study very carefully, the aspect of the teacher as 'exemplar' is illustrated by comparing it to that of the 'fugleman', who stood in front of a batch of army recruits and *actually demonstrated* for them how rifle drill was done, so that they might copy him and thereby learn to do it as perfectly as he could. I think anybody that had any contact with Mr.B. for any length of time soon realized that he was both the 'master' - who must be willingly obeyed, and the 'remarkable man' - the fugleman who must be imitated. But his authority as 'master' was too extraordinary and awe-inspiring for most people to feel themselves able to emulate his expertise as 'remarkable man'. He possessed naturally a leonine, king-like authority of the kind Gurdjieff in *The Herald of Coming Good* called '*Tzvarnoharno*', and radiated an aura of command. In such a case, we have to remember the curt, harsh advice expressed by the phrase: "If you meet the Buddha on the road, *kill him.*"

So remember this: sooner or later, and preferably sooner rather than later, you have got to get rid of your teacher. And only when he can get rid of you has he really done his job. Then, having become free of you, maybe he will be free to teach somebody else. Or maybe he will be free to do something else more uniquely suited to his own peculiar capability, but this teaching of you

has been an obligation that has been entrusted to him, and he carried it out to the limits of his own capability and yours. There is a Sufi story about a teacher who found a bird flying about inside a room with an open window. The teacher simply waited until the bird was near the window, then he clapped his hands suddenly - and the bird flew out of the window.

Question: One more thing Ken. A lot of discussion has been going on, not only today, but on previous days, about what it means when we say "It's coming from the heart." I mentioned to some people at tea-time that sometimes the pastor or the priest speaks and after speaking he says "this is coming from the heart". But then I found that these people didn't even know what "the heart" means - how we use the word 'heart', or how we express ourselves by using the word 'heart' in the Work. So could you say something about that?

Ken: Well, today I found myself walking towards the house and I saw one of the girls, who was just leaving; saying goodbye to somebody in the house. I hadn't known that anybody was going to leave so soon, but she was holding an enormous suitcase, and so it was quite clear that she was just about to leave. I suddenly realized that I had not had time to get to know her, and that perhaps I might never see her again. I didn't even know her name. I didn't think about it, but just went up to her and kissed her, and said: "Goodbye sister." I noticed that her eyes filled with tears, and then I just walked on. And then I started to think again, and I realized the significance of what I had done and the words I had spoken to her, and said to myself: "Ah, Yes! Of course! We are both children of a Common Father." And so I saw - but only afterwards - that what I had done was "from the heart".

Question: The way the ideas are presented to us, it seems there is an association of some kind between 'heart' and 'being'. A lot of people here have hung on heroically (though I wouldn't say 'heroically' in my own case) and tried to keep something going in themselves as regards work on 'being'. But I personally feel that I have made very little progress in the sense of 'being'. In the part of the book *Witness* that you read to us today, it was pointed out that for us to really get anywhere we need some 'finer energy' that we cannot make for ourselves.

Also, you mentioned in your first lecture that Mr. Bennett had all along planned a Sixth Course, if and when he could find some people who could benefit from whatever was coming next. The experience I have had of going to seminars, of working with other people and trying to keep something going, is that I am terrified - as you said you once were - by reading that section from *Beelzebub* in the chapter 'From the Author' which include the words 'indefatigable' and 'persistent'. It seems to me that there is a very great danger in trying to take a loaf of bread and put it in the oven for ten seconds, and then taking it out and put it in the refrigerator for a week, and then putting a little more fire on it later. I'm afraid of going doh-re-mi-"thud" too many times, and then never getting anywhere.

I think the reason I and a lot of people are here is that we feel somehow we have got to come to, to find, or to connect with, the sense of urgency that is implied by those words. Or to wring out of someone, inside or perhaps outside this room, something we have not yet heard that we need to know. Would you comment on that?

Ken: 'Being' is strictly quantitative: 'more-or-less', like the blob of mercury. What makes it so is the strength of what Gurdjieff in *Beelzebub* calls the 'force-in-oneself'. 'Heart', or *qalb* in Sufi terminology is really a technical term. The nearest thing to its meaning in *Beelzebub* is probably 'conscience'.

If you really do desperately feel as you say, then you are coming to a sense of what this seminar is really for. Because you are beginning to say "Amar" - to cry "Help" from the depths of your heart. And then it becomes a question of how we can *all* come to say "Amar", because if we all say it, then something will have to happen. Rumi has this saying "New organs come into being as a response to *necessity*. Therefore *increase* your necessity." We will be compelled to step up the intensity and quality of the work here - and this place will very definitely have to be no kind of holiday-camp. We would have to put ourselves in situations that would begin to demand 'super-efforts' of us.

We sometimes hear it said, or perhaps read, that "only 'super-efforts' count." It is not true in general, but when it is concerned with the transformation required to form 'real being', it *is* true. Do you really feel and think that you have the real wish to commit yourself to work of such intensity? I'm talking to you as a representative of everyone else, because you happen to be the one whose voice has come to be heard. Hopefully you are also formulating what the situation is for many other people also in this room, for those; anyway, who realize that they are in this situation. Because if so, seminars like these will have to move beyond merely being refresher-courses, that are perhaps in effect teaching you no more than how to "run as fast as you can in order to remain in the same place" - which is a quotation from Lewis Carroll's *Alice in Wonderland*. But this work is not like his description of the 'caucus-race', in which all the animals who took part started when they liked and stopped when they liked, yet nevertheless clustered restlessly around Alice when the 'race' was brought to an end, clamouring shrilly for "Prizes, Prizes."

You should read *Beelzebub* more carefully. Gurdjieff never explains everything all together at one place. He doesn't make things easy for you. He makes you have to search actively for what you want, so that when you find it, you have, in effect, created it for yourself and it really becomes your own. Then you will never forget it. If you bring together things that he says in other places than that last chapter, you will find that he explains that the process of struggle involved in the formation of the 'kesdjan body' - which is the beginning of 'real being' - comes about by actions proceeding from 'non-desires', not from desires. From selfless dispassionate acts, not selfish ones.

Your fear is not yet the real fear which comes when you see what must be done and doubt whether you can do it. That alone can begin to transform you. You don't even know yet what you have to do, but until you do know it is not a real problem for you and it is useless to worry about it. The best you can do is simply to clamour to be *shown* what to do, so you are making the right noises. In the gospels Jesus is on record as saying that 'importunity' is necessary if a prayer is to be answered. Maurice Nicoll in *The New Man* says the word is better translated as 'shameless impudence'. Keep badgering people and something will have to happen, but don't *worry* about it in this way - the word 'worry' is what a dog does when it tears a lump of meat to pieces.

And forget the word 'heroic'. It has nothing to do with this work.

Replace it by the word 'duty'.

NOTES ON TALK GIVEN TO STUDENTS ON 1975/76 BASIC COURSE
by Pierre Elliot, Claymont, January

In the beginning it is "roses, roses"; later it is "thorns, thorns".

In the usual way, the fading of the driving force, the wellspring of one's inner work, dries up about a year or two years after a student has found a master or teacher and embarked on the Work. In the beginning, the excitement of being in the school one has wished to join, the novelty of the place itself, the thrill of "belonging" to a group supposedly having a single aim carries you along and you work with ardor. You are prepared to dismiss, as not going to apply to you, the warning that because you will have to do the work and not be instructed or forced, you will find your impulses to work weaken and reach a phase of disenchantment, a period of dryness. This stage has not truly been reached, but when it comes you will ask yourself the question, "Why did I come here, where is my original ardor, my hope and excitement? Is the failure of my work the failure of my work, or is it the work itself or the way it is presented to us which is at fault?" At that stage you will have to resort to an intellectual understanding of your position, for as you have observed by now the intellect has a better memory than the emotional centre. It is difficult to remember the feelings that are now past, but you could remember certain reasons for your being at Claymont. You may, for instance, recall something of Mr. Bennett's reading of the present situation of the world, that false values seem to dominate human life at present, and that you came here to train yourself in some way, because you remember that money, organisation, and goodwill will not succeed in changing things, and that you saw that the acquisition of new ideas, new knowledge only, is not sufficient. Theoretical or intellectual acquisitions will not transform us. All these feelings were well understood by Robert de Ropp and he expresses them succinctly and accurately in The Master Game where he also speaks of the deviations that can take place in our aim:

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| Catch #1 | Talk-Think Syndrome | Talking or thinking about the Work instead of doing it. |
| Catch #2 | Starry-eyed Syndrome | Fanatical devotion to and belief in a teacher or system to exclusion of all others. |
| Catch #3 | False-Messiah Syndrome | Delusion that I personally am a teacher or saviour. |

contd/...

"There is always a danger that those who develop power will use the power in the wrong way, namely for the aggrandisement of the personal ego. If this happens the individual involved ceases to be a servant of the Work and becomes instead a slave of his own ambition. As such he can do a lot of harm because his power gives him a considerable influence over others. This is what G. called wrong crystallization.

We need again and again to remind ourselves that the Work is not some vague mystical process but an actual transformation of energy-substances in the body. It involves a real physical change. The first, or planetary body, is built up and held together by an entity called the organiser which is programmed by nature in a certain way and operates without any help from our conscious minds. It is located in the instinctive center. The second body is built up and held together by conscious effort and its nourishing substance, equivalent to the blood of the first body, is the energy-substance called by G. the hanbledzoin, which might be translated the "materiality of awareness". Man in sleep wastes his hanbledzoin in such useless activities as day-dreaming, negative emotions, muscular tension. On the spiritual level he is bleeding all the time and for this reason never has enough energy even to begin the great Work. His first step therefore must be to stop this loss of his spiritual life blood. This he can best do by practicing the first principle of work on Being - "Stop thoughts and be here now".

Though man cannot, as he is, remember himself, this effort will lead to self-remembering, which will in turn result in the transmutation of impressions. The second principle or work on Being - "Learn to transmute your poisons into honey", begins with the non-expression of negative emotions and results in further transmutations of energy substances in the body.

When these processes reach a certain intensity the coating of the higher being body begins. But until they reach this level of intensity nothing much happens because the destructive processes balance the creative ones. So man destroys with his left hand everything he builds with his right. For this reason special conditions are desirable because the follower of the Way again and again loses sight of his aim, and lets petty aims replace the big aim.

ing what is the right and normal passive state for man is something which can help us very much.

It is possible, to a great extent, to keep down daydreams in oneself by setting oneself exercises of attention: memorising exercises, number exercises and the like. It is good for purposes of observation to do that, but not in order to change, not in order to try to become a person who has no free automatic associations, because that is not a normal person.

The answer lies in what G. called relaxing by free associations. G. used to keep people in fits of laughter with his jokes, but they never contained any negative aspect. Here is an important aspect of work on attitude. I see when I allow myself free associations that there begins to enter that wrong attitude coming from the feeling that I am important. We have to observe that when we, as we put it, "let go", we become very vulnerable. We must become more sensitive to the arising in us of self-love, negative, fearful, ill-willed attitudes. If I allow myself free associations, if I picture myself going up to the house and enjoying the walk, and then begin to mix the idea: I am going to run all the way and everybody is going to see that I do not slouch along, or I am going to be the one to do this or that first, etc., then this is not natural free association, but mixed with my own self-love. Trying to be clever or make an impression on people, trying to show one is different or that one has had experiences and seen things others have not - this is spoiling the situation.

When we do practical work, it is work in which we have to keep a very active outer state. All our attention, all our wish must be directed to the quality of the external manifestation. But at times it is necessary to let everything go and then you must make sure of only one thing: not allow yourself to slip into many kinds of negative attitudes.

Now about essence and personality. About this stage of our work G. used to say we must learn to separate ourselves from ourselves. This has of course many meanings but the one I am concerned with today is this separation of essence and personality. We have two parts - all my possibilities of real change are exclusively in my essence. Personality can never change in the sense of being transformed to a higher level of Being. Personality today may be destroyed or change. Essence is more difficult to move, it changes its substance and not only its content. The substance of personality can never change only its content can change. We tend to take everything into our personality. So long as the whole of my life is occupied with the activity of my personality, essence has no possibility to grow.

Extracts from letter to group in Nashville, in answer
to several questions raised at end of Lecture at
Vanderbilt University, February 1976

Some of the questions which were raised at the meeting and later need to be answered more fully. They centre around the meaning of the word Being and also the relation of this particular way and other ways.

The man who cannot enter the kingdom of Heaven is the man who is spiritually wealthy, and therefore finds it very hard to accept the fact that he has no Being. Gurdjieff has always emphasized that in our work there is no question of some kind of mystical gnosis remote from life - it is practical work that has to be done and it requires the same kind of common sense as anything in life. People who have no common sense in the conduct of their ordinary affairs will prove to have no common sense in the work either. They belong to the categories that Gurdjieff called "lunatics and tramps". A man may seem to have a strong feeling about the work. He may spend all his time chasing after high questions. If a number of people gather around you in the new group, this is something that needs observing. There are people who belong to every known "ism" and even unknown ones which they invent for themselves. All this is what Gurdjieff calls Psychopathism. Or else there are people who will not stick to anything. They always wish to try something new. Then even when they encounter something that is real, they will throw it away, just as they have thrown everything else away. These are what Gurdjieff calls tramps. There is also a psychopathism that makes people feel sure that they are in contact with something wonderful, or are just going to be contact with it, or were in contact with it yesterday, when in reality they are in contact only with their own empty imagination. All this is implicit in the saying you will recall: Those who are weak in life are weak in the Work.

There is also the important question of group work and its necessity. Can the Work be done by one person alone? This is not an absolute rule - like everything else it is a relative

non-attachment in Zen and our strivings. To deny the Unity of Being is a characteristic of the proud. One person alone cannot deserve to have the force that is needed for Work. In order that this force should come "two or three must be gathered together in one place". If they will not consent to this, that is, if they will not make the sacrifices that are involved in sharing things with other people, they do not deserve to have a share in that Force. To work with other people is not easy, and the more real the Work the more difficult it is.

You must not think that this Work is all Brotherly Love. Before we can come to Brotherly Love we have to become exposed or unmasked. To work together is something to work for, to be accomplished. It is really only when we see that we are all in the same boat that the start can be made. Someone was asking about egoism. We all have fundamental egoism. It is common to us all. It is the core of our denying force. One cannot answer the question about non attachment for several reasons. The first is of course that we have not reached that stage - the stage where a man sees that he exists not only to Be but to serve. Non attachment is the condition of being able to reach this stage. And if not Zen, are we attached to the Rosicrucians? It is of course possible to pick out many ideas, perhaps nearly all the ideas in Gurdjieff's teaching and equate them to one or another element in some former or even existing teaching. But does this mean that we understand either the one or the other? The Buddhist doctrine on non attachment had been misunderstood. It is true that we must learn to look at all our functions, both bodily and psychic and recognize the truth that "This is not I, this is no self of mine". But this is not the whole story.

I believe you will find nowhere so complete and so penetrating an account of man and his place in the Universe as is contained in Gurdjieff's teaching, but it would not matter if I were to find it in various teachings. In one sense it is all in the Christian teaching. It is all in the Buddhist teaching.

Notes on Lecture given at Vanderbilt University,
Nashville, Tenn. by Pierre Elliot. February 1976.

By the way we live, by the way we strive, we can produce conscious and creative energies which can help mankind. A tall statement, you might say. No; one can go further and say that the work I want to speak to you about today may show you how we can produce these energies and at the same time develop and perfect ourselves, and above all I hope to be able to convey to you that I am not talking about one more unrealizable Utopia, but about a very practical system, chiefly presented to us by Mr. Gurdjieff, Mr. Ouspensky and Mr. Bennett. If you have read even one of the three or four dozen books which have appeared on their teachings in the past few years, you will already know that the ideas I will be speaking about will be neither easy to accept nor easy to follow, and peculiarly difficult to express in words with any certainty that they will be understood as I hope they might be.

Mr. Bennett - Mr. B. as those who knew him well called him - followed Gurdjieff's teachings and went even further. During the past 50 years, he studied and practised most of the principal religions and paths to spirituality. He plunged, as he said, deeply into several of these, profited enormously from the experience of other teachings, and found good in all of them. Gurdjieff, he said, was neither complete nor perfect, but nowhere did Mr. B. find methods so effectual and appropriate to the present age, as the teachings of the Masters of Wisdom as transmitted by Mr. G. in his school.

As most of you here probably know, a school was established by Mr. B. some years ago at Sherborne in England to put into practice this body of ideas, and the claim is made that a school of this kind - a "fourth way school" as it is called - the members of which are united in a common spiritual aim, are committed to respect and serve nature, and know how to carry out and put into practice in their daily life the spiritual disciplines required for the transformation of energies, can provide a living example of the society of the future. A little later, at the end of this talk, I will tell you something about Claymont, another school of this type, and, further, a society established just over one year ago in West Virginia.

I cannot in one short talk even outline the comprehensiveness of what is often referred to as "the System", but will nevertheless try to be as broad as possible. It is for this reason that I have chosen as the title and subject of my talk "Ways of Striving". This is a reference to a passage in a book by Mr. Gurdjieff called "An Objectively Impartial Criticism of the Life of Man, or Beelzebub's Tales to his Grandson", or more simply "All and Everything". In this passage he speaks of five different strivings which were followed by people at the time of Ashiata Shiemash, a mythical, or perhaps not so mythical, teacher who lived at a period when great technical achievements had been making unprecedented strides, a period when communications between remote peoples became possible for the first time - in

The third: the conscious striving to know ever more and more concerning the laws of World-creation and World-maintenance.

The fourth: the striving from the beginning of their existence to pay for their arising and their individuality as quickly as possible, in order afterwards to be free to lighten as much as possible the Sorrow of our Common Father.

And the fifth: the striving always to assist the most rapid perfecting of other beings, both those similar to oneself and those of other forms, up to the degree of the sacred 'Martfotai' that is up to the degree of self-individuality."

The first striving - this refers to the essential question: what is the right attitude to have about our body? The body is the home in which our mind or soul has to live from birth to death. It is the chief instrument by which we act on the world, manifest and achieve our purposes. Its state of health and efficiency - not just now at this moment - for the rest of our lives will influence everything we think, feel, say and do. Our first duty is to take care of this unique instrument - and we need to know it not only as an instrument but also as a living organism. We need to know the particularities of each particular body and all its particular functions.

Although our body is the primary instrument of our existence, yet on the whole people know very little about the care of their bodies and about the contribution which the body can make if it is properly cared for. For instance what is the right balance between the needs of the body and that which is in excess of those needs?

The first striving is intended to show that the aim is not to weaken or torture our bodies; we should treat our bodies just as well as we would treat a horse: we expect our horse to obey us, but at the same time we take care of our horse. In the same way we must treat our bodies and make them obedient to us. The aim of the first striving is to have strong, healthy, happy, effectual bodies, but even so the bodies in us represent a denying force, and we must realise the need to control our bodies. Some people advocate or think that a starved and ill-treated body will be better controlled. This is very doubtful. I believe the first striving to indicate that the body must be strong but that we should be stronger. We must look upon it as an instrument to be used, an animal to be trained, a slave to be commanded and yet treated with due regard to its dignity and its rights. If we have not already acquired this attitude, we need to exercise ourselves in it until it is established.

need to think in a non-habitual way we should change our posture..

.....It is easy to obtain a relaxed state of the body by hard physical work and other means. This is always useful but does not produce the deep relaxation which is required. This is produced by working with conscious energy, and learning to relax is thus a first step towards the voluntary control over physiological and psychological processes that are usually thought to be outside the power of our will.

Concentrating conscious energy cannot be done by an effort. On the contrary, any kind of force makes relaxation almost impossible. It is a matter of skill. This skill is a special kind of striving. It is hard work and yet it must not be forced. Any forcing is bound to produce tension and defeat its object.

This illustrates the importance of understanding what we are about. The aim of relaxation is to allow a free flow of vital and psychic energies, but deep relaxation goes further and enables a higher energy to work in us and assist in the real process of transformation. We cannot accomplish this transformation by the energies that are more or less under the control of the mind, and the position can, I think, be better described by saying that we must allow the work to be done in us. Those who have learned the practice of deep relaxation, sometimes called deep meditation, become aware of this working and learn to co-operate with it.....

.....If we follow the indications of the first striving, we should come to the conviction that our bodily organism is a noble and wonderful instrument and that it plays an essential part in our inner transformation as well as in our outward life. We should learn to love our bodies as the dependent part of our nature. The body cannot be a responsible being, and it must not dominate the rational part.

There is a stage in our transformation - by this is meant change of level as distinct from change from one situation to another on the same level - when the body accepts its true role and allows the energy of consciousness, which is not a bodily energy, to act in it. This produces a change accompanied by a very special kind of joy. It is an indication that all is well, somewhat akin to "organic conscience", and that enables us to discriminate with certainty between what is "good" for the body and what is "bad" for it.

The Second Striving. Here we come up with a difficulty: self-perfection in the sense of Being; what is the meaning to be attached to the work "being"? I fear I shall only be able to indicate to you how I understand the word.

that it should be emotional; because our emotions are unstable, no-one is continually in the same emotional state for very long, so whatever one may feel, it is quite certain that later on this feeling will have given place to some other feeling. Thus any aim based on mind alone is not sufficient to make us work, and any aim based on emotions alone is not stable enough to make us work. We must fully realise that just knowing with our mind is not strong enough and when our feelings swing in another direction our minds are too feeble to have any effect.

The second striving emphasises most emphatically that self-perfection must be in the sense of Being. The second striving could quite properly be called "hunger for Being". You cannot have hunger for Being unless you realise you have not got Being. Just in the same way, a man who is deprived of the appropriate instinctive reflexes can starve because he has not the hunger for food. Nature however has given us the necessary mechanism which reminds us of the hunger for food, but no such corresponding mechanism exists to give us hunger for Higher Being. We have to arrive at this by our own striving. When this striving gives us the feeling of our own nothingness then we have hunger for Being. Anyone who is deprived of the hunger for food can die, and so also, we can die, because we have not the necessary hunger for Being; we can perish through not having striven for this. This is what Gurdjieff meant, I think, when he spoke of man perishing like dog. The first striving is for the welfare of the physical body and the second one must be striving for an existence which can be independent of the body and which cannot die.

It is hard to accept the assertion that we do not exist. It is hard to admit that we are only functional mechanisms with faint stirrings of conscious experience. But this is the truth and it is only the faint stirrings that give us the possibility of being something more. We have formed such a habit of taking for granted that we exist as beings, that we ignore the evidence confronting us, that we cannot remember our own existence, that in fact man does not exist as a being - he is only a machine - he has no inner togetherness - he has no permanence - what he is now, he will not be tomorrow - what he wishes to be tomorrow he will not be - what he wishes to be in 5 minutes he will not be! Why? because he has nothing that holds together within him - he is empty. Occasionally a man comes to see this and it is almost unbearable. It is especially unbearable if we have never realised the difference between function and consciousness, that is between our mechanism and our Being. Gurdjieff has shown that there is something in man that prevents him from seeing this very thing and enables him to live in peace, by a process of self-calming. This is why in general people do not feel the need to do something about it, beyond perhaps thinking about it. The truth is that the need to change our Being is

and the desire to strive. When we have paid our debt then we can truly give. It can perhaps be put very much more simply. No-one can talk about loving God or serving God until he is free.

The fifth striving: The striving always to assist the most rapid perfecting of other beings, both those similar to oneself and those of other forms, up to the degree of the sacred 'Martfotai' that is up to the degree of self-individuality.

To some extent this fifth striving is self explanatory, apart from the technical term it uses - the sacred Martfotai, or degree of self-individuality. By self-individuality is meant, I believe, the formation of something which is organically complete and therefore able to exist and be independent of outside control. But one could well say: As we are in what way can we help other people? I think I should suggest to you that these strivings do not represent what we can do but that they put aims in front of us. There are certainly all kinds of reasons why we might not be able to help a given being - it might not be the right moment, or they might not be able to receive what we are able to do. One cannot give what one has not got, and as we have said tonight, we have not got much being. The analogy of blood transfusion is however a good one. You may be able to spare some of your blood, but there are limits to what you can do in this way. One of the most important things for us to hold on to is that this work can be done by everyone. The fifth striving is a reminder that we can have aims that consist in trying to get something, and we can have aims that consist in trying to be something. We have to recognise how much the strivings of men and women are concerned with getting. We can see the results of such strivings. Man has acquired very much in his external life, but inside it rattles like a dry pea. This is our position. Are we content only to get something outside and inside to remain empty? If not there is much to be done and it is doubtful whether transformation can be accomplished by working on ones own. I have an aim which concerns my needs, my own existence but I have also to take into account my relationship with other beings similar to myself and try to understand their needs as well as my own. I must also ask myself whether I wish to stand in the scale of Being as a man or an animal - as one who serves a high purpose & who submits slavishly to every external influence.

Progress in self-perfecting is not automatic, it requires use of the right methods and determination to persevere.

Some years ago an institute was created in England chiefly to study Gurdjieff's system for the Harmonious development of man. Its aim was to concentrate upon the themes directly arising out of the principle object of psychokinetic science which is the study of the possibility of transforming human

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ON UNITY

Let us try to share our views of what is required and of what it will take to bring us to a closer unity.

First there is a functional unity which necessitates a deepening of our functional efficiencies and a greater effectual communication between us, a greater utilization of the material resources that have been entrusted to us and a rightly-balanced division of functions and tasks. It is my hope that members of the various groups can get together in an attempt to share and communicate the techniques, exercises, movements and study themes that have come their way. But we must never lose sight of the fact that what is done on this level can always be lost again or destroyed or vice versa, it can grow or be improved upon. Nothing is permanent here and yet this level of unity is an obligation to which we must direct at least a portion of our attention. This first kind of unity and sharing depends upon external conditions, while the second kind of unity, unity and sharing of being, requires an inward change, and when that is accomplished, it is no longer dependent upon external conditions. I believe that most of us have caught a glimpse of the fact that this transformation is possible in us, in individuals, but let us look and ask how it can be achieved in groups and amongst groups.

The way I see it, it comes by a merging of the experiences of individuals or individual groups in a common experience, which comes either by experiences that are shared and which can produce a lasting bond due to their high degree of intensity which enables the superficial protective crust of individual or group personalities

to crumble, or through the action of an impulse independent of the parties involved and yet common to them all. For us, amongst the various groups, this influence can be our community of interests. But any unity of being requires an effectual sharing and for this there must be a substantial give-and-take between all participants. This is what distinguishes being-unity from function-unity, the basis of which is cooperation with the necessity for mutual sacrifice. A further distinction lies in the irreversibility of being-unity. When a sharing of substance has taken place things can never revert to the previous state. I think that all of us know that this second kind of unity is indispensable for individual groups and on a larger scale amongst groups that are somewhat in the same locality if we are to reach what we aspire to.

Now let us become still for a few minutes and see how far we have come here and let us ask the question: "How many people or groups of people am I capable of so accepting that I am prepared to give myself up to them and to accept that they should become part of me?"

If we are sincere, I think that we see that at the very best it is a small number only. And again, even with that small number, there is a certain unity of presence, a certain togetherness which should lead us to the conclusion that unity of being depends upon being unified in space and time. Now we have occupied a very small region of space and time and even at best we are not able to go beyond this to reach out to the fuller unity lying behind.

animals are prepared to serve. This has to be faced. And now let us see if we can go further. Can we see that there is something more than just life to be served? That there is the bringing out of life of what is still potential and latent and which requires service. Some people see this and look upon life not simply as something that has to be kept going in this very local way but objectively and totally. People who see this have a common understanding of a different kind, a unity of will that is different from anything that we see here, because not only will such people accept and trust one another, but they will work together as completely as all living things work together when they breathe. Each of the three kinds of unity has its graduations from the crudest to the most refined. From the sharing of the will to live right up to sharing in the will to serve and the understanding of what that means.

JGB. once illustrated this to us when we studied the mutual understanding and confidence that existed among the Spanish mystics of the 16th century, between St. Teresa of Avila, St. John of the Cross, St. Peter of Alcantara and a fourth mystic. It was so extraordinary, so little personal contact and such exceptionally effectual working. St. Teresa had no idea where St. John was imprisoned and what had happened to him, but she did just the right thing so that when he did reappear, everything fitted together. If you study this peculiar, extraordinary group of people, you can see that they had arrived at a unity of will which was in such a contrast with all the people who were opposing them. These few people were balanced against the entire

force of the church and the entrenched authority of their order and yet they were able to turn everything upside down which illustrates the point. that numbers do not count when that sort of force is present.

Unity of will depends upon a sort of understanding that always has the quality of being overwhelming, of being something not produced by man himself. Unity of being is a mutual affair where people are united in being, they become one whole. But unity of will is related to something beyond to a greater whole; it has a transcendental quality. JGB. told us that we could not realize this unity of will except in service to something higher. When a number of people know that they are serving the same high purpose, and they know that they are wholly committed to that, then something comes in that is not from them alone. And the unity that can come through an affiliation to a purpose is possible only if that purpose has the quality that is necessary. Therefore, there is still a mutuality, but the mutuality is not between individuals, but between them all and that purpose. They are not only united because they are directed towards that, but they are united to an even greater extent because that purpose accepts them.

This third kind of unity goes beyond limitations and is not dependent upon time and space, it is a yet untapped underlying force that pervades everything and keeps everything going and it is possible for us to build upon that together through our human experience, and to reach something that at present we can only guess at.

A 1991/1992 Christmas and New Year's Message

Complete silence is the only prayer worth offering. Praying is not doing anything; on the contrary, it is making the mind motionless, free from all activities. Where the mind is silent, experiences begin to speak and when the thought is mute, intelligence is awakened. The mind can only ask, but the solution comes not from the mind, but from the void. Ask and be silent. Let the solution itself come to you. What you see in the motionless state of the mind is that which is and that which you are. Observe the endless flow of your thought. Watch it and be aware of it. The impact of that observation will make you utterly free from all thought as well as from the mind which has been made so dull, heavy, stupid, so heavily conditioned by circumstance and by the environment.

Intuitive knowledge, according to the seers, is immediate as distinct from discursive knowledge. It is more immediate than sensory intuition, for it overcomes the distinction between the knower and the known which subsists in sense-intuition. All other knowledge is indirect and has only symbolic or representative value.

Logical reasoning, far from comprehending the living unity of God and man, the absolute and the relative, breaks up what it seeks to know into its simpler constituents. Being can never be objectified or externalized. The function of the mind is to borrow ideas and to mistake them for its own. Not from the mind, but from the innermost depths of one's own being - from one's own experience - is the meaning of living understood.

Mere conceptual reasoning cannot resolve the fundamental problems of life, nor does it allow the deep, slumbering forces within us to be aroused to action. It is the eyes, not thought or reasoning, that will help you distinguish truth and light from falsehood and darkness.

It is thought that gives birth to dualism, and incapable of going deeper, observes merely the surface of things.

Truth is not an objective state but a spiritual condition. The wise man beholds all beings in the Self, and the Self in all beings. What is needed is a change in direction from the seen to the seer, a change necessary for all who seek the Divine.

Having realized the Self in every being, the wise relinquish the world and become immortal.

Those who seek the Supreme must first turn away from wickedness, be tranquil and subdued, and possess a mind wholly at peace. They should merge their speech in their mind, their mind in their intellect, their intellect in the cosmic mind and the cosmic mind in the tranquil self.

External happiness belongs to the wise, who perceive the Divine within themselves.

If you do not realize truth in this life, you cannot expect to realize it in some other.

Do not let your mind wander among desires. Ignorance is the root of all evil. Through it we identify ourselves with our immediate ego in its narrowness and separateness, and it is this ignorance that must be overcome. He who knows the Divine dwelling in the secret place of the heart cuts asunder the bonds of ignorance even in this life. If one is all, all is one - If only this is realized, no more worry about your not being perfect.

Where there is emptiness instead of words, no thought instead of thought, non-attachment instead of attachment, there is entry into right religion which is but a leap from duality into non-duality. The solution to our problems lies in emptiness and the answer to our question in our being without any answer. Descent into emptiness results when you observe that which observes and watch quietly that which watches. The seer is the real self. See that which sees you, for that is the essence of our work. Hear the Divine in the silence of your heart.

When we look within what is experienced is the void. Within us there is unbounded emptiness which is so terrifying that we, panic-stricken, rush outside. It is sheer ignorance to run away from one's emptiness, for all solutions are obtained through coming face to face with it. Religion is but entry into the depth of our emptiness.

The pressing need for all of us, is our preparedness to live - only to live and not to fight, not to "live for". Can you go back to your childhood when you occasionally experienced moments when the mere fact of being alive was pure bliss and you wanted nothing further. Therefore, be silent and watch, observe what is happening. Die to this world and put an end to all attachment to the "I". Let all that come to pass which is already destined to come to pass. Give up all tension and let your life go - let it "happen" and that what will happen will liberate you from the bondage of life and death. Care not for systems or ideals, for life is meant for living, not for anybody or anything else. To understand the voidness of distinction is to be delivered.

Get enlightened by yourself.

Root out the mind that forms images and not the images themselves.

The void is a state of mind in which all traces of conceptual consciousness are wiped out. Hear with your ears and not with your mind.

Wisdom lies in attaining unbroken peace, simplicity, and equanimity, and in the standing on our own two feet.

And remember you are always here for there are no other places - and it is always now at all times.

The only way to get out of thought is to think to the end of thought. Think to the precipice where logic dies, and the last thought has ending.

Living in the ego shell is the shortest route to endless suffering.

The intellect knows nothing. All it asks is to explain and to interpret. It is the senses that gather knowledge in the world of form and appearances, and the intellect interprets what they know. It is the heart that knows in the world within, and the intellect interprets what the heart knows. Those who regard the intellect as the real knower are deluded, for the intellect does not know anything, nor can it lead to enlightenment and wisdom. The illusion that it shows the way, that it is the way makes it a great stumbling block. If the intellect does not meddle with our lives, we will develop a unique consciousness and real mechanism able enough to perceive the world in a grain of sand and the heavens is a wild flower.

All violence is traceable to the sense of "I am " or to the sense of "I am something". It is important that we share, that we commune with each other. But we do not know what it means to commune. A person imprisoned within himself remains shut off from all. He must die to his vanity, to his jealousy, to his envy, to his greed if he wants to commune with reality. Those who realize that they are not, realize "All" and are able to commune.

Truth cannot be attained with an ambitious mind full of purpose and desire. A mind filled with desire is not free; its energy is always distorted, warped, conditioned, held. If you have a motive, a curiosity or a desire, then you will never have the passion to pursue truth to the very end.

We seek the world without, so that we may escape from the world within. If you wish to run away you must have a destination, a purpose, but if you wish to wake up within, you must be alive to the uselessness of all aims and purposes without. What do you want to know truth or views concerning truth? Blow away the cobwebs of knowledge from your brain.

Enter right into objects and see them, as it were, from the inside. Feel them, live them instead of just thinking about them or going around them.

As long as we stand outside, we remain outsiders and for that reason alone we can never know the things itself.

Superficial activities are responsible for keeping our deep-seated energies dormant. The mind may possess the meaning, but it can never have the experience that dwells and lives in our heart. And sense devoid of experience is dead. It is our dead ideas and words that ring in our minds and burden us. Only sensitivity and ability to experience can lighten those burdens.

Whoever seeks the meaning and explanation of truth shall be deprived of it; and he that seeks the experience and life of truth shall find it.

Love and best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Randy', with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the left and then curves back under the signature.

For George C.

PERPETUAL MOTION*

We would like to invite you to explore with us a way of looking at this compact, "little", chapter in which Mr. Gurdjieff has powerfully juxtaposed two viewings of the inner life of man. The content and the placement of this short chapter, and the three brief chapters preceding it, at this early point in the "Tales" is of great significance. In colorful, evocative images Mr. Gurdjieff presents us here with fundamental themes, "primordial ideas", that are webbed and woofed throughout the "Tales", recurring and becoming more developed and differently related to each other as the dramatic events unfold.

Like an overture to an opera these early chapters, in remarkably dense "sensation-picturings", contain "first expressions" of many of the most important ideas and themes of the "Tales". They "set the stage", establish the overall aim and initiate the first "motion" and its consequences. An octave that will span the next thousand pages is begun with a "DO" (and its inner octave) that is a "whole" of its own, clearly and resonantly sounded. It invites our best efforts to comprehend and "crystallize data" for our own Being.

The two "viewings" of the inner life of man referred to above are capsuled in the opening words of the chapter.

"'Wait!Wait!' Beelzebub interrupted the captain. 'This - what you have just told us-must surely be just that short-lived idea which the strange three brained-beings breeding on the planet Earth called 'perpetual motion'" pp73 (underlines are ours...).

What the captain had just told them about was the "third" space drive, that of the Archangel Hariton.

An analogy has been created by Mr. Gurdjieff between this remarkable "cylinder" which digests all "atmospheres" and the imaginary, mechanical construction by ordinary man which is termed that "crazy notion" of perpetual motion.

The analogy, we will find, is quite precise and, to the extent that we can give it form and substance, it will serve us well throughout our further explorations of the "Tales".

We begin with this "crazy notion", coming to the cylinder of the Archangel Hariton after exploring this "mechanism" which costs man so dearly.

* All quotations are from Chapter 6 "Perpetual Motion" of Beelzebubs Tales To His Grandson 1950 Edition

In spite of the many ridiculous pictures given us of ordinary man's "perpetual motion machines" Mr. Gurdjieff places great emphasis on how seriously it has effected man's life.

"Thousands were shut up in lunatic asylums." Many "paid with all the material and spiritual welfare which they had previously with great difficulty acquired."

"Many went quite mad and even perished entirely."

"Thousands more began to fail altogether to fulfill even those being duties of theirs which had somehow or other in the course of many years been established there, or to fulfill them in such a way as 'couldn't be worse'."

It appears that many, many three brained-beings are effected by this "crazy notion". Perhaps many of us as well?

Are we not "believers" in perpetual motion when, in our adulthood, we conclude that the effort we have made is "enough", when we feel that we are "owed", when we act from an "I" that feels it is privileged, "special" because of some accident of the past - being born in this family, this race, with this money or social status?

In each of these instances we disclose, if we look closely, the clever self-constructed mechanism that is supposed to "run forever without requiring any material from outside".

It is also possible, with perhaps even more potency, to view the origins of this "perpetual motion" in the world of the young child. When was it, in each of our lives, that we began - out of fear, a sense of betrayal, distrust or frustration - to construct images of ourselves that did not require outside confirmations, that allowed us to live within, separated, "protected" by an imaginary notion that did not permit or require "resistance" to the "mechanism" that confirmed our self-image? Perhaps this is when we mechanically "learn" the first steps in this elaborate mechanism which will "again lift the weight, and so on, and so on".

What is it, in each of these instances, that has a "force of weight"? What is a "weighty something" within us, something with sufficient mass to have a predominating center of gravity?

Perhaps those self-constructed images of ourselves, those "I"s or Identities that we "believe" are us. We construct them as if "it were a simple matter", and many times "without any inner data for such work" or from reliance upon knowledge, or luck, or simply psychopathy.

Each of these "I's", when we look at them closely, is a "self-contained" entity, closed off from the rough and tumble, the unpredictability of the real, outside world, bent on perpetually reinforcing its own image.

When I have a narrow fixed view of the rightness of things; when I bring this "righteousness" to bear on some current issue of my life - then I always reward myself by being "correct", "stalwart", a "rock of faith". By being "right" or knowing the answer before the question is asked I have cleverly arranged my internal "mechanism" to perpetually lift the "force of weight", again and again, and endlessly sustain my "righteousness".

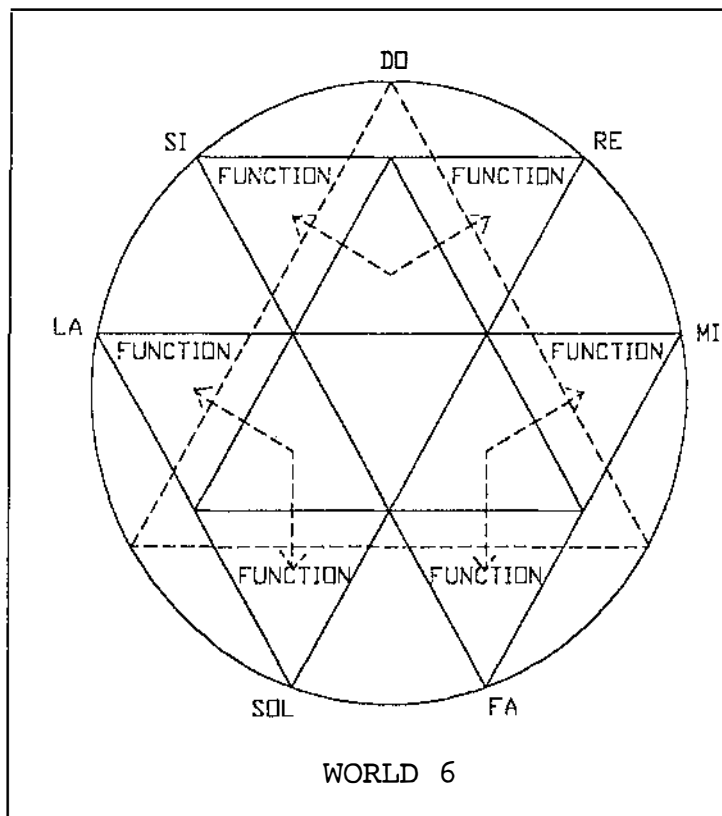
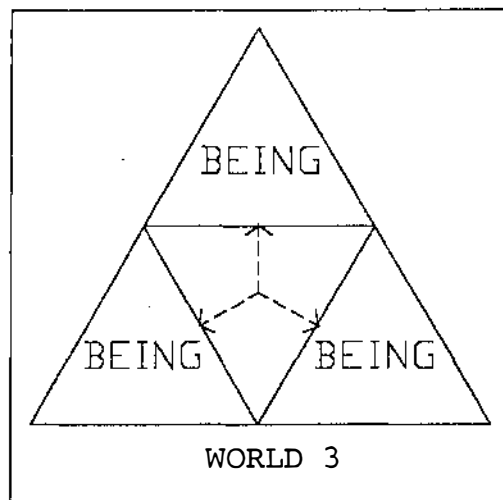
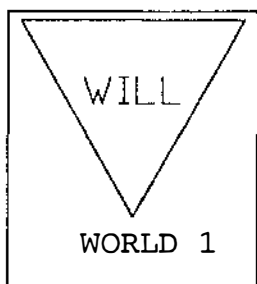
If we take our Identities, our "I's", as the coalesced "mass" or "one" that has this "force of weight", what then is the "very complicated mechanism" which was to "lift some weight and this latter was then to fall and by its falling set the whole mechanism in motion, which motion would again lift the weight, and so on, and so on"?

Inside us, what is this "fall of the weight"? Can we taste it? And from where does it fall? And what "mechanism" is there within us that could, in a very complicated way, lift the weight to the same "place" from which it fell?

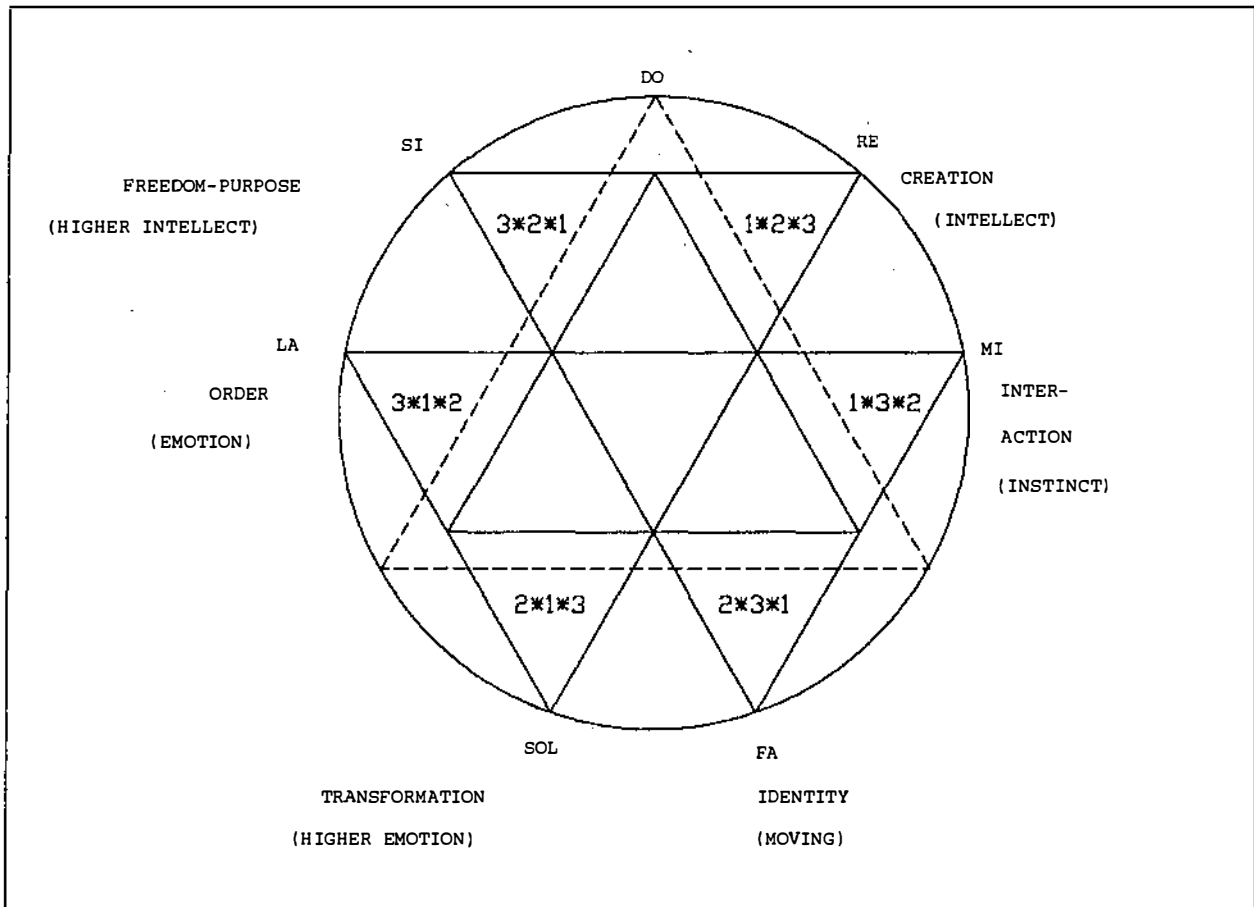
Many authors have commented on the absence of any direct discussion by Mr. Gurdjieff of the enneagram within the "Tales". While it is true that, on the "surface" of things Mr. Gurdjieff did not treat the enneagram as he is reported doing in "In Search Of The Miraculous", we should not be surprised that this most "primordial" idea is "everywhere" in the "Tales". And indeed it so appears - in the overall structure and interstices of the three books, in the "Purgatory" and "Heptaparaparshinokh" chapters, and pre-eminently in "Form and Sequence". Here in "Perpetual Motion" we are given one of its first "manifestations" - namely, in the reference to the "very complicated mechanism" which, when set in motion, lifts the weight again and again.

In our ordinary three-brainedness the enneagramatic inner circulation of 1-4-2-8-5-7 indicates the flow of energies that sustain our life, up to and including our procreative possibilities. What if we were to take this inner circulation and misuse it, distort its fundamental life giving and life sustaining capacity and construct, quite "unconsciously" a mechanism that is "presumed" to run all by itself, feeding on its own mass and energies once the "fall of weight" begins?

We are going to offer a way of looking at just this possibility in the enneagram; but before taking up the first representation of this mechanism, we will outline a form of the enneagram that we will make use of for the "crazy notion" as well as for the third space drive of the Archangel Hariton. The form derives from what we have come to call the Symbol of Law and we would refer you to other papers for a detailed elaboration of this symbol. Briefly, the form emerges (in one of its derivations) in the following way:



The first "enneagram" of the Trogoautoegocrat.

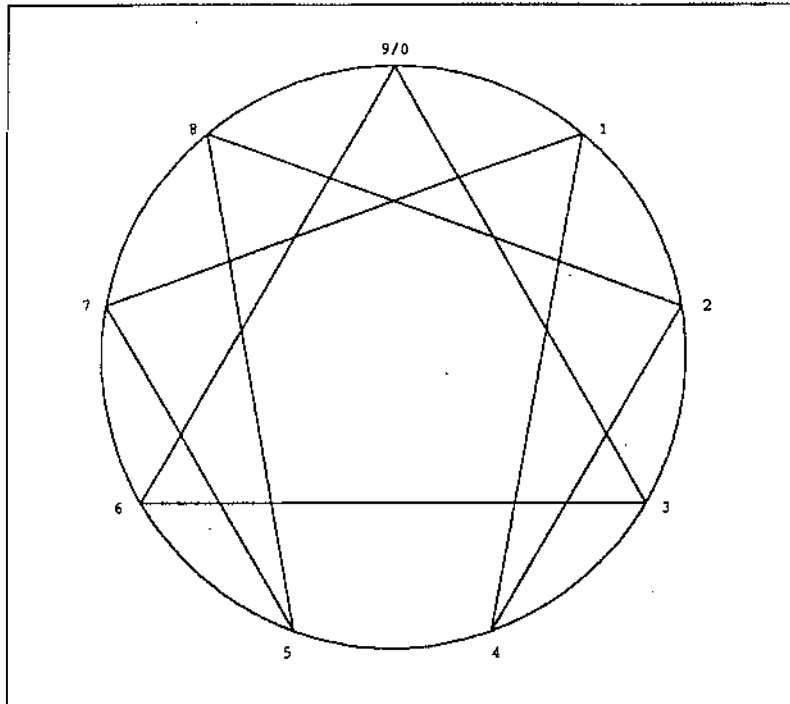


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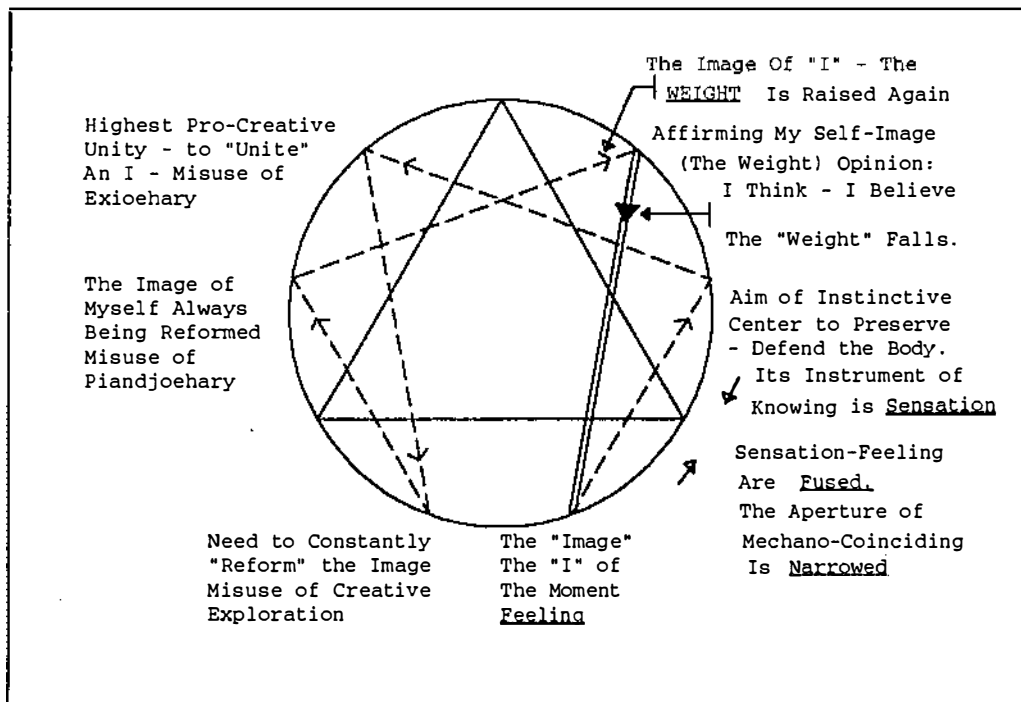
Centers in man are placed in parentheses.

Each numbered triad is one of the six fundamental laws of

Removing the triadic forms from the above Symbol, and establishing the inner circulation - the more familiar form of the enneagram emerges:



Placing a proper "prospective" inner circulation on the enneagram results in:



We will begin from point 1 [Re] and elaborate this "very complicated mechanism".

1. We presume that the weight has been 'lifted' and is ready to fall [7 to 1]. Later the 'mechanism' of this will be taken up.
2. 'I' enter daily life with a wide assortment of beliefs, opinions, etc. that I 'affirm' myself from. Regardless [almost] of the event there is a ready-made 'I' that can be affirmed from my intellectual part. I am always ready to give my opinion, assert my rights, share my belief, etc. When I affirm in this way, I drop the weight - the image of myself is falling, within myself. Having 'mass' it will be a 'center-of-gravity', holding and attracting other 'things' to it. It will impact at point 4. It often seems possible to 'sense' this impact within oneself - this solidarity of 'I am this!'.
3. At point 4 [FA] I 'feel' the oneness of this image of myself, mistaking this for emotion [in actuality it is the 'emotional' part of Moving Center - a 'reactive' feeling state]. This 'feeling' of myself is greatly reinforced by Sensation. These two, Feeling and Sensation, are, in ordinary, mechanical states, largely fused together and together they produce an 'experience' of myself that is wholly of the physical body. In that moment I am convinced that what 'I' affirm-sense-feel is me, my whole 'I'. In truth there is nothing 'to be convinced' - I simply am that state of affirm-sense-feel.
4. Because Sensation and Feeling are 'glued' together - two things 'happen':
 - A. The Mi-Fa interval, our Mechano-Coinciding Model-In which should be 'open' to the real world 'outside', is narrowed, often to a bare point - an aperture, which allows only a point-of-contact with the outside world. We will return to the significance of this later in more detail - for now we can look at it as the "trigger-point" for the particular "I" of the moment.
 - B. The feedback of Sensation-Feeling into Instinctive Center (2) will "inform" and energize this primal center to mobilize its resources to maintain and defend the "body". Instinctive Center, being "hard-wired", has no means of differentiating adequately the "oneness" of image deriving from sensation alone and that deriving from a mixture of sensation and feeling*. As its function is totally dedicated to the preservation of the "Self" it will make its considerable energies available to do just that -

hence the line 2_8 inferring the support and aim of
Instinctive Center to that highest energy within us
- Exioehary.

5. At point 8 'I' unconsciously misuse the pro-creative power of an aspect of higher Intellect [the Unifying aspect of true 'Holy Affirming']. Its potency is directed down to 5, where the repository of our exploratory, creative capacity is found [This is the triad 2-1-3, Transformation, which should function as our real creative, exploratory center of possibilities]. Instead the exploration is bent to serve the self-image, refining or reforming the image of oneself that is the Weight. The refined 'image' is brought to final Order at point 7, where Piandjoehary is misused to give a formal 'pattern' to the re-exploration undertaken at 5.
6. My self-image, the Weight or mass of my constructed 'I', is now complete, ready to be raised along the inner circulation from 7 to 1, to 'fall' again when 'triggered'.
7. The power of this 'image', patterned finally at point 7, is now well confirmed in current neurological and behavioral literature. We know that a well-formed image, especially when it is reinforced through repetition, can dominate over the intellectual 'mind' and the body. This should not be surprising as point 7 has the energy of our real Emotional center within it and we all have had experiences in life when the potency of a true emotion has shown itself in some extraordinary way.

**The auto-immune diseases of man, so much more common today, may have one source of origin here in the confused world of Sensation-Feeling.*

With this 'very complicated mechanism' we become true believers in perpetual motion. We do think of it as "a simple matter", but what has really happened is that we misuse the natural, lawful "inner circulation" within ourselves to construct, maintain, re-form and hold ready a whole series (a "legion") of "I's" with which we "meet" (but do not, really) the world.

With this degree of misuse of our natural energies it is appropriate that Mr. Gurdjieff placed such emphasis on the heavy penalties paid by many of the believers.

There is an additional way of looking at the "involving" enneagramatic form elaborated here. It derives from the reference in paragraph 4-A to the narrowing of the Mi-Fa, the relative "closure" of the aperture of Mechano-Coinciding Mdel In.

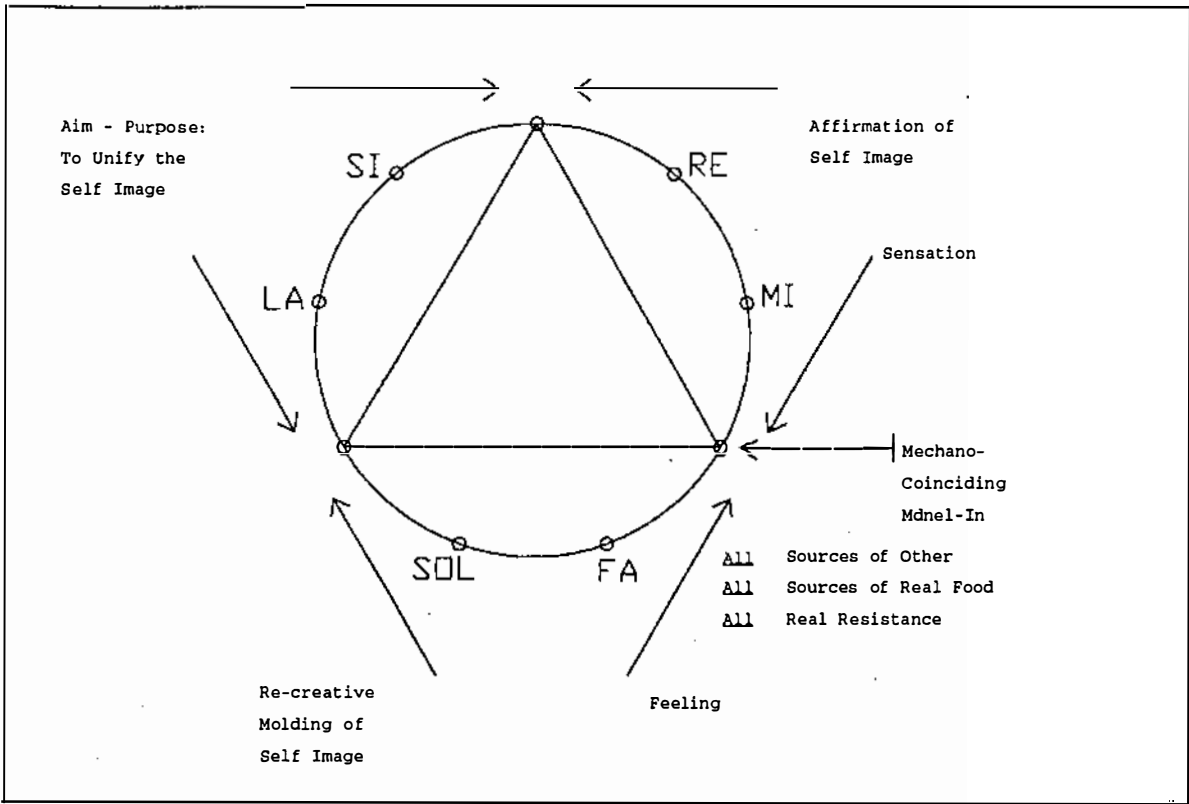
When sensation and feeling are not rightly separated they both "mix" and enhance each other and, subjectively, we do not experience them as individual, unique energies. One result of this "fusion" of sensation and feeling is that we have nothing within us that can respond to the fullness of the events which are presenting at Mechano-Coinciding Mdnel In. There is only "reaction" to the physical aspect of the event, and that reaction is carried into manifestation via the "self-image" or "I" of the moment. The true emotional qualities - the sense of "value for other", the recognition of personal and collective purpose beyond oneself - all of these are absent, even as possibility, when the sensation-feeling "state" is what meets the incoming world of impressions at the Mi-Fa interval.

Our physical Being is thereby "collapsed" or shrunk to a less than animal level precisely where we meet the world beyond our skin.

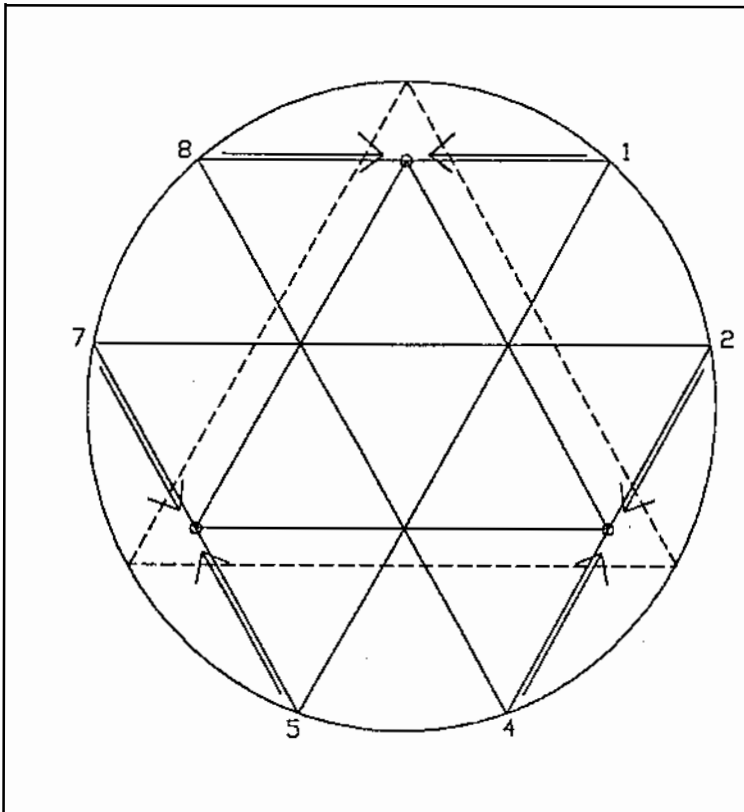
Sadly, with the "complicated mechanism" in place, we suffer even further diminishment of our Being:

1. At point 6, between Sol and La, the "Guest" enters in a "normal" enneagram. Always there can be apprehended an aspect of "Love-of-Other" when the transition from Sol (5) to La (7) occurs. With the "crazy notion" in place, however, only "Love-of-Self" is present, and the "Guest" becomes none other than the self-image of the moment. In effect this inward movement collapses the "space" between 5 and 7 in a manner analogous to that which takes place between 2 and 4. The creative exploration of possibilities which should take place at 5 (Sol), is restricted by its proximity and "mixing" with 7 (La). Instead of a new, exciting "possibility" emerging from the right function of 5, the same restricted but perhaps slightly "adorned" self-image emerges from the "fusion" of 5 and 7. Our emotional Being is thereby equally "collapsed" or shrunk.
2. Between 8 (Si) - [Encompassing our Purpose and Freedom to move toward Unity] and 2 (Re) [Affirmation by Knowing-Commitment] a similar "fusion" takes place when the misused energies of the "mechanism" are in motion. Our purpose, and capacity to unify, are totally "spent" on the realization of the self-image. If this can be viewed as a type of "coalescence" to a One, The "Purpose" becomes the "Affirmation", the Affirmation becomes the "Purpose".

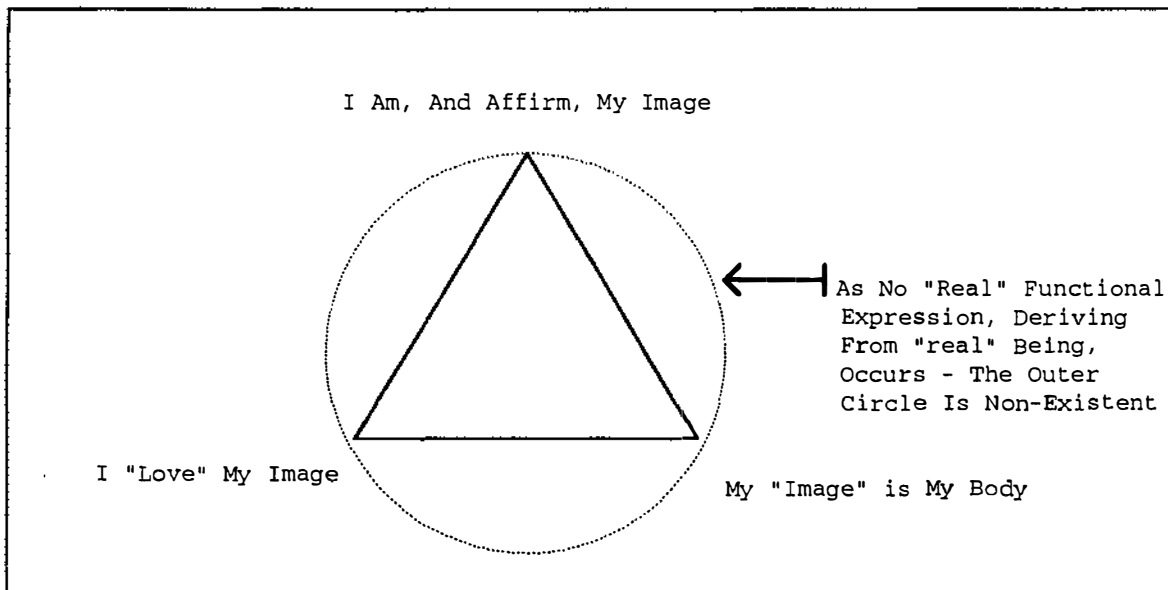
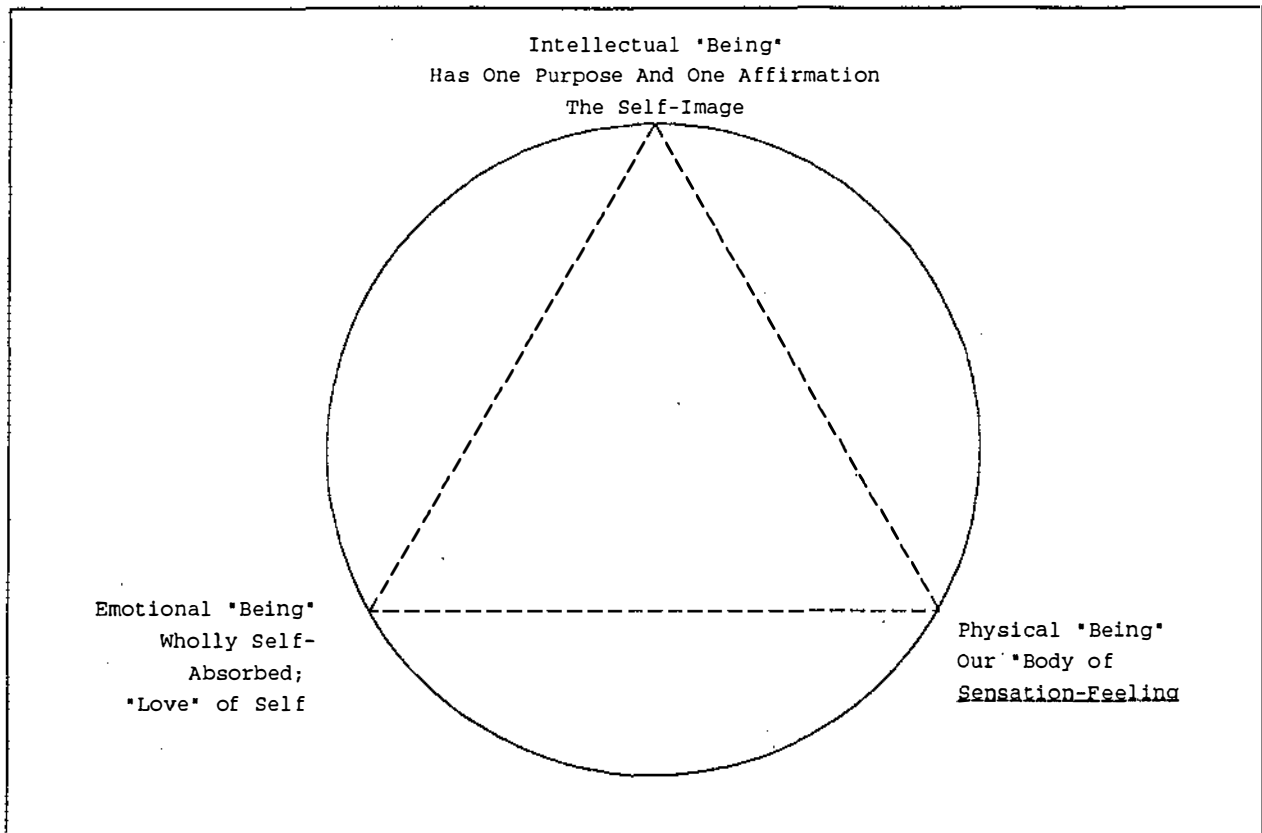
Using the "form" of the enneagram we can illustrate the progression of the diminishment of our Being and point toward what may be the final outcome.



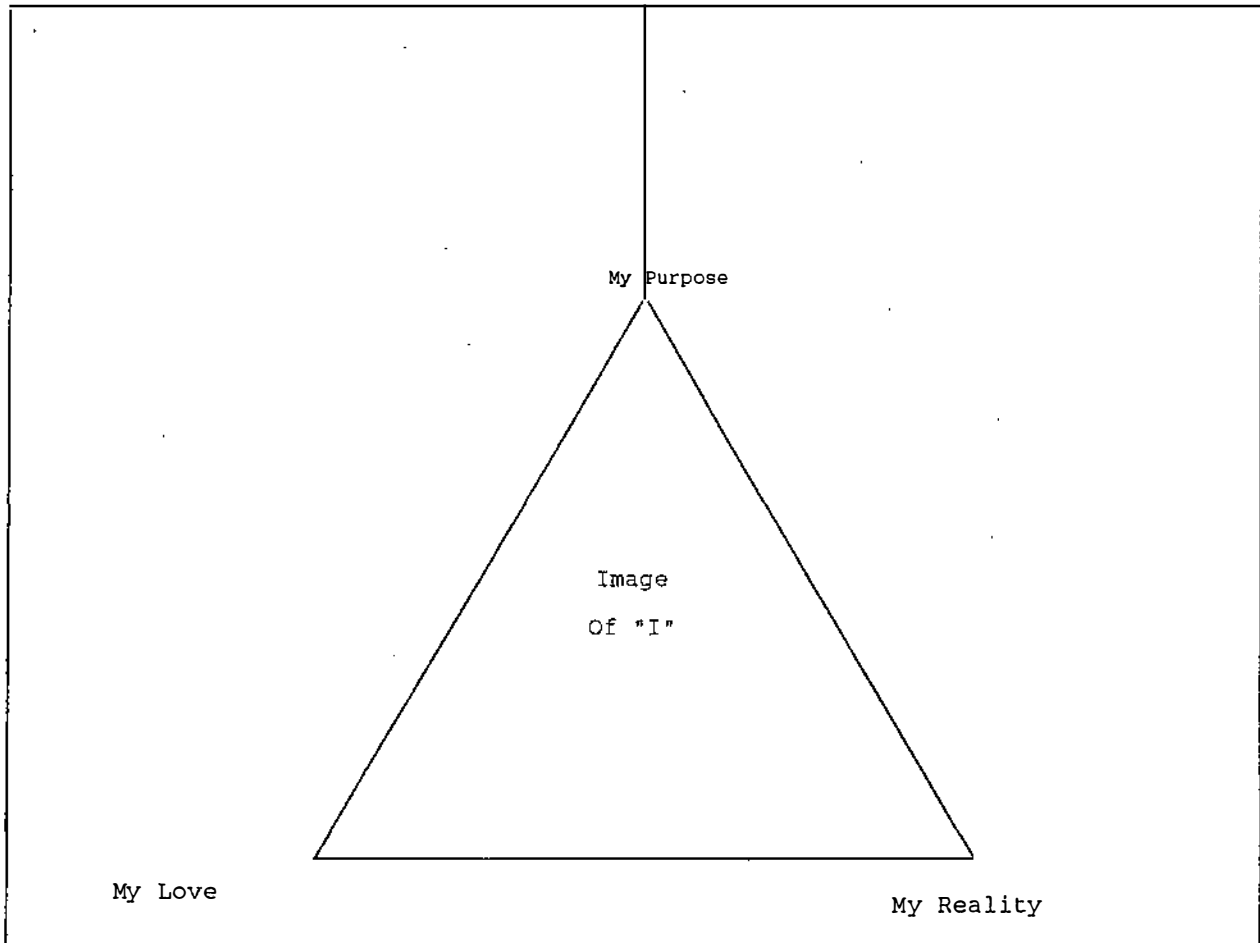
OR



In the form of the
Symbol of Law the
"fusing" of 2-4, 5-7
and 8-2 gives a more
immediate
representation to the
"collapse" of our
functional expression
in "life" outside
ourselves. It also
raises the interesting
question of how our
"Being" is related to
our functional
expression.



If this model of perpetual motion is "successful" it could presumably "run forever without requiring any material from outside". The entry of the outside world at Mechano-Coinciding Mdel-In is just this "material from outside". Reducing it to a "trigger-point" insulates the self-image from the very sources of food/resistance which could bring about a change in itself. The result, in our progressively diminishing enneagramatic form, is:-



Cut off from outside, the "complicated mechanism" feeds itself and is fed by itself; it can run "perpetually": - we will always be right, always be stalwart, always be "whatever it is that we dream to be". It is a kind of "topsy-turvy" Autoegocrat.

But it doesn't work!

Even, and perhaps only, an "old dotard" with one foot in the grave can prove that.

In the end - we go "mad", perish entirely, lose all our material and spiritual welfare previously acquired, and fail in our being-duties.

So much for the "simple matter" of perpetual motion!

We must now try to complete the analogy Mr. Gurdjieff presents in this chapter and explore the "cylinder" of the Archangel Hariton, "the very thing of which these unfortunates there dreamed".

(It is interesting that Mr. Gurdjieff's last words regarding that "crazy notion" place the entire affair as "dreaming". From where do we dream? How do we mis-use that energy?)

Keith and Marlene Buzzell
3/93

Work Week Themes

Two Rivers Farm

June 15-22, 1991

The Fifth Obligolnian Striving

The theme for this Work Week is the Fifth Obligolnian Striving.

The Five Obligolnian Strivings, or as Orage refers to them, the Five Strivings of Objective Morality, may well be seen as the vehicle for carrying out our function as human beings.

Beelzebub tells us "all the beings of this planet then began to work in order to have in their consciousness this Divine function of genuine conscience, and for this purpose, as everywhere in the universe, they transubstantiated in themselves what are called the 'being-obligolnian-strivings' which consist of the following five...

The first striving: to have in their ordinary being-existence everything satisfying and really necessary for their planetary body.

The second striving: to have a constant and unflagging instinctive need for self-perfection in the sense of being.

The third: the conscious striving to know more and more concerning the laws of World-creation and World-maintenance.

The fourth: the striving from the beginning of their existence to pay for their arising and their individuality as quickly as possible, in order afterwards to be free to lighten as much as possible the Sorrow of our COMMON FATHER.

The Fifth: the striving always to assist the most rapid perfecting of other beings, both those similar to oneself and those of other forms, up to the degree of the sacred "Martfotai" that is up to the degree of self-individuality.

With reference to the fifth striving, Orage sets out in his Commentaries that: "We must discriminate between gratifying the weaknesses of others in order to obtain their good opinion of ourselves, and helping them to become what they really wish to be. But we can only be 'hard' on others when we have learnt to be 'double hard' on ourselves. The one real service we can render to others is a service that will help them to discharge their functions as human beings."

In the chapter *The Organization of Ashiata Shiemash*, it is explained that as a result of their work on themselves, some individuals attained more quickly than others, and became chiefs whose word became the law which was followed 'with devotion and joy'. The process of reciprocal destruction entirely ceased in Asia and only occasionally occurred in places more distant from the influence of those transubstantiating in themselves the five strivings.

Saturday, June 15, 1991

But the most astonishing and significant result was that the duration of existence of individuals became a little more normal, that is it increased and the death rate diminished, and the birth rate diminished to one-fifth. People began to radiate from themselves vibrations responding more closely to the requirements of Great Nature, so that Great Nature needed less of the vibrations which are in general obtained from the destruction of the existence of beings.

It would seem that we are to undertake all five obligolnian strivings, not in numerical order, but simultaneously, so that working to assist others is an opportunity to work on myself, or to carry out any one or more of the other strivings.

Do I really see others? Do I take them into my awareness enough to even begin to know what could be of assistance to them?

When encountering an organism or object, take your attention off yourself--try to regard it, to give it your first consideration.

T.Prideaux
R.Newton
T.DeLooze

Saturday, June 15, 1991

On Assisting

The fifth Obligolnian striving: the striving always to assist the most rapid perfecting of other beings, both those similar to oneself and those of other forms, up to the degree of the sacred Martfotai that is, up to the degree of self-individuality.

My first reaction to this striving is one of alarm. How could any of us presume to assist another in this way? It implies that I have the strength, the understanding and the wisdom to know what another needs for his own perfecting and that I have the ability to provide it.

It I am honest with myself, I know that I also have the opposite, often manifested in my behavior, where I think I know exactly how another should be, what he should do, what he should think, and what his attitude should be, in order to please and agree with me. Children and spouses are most often the victims of this reaction, but others are not exempt. Usually when I see myself as "helping" someone, I feel superior and self-satisfied. When I am on the receiving end, however, and someone is "helping" me in this way, I reject their help.

Mr. Gurdjieff certainly knew of our arrogance, our inclination to set others straight and our feelings of superiority. He would not give us license to strengthen these weaknesses. So I need to ask myself, what would *he* mean by assisting?

The etymology of the word assist means to make stand. This has quite a different flavor from my usual connotations of the word help. For one thing, it seems that one would have to be standing oneself--that is, to be upright, and it also implies that one wishes that the other might also stand. Setting another straight, doing it for him and always giving him what he wants will not strengthen him to stand on his own. Sometimes I see how I stand in another's way; sometimes I know that I need to sense, or relax or let go of a reaction.

If I am assisting another, it means that he has already begun. I must be subordinate to his striving, to see what it is, to free myself of my own self-interest, of what I want. We are not trying to clone everyone into some imagined perfection like a flock of angels all singing the same hymns. Rather, I have to allow others to be what they are, so that their "true self-individuality" can emerge, to allow and strengthen that which is real. False values, desires for approval, even praise and adulation, fame, fortune, or power, have buried or at least confused the real, the true desire and striving. Many people

Sunday, June 16, 1991

today recognize the need to rediscover the real part in themselves, to create their own being in accordance with the higher plan. But the fifth striving does not limit itself only to those working on themselves. Each being-- human, plant and animal--comes into this world with an innate desire to become that which it was intended to be, to realize its potential. How could I assist another in this way?

Obviously, there is no single, simple answer. But I can start from a simple example. Think of assisting a squash plant to become what it was intended to be: strong, healthy, and disease free. I know that I prepare the ground, fertilize, water and weed it. It knows how to become a squash and no efforts of mine will make it become a rose bush. I could perhaps delude myself that it is a rose, but I would always be unhappy with it, particularly when it keeps producing squash. It is not so simple with human beings. I cannot do the weeding for another, but I can try to allow and encourage what is genuine, and I can allow him to be different from me. I need to see him as he is, but what I see in others depends on how I look. I can look for a person's weaknesses, critically and judgmentally, or I can simply allow him to be, remembering that he has a potential which I do not know, and allow his weaknesses, as well as my own, to be seen without condemnation.

Constantly there are ways to choose the timeless over the immediate. If I look at another's possibilities in terms of a life span, then my perception of how to assist him will be different from only seeing the immediate situation. We create together an atmosphere that hinders or assists the Divine purpose for each of us. Always I need to reestablish the link in myself between the present moment and my own understanding, my own wish to practice my work in this way.

Today, as you work with other beings, both those similar to yourself and those of other forms, ask: Am I assisting them to stand, strengthening them? or, am I weakening them? If so, how?

W.Givot
M.Gottlieb
B.Prideaux
B.Viers

Sunday, June 16, 1991

Namaste

Wishing someone well is to wish that another person become all that they can be. Not in the sense of becoming rich, popular or powerful, for these are desires of the ego. To wish another well in the sense of "being" is to have a wish for the Higher in them. The Fifth Obligolnian Striving states that we need to assist in the rapid perfecting of other beings. How does one begin in a practical way to work towards this aim? One starting point is to strive to recognize the Higher in another being.

Usually, my relationships exist on a much lower level, the level of like and dislike: if I like you, I can easily find explanations to smooth over your crazy behavior; if I dislike you, it is easy to conclude you are simply acting like the complete idiot I have always thought you were. In all of this, there is no focus on the Higher in either one of us. There is no well-wishing. There is no assisting your rapid perfection. There is just the life of my ego and your ego--a world in which the Higher does not live.

The other day at breakfast, I was in a generally irritable mood and my 5-year-old son Daniel was in a similar state. Somehow we began arguing about some well-known fact or other--each of us stubbornly sticking to our own point of view. In the middle of this conversation, Daniel said, "Dad, do you know how many trees there are in the world?". I replied, "No, Daniel, I don't know.". He responded, "That's right. Sometimes the right answer is 'I don't know'". This reply of his left me in a mild state of shock. I then began to experience a sense of my own presence returning, and, looking into his eyes, I smiled --- and he smiled back. I realized I *don't* know. I don't even know my own son: he is a mystery to me. It was so unusual: one moment our egos were the only parts of us in the room; the next moment everything was changed. We regarded each other for a time without words.

The Higher is often more visible in little children than in adults. But it is there in anyone, in any being. It has nothing to do with like and dislike; it has nothing to do with past or future. If it cannot be seen, perhaps it is hiding. Is there a way to acknowledge the Higher in another even if it is not visible? Is it possible that another person whom I think I know is a mystery to me? Is it possible I *don't* know?

I'm busy and don't want to be disturbed. Someone comes up to me to ask a question. Automatically I look at him for a moment and then glance back to my task. This is a signal meant to brush him off. He asks no question, but I find myself ill-at-ease anyway. I look up and realize that I have denied him the one thing he wanted: my attention. A few words are spoken. He is satisfied. Although there is an element of respect in this exchange, a disturbance still lingers in me.

Monday, June 17, 1991

I ask myself, Am I so important that there is no room for anyone else in my life? All the quotations, ideas, mantra and other efforts--have they penetrated beneath the superficial level? Or am I so shallow that I cannot even listen to another person?

Sometimes I can be open--open to the being of another being. I don't know what it is that I feel respect for: sometimes it may be seen in a person's particular talent, sometimes in an effort I see being made, sometimes in a person's sincere humility, or maybe when I recognize a common human suffering. In all cases I am reminded of how little I really know of the other person. At any rate, I feel the impulse to feed another's aspirations, to support what is worthy of respect in them, even if it means only giving them my attention.

In India, they have a greeting: "NAMASTE". This word, "Namaste" comes from two Sanskrit words: "Nama" means "I bow before you", and "aste" means "God in you", "the Higher in you", "your individuality". "Namaste"--"I bow to the Higher in you".

Namaste--I bow to God within you.

I cannot see God manifesting in you--probably you cannot see God manifesting in you, either. And yet--I know it is there, potential in you, but at this moment I am not connected with it.

So I use my imagination: you are secretly a holy person--able to accomplish sacred unifications, but you have concealed this. Now that I look at you, I see that this is so. I should have guessed all along. What a good disguise you put on it--but I see through that now.

Which reminds me--I have forgotten: I, too, have this possibility. And seeing it in you, I remember now; I remember myself. There is more to me than just this pretense, than this outer life that I usually believe is *all* of me. There's more than I first thought in *you*, too, and in the food I eat, and the materials I am working with today.

I remember now: there is a secret holiness in all things. Oh how could I be so forgetful -- ?

Namaste--I bow to God within you.

As a task for today--when you meet another person, while you work with someone, when your eyes fall on another being, or whenever you remember, bow inwardly to the Higher in another. Our egos will try to get involved in this effort: they always do. We will think we know the other person. Don't become discouraged by this--keep trying.

G. Bruno
J. Casteel
L. Gottlieb
J. Viers

Monday, June 17, 1991

Working With Others

This theme group has gone through quite a time getting to this point of standing in front of you. Each of us has separately written a theme and actively discussed the merits and holes in each of our concepts. Yet now, we stand together. What has occurred to allow this to happen? None of us really know, yet something has occurred. A brilliant theoretician could most likely come up with several persuasive and compelling reasons, each one of which would leave us satisfied. For now. But something has taken place that is not easily explained.

As each of us has struggled to be clear out our own work something has taken place.

At times, we felt like giving up. At times, we did not wish to listen to the other person. At times, there was the urge to say: that's enough talk. But something else took place. Each of us had certain directions we felt the theme should go in. Even now, you might ask, what direction is this them going in?

This theme is based on the experiences that each of us have during the day. It is predicated on the fact that each of us wish to know what Work is and that we struggle with that. We must continue at all costs and strive not to lose heart or give in to weaknesses. Real Work must now take place.

In this age, the world in which we live is nearly devoid of well wishing. Every man is out for himself, inwardly and outwardly. It is critical that we not underestimate the power of this current, and imagine that we are not caught up in it. The results of these selfish impulses engulf us, increasing our sense of desperation and helplessness. Yet the antidote is present at all moments. The fifth obligolnian striving is an esoteric extension of the golden rule, and it is a striving--something to be worked towards.

The Fifth striving speaks to assisting others. How can assisting be a possibility if my own struggle is weak? Here we have a common aim, whether or not we are aware of it, and we have the opportunity to work together to strengthen our wish. If we can do this, actually do this, then we can grow not just individually, but we can grow as a group and serve our true purpose. Each of us has a function. Honest, conscientious, struggle will help us to find that function. Then not just the Fifth Striving can be actualized, but also the Fourth.

Something in us knows we are not here to fulfill our selfish desires, that in seeking to fulfill our selfish desires we are attempting to avoid the experience of our own emptiness.

Tuesday, June 18, 1991

Today we struggle, individually and together with the automatic tendency to want my own way. We are building a force that can be tangible, but in order to allow this possibility to be actualized, we need to leave something behind. What is it?

B.Enright
J.Goodman
D. Kangas
H.Strauss

Tuesday, June 18, 1991

Honesty

In order to receive this teaching, I must begin to be honest with myself. Remember the parable in the Bible about the sower who went out to sow his seeds and they fell along the wayside, upon a rock, among thorns, and upon good ground. It continues:

"Now the parable is this: The seed is the Word of God. Those by the wayside are those that hear; then cometh the devil and taketh away the Word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved. They on the rock are they, which, when they hear, receive the Word with joy; and these have no root, which for a while believe, and in time of temptation fall away. And that which fell among thorns are they which, when they have heard, go forth and are choked with cares and riches and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to perfection. But that on the good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the Word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience."

"An honest and good heart"--what does this mean? Something in me *thinks* it yearns for honesty, but the parable does not refer to an honest and good head. I may think, "I want to be honest. I will be honest!" And before I know it, all that is coming out of my mouth are lies. Something is altered, improved just a little. Something is given just a bit more dramatic color, sometimes making everything worse than it is, with a tone of voice, a gesture, an expression. Some detail is left out or added. There is just a little explanation, and before I know it, I am excusing, blaming, complaining, hiding. What was that I intended to be honest about? I can't quite remember.

Many times here we have been instructed to look for our lying and self-deception. Fritz Peters relates a conversation with Gurdjieff. Fritz had been complaining about the insincerity and lying he observed among "Work" people.

Gurdjieff:

"What you say is true...when you come Prieure first time you not yet spoiled, have not learn to lie to self. Already even you can maybe lie to mother or father, but not to self. So you fortunate. But these people very unfortunate. Like you, when child, they learn lie to parents, but as grow up also learn lie to self and once learn this is very difficult to change. Lying, like all other things, become habit for them. So when I say even ordinary thing, because they wish have reverence for their teacher and because also wish not disturb their inside sleep, they find other meaning for what I say."

Wednesday, June 19, 1991

We learned to lie to ourselves. Gurdjieff said in order not to disturb our "inside sleep", we alter or twist what we hear.

The Word needs to fall on "an honest and good heart so that it can bring forth fruit with patience."

So again, what does it mean to have an honest and good heart?

I see I assume honesty is something I do--an honest effort, an honest talk, an honest relationship. Yet, the part that knows "honest" is not outside of me. Honesty is a state of being that has to be worked for--earned. It is a result of allowing the light of consciousness into my own inner darkness. It is a result of allowing the light of consciousness into my own inner darkness.

To acknowledge to myself that I lie is very disturbing. It seems so direct and harsh to say you are lying or I am lying. But in fact, we are all so immersed in lies and self-deception that it is a part of the fabric of our lives. Until we begin to see these lies and the various forms they take, there can be no development. We need to hear the lies, to develop a sense of when we lie.

For a long time, I have to have the wish to see the truth and wish to have the ableness to be honest with myself. For a long time, I must suffer my manifestations of lying. I need to suffer that I cannot be honest. This suffering is payment--payment for seeing the truth.

In order to have an honest and good heart, we need to allow our "inside sleep" to be disturbed.

Today, listen to both the inner and outer lies and allow the suffering these lies bring.

M. Birkemeier
P. Casteel
D. Hachmuth
G. Pecore

Wednesday, June 19, 1991

As If

Man cannot do . . . but something must be done. Daily I am confronted with the limitations of my ordinary consciousness. . . yet we do have the freedom to make efforts. A question arises 'Who are these efforts for?'

The spiritually materialistic side of my ordinary psyche, which wants to achieve enlightenment, is the very part of me that must die. The quality that wishes to be born, I am not in touch with. So who is making efforts and for what purpose? In my everyday mechanical self there is certainly no desire to serve others, quite the opposite--the ego craves to be gratified and catered to with praise and attention.

But there is something else in me which I very seldom consider. It has no opinions, beliefs, or imagination. It simply sees what is going on and isn't particularly colorful, just there, unconcerned with what type of efforts are being made, but quietly uninsistently relates a truer picture.

We've been told to give up the *idea* that we can help other people. Yet there is a need, there is a very real sense of being connected to life on this Earth. Must one wait until we are self-perfected before offering assistance? No. There is a bridge between this ego--which is incapable of real service--and the perfected man who strives to assist.

Mr. Gurdjieff, in the third series, has this to say:

"The first of the aforementioned secrets is that a means for self-perfecting a man can use a certain property which is in his psyche and which is even of a very negative character. This property can serve as an aid to self-perfecting and exists in people in general, particularly in contemporary people . . . and it is called self-deception.

If you have understood without any doubt what you must do, and how and fully hope at some time to attain this in reality, you must at the beginning often imagine, but *imagine only* that this is already present in you. (p 133) . . . It is first necessary to know that when a normal man, that is a man who already has his real I, his will and all the other properties of a real man, pronounces aloud or to himself the words 'I am' then there always proceeds in him, in his as it is called "solar plexus", a so to say reverberation that is something like a vibration, a feeling or something of the sort (p 134) . . . He who is exercising himself with this must at the beginning, when pronouncing the words 'I am' imagine that this same reverberation is already proceeding in his solar plexus" (p 134).

Thursday, June 20, 1991

When I ask myself how could I help others, the first question that comes up is how would I help myself? There have been many times when I have been given a clue. It has happened most clearly and regularly during a movements class. Time set aside to pay specific attention to this question.

Perhaps my shoulders are tired, some part of my body aches, or I generally am filled with the wish to sleep. A choice keeps presenting itself, whether to slog along resentfully, or stand up inside myself and try. Try to shake myself out of the passivity, to stretch toward more precision, sustain sensation, direct my thought toward the form or taking impressions, relax my feeling into participation.

When this choice is made, I experience a feeling of rightness, not as a result of shoulds or ought-tos, but an inner alignment, when the need to try combines with a willingness, a saying yes.

This is what is wished for myself and all of humanity. To find this inner alignment and return to it again and again.

Thursday, June 20, 1991

Saturday: Prepared for movements as if I were a conscious being, remembering to disregard all. Felt inflow of energy right before movements. Worked on wishing various members of class well. Felt this. Then I was moved to back and suddenly I was a failure and I was envious but I remembered to disregard and it was gone. Afterward, I had the envy come back and got interested in it. Interested in the sequence of emotions and realized it went disappointment - envy which means self reproach etc. Felt I had two strong currents in me--the wishing well and the disappointment--and the disappointment was still a much stronger force but that the wishing well was real and was there, though only a light blade of grass beside the concrete of negative emotions. Remembered that in thinking of humanity -- to wish self well -- that I was part of humanity.

So I can use my imagination positively. I can cultivate this, try to make emotional contact, visualize, whatever helps. It is inevitable that we will meet with certain people today and there will be movements. How do I wish to be? Figure, in the resistance--the predictable reactions, objections, etc.--then disregard them, affirm, remember your aim.

J. Birkemeier
J. Cunningham
M. Smyth

Thursday, June 20, 1991

To See Again

I am with others as I am with myself. I pick friends that have similar likes and dislikes. My attitude with others is "if only I could get you to change". What am I afraid of? My fear to recognize the possibility of someone else limits me to one way of thinking and being. If I choose to see that each person I encounter is unique then I have a life time of possibilities to explore, and I know by my experience that when my real interest is evoked I benefit and the people around me benefit.

Mr. Gurdjieff said we need to work with others and that we can only know each other to the level we know ourselves. To accomplish this I must learn and practice sincerity, frankness and honesty. Before I can develop these in me I must learn to recognize these qualities in others. I must be able to see them before I can know them.

During the Ashiatian period some came in touch with genuine being conscience and began to transubstantiate in themselves the five Being Obligolnian strivings. Various power possessing beings surrendered their unmerited rights having become aware by conscience and sensing that they possessed and occupied these rights only for the satisfaction of their own personal weaknesses such as vanity and self-love.

These strivings began to remedy conditions created by a caste system based upon peculiar properties crystallized in them such as cunning, contempt, hate, servility, lying, flattery and so on. Certain of these beings making special efforts began to be recognized by their "essence power" and varying degrees of self perfection for their objective merits acquired by them themselves and sensed by all the beings around them.

It occurs to me that what is needed is not for me to teach anyone, or to attempt to set examples for others to learn by, so that I might develop "objective merits" by which others might know me.

Jane Heap has indicated in her teaching that some of the qualities that can assist us toward achieving "objective merits" and help us to recognize them are: Resourcefulness, Respect, Responsibility, and Fearlessness. These qualities like objective merits are however acquired solely by Work on oneself.

It is painfully obvious that without work on myself I do not respect others. Criticisms, complaints, or on the other hand, flattery or praise are not a help to anybody. Real respect which can, by its very nature, assist others does not happen by itself. It cannot be pretended or faked, but can only occur by an active effort to "see again".

Friday, June 21, 1991

Today's task is to respect all life. To see again. To see anew with opened eyes and look for the qualities and merits, or their potentials in other beings. Participate actively in this task by formulating these qualities accurately by name. For example: patience, caring, attention, inner quiet, or compassion.

I.Givot
J.Pedersen
T.Shea
J.Pecore

Friday, June 21, 1991

In Mr. Cornelius' toast which was read last night, he said, "We can only give what we receive." What do we actually receive? We take in impressions of all kinds; data comes in through our eyes, ears, taste, touch and smell. We take in ideas, we take in impressions of ourselves. But how are they taken in? Is it intentional or accidental? Who is there to receive them? Which "I" is there to take the impression?

Impressions are a food, but they are of no use unless they are digested and transformed, just as for the other two foods. In ordinary mechanical life, impressions come in as a do of an octave and are not transformed at all. They never make it even to re. They only serve as a shock for the other octaves. Only if they are digested do they provide the higher energy we need for work. In Beelzebub's tales, in the chapter Form and Sequence, he gives us a clue about digesting impressions. He says for mechanical man, when an impression strikes us, it immediately triggers past associations, so we keep on repeating and repeating our experience and never learn anything new. But when I make an effort to remember myself at the moment an impression comes in, more of myself participates, and a real understanding can occur because the impression is digested and provides a finer food.

It is interesting that a certain amount of this finer substance that only comes from the digestion of impressions, is required by great nature. That is why, if I'm not working on myself to provide any conscious impressions, nature will occasionally awaken me willy-nilly by accidents, "acute psychic experiencings," or "unexpectednesses" We are well aware that many people who have no aim seem to live from crisis to crisis. Others are accident prone. Nature will extract from us what she needs one way or the other.

There is an octave for impressions just as there is an octave for the transformation of food and air. Food is digested, transformed into nutrients in the blood stream, then into thoughts and other finer substances, finally into sex energy, which we use for work. In like manner impressions are transformed into perceptions, impulses, and manifestations or behavior. We will speak more of this later, but for now remember that our behavior is a result of how we take in impressions. If I am asleep to my impressions, I will manifest the same old way over and over again no matter how much I wish to change. It is useless to try to change ones's behavior without real work. On the other hand, it is wonderful to see when people who have been working on themselves begin to understand this and make the effort to be awake at the moment of a disturbance—at the moment a strong impression comes in. Then there is hope for change, hope that as Jane Heap said "Our future will not become our past."

Today, the task is to work to be awake at the moment I take an impression, especially if it is uncomfortable or disturbing. This is mu

only hope of not reacting in the habitual way. For example if someone speaks to me in such a way that exposes one of my weaknesses or if they misunderstand me or simply make a mistake, today I will not immediately defend myself, set them straight, or hide from what is unpleasant. Instead, I stand there and take in the impression more deeply. Allow the other person to be wrong. See what happens. For the times you are working by yourself, practice by staying present to your own disturbances and mistakes, without making any exclamations, self-criticisms, or other internal talk.

For this task to work two conditions are necessary. One is that we be a little more sincere with each other. Another Jane Heap saying is "We are not here to find peace. We are a community of warriors." But a real warrior in the work sense does not fight with other people; toward others he is sincere but also has kindness and respect. It is only toward himself that the warrior is merciless. He does battle with his own resistance, as we saw with yesterday's theme. Again, today be more sincere with others and yourself. For self-observation to be fruitful we cannot hide, but we need to bring the dark sides of ourselves into light.

The other condition that is necessary if I wish to be more awake to my impressions is to be prepared so that when a small shock comes, I can be awake and let it enter instead of reacting in the usual way. A help with this is to have an inner practice that I work on all day to keep me more in touch with myself. One practice that is helpful is to come back to the sensation of your feet on the ground as often as you can remember. If you can do this in front of other people it is especially helpful. If you wish to include your own inner practice in addition to this, all the better.

Mr. Gurdjieff has called impressions "Heikdonis," help for God. When I really live my life, when I can be present to my experiences and the impressions become digested, this is one way in which my life can be a service.

Irv Givst

2-17-91

THOME - 2-18-91

LEONARD CHARLES

Having missed George's talk on Saturday evening, I read it last night. I was struck by the paragraph where he states:

In conclusion, we should be able at this weekend to detect, or watch, the gleam of light which flashes across our neurological mind from within more than the firmaments coming from the books of bards, gurus, and sages. Yet, we dismiss without notice our own thought process because it is ours. The Real I which contains the real knowledge of ourselves which connects all the separate thoughts to the whole of me, ends up as an alienated majesty.

This is an exceptional insight, one upon which we might work on a small part of today.

We are all aware of self-pity and its many guises (including those forms where we revel in our suffering). Today, pay attention to your self-pity, bring your attention to bear on it, examine it from whatever vantage point you can. While you are doing this decide on some form of service, something or someone to serve - it may be outside you or inside you. Alternatively, you may wish to select this focus of service at the beginning of the day. Given this self-pity held beside your chosen form of service, decide - choose what you wish to do - pity yourself or serve. And then do it.

In this work we hear about the importance of a law called the law of three. The basic premise of this law, which is one of the fundamental laws of the universe is that every manifestation is the result of three forces acting together: active force, resisting force and neutralizing force. To understand this law of three and begin to see it in myself and the world around me it must be first studied in my own psychology and the many I's which make up my inner world.

Today I make a simple aim for myself: perhaps I decide that I will not sit down all day- or I will be present to taste my first bite at every meal- or I will do some things with my left hand- or I will not talk for a certain period-or I will do a job I don't particularly like--or whatever I decide for myself.

You see I must have an individual aim in this work. It need not be a big aim; smaller is more practical. If I don't have an aim then there is no possibility of getting a taste or feeling for the particular flavor of **my** resistance, or denying force. Without first force, an aim, I cannot get a taste of second force.

I need this taste of my own resistance. It is **not** something I need to feel bad about or even dwell on, but it is part of the fundamental law of the way I am.

To recap:

I make a simple practical aim for myself today.

I try to observe, get a taste or feeling for, the resisting force both within me, or outside of me and affecting me.

Everything which keeps me from my aim is part of resisting force.

Resisting force is not something good or bad, it just is. If I do not **observe** it and come to know it's taste, I can not make use of it--then it makes use of me.

Without an aim, there is resistance, but I get nothing out of it for myself.

Take 5 minutes now, relax, and choose some aim for yourself. Don't rush let it bubble up from inside you-something **simple** you want to try today which may give you just a little taste for the resistance always there.

January 11, 1990

Today, we begin the concentrated group work on the birthday celebration. Lately, some questions have come up in me. Why do we celebrate Gurdjieff's birthday? Is it for him? For us? Is it to honor? To show respect? To feel gratitude? To inspire? To evoke aspiration? Perhaps it is all of these, perhaps more. For all of us it is a reminder of a tremendous debt we owe him for the teaching he left, a teaching which has changed our lives, our values and our hearts.

Most of us here never met the man, Gurdjieff, so the celebration is not, for us, one of personal attachment or of sentimental memory. I don't believe that he would have wanted it to be that. At times like this, we sometimes feel a very real sense of gratitude to Gurdjieff - to a life so dedicated to helping mankind lift itself out of the quagmire. And yet, I don't think that Gurdjieff would have wanted this celebration to be focused on that either. So I asked myself, What would he wish for? The answer is clear. To use, to practise what we understand of the teaching.

We have taken the following prayer as the theme of this celebration:

Help us to know our experience as a mirror of the Divine.
Strengthen our wish to be.
Teach us to act in service of the Higher.
Let the true nature of our lives be revealed to us.
May Gurdjieff's Work live through us.

This is a special time of group work. Along with an intensification of our physical tasks, we take this as an opportunity to intensify our inner work.

Today, let's focus on two lines of the prayer.

Strengthen our wish to be.
May Gurdjieff's Work live through us.

It is the only way we have to make this a true celebration of his birthday.

January 12, 1990

Help us to know our experience as a mirror of the Divine.
Strengthen our wish to be.
Teach us to act in service of the Higher.
Let the true nature of our lives be revealed to us.
May Gurdjieff's Work live through us.

Today, the pace quickens - so many doings. Tasks loom large, perhaps seem overwhelming. It is so easy to lose myself, to get caught up in "getting it done". "Help us to know our experience as a mirror of the Divine." Surely this is not the experience of his Endlessness! If I can remember the Divine, perhaps the experience itself will not be the same.

"Teach us to act in the service of the Higher." This celebration for us is a representation, a symbol of the higher. Can I learn to act in an attitude of serving the higher as I prepare - cook, iron, clean, whatever? This is my effort today.

January 13, 1990

Today, we celebrate the birthday of Gurdjieff. We bring the preparations to completion and we gather together for the celebration. I wish to participate fully, to experience whatever this day that we have set aside brings.

Each of our experiences is personal and yet it is shared, just as our efforts are personal, yet shared.

God Creator and all ye who are His helpers,

Help me to remember myself always,
that I may take no unconscious steps,
as only in these can evil manifest itself.

I must remember to remember...

What is it that I must remember?

What thing is it that I must not forget to recall?

I MUST REMEMBER TO REMEMBER MYSELF!

**OVERALL THEME FOR WORK WEEK SEMINAR
USED AUGUST 5 AND 6 1989**

How does the spontaneity, or freedom from conditioning, keep the thread of meaning of looking, noticing, depth of color, and vision, alive in my work?

THEME FOR AUGUST 7, 1989

Associated with the theme of spontaneity , how do I utilize the three foods as experience for the next brick in the building of my foundation.

THEME FOR AUGUST 13

What does the Work mean to me?

WHAT IS TRUST?

When you first arrived here for the seminar, I made the statement that I had high hopes that you would be able to discover a place within yourself of quietness. A place where you have never been before in which you would be able to understand something about sincerity.

So today I will ask all of you the question- how is trust associated with spontaneity? When you first came here did you trust me? Do you trust yourself? Another question arises- what is the difference between trust and faith? Is it letting out your real self? Is it a sense of truth? Is it allowing myself to be vulnerable to outside influences? How do I trust myself or an idea, as ideas are associated with values? When you trust, is it connected with personality or essence? Has it to do with levels or varieties of trust? Is it associated with levels of certain kinds of knowledge? Is it a form of inward or outward surrender? Does trust have to do with observing fear? Do I trust a person for what they are?

August 8, 1989

WORK WITH OTHERS

How can the second line of the Work, which is my work with others, become a center of gravity to help me develop a guiding principle that can serve to reveal the mystery of the exquisiteness of my real world? How does the external and internal, which is associated with will and hazard, pertain to the overall theme of spontaneity in this play event?

Each day of this seminar, the themes have elucidated a certain aspect of the Work. They have been relevant to the psychological issues relating to the barriers of unseen potential that require an expression of certain manifestations in relation to practical work, the theater, and movements. This manifestaion is necessary for the unfoldment of knowledge, being, understanding, personality and essence. But you should try to see that by working in a group for the benefit of all we can create a bridge between ordinary life and the Great Work. This necessitates strength and cannot be accomplished by oneself alone unless you reconcile your inconsistencies. This requires serious study and getting a picture of yourself such as you do when the stop exercise is given. You can notice the potential for changee to take place, but this kind of stop-shock cannot replace the need for real effort.

I ask you, is this seminar event going to be a way to open the door to clean your house of unpleasant emotional states associated with identification? Try to be awake and utilize your work today as raw material to make a good clay vessel.

August 9, 1989

WHERE IS MY PLACE AND HOW DO I GROW IN THIS WORK?

Throughout this seminar, the subject of negative emotions has come up. Yesterday at the theme meeting, Daniel Stroberger made the observation that he had been in a negative state several times during the day. I think that the main cause and reason for this negative state was that he didn't depend on his formatory apparatus to separate the wheat from the chaff. He should have set himself an aim with the end in view to have sufficient cause to produce an effort. If my aim is to change something in myself, I must find out how to do it, otherwise it will have no effect. In Stroberger's case, his aim or aims should have been stronger than the cause of his negative state. His observation is associated with today's theme of "Where is my place in this Work?"

After this seminar, you could be a new man or woman because you will have had the opportunity to see how negative emotions can destroy your inner life. The Work says that you must think internally. When we come to these seminars, we must work towards our completeness. This means dealing with the quality of feelings which lead to the possibility of experiencing and trying to develop all the aspects which make essence positive. Do I see where I am? How has faith and trust been strengthened in me by my participation in the play? What kind of commitment have I made to this Work? Am I going to be clear about the experiences I have here or am I lying to myself? How does suffering serve essence? Please - look at your place in the Work as to levels and states from the simple standpoint of this day's work.

August 10, 1989

WHAT AM I DOING WITH MY ENERGIES?

Today is Friday, the day the community will be given the food I have helped prepare in the form of this play, "The Song of the Seven Winds". The meal has been cooked - quite literally in the 100° heat this week - and is out of the oven. Final garnishes are being prepared, tables decorated and set, seating arrangements made, and so on. All last minute preparations for the feast are being attended to.

It is easy to think I am almost out of the woods, that once these last minute details are completed, I am ready for the guests to arrive. It is easy to feel that this is the last dash before crossing the finish line and that all my energy is needed to push through today so then I can coast. It is easy to be emotionally identified with the external events going on, my own and those of everyone around me.

I need to remember the guests for whom this food is being prepared. I need to remember the food of impressions I wish to create with the meal, the ideas and feelings I wish to share which are the real gifts I have for the guests.

My attention needs to include remembering the Great Work for which I am here helping to present this play. And it needs to include being aware of myself as a representative of that Great Work. More than any day this week, today, as the play preparations are being completed, I need my center of gravity to be in the Work in me. I am here to manifest the Work, to step aside from my ordinary self and let the meaning of this play be expressed through whatever I am doing, thinking, and feeling.

Today I wish to listen to my words and the songs I sing, and to observe my movements. I wish to see myself. Where is my force going? Into what am I allowing my energies to go? What is happening to my accumulators? Are my energies being utilized as I wish them to be? What am I valuing? Am I feeding the hunger of the world, of the community, of myself?

August 11, 1989

WHERE AM I NOW?

How do we understand these few simple words? Where am I now? My Real I is a mystery. It is a particle of God, a particle of His Endlessness in me but with nowhere to exist. Like the biblical story of Christ's birth, there is no sympathetic place to live, to be, in my rowdy inn.

Where am I now? Am is part of the verb to be, being. It is questioning the state of my being, the state and quality of my own inn. What food has been taken in by me this last week for my being? Has anything grown or developed in me in this last week? Plenty of food has been given to us.

There is the analogy of casting pearls before swine. What does that mean? Pearls are too fine a food and therefore useless for swine, or a sleeping, mechanical man. Pearls are only for a man awake, present and collected, who can appreciate them and use them. Pearls are the opportunities, the incidents of friction, of understanding, of readings, of work on themes, etc, which we have experienced in the last week. It is through these that we have passed either awake or asleep in this seminar. A pearl is formed from a grain of sand which gets into an oyster and which, due to constant friction, is transformed into a beautiful pearl. However if we have been asleep, we have not taken in the grains of sand and therefore we will have no pearls. If we have been awake, then we will have taken in something which will have been transformed as in the oyster. We will have used our opportunities and seen something about ourselves.

Where am I now? Now has two aspects. Let us look first at now in this moment of time. We have arrived at the last day of the seminar, the note Si. On ordinary worldly standards, it is a successful note. A good play has been created. By the sounds of self-adulation and congratulation of others, it sounds uncommonly like feeding and supporting the desires and wishes only of the two ugly sisters. Have we forgotten Cinderella, whom our egos have left at home hungry and in rags? Cinderella is young and beautiful. She knows what pearls are for if only we could give or experience her time to wear them. And even she was only challenged to stay awake until midnight but she fell asleep and found herself again forgotten and in rags. Each of us has the ugly sisters in us and the various egos with which we are so familiar and which take up so much of our time and energy - greed, self-love, vanity, bragging, arrogance, envy, pride, self-conceit, swaggering imagination, and on and on. But we also have a Cinderella - that

beautiful young girl starved of all she needs for growth, development, and experience in life, kept at home in the cellar doing chores for the ugly sisters. We are all aware of her potentiality but she needs food. How is she to get it? And who is going to feed her? Cinderella's food must be fresh and spontaneous, created by conscious labor and voluntary suffering. We need have no fear about the feeding of the ugly sisters. They will look after themselves.

The second aspect of now is related to the bewitching hour of midnight. Now has already gone, it is past. How many being presents, how many nows, are there in five seconds? We need to be awake, not now and again, but now and again and again and again. As many midnights and falling asleep and forgetting Cinderella, so many times have we to wake her up and get her ready for the ball. It may be hard work but each one of us needs to encompass the existence of both the ugly sisters in us as well as our Cinderella. Without the ugly sisters there would be no story, no Cinderella and no Prince Charming. Who could Prince Charming be?

Where am I now? Where is where? Firstly, there is the external ever-changing current of life in which we live. Today it is the play - tomorrow it will be cleaning up, a new octave beginning. The next day ordinary life again. All these wheres are different places, different circumstances of the enactment of possible experiences of nows which are coming to us. Could that be the life of the sisters? These form our path through life which is of no importance, but yet is very important. How can that paradox be true?

Then secondly, there must be a where, where something permanent, something stable, something which does not identify, can live. Where is that place from which observation without comment and interference can take place? It is necessary for my Real I to be awake to those ever-changing scenes.

Today let us return to being spontaneous, to see from what place that spontaneity comes. What is that Quiet Place? Where is that Quiet Place? Plato talks about it in the saying, "Quiet is not found in the hills nor in the market place, but in the ever-changing heart of man."

August 12, 1989

WHERE IS MY PLACE AND HOW DO I GROW IN THIS WORK?

Throughout this seminar, the subject of negative emotions has come up. Yesterday at the theme meeting, Daniel Stroberger made the observation that he had been in a negative state several times during the day. I think that the main cause and reason for this negative state was that he didn't depend on his formatory apparatus to separate the wheat from the chaff. He should have set himself an aim with the end in view to have sufficient cause to produce an effort. If my aim is to change something in myself, I must find out how to do it, otherwise it will have no effect. In Stroberger's case, his aim or aims should have been stronger than the cause of his negative state. His observation is associated with today's theme of "Where is my place in this Work?"

After this seminar, you could be a new man or woman because you will have had the opportunity to see how negative emotions can destroy your inner life. The Work says that you must think internally. When we come to these seminars, we must work towards our completeness. This means dealing with the quality of feelings which lead to the possibility of experiencing and trying to develop all the aspects which make essence positive. Do I see where I am? How has faith and trust been strengthened in me by my participation in the play? What kind of commitment have I made to this Work? Am I going to be clear about the experiences I have here or am I lying to myself? How does suffering serve essence? Please - look at your place in the Work as to levels and states from the simple standpoint of this day's work.

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August 12, 1989

WHAT IS TRUST?

When you first arrived here for the seminar, I made the statement that I had high hopes that you would be able to discover a place within yourself of quietness. A place where you have never been before in which you would be able to understand something about sincerity.

So today I will ask all of you the question- how is trust associated with spontaneity? When you first came here did you trust me? Do you trust yourself? Another question arises- what is the difference between trust and faith? Is it letting out your real self? Is it a sense of truth? Is it allowing myself to be vulnerable to outside influences? How do I trust myself or an idea, as ideas are associated with values? When you trust, is it connected with personality or essence? Has it to do with levels or varieties of trust? Is it associated with levels of certain kinds of knowledge? Is it a form of inward or outward surrender? Does trust have to do with observing fear? Do I trust a person for what they are?

August 8, 1989

WORK WITH OTHERS

How can the second line of the Work, which is my work with others, become a center of gravity to help me develop a guiding principle that can serve to reveal the mystery of the exquisiteness of my real world? How does the external and internal, which is associated with will and hazard, pertain to the overall theme of spontaneity in this play event?

Each day of this seminar, the themes have elucidated a certain aspect of the Work. They have been relevant to the psychological issues relating to the barriers of unseen potential that require an expression of certain manifestations in relation to practical work, the theater, and movements. This manifestaion is necessary for the unfoldment of knowledge, being, understanding, personality and essence. But you should try to see that by working in a group for the benefit of all we can create a bridge between ordinary life and the Great Work. This necessitates strength and cannot be accomplished by oneself alone unless you reconcile your inconsistencies. This requires serious study and getting a picture of yourself such as you do when the stop exercise is given. You can notice the potential for changee to take place, but this kind of stop-shock cannot replace the need for real effort.

I ask you, is this seminar event going to be a way to open the door to clean your house of unpleasant emotional states associated with identification? Try to be awake and utilize your work today as raw material to make a good clay vessel.

August 9, 1989

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Being-Obligolnian-Strivings

The first striving: to have in their ordinary being-existence everything satisfying and really necessary for their planetary body.

The second striving: to have a constant and unflagging instinctive need for self-perfection in the sense of being.

The third: the conscious striving to know ever more and more concerning the laws World-creation and World-maintenance.

The fourth: the striving from the beginning of their existence to pay for their arising and their individuality as quickly as possible, in order afterwards to be free to lighten as much as possible the Sorrow of our COMMON FATHER.

And the fifth: the striving always to assist the most rapid perfecting of other beings, both those similar to oneself and those of other forms, up to the degree of the sacred "Martfotai" that is up to the degree of self-individuality.

Beelzebub's Tales to His Grandson
"Organization by Ashiata Shiemash

Sunday, July 26, 1987

SILENT COMMUNICATION

We are all engaged in practical work here together, either in the kitchen or in projects like the path, the fish pond or the children's barn. There are two ways we can organize these practical projects. The first is that we can discuss the project among ourselves; we can each give our opinions about the way it should go and try to arrive at a consensus about the way we are to proceed. Or we can organize the project in silence, by forming a mental image together of the finished task.

So today, let's take the theme of silent communication and try to organize our activities by forming a picture of the outcome. At the same time, while we're working, we can try to avoid unnecessary talking.

Now the next activity we are going to engage in as a community all together is eating lunch. Let us now form a mental image together of the way we are going to set about eating the meal.

(PAUSE)

That's all I want to say about the theme now; you've all engaged in this kind of exercise at some time or another.

Mr. George Bennett

Theme Tuesday July 28

Opening of The Heart

Everyone in this room has made some kind of sacrifice in order to be here, a big sacrifice or a small one. There's one particular benefit I would like us to come away from here with which would make those sacrifices worthwhile. Many of the people here, I think most of the people here, have friends in the seminar, people they have known perhaps for years, people they know very well in a kind of way. But what I am talking about now is the kind of relationship that comes when people work together and actually open their hearts to each other. Its not the same thing as the social contact, the everyday contact--which may be close--but its not the same as this being open to each other that I am talking about, which I find comes not from talking, but from working together. I've noticed, going from one working group to another, that people tend to regard each other as some kind of machine that's carrying a bucket, something for holding a pan, something for unwinding some wire, not as another person, another human being exactly like me.

Try today really to look at each other, really be aware of each other--the other people in your working group. This is difficult if you're not accustomed to it, but the second thing I would like you to try to observe today is more difficult. Try to see why it is that we do not open ourselves to each other. What it is in us that prevents this. See if you can observe that and we can see what conclusions we come to this afternoon.

Elizabeth Bennett

SYMBOLISM

Words alone are never adequate to describe or transmit experience and understanding. Man's chaos is often a result of his attempt to solve this problem by using still more words.

Symbols can and do serve a survival function. They may in fact constitute the essence of man's survival techniques.

Symbols provide meaning and intentional action for the conditioned and unconditioned response.

The Pentagram is called in Kabbalah the sign of the microcosm, that sign so exalted by Goethe in the beautiful monologue of 'Faust': "Ah, how do all my senses leap at this sight! I feel the young and sacred pleasure of life quivering in my nerves and veins. Was it a God who traced this sign which stills the vertigo of my soul, fills my poor heart with joy and, in a mysterious rapture, unveils the forces of Nature around me? Am I myself a God? All is so clear to me: I behold in these simple lines the revelation of active nature to my soul. I realise for the first time the truth of the wise man's words: "The world of spirits is not closed! Thy sense is obtuse, thy heart is dead! Arise! Bathe, O adept of science, thy breast, still enveloped by an earthly veil, in the splendours of the dawning day". (Faust, part i, sc. 1).

Words should not be used except where absolutely necessary.

THE PUBLIC HOUSE

In the chapter "From the Author", an analogy is made between a typical contemporary man, and a hackney carriage, horse, and coachman. In this analogy, the driver, representing mans thinking center, is a tatterdemalion, half sleepy, half drunken coachman whose time designated by Mother Nature for self-perfection passes while he waits on a corner, fantastically daydreaming, for any old chance passenger, spending the money given him to buy feed for his horse.

In Nicoll's Commentaries, this state which the thinking center has fallen into is called 'the public house'. What is the public house? What is the drink? and what is the drunkenness? The 'public house' can be a place to be seen; a place to prop oneself up and try to impress others; fully satiated with one's own self importance, vanity, self love, pictures of oneself, one's favorite negativities. The public house is described as the lowest level of "thinking", and that anyone in such a condition doesn't see themselves as being in a public house in a drunken condition. On the contrary they will have wonderful ideas of themselves, namely, that they have will, that they can do, that they are efficient, that they know best, that they have a real permanent "I" and all the rest of it. Unless they have wakened up from these profound illusions and have begun to feel their own helplessness and nothingness, they will never be able to climb on the box.

At times it is possible to enage my mind, to offer some direction to thought; but the habit remains, the temptations to return^{to} fantasies and daydreams to return to deeper sleep is more ~~is more~~ alluring then ever. Beginning a project to simply participate in an activity provides countless opportunities to "fall into" feeling owed, considering myself extraordinary and imagining others must surely consider likewise, trying to convince them if they don't or feeling indignant. What may have begun as an activity to gain some semblance of sanity to engage parts of myself, to experience; is soon imagined as a gratuitous service to mankind as my thoughts are again found resting in the public house.

This continues unnoticed ~~or~~ rarely challenged. Working with this ab..use of the thinking center becomes possible only after seeing it as being below me, below my possibility. It requires dissatisfaction.

False personality keeps us in the public house and by our mutual support of weakness, we remain there. I WISH TO SEE MYSELF AS I AM. But every day I continually compromise this wish to the vain illusion of myself. I must more than just notice the attraction to the comfort of these habitual weaknesses. Clear aims must be made to study and understand them in myself.

In the same chapter Mr. Gurdjieff gives us a key to make efforts against this thoughtless drunkard.

"To possess the right to the name of 'man,' one must be one.

One must first of all with an indefatigable persistence and an unquenchable impulse of desire, ... issuing simultaneously from thought, feeling, and organic instinct, work on an all-round knowledge of oneself-at the same time struggling unceasingly with one's subjective weaknesses-and then afterward ... taking one's stand upon the results thus obtained...., concerning the defects in one's established subjectivity, as well as the ... means for combatting them, 'one must' strive for their eradication with out mercy towards oneself." ".....a man must decide, once and forever, that he will be sincere with himself unconditionally, will shut his eyes to nothing, shun no results wherever they may lead him, be afraid of no inferences, and be limited by no previous self- imposed limits."

No one said it would be easy. Recently a question was posed which challenged me to ponder such an effort. It is, can anyone clearly state one of their own personal subjective weaknesses? Amongst the group hearing this question, the unspoken inner resistance and reluctance to making such a clear definition was palpable. In myself was fascination as parts of my drunkards comfortable personality were rushing about trying to avoid the directness of such a question within myself. But I have been searching since then.

For example, I see a disturbance deeper within me when saying 'thank you' to someone. For anyone else it might be nothing. Inside me, is a taste of dependence in owing someone something and it touches upon the fact of my own real helplessness. In front of this discomfort, false personality lifts itself up in a posture of self-important, arrogant superiority; justifying my accomplishments and grateful to no one, feeling, "I deserve what I have." Strangely these outrageous inner attitudes feel comfortable in a false sense of strength and boasting. My mind must know this and I must affirm with the whole of my being when saying 'thank you.'

This is only one of many. Each of us have different weaknesses. The inability to speak to others, to be kind, to stand upright, to be able to cooperate, to stop criticism; but now what is interesting after so many years of quote "work" is the uncanny inability to face and clearly define single aspects of these weaknesses to myself alone, as if they were a secret to all of you. Every fiber of personality cringes and resists, and wants to find a comfortable corner of the pub with its cronies.

Today affirm; "I WISH TO SEE MYSELF AS I AM," and struggle to describe and know for your self alone, one aspect of these subjective weaknesses. If it helps, write it down. Personality hates that.

1-15-89
Birkemeier
Pecore

1/12/89

Aspiration

We all aspire to something- but to what? Webster defines aspire in the following way: *to be ambitious (to get or do something lofty); to seek*. Which portion of this definition applies most accurately to me, now?

Ambition can be defined as a "strong desire for fame, power, or wealth." Nearly the entire history of mankind is a pathetic series of atrocities perpetrated by one group of people on another, as an exercise of this "ambition." Beelzebub is perhaps our most objective perspective on this strange tendency inherent in human beings.

I need to see clearly that this malediction, this *ambitton*, is in me also. How often are my actions centered on "being seen in the eyes of others," on having my own way, controlling people and situations, and on getting as much as I can for myself? Some of these manifestations can be subtle, or disguised as something else. Should I chance to catch a glimpse of one, the automatic justifications quickly appear. It is possible to justify absolutely anything- just look at our history.

But there is something else in me also; there is the other sort of aspiration. *I seek*. I seek a connection with the higher parts of myself. I seek my higher possibilities. I seek an awareness of what is in and around me; an awareness of others. I seek to be able to serve god.

In our work of preparation today, let us strive to connect with *this* form of aspiration. Why have we come here, and why are we doing all of this?

It may help to remember that "aspire" is from the latin words *ad*, to, and *spirare*, breathe. To breathe.

Dave Kangas

January 13, 1989

ASPIRATION II

I aspire to something higher, but in countless small choices throughout the day, I turn away from that aspiration.

Last Sunday, Mrs. Staveley remarked that more than 99% of our energy and time goes toward living the life of the body. That is why our progress in the work is so slow.

My effort again is to remember why I am here. I rearrange my priorities. Anyone with the appropriate skills could create a beautifully decorated room and an elegant dinner, but without the atmosphere created by our combined inner efforts and wish to be, it would all be meaningless.

Related to this idea, Beelzebub has said: "If the completing process of this sacred law (of Heptaparaparshinokh) flows in conditions where during its process there are many extraneously caused vibrations, then all of its functioning gives only outer results. But if this same process proceeds in absolute quiet, then all the results of the action of its functioning remain within..."

So today, in the midst of outer activity, I work for inner quiet. This may enable me to be, at times, in touch with my center of gravity, and maybe at moments, to be in touch with the reason why we are here.

Friday, July 31, 1987

MORE

The theme for today is what we spoke of briefly two nights ago, which is the word "more". Lord Pentland gave us a talk on that at the first seminar we ever had here. And when he said that word, he -- I have never checked it, but he had, and the etymology of the word "more" has the same root as the word "magic" does. And I think if you look here at this incredible scene that nature has provided us, and you look at the group of people that you've been with for the past week, it doesn't take very much imagination to see the magic. It's an invitation to dance. And all it requires is to come out from the row of old maids or old men against the wall and to dance. The "more" is not going to come from out here, because nothing more can be provided. So the "more" comes from us.

And I would hope that you wouldn't take that to mean more in the sense that I have to push myself to do the most serious, concentrated work I can do -- although that is an aspect of "more". But you don't usually make a very attractive dancing partner when that's your approach. You tend to be more of an attractive dancing partner when you make yourself look good and you have a smile on your face -- or at least that's my experience.

So I would like you to look at that. What more is it that you can do, or is it what more can you be? And the only concrete thing I would say, because I think you can all find your own way to deal with that, is I would suggest, if you've been stopping every half hour as a group -- and it seems to me most of you have been -- whatever else you are planning to do during that time, if you could just sit for 30 seconds and collect yourself and do the exercise Elizabeth showed us this morning, where you affirm: I WISH; I CAN; I AM.

Leonard Charles

Mon. July 27

INNER FIRE

At one time or another we all directly experience the state of being "stuck" and find that not only are we "stuck" but we are also lacking any inner fire with which to get unstuck. Generally this experience is not a problem when we meet together in these seminars, especially in the beginning, as there is a surge of energy that comes when many people are gathered together to work. But this state does not last long enough to get us to Heaven. Sooner or later we must look elsewhere for "fire".

Perhaps you are one who meets new situations or new tasks with enthusiasm and you call that enthusiasm "fire". Eventually that enthusiasm wanes and the interest sags. What was once a joy, a marvellous challenge, is now a chore, an albatross around the neck or merely a distracting discomfort. But was that enthusiasm ever really related to the inner "fire" that is needed for work on myself? What is this inner "fire"?

When a man sets himself an Aim, instantly a force, corresponding in strength to that of his Aim, arises against him. One experiences a friction; an uncomfortable, unaccustomed friction. Everything in one wants to avoid friction or to escape from conditions producing this friction at all costs. But if one compels oneself to make the effort anyway, something of the energies generated by this friction goes toward the development of a new force in me -- friction -- fire -- transformation -- But it all begins by having an Aim; otherwise these forces remain in their unmanifested, potential state.

We aim for the impossible so that we can attain the possible. Our long-term aims can be supported by short-term tasks. Choose a task for yourself toward your Aim that is attainable today. For example: If my aim is to study my mechanicality, I set myself the task of not permitting the body to sit between now and lunch. If my aim is to cut through my egoism, I can decide to affirm, "We are Children of the Common Father," on the hour. If my aim is to engage my mind at my physical job, I can set myself a counting exercise for 10 minutes out of each hour.

Remember you Aim.

Jeffrey Viers
Linda Cattadoris

Thursday, July 30, 1987

HOW CAN I BECOME AWARE OF QUALITY?

We don't have much problem with seeing form. We come equipped to know the world of quantity. We have even taken our natural ability to know quantity and have developed sophisticated techniques to sort out complicated details about quantitative dimensions. Work on the quantitative dimension is not the focus of the work of this seminar.

The Work demands attention to the discovery of quality in life. We don't readily know qualitative dimensions. We need to become more aware of qualities. Let's begin the quest to understand quality. Our theme today is: How can I become aware of quality? Make an observation during practical work, or an observation of a relationship, or an observation of something about myself or something in the field of my attention that speaks to quality. Can I be bold enough to identify the quality?

Ben Hitchner

May 18, 1986
Dr. Hitchner
Cave Junction

IN MY ACTIVITY AND WORK TODAY, OBSERVE
HOW I AM SERVING NATURE. WHAT CAN I
SAY ABOUT THE QUALITY OF WHAT I SEE

We are aware that in everything we do we are serving nature, and we are aware that much of this service is unconscious, that it's happening, it's being done, being performed, and we know that one great tradition tells us to just flow with Nature; this is a great wisdom. But there can't be any question that the Gurdjieff Work puts a lot of emphasis on becoming conscious of this service that we do unconsciously. We should aim to be more aware of what we are doing every day, because we know from the talk yesterday, that we don't really know much about the needs of this planet. We shouldn't begin a quest to know more about the planet through intellectualizing. For example, as we referred to the abstractions yesterday. The way that we can become aware of the needs of this planet, to become aware of the needs of the environment that we are in is reduced to what we are doing, to what we are performing, what our job is. So, the theme is addressed to that. I am going to read the theme twice, but there will be no questions on it, so pay attention to the reading of this short theme.

WHAT KIND OF ANIMAL AM I?

It is suggested that this morning you try to observe yourself as an animal, a member of the animal species called Homo sapiens, a mammal. We are animals; it is the base on which is built the phenomenon we call "man." This morning, try to be an animal, a female or male animal, and observe yourself as such.

There are many ways to do this. A suggestion is to observe your posture, the tensions existing in your body. If you look at the animals surrounding us here on this farm, you will see that there is never unnecessary tension. Muscles and tendons are tensed, but only to serve a function and then the tension is gone. Try to observe if the same is true for you. One further note--as Mary said yesterday, we learn to love by first practicing love with plants and animals. We are animals, and perhaps we begin to love ourselves by loving the animal that each of us is.

This afternoon, we again try to observe ourselves as animals, but this time as women and men, beings with three brains who have the potential for being more than, though not necessarily better than, animals. What does it mean to be a woman or a man, and how is this different from the animal you attempted to be and observe this morning?

Wednesday, July 29, 1987

BEING RIGHT

"Being right" is something I am all too familiar with. There are a million ways to be right, and these ways fill my thoughts and actions. We all know them well. They come up time and time again in theme: "I know the right way to pound a nail;" "I know the right way to cook chicken;" "I know the right way to explain an idea;" "I know the right way to take care of the children." I have worked harder, studied longer, or suffered more and I am right. And further I want you to know I am right. And often I am right. So that's where we come to the key point -- well, so what?

What I want us to look at today is what happens to me and to the world I exist in when I am locked in my rightness. What happens to us then? What is lost? What disappears? I don't want you to change anything, but just watch and see what takes place when you are caught by being right.

In addition, another way to work with this, what Elizabeth Bennett said yesterday in theme discussion about not explaining would fit very well with work on today's theme. If we could take that upon ourselves today to not explain, and see how that helps us.

We are here in the middle of the week; we have taken time away from our lives. Somehow when we come here on these work weekends we tend to get lost in them. We have separated ourselves from the world, which has its advantages; it also has its disadvantages. I believe that many of the people who come here, perhaps all of you, have a real familiarity with the sense of urgency that Mr. Bennett talked about a long time ago. The urgency continues. Dr. Lester mentioned it earlier this week in relation to the world and I think we bring that with us here. But then, when we have gotten into the week, gotten involved in our personal sicknesses and our personal problems or conflicts, that we may have lost this sense of urgency and how it connects back with the world.

I was hoping that we can keep in mind that looking at this being right goes beyond just an exercise, it can function as a severe limiting factor in the ecological sense that may not always be visible, and so importantly, can create tunnel vision or the narrowing of possibilities. So if we can just keep that generally in mind.

Lynn Milliman

OBLIGATION

Today's theme is associated with Work effort and struggle.

As I free myself from slavery to the lower world, I pass through the door and I have a glimpse of freedom. This is associated with the five obligolnian strivings that relate to a way of listening inwardly and outwardly that we are not accustomed to. The strivings have a beginning within my experience. Try to find a starting point within your experience that will be of value not only to yourself but to all of us.

1. Strive to better your health.
2. Maintain your strength, do not waste effort.
3. Understand what you are here for this weekend and share.
4. Give a sense of duty and responsibility.
5. Make a pathway of service as you go about your assigned task and use that task to observe desires and non desires. Transfer ordinary work into Work being, by paying attention and having several aims for the day associated with habit and attitude.

Friday May 17, 1990

HOW DOES SPONTANEITY OR FREEDOM FROM CONDITIONING KEEP THE THREAD OF MEANING IN LOOKING, NOTICING, DEPTH OF VISION AND COLOUR ALIVE IN MY WORK.

8/5/89 First day.

At the Seminar. First day, the sounding of the do. I must struggle to formulate an aim, my aim, for being here. How can I see the impediments that arise in the way of spontaneity which sever me from the threads of meaning?

2nd day

Small aim: to find my tongue relaxed, not pressed against my teeth, at some stop exercise.

To find a home, a place to live, within myself. (as well as externally!)

I can still my body. I can become aware of my breath. I can look at the thoughts passing through my head. And then, perhaps, I can respond.

I wish to be able to formulate my own aim or aims.

Re: the kitchen at work. to know what I am going to cook(4) and (8) looking at the meal.

So far, even the act of concerned mother is sometimes, just that, a role. What makes it real? It is valuable to know that it is all roles. Then what is the meaning?

There is the fear I feel.

And when I am afraid there is that choice of retreating into the avenues of my own safe, familiar, thoughts.

3rd day

ASSOCIATED WITH THE THEME OF SPONTANEITY, HOW CAN I UTILIZE THE THREE FOODS AS EXPERIENCE FOR THE NEXT BRICK IN THE BUILDING OF MY FOUNDATION.

taking in impressions is like saying "camera, set, action!"

foundation: that which within me is able to be still

4th day

Flash: This Might Be My Life (and not just a hazy dream)

The Spirit

"When the spirit moves me"

There is now the distinct sense that the work is getting done.

The Spirit World has a

certain TRANSPARENCY

When I open my eyes there is much to see. Again and again, when I have faith-I am fulfilled.

What is Trust

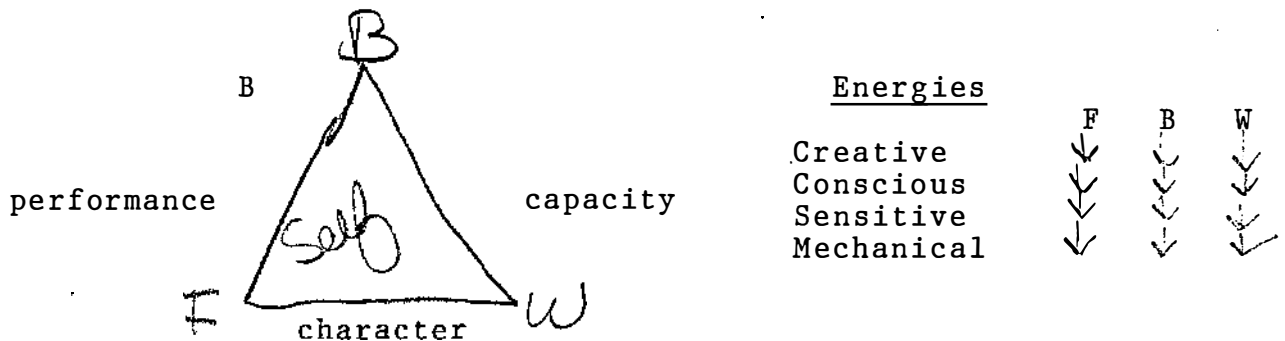
Inward or Outward Surrender.

The Outer Pattern. It is important of use the mind to learn the external pattern

But I do not think I trust myself.

I am learning to trust forces outside myself, to trust that what happens is somehow supposed to happen, and I am learning-a little- to keep myself out of it....

And I must say, no, I do not trust myself. There is that part of me that does not want to be.



Take the stage, say your lines cleanly and with precision. Then, when your role ends, get off quickly.

Don't pay attention to unimportant voices. "clean your house of unpleasant emotional states associated with identification"

The role I'm playing is freeing me---D.Hirsch said at theme mgt.

5th Day Theme of 2nd Line of Work

I went to the playsite, the whole cast meeting for a complete runthrough.

We're all scattered.

I did not find any of it interesting. I was glad to go to the playsite because I wanted to find my lost shoes and my rock for the Indian circle. I saw nothing. I did not think I was needed, except to sit and watch it. After the play the children ran down a path to the river. I followed them.

It seemed to me that everybody was identified with their roles. But I was too identified with my negativity to enter into and enjoy playing my role.

All Life is One and Everything that Lives is Holy
Something to do with how can I bear feeling like a worm.

This morning we were all so wonderful
This afternoon I am not capable of caring for anybody
We completed one level
Now, to get up to the next level.....

6th day

Finding my Place in the Work and How that can help me Grow

This place (the Cornelius', Cave Junction) is a garden where essence can grow and personality cannot.

Assuming our Roles

7th day

What Am I Doing With My Energies

The Food has been prepared and cooked
today we serve it (garnishes prepared, tables decorated and
set, seating arrangements made)

Indian costume

black pullover
ballet shoes, socks
orange skirt
hair down
eyeliner, powder

Change

grey skirt
lacey white blouse
black sandals
hair up, lipstick

(I inwardly berate myself, that's good, that's wrong, that's right...
To let the wind come through-the spirit- I must free myself of
all that)

I need to Remember

the guests for whom food is being served
the food of impressions
-what are the real gifts?
food of impressions
ideas
feelings

ALL we can do is trust in
the spirit

The Great Work

that includes being aware of myself and my own part
it includes MANIFESTATION

stepping aside from my ordi-
nary self and allowing the
meaning of this play to be
expressed through what I am
thinking, feeling, doing (BEING)

Observe my movements

Listen to my words and songs

Where are my energies going

BE CAREFUL

what am I doing, am I feeding hunger of world, community, myself...

Page 4.

8th day WHERE AM I NOW

She fell asleep at midnight and found herself in rags, doing chores for the ugly sisters.

Sounding the do for the next octave.

Taking in - the grains of sand must be taken in to make pearls

She must be awakened again and again and again and again....to be dressed and gotten ready for the ball.

We need to "encompass the existence of both the ugly sisters in us as well as our Cinderella"...without which there'd be no story, no Cinderella, no Prince Charming.

To be awake to take in Impressions which are food for Cinderella (the ugly sisters can feed themselves)

Before the small group of I's that love the Work may proceed on the Road to Wisdom, It is necessary for me to find someone with magnetic center to take my place on the first rung of the Ladder to Wisdom. By this, I must realize that the Work octave necessitates more and more outward considering, and a new attitude toward the Trogoautoegocratic process. Lord Pentland stated that meetings here were considered as experiments, and as you all know, experiments may either fail or succeed. Failure is entropy, but I would like to be a part of a group having a thirst and striving for self perfection of Essence Being. Considerable amount of suffering and payment must be realized. This manifestation the Work call Conscious Labors and Intentional Sufferings by becoming aware of Genuine Being Duty.

This possibility only exists when I am awake, which makes for change of myself and not change of my life. One of the sayings at the Institute at Fontainebleau was "Work here is not for work's sake, but as a means." One of the things to try when here is work on your negative emotions. Try to think about the difficulties of keeping this Center alive. What is my aim in coming here and what is the aim of this center or place to work on myself? By not being Third Force blind, thus realizing the necessity for living the Work and helping to complete the Aim octave associated with higher centers. Or, perhaps I should say, working to prepare the lower centers for the reception of the higher centers. Reciprocal Maintenance, As above, so below, second and third being foods, ordering of the octave, and the six triads with an end in view.

The Collected State Exercise

The collected or 3 centre balanced state is both one of the simplest and most difficult exercises. In some groups it is known as "The exercise", and is practically the sole exercise used so one cannot overestimate its importance. The posture is important with the palms on the knees to aid this "non-emanating" state.

All three centres must be active. It is not a self-indulgent state, it can almost be said to be the opposite of meditation. This is one of the hardest exercises and nobody can do it straight off, and it should only be given for a few weeks and then put aside for 3 or 4 months before returning to it.

There are several ways of introducing it. After a good full deep relaxation, you can say, "Picture to yourself that you are surrounded by an atmosphere that extends to about a yard away from your body. Through this atmosphere emanations enter and leave your presence. The collected or non-emanating state is one in which nothing enters or leaves your atmosphere. Your attention including your thoughts must be kept within your immediate presence, Here and Now. Maintain this as long as possible."

Another method: after a full and deep relaxation, "Put your attention outside this room, listen to the sounds, the wind, the birds, the traffic, etc. Shift your attention now inside the whole house but outside this room. Now separate yourself from that and have your attention only inside this room. Now detach and separate from that and bring yourself with your attention to within your own atmosphere a zone extending about a yard from your body. Now separate from that and be with your attention on your body, you are sitting on the floor, you have hair on your head, clothes on your body. Now enter inside your body, become aware of its whole presence, become aware of your feelings and let them quiet down, become aware of your thoughts and let them quieten also. Now separate from your sensation of your presence, your feelings and your thoughts.

This exercise is usually shown after the 60 point exercise. It is a basic preparatory exercise and should be well established, then it can be done more quickly, about 10 minutes as a basic preparation before practically all the other morning exercises.

Check posture, spine erect, head balanced on spine. Start with relaxing the eyes. Stretch your eyes to the right, to the left, up and down without moving the head. Hold your eyes stretched in each direction for about 5 seconds. Relax the face, nose, lips, tongue, throat and back of neck. Relax the right shoulder and move your attention down your arm with the impulse of relaxation. When you have relaxed all your fingers, transfer your attention to your right leg and again travel down the leg with your attention and with an impulse of relaxation to your right foot. When the right foot is fully relaxed, go with your attention to your left shoulder. Now as you did with your right arm and leg, do with your left arm and leg. When the left leg is fully relaxed, let your attention travel from your throat down your back and torso and abdomen with the impulse of relaxation paying special attention to your breathing which should be rhythmic, deep and smooth.

Now begin sensing from the eyes and let sensation follow the same path as you followed with relaxation. Use your attention for this.

Now put your attention on the soles of both feet and keep it there until a strong sensation is well established. Let this sensation flow and rise up through the feet, the lower legs and thighs to the body as if filling a vessel with water. Let this continue up the body until the whole torso is filled to the shoulders. Then put your attention on the finger tips of both hands and the palms sensing the whole of both hands. When this is well established, let it rise up both arms to the shoulders until it joins to the filled torso and legs. Continue this filling across the shoulders up the neck and finally to the top of your head. Take your time for all this. Do not rush.

Now sense your whole presence. Let sensation be distributed evenly through your whole body from the crown of your head to the soles of your feet.

This exercise in the beginning takes about one half hour.

Blending Exercises

The following exercises are for introducing blending: 1. I AM, 2. LORD HAVE MERCY, 3. GOSPODEE POMELOE (more complex Lord Have Mercy).

I AM Blending Exercise. Begin with a reminder about breath and breathing and about finer substances in the air which we call "active elements" and how these can be blended with existant energies. After relaxation and filling sense the right arm strongly taking sufficient time to establish this (thus this exercise can only be shown to students who have worked at sensing). Evoke the feeling of 'I' in the breast. Put your attention on your breathing, follow a particle of air from nostrils to lungs. The breathing should be slow, rythmic and unforced. In the inbreath feel 'I', on the outbreath blend with the sensation 'AM' in the limb. Repeat this for 1 or 2 minutes, then move to the next limb, following the sequence, right arm, right leg, left leg, left arm. Then start one limb round, right leg, left leg, left arm, right arm. Then left leg, left arm, right arm, right leg. Then left arm, right arm, right leg and left leg. If there is time this sequence can be reversed beginning with the left leg.

The simple Lord Have Mercy Exercise. Begin with relaxation and filling. Put attention on breathing and follow a particle of the air down through the nostrils and throat to the lungs. Introduce a short pause between inhalation and exhalation. The pause increases the intake of active elements to our being - bodies. Now arouse the feeling in the breast of "Lord have Mercy"; grant me access to the unconditioned world. This in itself is a positive feeling and if properly evoked opens channels to the other world. (Or one can reach it inwardly by feeling a state of Remorse of Conscience which will awaken the Unconditioned.) Now sense the right arm strongly. Time should be given to allow this to be worked at. Now without the pause breathe in "Lord" and on the outbreath blend the feeling in the breast with the sensation energy in the limb. This should be done for 1 or 2 minutes and then move to the next limb in the same sequence as the previous exercise.

The 9-point Exercise

The senses perceive by way of vibrations but man also has an inner organ of perception which perceives by direct contact. This is done with a thread of substance emanating from the forehead. This substance is a form of blended energies called Hanbledzoin and is created by the blending of the energies of thought, feeling and sensation. This organ of perception is located in the centre of the forehead and it sends energies outward as opposed to the centre of the ~~heart~~ breast which enables our perceptions to enter deeper into our own being. This direct perception transcends time and space.

This organ of perception is sometimes called the "Third Eye ."

The 9-point exercise is an initiating exercise and it should not be shown or introduced for at least 6 months until a thorough experience and understanding of blending has been achieved. Begin the exercise with relaxation and filling. (If there is time it is beneficial to also do the 6-point exercise. Seven breaths is sufficient. This also may be done in the middle of this exercise if one feels particularly tired.) Now put your attention on the centre of your forehead. Keep it there until you feel a vibration or a stirring of something. Bring to this the energies of sensation, feeling and thought and blend them. (Blending in a limb gives presence, blending in the breast gives a feeling of "I", Being. Blending in the head gives us an energy we can use outside ourselves. Never use this energy for personal gain or for achieving anything yourself.) Having really established this vibration or something in the centre of your forehead, be sure it is not just sensing. Move your head so that your forehead is directed at your left foot. Send out a thread of substance, you may even be able to be directly aware of it, to the left foot, and enter into it. This, when established, is quite different from sensing the foot. Take your time. Now draw the thread back to your forehead and feel direct contact with "what it is to be a foot" "footness". Return your head to the forward position. Repeat this for: your left knee, left shoulder, left hand, navel, right shoulder, right foot, right

9-point exercise, ~~page 8~~

hand. This should take about 30 minutes. Later , one can direct the thread without moving the head.

This exercise is used as a preparatory exercise before going on to more complicated exercises. It is the most verifiable, and does not lend itself to so much fantasy and imagination as other exercises using "The Third Eye" as it uses one's own body in one's own time.

Each point should be experienced as a "Present Moment".

THE EXERCISE OF THE PERMANENT IMMOVABLE POINT

Begin with a good relaxation and filling with sensation. Now become aware of life in your body, your heartbeat, your breathing, the flow of blood in the body. Now become aware of your associations; don't try to stop them just become aware of them. Now put your attention on your feelings; they may be weak or strong. This body is not "I", I am linked to it by sensation, by feeling, by thought. Become aware of an atmosphere surrounding you through which vibrations enter and leave your presence. Become ~~XXXXXX~~ still and collected so that nothing enters or leaves this atmosphere. (Stay in this collected state for about 5 minutes before continuing with the next part of the exercise.) Now visualize or select a point in front of you and then hold your attention on it. "This point is ETERNAL-FIXED." Now see yourself in front of this point as present, as fixed as the point, keeping out associations and external influences.

This state, this awareness "I am here and I am as stable and permanent as this point" to be maintained for at least 20 minutes.

Relaxation exercise--Should be given for at least one week prior to 60-point exercise.

We begin with ATTENTION. This in these sort of exercises is our major tool. Relaxation is all important and is a necessary preparation for all the exercises we shall be doing. Start always with the eyes. Stretch eyes to the right and hold there 3 or 4 seconds, now forward. To the left and hold, forward, up and hold stretching- forward, down hold, forward. Now all this must be done without moving the head. Now circle with the eyes, to the right, up, left and down, now the other way to the left, up, right and down. Now cast the eyes to a point about 3 feet in front of you and relax them; allow your vision to become wide. Now using your attention relax your face, nose, ears, lips, tongue, throat and back of neck. Relax the right shoulder and move attention down arm, elbow, wrist to the hand with the impulse of relaxation. Relax each finger in turn. Now put your attention on left shoulder and relax it and repeat as you did for the right arm. When both arms are fully relaxed continue with your attention down your torso. Relax your breathing, it should be free and easy with nothing forced. Relax the diaphragm and the solar plexus and then the abdomen. Now with your attention, travel down your right leg, relaxing as you go until the whole leg is relaxed. Then repeat this for the left leg.

Now with your attention, scan from the top of your head to the soles of your feet, your whole body relaxing tensions that you may find. You may use your breath to help you do this allowing tensions to flow out with the out breath as it leaves the body. This may be repeated 2 or 3 times.