



# **THEOSOPHY AND THE NEW PSYCHOLOGY**

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# THEOSOPHY AND THE NEW PSYCHOLOGY

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psychically developed man is not a vision which comes through a stimulation of the sense centres in the astral body, but from the chakras; and the man who is using the one would be the last man in the world to be using the other, which is only wanted, so to speak, on the downward path of the bridge, in order that physical impacts may reach the thinker and give him information. I have never known a case of crystal-gazing which went beyond the possibilities of the lower astral plane. It is true that you can by practice see, but you do it at a serious risk. I strongly advise you not to go largely into crystal-gazing, popular as it is, for although you may gain some small results from it, you will be shutting yourselves out from the higher possibilities.

Turn from that line of evolution to the Raja Yoga system. That starts quite differently. It starts with thought, with a process of meditation; and before that process of meditation, which is the beginning of the Raja Yoga, there is a preliminary course to be followed by the man desiring to practise. He must to a certain extent have purified his physical body, not because he is going to use that body to stimulate the astral, but because, as the powers of the consciousness grow, they will work down on to the physical body, and unless it be prepared to receive their workings it is likely to be injured, and hysteria, diseases of all kinds, breakdown of the physical health, sometimes even lunacy may result. All these things have been observed and studied in India, and it has been found by practical experience that if a man starts these methods with an unprepared body, while he may get some very remarkable results by the play of the consciousness downwards, he will very soon break up as regards his health, and he will become a nervous wreck. The purification of the body is effected by an elaborate system of food, drink, sleep, and so on, of which the centre note is moderation not starvation, not lying awake so that the nerves are overstrained, but moderation in everything. The kind of food the Raja Yogi takes is to be satvic, a term generally translated "pure", but which I think is better translated as "rhythmic"; that is to say, food in which the vibrations are regular, harmonious, balanced. This is based on their theory of matter having three attributes: one, Inertia, which predominating in the human body, would mean sloth and heaviness, so that foods tending to produce this quality are barred. So also all foods that tend to produce ill-regulated activity, restlessness, in which predominates the second of the attributes of matter, Mobility, are

barred. That leaves the foods in which the quality of Rhythm predominates. A whole system relating to the food-stuffs is built up to help in the preparation of the body to vibrate in answer to the higher consciousness when it is wanted.

The next step is the complete mastery of the emotions, so that a man may never be carried away by them. A man must have made some advance along this line before it is thought safe to teach him the methods of Yoga itself. When he has thus partly purified his body, and learned to control his emotions, there comes in the training of the mind, the "great enemy" as they call it; because all the ordinary use of the mind is to run out to the outer world, and that mind is usually regarded as the best which moves most rapidly from one thing to another, which is able to grasp one thing and then turn to another, and so on. Now those qualities are exceedingly hindering when you come to the evolution of the higher consciousness, and the Raja Yogi turns all his efforts to the evolution of this higher consciousness, which demands the quieting of the mind, in order that it may shine forth. So his practice consists partly in the steadying of the mind, which is done by the use of the imagination to a large extent, a mental picture being formed and the attention fixed on it; then withdrawn from all the picture but one point, and fixed upon that; that point finally being dropped so that the mind remains absolutely still. The difficulties here in the West with regard to this method are these: that the mind is more restless than it is in the East, by the line of evolution; and again, that people expect results too rapidly. The first result of trying to fix the mind is to discover that it is much more restless than you thought it was. A mind which thought itself fairly steady is found to be restless and all over the place, when it is ordered to fix itself on a thing which does not attract it. Then, again, you must practise this for years before you get a really satisfactory result, and that is a thing which seems rather long to the hurrying and busy life we find here in the West. If you have done it some lives before, you will do it soon now; but if this is the first life, it will be a weary task, but it is inevitably necessary if you desire to grow along the path that means wisdom, power and service. When the mind has grown fairly steady, so that it can be reduced to quietude and kept there without thinking, then comes the time when the higher consciousness asserts itself, and with that one enters on the real practice of Yoga.

In addition to the fixing and gradual emptying of the mind in this way, there will be considerable practice simply in concentration, keeping the mind on a single thought, not so much now on a mental picture as on an idea, and, as it were, sucking out of that idea everything it has in it, by a curious process in which the idea takes possession of the man. What really happens is that the mental body moulds itself into the form of the idea, so that the idea becomes part of the mental body of the thinker; and when he can do that, those fixed thoughts mould and shape, and create the organs in the mental body necessary for the work which he has to do. When those organs are partially developed, then the thought-power comes down through them on to the astral, and builds there again the organs that it requires. You see you are coming down, along the true line of evolution - the higher builds the lower and this more highly developed consciousness, having shaped the mental body, proceeds to the shaping of the astral; and as the man proceeds with his meditation and concentration day by day, the thought comes down on to the physical plane, and shapes the brain, also for the expression of the higher powers. And when the thought-currents at last pour down, they find an instrument which is able to vibrate without injury; and in addition to that, the whole of the man's previous thinking has improved the cells of the brain, has enlarged them and made them very much more complex, creating a better instrument both in the organisation of the cells by the whole course of thinking, and by the power of vibrating to the subtler currents when they come down from the higher planes.

Now that is the practice of Raja Yoga put in a general way. Laborious, difficult, demanding a great sacrifice of time and labour, it must become the first thing in life ere one can expect success. But, after all, that is only what is true of every other science. The man who is going to be a really great mathematician must give his life to it; the man who is going to be a great scientist of any kind makes the science in which he chooses to be an expert the one object of his life, bending all his efforts that way; and can you expect the science of the soul, hardest, most complex, and most subtle of all sciences, shall be mastered with less of effort than is given to the ordinary science, which works in the physical plane and by the physical brain? If you think of it, you will see that this only can be the rule of evolution here as elsewhere that the man who would really be a Raja Yogi must make it the object of his life. And as he proceeds in this

way, notice the sequence: consciousness unfolding first, and then the organs of the body shaped for its expression. That means that whenever the organ is able to work, the consciousness will be able to understand and master. It means that the man has evolved within, and so will be able to deal with all that meets him on the different planes of existence; and as he enters into one plane after another, he will find that the powers that he requires on that plane are evolved in his consciousness, and that none of the mechanism that has been created by their use goes beyond, in its power of response, the powers of the consciousness to understand. I grant that it is much more difficult than the other plan; but then it takes you somewhere. It really quickens our evolution and makes our lives nobler and grander than otherwise they can possibly be. It is the road of evolution traced by the Divine Will for the whole of humanity; and all that the Raja Yoga does is to quicken evolution; it does not turn aside from it, nor go against it.

Along this line of meditation and of practice it is that the great Teachers of the past have gone. It is the road that They have proved to be safe for human feet to tread. And the prize that lies at the end of the efforts is great beyond all speaking.

I have been talking here all the time of this New Psychology; but the understanding of that is as nothing, is but, as it were, child's play to those who are working for the evolution of these higher and nobler faculties. For there is only one motive that makes the strength, the courage, and perseverance to follow this toilsome road to its end, and that is the will to serve, and to become a channel of the Divine Will in evolution. You may tread part of that way with the desire to serve your separated self; you may find something of courage, endurance, and patience by the prizes of power held out to you along this path. But this also will fail as the difficulties grow greater; for the man who fixes his thoughts on power for the separated self is working against the Divine Will which works for unity, and although he may become splendidly intellectual, although he may develop to a great extent that body which for age after age is not born nor dies, he cannot touch the innermost life of the Spirit, which knows no separation, but lives by unity alone.

Along these paths of unfoldment I have mentioned, you are truly unfolding consciousness and form. But the highest path of all, on which

the eyes of those who tread these paths are set, is that spiritual evolution which means the recognition that all lives are one and not separate; that all beings live but in the Self, and the Self in them; that knowledge which is of the highest, in which all are seen as one and not as "others". So that the man who reaches the threshold of the spiritual world sees in that world himself indeed, but himself as part of a common, universal life; realises that all the forms that lie on the lower planes are his so far as his life and his powers are concerned, and that the one particular form that he has been evolving by his struggles and his labours is in very truth no more his, as a separated thing, than any of the other objects which he sees around him in the universe, whose life is one. So that it is not for him, as his eyes open to the greatness of the spiritual world, to see differences in those around him any more, nor to think of himself as other than they. The criminal in his lowest degradation to him is part of himself, and the form of the criminal is his form as much as his own highly evolved one. It is the glory of such a life that it can share any form, however low, however base or vile, and, pouring part of itself into that form, can raise it a little higher than by its own unaided efforts it could climb. That it is to be a Saviour of the world; to know no difference, to look on the saint and criminal with equal eyes, as both manifestations of the Divine, as much identified with the one as with the other - perhaps even more with the lower than with the higher, because the lower needs aid and effort more than does the higher and the more intelligent. That it is to be a Saviour of the world: to be wise, but only that the wisdom may go out among all the ignorant and make every ignorant man a little wiser because one has known; to go out among the foul and the impure, having gained purity, and make them a little cleaner because one has risen to the heights of purity; to learn, but only to share; to gain, but only to give; to rise to the highest in order to be able to touch most effectively the lowest. For this is true that the higher you climb, the more easily you can touch the lowest; not by stooping down to them, but by feeling your own unity and identity with them. It is the part of the truly spiritual man to feel himself one with the sinner, and to share his own purity with him. That is what is meant by the spiritual life, beyond all intellect and beyond all enveloping form; that is the true glory of Divine manhood; that the reality of the spiritual life. Worthless is all unfoldment, worthless all swift evolution, worthless all development, unless it subserves this one supreme end - to put an end to separateness; to think no more of others

as different from one's Self, but to know that the whole universe, inasmuch as it is in its Creator, is also in every life that is one with Him; to know that, as we share the Divine life, we come nearest to every form in the universe; for true is it only of that which is of Spirit: "Closer is he than breathing, nearer than hands and feet."

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