

EVERYDAY QUESTIONS
ON PATANJALI'S YOGA APHORISMS

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WHAT is the real and essential difference between Eastern and Western psychology? That is, aside from the basis of reincarnation, what would be a few primary differences, taking Patanjali as a type of Eastern psychology?

The *essential* difference between the two is described in a few words of Chapter XIV of *Notes on the Bhagavad-Gita*:

Both abound in classifications; those of the East are much more numerous than those of the West and cover a far wider field; Western psychology in its classifications refers solely to mental states. The psychology of the Gita and the ancient sages classifies the *moral* states, treating of the mental states as mere effects produced by moral conditions (p. 197).

A psychology which is founded on the study of moral conditions is immediately and practically related to conduct. Eastern psychology is therefore dynamic, not merely descriptive. The *Gita*, rich in oriental psychology, is above all a treatise on *action*. Its purpose is to assist the reader in deciding what he *ought* to do. Thus true study of Eastern psychology is impossible without living it as well. In her article, "Psychic and Noëtic Action," H.P.B. identifies the two great springs of human action, the higher and the lower. It is meant as a practical guide in the struggle for self-knowledge.

The classifications of Western psychology deal almost entirely with the psychic nature and the psycho-physical correlations of the lower man. It sets forth many details of psychic stimulus and response and describes typical human behavior in individuals and in the mass. But Western psychology has

no general doctrine of the nature of man, no clear concept of soul, no serious consideration of the moral struggle. An apt admission of the confusion of modern psychology is found in the words of the late William McDougall, himself a leader in the field. "It remains," he wrote in 1931, "a chaos of dogmas and opinions diametrically opposed, a jangle of discordant schools and sects; a field exploited by quacks and charlatans of every sort, preying upon the ignorance of a deeply interested public which knows not which way to turn for authoritative guidance."

Eastern psychology is the study of the mind as a principle in itself, in its relation to external and internal experience, and in relation to the Spirit or the Self. By understanding of the mind, the student learns to overcome its limitations—its "modifications," as Patanjali calls them—and thereby becomes a free being. This freedom is identical with knowledge, for it is the product of knowledge. True psychology, therefore, is inseparable from philosophy; is, in fact, a department of philosophy. In the West, psychology is the enemy of philosophy and the ally of the grossest materialism. It is this materialism of academic psychology which has delivered "a deeply interested public" into the hands of "quacks and charlatans of every sort," as McDougall says. There can be no true psychology without a philosophy of soul.

Is it possible for the public to be enlightened as to the psychic and mental enslavement which follows the misuse of psychological laws and principles?

Mental enslavement, except for its extreme subtlety, is like any other enslavement. Its victims can be enlightened if they are beginning to be aware of their slavery and want to be free. There is a high degree of enlightenment today regarding the evils of drink, but this does not prevent the increasing use of liquor in modern society. Public enlightenment regarding false psychologies and harmful psychic practices will depend upon the public desire for knowledge on these subjects. It is probable that a *general* interest in true psychology will result only as a reaction to these abuses, to the excesses described by H.P.B. in the *Five Messages to American Theosophists*.

Meanwhile, students of the present day may spread the enlightenment

provided in Theosophy as widely as they can, so that the suffering and the disillusioned will have opportunity to find the truth after bitter experience starts them on the quest.

If the moral nature is to be developed ahead of the intellectual, will it be necessary to change our entire educational system as it exists today?

The task of subordinating intellectual to moral development is accomplished by individuals, not by “systems,” educational or otherwise. Educational theory and practice may place obstacles in the way of natural development, but it cannot prevent men of will from reaching to the truth. When enough individuals place a higher value on moral integrity than on intellectual facility, the educational system will undergo the natural modifications required to introduce a similar emphasis in the schools. Systems reflect the thoughts of men, they do not create them, except as “conditioning” operates as an influence in all human relations. Great moral changes come about, not by changing “systems,” but by creative thought and action which lead men to rely on themselves instead of systems. Systems are only social habits—no better, no worse, than habits of any other sort.

May the failure of Christianity be rightly attributed to false psychology, in view of the fact that its dogmas have destroyed self-reliance and all sense of individual responsibility?

Christianity failed because it contracted the universal *Christos* principle, potential in every man, to a single historical personality, and made the moral evolution of all dependent upon the achievement of one. As the questioner intimates, this undermined self-reliance among Christians, with the logical effect of weakening individual responsibility. Modern psychology is materialistic, largely because of the betrayal of the Western world by its priests, who so degraded and distorted the original psychology of the Gnostic Christians that modern thinkers felt it necessary to make an entirely new beginning in psychology, leaving out the soul, and even the mind, in order to avoid any resemblance to hated theological dogmas!

Why does Mr. Judge, in the Preface to the Aphorisms, speak of the mind as an "organ" Is not an organ "physical"?

The mind is called an organ by Mr. Judge for the reason that mind is a substantial and dynamic principle, and not the mere abstraction of cognitive functions which modern psychology would have us accept as its meaning. The *power* of Patanjali's psychological system is rendered into the Western idiom by Mr. Judge precisely in this way. He provides an "anatomy" of the mental principle, and blueprints the method of its control. His Preface makes clear that for him, Patanjali's teaching was not merely a "theory of knowledge," but *knowledge itself*. Euclidean certainty of these aphorisms challenges the reader to basic decisions. One does not "read" or dabble in Patanjali. This psychology has the precision of a treatise on engineering; obedience to its principles as stated is as crucial for soul-development as following the known laws of stress and strain in physical construction. The mind is the psycho-moral organ of the evolving ego. It is the link between Spirit and Matter, the principle of individuation, the source of all illusions and the means of overcoming them. Perfect control of the mind is the dynamic aspect of self-knowledge. Adeptship is simply the indivisible unity of mind and the spiritual will.
(*To be continued.*)

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THE mind, it is said, is constantly modified by the perceptions of the senses (p. xii). When the Soul is without concentration, it is similarly modified by the senses via the mind (p.3). When Soul is in control (xiii), is it the Mind or the Soul that controls sense? Aphorisms 35 and 36 in Book I raise this point.)

To say that "the soul has concentration" is to describe a condition under which the full energies of the matter-transcending self find active expression through the mind. Therefore, there is no separate control over the senses by either "soul" or "mind"—the controlling entity being indivisible as Atma-Buddhi-Manas.

The difference between the "higher nature" and the "lower nature" resides

in the power of creativity—first distinguishing mark of the self-conscious being. The “lower nature,” expressing itself actively through a form of intelligence we call “latent” manas, is simply *instinctual* in behavior. Instinctual intelligence is never creative, but rather *repetitive*. The modern school of behavioristic psychology has studied long and arduously the nature of instinctual intelligence and pronounced that intelligence is derived from a conditioning process. This is quite correct. The error of “behaviorism” from a Theosophical point of view is simply that such a description becomes misleading if a further, and in this case, unwarranted assumption is also made—that *all* intelligence is simply instinctual or repetitive, and that therefore all conditioning comes from *external* sources.

One of the “conditioning” factors in the formation of new habits of instinctual intelligence is the creative impulse of the Higher Man—the man who thinks in terms of progress and evolutionary growth—the man who is quite literally bored with a routine of sensations. New habits, on this view, are *formed from within* as the always new purposes of soul are given preference over the routinized purposes of the purely sensory self. It is only when the Buddhi-Manasic center of self-consciousness is afraid to attempt the evolutionary growth for which it nevertheless secretly hungers, that the energies of Buddhi flow back through a passive mind, serving no evolutionary purpose, yet temporarily vivifying sensory pleasure. But since a denial of the purposes of the inner self is implicit in this process, such intensifying of sensory pleasure is sufficiently frustrating to the soul nature to produce more actual neuroses than ever accrue from the too-stern disciplines over the lower self recommended by the “denial” theory of religious practice.

The Preface calls for sincere students and resolute students to gain the knowledge implied in Patanjali’s Yoga aphorisms. Is it possible that there are today theosophists with the stamina to become true occultists, in order to help the world in the present critical cycle? If so, what are they doing toward this end?

A text to answer this question might be Mr. Judge’s statement, that “the world of real occultists . . . goes on with the laborious process of sifting out the living germs from the masses of men. For occultists must be found and fostered

and prepared for coming ages when power will be needed and pretensions will go for nothing.”

Can we suppose that H.P.B. came simply to found a Movement of benevolent humanitarianism? The Third Object, read between the lines, or even as she stated its meaning in “Recent Progress in Theosophy” (see THEOSOPHY for October, pp. 445-46), suggests that the development of real occultists is the very heart of the Theosophic enterprise, for Brotherhood must not only spread as a sentiment; it must become a *power*. When it is realized that the first step on the path to occultism is a deliberate and thorough inventory of one’s qualifications for this high calling, then the self-imposed discipline of the Theosophic life may be recognized as being in fact that step. It would be well to refer to the article, “What Is Occultism?” printed in THEOSOPHY, VIII, 353, and to read Robert Crosbie on impersonality (*The Friendly Philosopher*, p. 127), for a better understanding of what Mr. Judge may mean by “the living germs” on whom the future of the Theosophical Movement, of all mankind, maybe, will depend.

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IT is said (Preface, xiii) that “Knowledge exists as an abstraction.” This is not clear. It seems that there could be no knowledge without the knowers of it. On the other hand, if knowledge exists without knowers, where does it exist. It is said that in the Astral Light are “all human actions and things, thoughts and circumstances fixed,” but how could they be regarded as an “abstraction”?

The “astral light” does *not* contain *knowledge*. Knowledge is a manasically-perceived relationship between the Buddhic element of the individual and “human actions and circumstances.” Such relationships always pertain to the “moral” aspects of human evolution which are simply the specifics of interdependence. But moral knowledge is never the exclusive possession of any individual, for moral knowledge resides in a grasp of *principles* that underlie all relationships. Principles are “abstract” because they may be and are applied in all directions—not just in certain specified instances—by the beings who seek to embody them.

A principle is not possessed by an individual—he *uses* the principle, and what he “possesses” is simply the sum total of results caused by his application of the principle. Therefore, unless it is perceived that knowledge resides in the world of principles rather than in the realm of specific actions, the only solution to the human moral problem would be an enforced conformity to categorically “good” actions. This latter tendency, the “materialization” of the moral equation, characterizes all revealed or authoritarian religions—and moves towards the stultification of individual growth in the attainment of knowledge. Knowledge, when attained, is in a definitive sense “abstract,” because it resides in a grasp of principles rather than in a memorization of events. *There is no knowledge without the grasp of a principle, and a principle is abstract, for the simple reason that if it is a principle it cannot be limited by any single embodiment.*

All real scientific knowledge is “abstract” in origin, for it depends upon the establishment of *laws*. To formulate a law means to discover a *principle* of relationship between apparently unrelated objects and motions. The knowledge of the scientist, measurable only by his discovery of abstract principle (since these principles never reside in objects or motions themselves), comes to him *as he grasps the principle*, not while he is engaged in sorting his “facts.”

The word “abstract” should also be related to the word “metaphysical.” Metaphysical realities, not physical realities, are primary. It is only by learning to think in terms of a metaphysical world of reality that man learns to raise himself above the instinctual level of animal behavior. Looking from below upward, all realities are very much “abstract,” but that fact makes their attainment more, rather than less, necessary.

In Aphorisms 2 to 13 (Book I), “Mind” is represented as an internal tactile organ which conveys the properties of an object to the Perceiver by forming itself in the image of the object. But this does not seem to be a “thinking” process, the latter being the action of logically relating the properties of an object to those of other objects or to successive states of the object itself. Thus the mind does not here appear as a “thinker,” but only as a perceptive organ. But again we are informed that the “soul” is in the same

modification as the mind when objects are being perceived. Thus the "soul" does not seem to be the "thinker" either. The ultimate "Perceiver" we recognize as Atma; but, between the perceiving organ and the "Perceiver" there seems to be a missing link of thought. Are we to find it in a parallel definition of the "principles"?

The word "mind," as used by Patanjali, has two meanings. The "tactile organ" is composed of a highly refined, tenuous substance—referred to in *The Secret Doctrine* as "fifth-state matter." But the man, the individual, is not a state of matter, nor a combination of states of matter. Man, as the center of self-consciousness, is the causative and governing balance *between* various states of matter. An illustration may be offered: A lever is not even a *potential* mover of three-thousand-pound stones. When man (or higher intelligence) is combined with the lever, the ability to handle such weights is at least potential. The lever of itself cannot move anything, nor can the man without the lever. Thus fifth-state matter is simply the medium through which mind must function, even though it (fifth-state matter) is also a conditioned aspect of intelligence itself, having the sixth, or Buddhic state of matter, for its substratum. *Individualized* mind is Buddhi aware of the potentialities of fifth-state matter, and, through that mirror, of the other states of matter represented by the psychical and physical principles. Such "joining" or incarnation, however, "produces" a new principle, a new form of being which may be called the self-conscious soul—although the being is not new, but only the *form* of being.

Patanjali asserts a philosophy of "dualism." Together with Krishna, as the latter sage speaks through the *Bhagavad Gita*, he teaches that all human beings have both a higher nature—which is the same in all, and a lower nature composed of elements which are the same in all. Man is the *balance struck* between the elements of the higher and lower natures, and therein resides the individuality. The man-entity is the center of being, capable of consciously establishing new relationships between the higher and lower elements of the states of matter which surround him. The mind, then, is both a "tactile organ" or substance, and *directive mind* or soul—the latter being more truly metaphysical. The term Buddhi-Manas, as differentiated from Kama-Manas, is used to make this distinction clear.

In Aphorisms 2 and 6, it is said (a) that one of the five modifications of the mind is Correct Cognition, and (b) that the modifications of the mind must be hindered if concentration is to be achieved. Thus it would seem that in order to be perfected in concentration, one must “hinder” Correct Cognition. Is, then, Correct Cognition undesirable?

“Correct cognition” employs the analyzing, weighing, measuring aspect of the mind. Intellect is indirect perception through cognition. Intuition is *direct* perception. The scientist, and also every man, can only use “correct cognition” as a means of opening up a passageway for intuition.

The ability to synthesize, wherein intuition is employed, is never a matter of establishing certain definitive, descriptive relationships between objects, events and beings. It is the manifestation of the power to combine essences of relationships in a single vision of meaning. If “concentration” is only upon the mechanical potentialities of the mind-organ, the tendency to see only one relationship at a time between objects will binder the synthesis of intuition. The mind, therefore, must be turned by philosophy to a consideration of *purpose*—*the why* of objective movements, in order to leave full opportunity for direct or synthesizing perception. This was the story, self-told, of Copernicus’ discovery that the earth revolved around the sun.

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IN notes on Aphorism 17 (page 4): When “all lower subjects and objects are lost sight of, and nothing remains but the cognition of the self,” does it mean a condition in which the will is, or is not, active?

In simple psychological terms, the only inhibition of the will is anxiety or fear. And man’s fear is never fear of a *thing*, but simply doubt of his ability to meet the “thing” if it should confront him. Doubt of oneself and fear of oneself are the anxieties of ignorance. No man who faces and knows himself is “afraid.” Dissatisfied with his present state he may be, but in such a case dissatisfaction is but a prelude to an invocation of will to correct matters. Death is “feared”

when knowledge of the permanence of self is lacking or incomplete. Thus fearlessness is the first quality assigned by Krishna as a requisite of successful discipleship—for only when a man realizes the inexhaustible power of Soul can he fully release the will and attain concentration.

Meditation represents the quality of steadiness in mental and moral states which must be the accompaniment of a will grown strong. The common forms of will are not in *action* during meditation, but they are present in a very vital sense—since their combined potential energies are being reconstituted for newer and more meaningful expression. This *is* the action of Soul, the regeneration and reconstitution of the will.

The full power of Soul resides in the bonds of spiritual interdependence which reach out to and include all living things. All beings are sources of our “individual” strength, though they are such sources only because they are united in “the divine unity” — the One Self, the Universal Will. Thus attention engrossed in failures, doubts and ignorances is but a “hindrance.” The will of the adept becomes fully active, because there is no corner of the wide universe where he fears to enter. Will, as the force of Spirit, moves in and from all beings in all states and conditions. But will, in the individual, is often sundered, disparted, while it can be *integral* and concentrated.

Aphorism 21 (page 10): “The attainment of abstract meditation is speedy, in the case of the hotly impetuous.” It does not seem natural that the “hotly impetuous” would be capable of attaining the state of abstract meditation. Why should not a calmer, steadier nature be better fitted to attain that state?

Use of the term “hotly impetuous” would seem to first remind students that nothing is accomplished without passion. The fact that there are many kinds and qualities of “passions” is only to say that even a Buddha had first to *desire* to move toward universal understanding. The kingdom of heaven is always taken by violence, for there comes a time in the psychological life of every man when he must throw all trivial cautions to the seven winds. Yet it is necessary to remind ourselves that Patanjali is not implying that the person who is hotly impetuous *in his relations to others* can reach “abstract meditation.”

He is the man “hotly impetuous” in respect to his own inner battle. To others, gentleness, calmness—to oneself, fire and steel.

Yet even when the state of abstract meditation is attained, this state is but a field for future action, a condition of mind which can be used wisely or not depending upon the degree of maturity of the being who has reached that state. The state of meditation differs for each individual according to *why* he has sought to reach it. If the “hotly impetuous” one desires the state as an acquisition, for instance, he will *never* attain it fully. If he desires it because he wishes to realize inner potentialities for the benefit of others as well as himself, his impetuosity may be simply a disinclination to be held forever in bondage to the energies of Kama.

Aphorism 17: Just how or what would be the thoughts of one who is pondering on the highest powers of the mind “together with truth in the abstract”?

The “highest powers of the mind” provide the soul with the *metaphysical* “contours” of relationships with other selves. The mind, when limited to functioning directly through the physical brain, can never directly perceive relationships between beings, since its sight is limited to the *material effects* of relationships and fails to illumine the fundamental *nature* of the beings involved.

“Truth in the abstract” might be regarded as representing the spiritual relationships between beings. The truth becomes constantly more “abstract,” but at the same time, more “real,” with each new awakening to enlightenment, since in the final analysis—which is reduction of all to One Spirit—beings are not “related” at all, but identical in Atma. Therefore the highest faculties of mind begin operation from a Buddhist perception of the One, and proceed downward in consideration of the other “principles”—which comprise the “differences” between individual beings. The highest use of the mind proceeds, then, from this *deductive* basis, the *inductive* operation of intellectual faculties serving in proper balance only when the One Self of all creatures is the internal point of departure for all reasoning. The favoring of “deductive” reasoning, however, is a dangerous doctrine in an age corrupted by the acceptance of

specific dogmas, unless it be made clear that there is only one basis which can be trusted for deductive use of the mind—the basis of an all-pervasive metaphysical unity in spirit.

Aphorism 50: Would worry be considered self-reproductive thought in the sense of Aphorism 50, and also what about the endless going over of past actions, usually to try to find justification for the acts performed Would not this be analogous to a kamalokic condition, except that one meditating thus would have the chance to “pull out” of the state, whereas in kama-loka the initial energy has to be exhausted there, the will being inactive?

Worry is not *genuinely* self-reproductive, for it is always sustained by fear of the encroachment of *external* factors. Self-reproductive thought is *inner* generation. Self-reproductive thought, in the sense of this aphorism, means *spiritual ideas*, constantly generating and regenerating themselves from the inexhaustible reservoir of Universal Will, located in all that which is informed by Spirit. Kama-loka is only apparently a fully subjective state. Actually it has been produced from former concerns about external things—all those things less than spirit and soul. Its substance—that is, its apparent reality—is simply the inevitable crystallization into semi-substantial form of ideas based on incorrect cognition. Kama-loka is no more self-reproductive than is an astral or physical corpse. It is possessed of *residual* energy, not creative energy, and will pass out of existence as soon as the magnetic currents which are its substratum lose their momentum.

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APHORISMS 33, 35-45 (Book I): What is the function of the virtues in the attainment of Soul-knowledge? A contrast between the Christian idea of the virtues and Patanjali's treatment would be helpful.

The fundamental distinction between Patanjali's "virtues" and those traditionally associated with Christianity clearly lies in the fact that for Patanjali "benevolence" and "tenderness" are *means* to the end of individual mastery

over everything from the “atomic to the infinite.” The Christian seems to have a historic propensity for regarding the virtues as ends in themselves, or at least, as attainments which automatically bring the reward of a completely passive existence in heaven. It is probably significant that Patanjali makes no emotional appeal whatsoever in favor of the virtues, once again unlike enthusiastic Christian hot-gospellers. The attainment of virtues in Patanjali’s terms seems a rather matter-of-fact necessity, part of establishing sufficient self-control for the accomplishment of the further “ends” of evolution. Each virtue depends, Patanjali implies, upon an understanding of the laws applicable to each psychical and mental division of man’s nature. A “virtue” is therefore like an ability to typewrite forty words a minute—an author can make good use of such a “virtue,” but only, in the final analysis, if he has something important to say through the medium he has mastered. In the strictest sense, then, the virtues are not “accomplishments” in themselves, nor in fact guarantees of accomplishments. They represent stages of self-control *without which* accomplishments cannot be made—simply because clarity and objectivity of mind are imperative.

Aphorism 10: Is there a way for us to go to sleep by force of will? If so, there must be a way to die by force of will. Can this be the fact?

Sleep is not to be attained by the direct force of will in the case of ordinary men, although the high adept may paralyze his lower principles by an act of will—“put them to sleep,” so to speak. But anyone can will to *rest*, knowing that rest is necessary, and sleep will follow the subduing of restless energies which at the moment need rehabilitation rather than strained exercise. Sleep is the force of All Life, working preservatively and regeneratively rather than creatively—not a force rooted in the individual. Death is similar in this respect, yet it would take a great Yogi indeed to know with surety that all karmic opportunities of a lifetime had been exhausted in a manner corresponding to the instinct which often enables a man to know when sleep is justifiable. The ending of a life has a semi-finality in karmic terms which the ending of a day does not. The same personality cannot be called forth in exact duplication ever again after death, while in sleep the innumerable threads of personality remain unbroken. Therefore for one to say he is “through with life,” in its present

context, implies a complete knowledge of karma—a knowledge which apparently even great adepts do not claim.

Aphorism 4 states that except during concentration, “the soul is in the same form as the modification of the mind.” Does this mean that to keep the soul in a pure state, it would be well not to expose the mind to the contemplation of anything unpleasant? And if so, does not this savor of the ideas of Christian Science? Might it not encourage a drawing away from contacts with the end in view of not contaminating the Soul? How can the work of aiding suffering humanity be accomplished while we are so concerned with keeping the Soul from being affected by the Mind, the brain, the senses?

It is very evidently true that the soul cannot exist in a state of full concentration if the mind is affected by something “unpleasant.” But the whole meaning of the state of full concentration—which is simply the state of *balance*—lies in its definition as an awareness so acute that *no-thing seems unpleasant* (or pleasant, either, in the usual highly personal sense). The Christian Scientist denies the existence of the various real things which he is afraid he will have to view as “unpleasant” if he allows himself to view them at all. He seeks to escape the fear of “evil” by avoidance. The “Yogi of time’s duration” meets *directly* all apparent evil, and conquers its potentially corrupting effect by *understanding* rather than avoidance. This is the only satisfactory “escape from evil” and it is accomplished only in the mental state called “concentration” by Patanjali. It might be said that the Sage, instead of seeing “pleasantness” or “unpleasantness,” sees in all events and beings only various degrees of significance.

Aphorism 46: “The mental changes described in the foregoing constitute meditation with its seed.” “Meditation with its seed” is often used in the connotation of very concentrated, but personal thinking. Is not here a very subtle form of selfishness, which is accompanied by an anticipation of consequences?

Aphorism 44, preceding, is a definitive statement from Patanjali that in meditation with its seed “the object selected for meditation” may be “of a higher nature than sensuous objects.” A practical ideal to be realized, then, as for instance a specific social improvement, may be clarified and given deeper significance by concentration during meditation. Nothing *necessary in the*

furtherance of growth can be accurately regarded as selfish. Selfishness may be said to enter, in the case of those who “meditate” concentratedly upon a specific human or social need, only when the desire of the individual to be the revered and recognized agent of such improvement is added to the desire for the accomplishment itself. So, in endeavoring to establish the nature of “selfishness” and “unselfishness” as related to meditation, the line of demarcation must be seen to be *not* between “meditation with its seed” and “meditation without a seed,” but rather in the nature of the “seed.” For there is obviously, in Patanjali’s own terms, a necessity for both types of meditation. “Meditation without a seed,” or with only the subtle seed of egoic isolation and perfection, might be the *exclusive* state of none but the Dharmakayas, who apparently have finished with all desire to work for and through the world. Yet this state, the state of abstract objectivity—possibly symbolized by Pythagoras in his insistence that his disciples concentrate on mathematics—is necessary for all men: it affords impersonal balance to their “meditations” upon the specific things their destiny will impel them to accomplish. “Anticipation of consequences,” for instance, is required for the most thoughtful efforts in mankind’s behalf, yet to prevent that anticipation from being either fearfully or greedily personal the interposition of periods of “abstract meditation” becomes an indispensable aid.

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BREATH regulation is frequently referred to in Book II. Theosophical teachings definitely warn against this hatha yoga practice. Is not Patanjali accounted a real teacher? How explain? And how, as on page 35, Aphorism 50, could the regulation of the breath be restricted by conditions of time, place, and number, each of which may be long or short?

Just as it is possible to do a great many things with atomic energy, so does Patanjali say that many things can be accomplished by psycho-physiological control. Breathing practices, however, are but one method of attaining psychical discipline, and as H. P. Blavatsky pointedly observes in *Isis Unveiled* (II, 635), they are not a natural or normal method for Western peoples. Patanjali was an Eastern teacher, concerned with the peculiar psychical

temperament of the East of his time. An identical psycho-physiological equation may never exist in the West, nor may special breathing exercises, as a “technique,” ever become an appropriate discipline in this cycle of accelerated *Manasic* evolution.

Patanjali introduces the subject of “breath-control” as a legitimate object for practical study (even for Hindus) only *after* “purification of the mind” (see Aphorism 41) has been attained. It becomes entirely natural to assume that when a disciple has mastered all the usual quixotic quandaries of the dual human mind, *on that plane*, he may wish to “stretch” the usefulness of his physiological organism, thus making a more refined medium for the use of soul and mind power. Breath control means control over those semi-astral nerve centres which maintain the normal tone of physiological existence *involuntarily*. Conscious control over these same functions can therefore be thought of as introducing a new dimension of occult receptivity to what is otherwise simply the average psycho-physiological equation. There are “times and conditions,” according to Patanjali, presumably in accordance with the necessity for various phases of practical occultism, when such control over the hitherto “involuntary” centres is not only helpful but actually necessary, though this type of control may be attained in more than one way. The repeated warnings against Hatha Yoga practices are a cognizance of this fact, and Easterners are also directed against *premature* attention to a phase of control which does not find rightful usage until the basic principles of Raja Yoga have been assimilated.

Aphorism 18 (Book II) reads: “The Universe, including the visible and the invisible, the essential nature of which is compounded of purity, action, and rest, and which consists of the elements and the organs of action, exists for the sake of the soul’s experience and emancipation.” This is a very interesting and no doubt deeply significant statement on the “essential nature” of the Universe, but the terms “purity, action, and rest” need some elaboration for the average student in order to convey a description of the Universe: can this be done?

“Purity,” “action” and “rest,” in universal terms, are suggestive of the three fundamental propositions of the Secret Doctrine. Purity is simply that which is

indivisible. In man, and in all monadic intelligence, the “indivisible” is the inextinguishable *power* to acquire experience. Action is the process of interweaving one being’s use of this power with the differing uses made by other beings of the same power. The “law of cycles,” universal aspect of the Second Proposition, is descriptive of that type of “interweaving” among beings which results in periodical embodiment. “Rest” has only one dynamic meaning, that of *assimilation*, and assimilation is the keynote of the Third Proposition.

Any “description of the universe,” however, is of necessity inadequate unless it is perceived to be directly applicable to the psychological life of the individual. In the life of mind-consciousness, “purity” and “action” cannot be separated, for “purity” in the moral sense always means a relatively perfect degree of conscious motion—not immobility or inaction. Rest, in an evolutionary sense, becomes reflection upon the nature of action—and its various degrees of purity. This is the only *real* rest, for it lessens inner tensions by conveying an even deeper evaluative power to the soul.

What is the peculiar value of Aphorism 6? How could this fact affect a man’s life and character?

Aphorism 6 of Book II may become more specifically instructive if considered with Aphorism 6 of Book III. Identifying “the power that sees with the power of seeing,” and the soul with its tools of perception (including the mind) leads to a “fixation” with regard to “modifications of the mind.” In Aphorism 6, Book III, the implication that it will finally be necessary to do away with all “modifications of the mind” means that no formulation of words in philosophy, nor any specific religious devotion, will ever in any final sense represent Truth. The disciplines of philosophy, of course, are supposedly self-initiated, while the disciplines of religion are required by authority or by temporary acceptance of an occult Teacher or transmitter, but all *disciplines*, whether philosophical or religious are “modifications of the mind” and therefore can but represent *partial* truth. The mind able to look directly upon realities can use no intermediate *form* or *focus* whatsoever, as each form or focus becomes the modifier of the object to be perceived.

Every *formulation* of philosophy, every metaphysical system, every scheme of the categories of “reality,” will at some time be discarded as a particular, and therefore a limiting, focus for Truth. As Krishna says, when the heart is free from delusion, the disciple will “attain to high indifference as to those doctrines which are already taught or which are yet to be taught.” Even the familiar statements of the Three Fundamental Propositions of the Secret Doctrine, as approaches to the several *facets* of reality, must finally give way to a formless realization of THAT for which the Fundamentals are abstract “representations.” Every noble habit, painstakingly acquired as the very highest embodiment of devotion to one’s fellows, must be abandoned *as a habit or specific practice*. The *essences* of the noble philosophies and religions, however, will live on in pure form, or rather, *formlessness*, in the same way that the individual ego itself is said to outlive the destruction of worlds, solar systems and even universes.

EVERYDAY QUESTIONS
ON PATANJALI’S YOGA APHORISMS Vol. 35, p. 318

APHORISM 9 (Book II) : *I can not see how any basic drive of human life could be felt by the wise as by the unwise. I can not believe that the wise could possibly be held in a worn-out body so long as are, or have been, the unwise. What is the relation between Tanha and Skandhas?*

The “wise” man is the man who has gradually established sympathetic understanding with every form of intelligence—including the “lower” as well as the “higher.” It is the nature of purely psychophysical intelligence to focus nearly all energy upon the continuance of existence, because that particular organic complex can only be enlightened by higher intelligence so long as it shall live. This is the *physical* instinct for preservation, and it is normal and beneficial. The “wise” man not only “feels” this, as it exists in his own physical instrument—he will feel it more keenly than anyone else, because he is more understanding and sympathetic toward “life” in particular and as a whole. Nor will he sacrifice the body lightly. The difference between the wise and the unwise in respect to “thirst for life” lies in the fact that the wise are not *subject* to this feeling—they simply *feel* it, whereas the unwise, possessing

“misconceptions of duties and responsibilities” allow the feelings of the body to eclipse the needs of the soul. No wise man is completely indifferent to the matter of preserving his life upon earth—the suicides are not the “wise” but those so tragically confused that they *feel nothing* with clarity. There is more than considerable difference between an ability to detach oneself, when necessary, from a feeling, and the tamasic state of living in an indifferent stupor in regard to all feelings. Physical “Tanha” can be very properly expressed as physical dynamism and intensity, without developing the skandhas which signify *fear* of death or any other ignoble physical cravenness.

Yet just as death should not be feared, but rather respected, so should life not be feared. The wise man is the man possessed of a maximum of intensity on every plane; he should be distinguished by his deeper appreciation of every form of beauty, for instance, including the beauty and magic of physical vitality.

Aphorism 16: (a) Do our imaginations and fears for the future cause any injury to the soul, other than waste of time and energy?

(b) Is Mr. Crosbie’s statement on page 8 of The Friendly Philosopher, “I used to look calmly and dispassionately at the very worst picture I could conjure up as happening to myself,” etc., to be regarded as contradictory to this Aphorism?

(a) For man as Kshatriya or actor, there are two realities. The present moment is real, and eternal verities are real. Fear, as Patanjali endeavors to show, is invariably rooted in “illusion,” a realm between the Present and the Eternal. No one fears the *present* moment, but fears instead moments not yet come. All that he may *do* in any moment is act, and while he acts there is room within his consciousness only for action and not for fear. Nor can anyone fear anything measured against the infinite background of eternity. Neither the moment nor eternity relate themselves to the countless numbers of “uncertain desires” which crowd the human mind. Uncertain desires relate only to an illusory sense of time, whereas *now*, the sphere of action, is an ultimate reality.

Fear distorts human relationships, for emotionalism renders potential philosophical attitudes inoperative. If a situation we have feared confronts us,

we view it not as it actually is, but as warped by our fright and fancy. Thus fears alter the being himself so far as his existence as an effective center of action is concerned, and constantly affect all others with whom he comes in contact. For the evolving ego this alteration of psychic condition is a very specific injury, for it is a limitation on growth. His own karmic "circle of necessity" becomes more complicated, since the conditioning effect of his fears blocks any natural or balanced working out of his destiny. He is sundered, disparted, acts in hesitant fragmentary fashion, and therefore reaps fragmentary, confusing karma.

Patanjali's "meditation" is a term for the internal acts which establish a true relationship between the individual student and the events and beings that become relevant to his own soul pilgrimage. This, Patanjali suggests, is accomplished by excluding from meditation the confused feelings which comprise the innumerable conflicts of mind on matters not presently resolvable. The practice of mental discipline leads to the attainment of philosophy, and philosophy is to be judged in turn by action—by the degree to which it impels the individual to live fully in each moment while yet overshadowed by a sense of eternity.

(b) Robert Crosbie's statement seems clearly to be a way of laying fears to rest rather than a way of indulging in them by pre-occupation. This method in the strictest sense is a device for dealing with any hidden fears that might lurk within the subconscious mind. As a device it is but one practical means to an end, and, like all devices, it should ultimately be dropped by the proper wayside. Any specific discipline must be transcended, however necessary it may once have been. If this particular practice were made a ritual for daily use it could lead to a psychological unbalance but one step removed from the original lurking worries. The hypochondriac is an example of one who misapplies the suggested method, for the hypochondriac often imagines the most dire physical happenings, while deriving secret pleasure from the fact that he really does not believe his actual situation will ever be "that bad." Such a distortion of the method would, however, be a way of trying to achieve a relative, external calmness by indulging in a specialized kind of *controlled* worry. Mr. Crosbie's intent was obviously to test the extent and

nature of his *inner calmness*—and to better evaluate whatever final obstacles remained to bar its complete attainment.

Are not Aphorisms 23 and 24 somewhat contradictory? If “the conjuncture of the soul with the organ of thought, and thus with nature, is the cause of its apprehension of the actual condition of the nature of the Universe and of the soul itself,” is this not highly desirable? If so, why should the cause of this conjuncture be quitted, as stated in Aphorism 24? And further, how can ignorance, cause of all the “afflictions,” lead to such a noble result?

This question might be paraphrased: “Is evolution desirable, since one of the conditions of evolution is the incomplete knowledge of all the beings involved?” The English language seems lacking in appropriate terms to distinguish between evolution impelled by the trial and error process which accompanies ignorance, and completely self-directed evolution. The organ of thought is composed of the physical and the astral brains. These material foci are necessary as direct contact-points for the soul in journeying through those realms of experience which the simultaneous presence of myriads of differing classes of monads make possible for the soul. In the strictest sense the self-conscious man, or the monad, is not “ignorant,” yet while in manifestation the man cannot exhaust the infinite variety and significance of experience in the whole vast society of selves.

Obviously the word “ignorance” carries with it differing implications according to its context. In the most universal philosophical sense it is simply the symbol of unfulfilled or uncompleted destiny—the impulsion to a further growth which may finally bring spiritual understanding. But ignorance is also a symbol for the degree to which the inertia of matter unnecessarily retards the widening of soul-perception. This “ignorance” ceases, says Patanjali, with the attainment of “perfect discriminative knowledge.” “The isolation of the soul” mentioned in Aphorism 25 means that the soul is no longer confused or involved in acts of ignorance by the influence of matter. The soul sees *body as body* and *soul as soul*, and thus transcends the confusions of incarnation by reaping the benefits of learning *which only incarnation makes possible*.

Aphorism 34: Please clarify what is meant by “questionable things” in relation to motive and sins of omission.

“Questionable things” are simply those things done without sufficient concentration upon the possibility of doing something better. Any act is questionable not in itself, but in its relation to other acts which *might* be performed instead. Therefore all “wrong doing” is, in this sense, part of an “error of omission.” As regards motive, the theosophical admonition that motive must be checked by mind, is once again a way of saying that no one can have a completely pure motive unless his mind clearly sees alternative courses of action and the nature of the continuance of both alternative actions in terms of karmic consequences. It is the “good” we do not see rather than the “evil” we do see that is the cause of karmic difficulty. Similarly, if we see nothing but “good,” we do not see true good at all—since the latter exists at all times as the better or best alternative rather than as a thing in itself. One of the occult failures of modern world religions has been their failure to provide philosophical means by which “good” and “evil” are seen to have meaning only in their relationship one with the other. “As wise as serpents and as harmless as doves” means *knowledge* of the alternatives which line the path of choice.

EVERYDAY QUESTIONS
ON PATANJALI'S YOGA APHORISMS Vol.35 p. 373

APHORISIM 36 (Book II): Why should a Yogi in whom veracity is complete pay the penalty of becoming a focus for “bad” works? I can understand better his being a focus for “good” works, but I should think such a Yogi would be karma-less.

It is necessary to assume that a Yogi should have counterbalanced both the cause and the effect in himself because of his complete veracity; but for others he is a representation of both philosophical truth and correct action, and is an open channel for their karma. If those who share the same environment as the Yogi are envious or resentful of him they will act in all things with partially impure motives, since recognition of a Teacher is proof that one recognizes truth in action when he sees it. “Good” karma comes to the man who understands some of the principles of wisdom, of which one of the basic, as well as most “human,” is respect and gratitude for the wisdom of the teacher

whose vision of truth is clearer than one's own. Unless the relationship between any individual and the Yogi is a proper one, the karma of that individual will be "mixed" rather than good, and thus the Yogi will feel those mixed effects, while he enjoys the fruits of his own right thought and action. He is also a key to the right thought and action of others. He is, in fact, the "key man" in society, as was Plato's philosopher-king, and, unless his place be recognized, society (or karma) will withhold certain benefits (or good karma) which would otherwise accrue. Without any conscious effort to be such, the Yogi is an open sesame for the good karma of others. He is the truth before men which they must be able to identify if they are to have the complete wisdom which brings right action and "good karma."

The same principle would apply to what is called "bad" karma—for the usual classes of "bad karma" would simply be the results of denying truth. Yet another principle is also involved in the matter of a good and great man being the focus for karma resulting from "bad works"—a principle known as "the economy of nature." Just as poisonous mushrooms seek the shade of a great oak, since otherwise the conditions necessary for their growth do not exist, so also do many dire and troublesome events focus around the yogi, for the reason that only he has sufficient wisdom to deal with them. The breadth of his knowledge can make room for human confusion or malignance in others, since his nature will not be inwardly troubled by anything that befalls. In this way, perhaps, can many "bad things" come to the great and wise.

Aphorism 37: "When abstinence from theft, in mind and act, is complete in the Yogee, he has the power to obtain all material wealth." Would this mean that such an one as described above could, if he chose, become very wealthy in this commercial civilization of today? If honesty is thus seen to be such an important factor in the acquirement of material wealth, why it is that such a large percentage of relatively dishonest men are so materially wealthy, and conversely, why do many honest men barely manage to acquire enough wealth to support their families?

The average "honest man" is not a yogi, as the latter term is used by Patanjali. "The Yogee of time's duration" has more than one kind of wisdom, honesty being for him simply the inconspicuous by-product of knowledge of

all things in their proper relation one to another. The Yogi has a highly developed manasic faculty—manas lighted brilliantly by fusion with the inspiration of Buddhi. Such a man can acquire any “material wealth” that is *really needed* by applying his crystal-clear mind to the problem presented, or he can inspire such trust in others that they will without question place all wealth under his stewardship. The latter, in fact, would be the most natural working out of karma in our age, since the direct acquisition of wealth in the commercial world would be something of a waste of time for a great spiritual teacher. For the average honest man, however, there are still many obstacles to be overcome. As the potentialities of his mind develop he may find it increasingly difficult to be honest—just as the awakening faculties of man after the first rounds and races tend to confuse him and suggest through vivid imagination the “beauties” of the road of exploitation. In a practical sense, men do not shower trust upon the honest man unless he is also provenly a wise and practical man, for honesty in itself does not insure that the *best* use will be made of property or wealth entrusted to his care.

Aphorism 38: Why should “continence” be so important, when it applies only to the body—the ephemeral?

The place of occurrence of this reference to continence suggests that more is meant to be conveyed by the word than simply physical chastity. The qualities discussed as unworthy in previous aphorisms are *enmity, theft, anger, questionable things, etc.* Aphorism 39 speaks of “covetousness” in exactly the same *way*. Continence, in this context, becomes *the ability to restrain all forms of self-indulgence or sensualism*. It is the *tendency* to self-indulgence which takes strength from the body and from the mind. Sensual self-indulgence is first a mental misuse of the energies of the body—instead of raising the level of expression for the body-lives, the soul infuses itself into a “stretching” of the normal capacities for psychic feeling and thus exploits and damages a normal capacity. The effects of this are both bodily and mental, as the decline of Grecian civilization in particular attests.

Aphorism 42: If it is possible for a Yogi to acquire superlative felicity, how are we to understand Aphorism 15, of this Book, which says that to the man who has attained

the perfection of spiritual cultivation, "all mundane things are alike vexatious."

Mundane things *as* mundane things would clearly be "vexatious" to the knower of spiritual reality. Yet in all things and events the Sage, it is said, can see the spiritual *in* the physical—beyond and above it, no matter how superficially interwoven the *two* may be. Aphorism 15 also posits that mundane things are vexatious *until* the "highest condition" is reached. Beyond that point nothing is vexatious, and when nothing is longer vexatious one is in a state of superlative felicity. When one fears no failure, dreads no disappointment, he can begin to truly live with vitality and full awareness on all planes.

EVERYDAY QUESTIONS
ON PATANJALI'S YOGA APHORISMS Vol. 35 p. 421

IT seems strange that this is the only Book which has no title. Can it be simply because it serves as a continuation of Book II ? In Book II, Aphorism 29, the last three practices named are not taken up until the beginning of Book in, but the remainder of the Book is very detailed and specific in contrast to this beginning.

In the commentary upon Aphorism 4 of this Book it is explained that the word "Sanyama"—used more frequently than any other capitalized designation in Book III—cannot be properly rendered in English. A title for Book III which employed "restraint" or a similar word would therefore be misleading. From consideration of these tangible difficulties regarding a name for such instructions, it is natural to notice the similar difficulties which would inevitably attend the "titling" of any subjects relating to practical occultism. Techniques for "Getting Occult Power" might command fascination—but for the wrong reasons. Patanjali, apparently, as would any initiate, avoided calling *special* attention to such things, but simply mentioned them after the proper philosophical background had been provided. In this sense, the chapter is a continuation of Book II.

Mr. Judge states in the Preface that "Book III is for the purpose of defining the nature of the perfected state"—a definition which can be understood only in terms of the philosophical clarifications offered in Books I and II. When

abrupt transitions of development occur in Patanjali, a reference to Mr. Judge's preface will often offer a germinal thought on the general scope and purpose of the several Books taken as a whole. For instance, the problem of separating philosophic ideas from specific techniques of psychological discipline is illumined by Mr. Judge's explanations. The last paragraph of the preface implies another factor which should be borne in mind: the "specifics" of such teachings as Patanjali's are peculiarly fitted for men of a certain "temperament" and character, and are not as universally applicable as might be supposed.

Aphorism : In "The Voice of the Silence," Samadhi is referred to as "the state of faultless vision." How would it be possible to reach such a high state of consciousness by concentrating on a material subject or object of sense?

An Adept is one who moves with the knowledge that there is no real distinction between spirit and matter. Any form or object becomes for him, it is said, the mirror of the universe—both objective and subjective. All definitions of Samadhi are not, it should be noted, synonymous with "the highest spiritual state." As a sort of "beatific vision," Samadhi may be compared with devachan—if we can imagine devachan consciously controlled by one in that state. Samadhi can be entered by all those who attain a certain degree of knowledge of occultism—by those who move toward becoming Dharmakayas, as well as by those on the Nirmanakaya path. H.P.B. called Samadhi an "ecstatic trance," and it is also implied by her that Samadhi should not be confused with the state of Samadhana (see *Glossary*) in which "a Yogi can no longer diverge from the path of spiritual progress."

One of the first principles infused in the teachings of initiated occultists is that control of all one's faculties and the perfection of Yoga do *not* mean automatic entrance into the highest initiation. The purpose of Raj Yoga is "divine union," but its *practice* is the exercise of will upon the various degrees of resistance encountered in the world of matter. In a special sense, therefore, the practice of Yoga is a science relating to matter—power over various forms of matter invisible to the naked eye. But Raj Yoga means the *fitting use* of the knowledge, as well as the ability to command the unseen forces of nature.

Aphorism 5: (a) In what way is the “discerning power” to be distinguished from discrimination? It is clear that true discrimination is by no means “ordinary.”

(b) In the note on Aphorism 6, it is suggested that special modifications ensue after many other “afflictions” are removed, these, too, to be got rid of by means of Sanyama. Would this refer to the trials of chelaship?

(a) All human beings exercise some form or degree of discrimination—the highest degree obviously calling for considerable development of “discerning power.” This “power” is, of course, common to all men, and is the root of self-consciousness. All men must discriminate, in the sense that they select or prefer, but the “discerning power,” as Patanjali speaks of it, connotes more than simply conscious personal preference. We can know *that* we prefer something, yet it is far more important to know exactly *why*. A full manifestation of discerning power would occur within the mind of the man who is able to see the correct proportions of all the factors involved in each opportunity for choice. This would also be “discrimination” in its philosophic meaning.

(b) “Chelaship” in the philosophical sense means any self-conscious pledge to undertake one-pointedness *in action*. The “afflictions and obstructions described in the previous books” have primarily to do with mental discipline—the attainment of concentration and one-pointedness *in thought*. This mental discipline is but a means to the “end” of action, however, and the practical use of a discipline involves complications which can be revealed only in and through action. Thus the chela, be he one of Patanjali’s pupils or a worker for the present Theosophical Movement, will inevitably encounter all manner of disquieting circumstances and attitudes, which tend to test and strain his initial mental calmness. But such an one has the advantage of the instilled habits of mental discipline, and the advantage of viewing goals and purposes integrated with that discipline. This is the difference between “chelaship” and religion, for the latter demands “devotion” during periods of both outer and inner strain without having first supplied that mind-control which enables the devotee to meet all circumstances as a responsible moral agent. For the religious man (whether he be called Christian, Buddhist or Theosophist), the burning issues of life tend to be over-simplified if he simply refers to hallowed phrases instead of giving them needed thinking on his own part, and his inner growth can thus

be considerably retarded.

EVERYDAY QUESTIONS
ON PATANJALI'S YOGA APHORISMS Vol. 35 p. 467

APHORISM 9 (*Book III*): *Here it is said that there are two trains of self-reproductive thought, but that the mind, in passing from one to the other, is concerned with both those trains. Is it possible for the mind to THINK of two things or subjects at the same time?*

Self-reproductive thought must be based upon some genuine apprehension of reality, else it is not thought, but simply the recording of impressions. There are, however, two “realities.” There is the reality of any given moment, the relationships between beings at any certain point in time, and there is the reality of a universal spiritual evolution—which has nothing to do with “physical” time—and which represents the highest principle of both man and nature. For man, the problem of understanding is dual—he must understand the phenomenal world by correlating the activities of any, and finally all, manifested beings with his own activities. He must also understand, through the medium of his highest faculties, the *noumenal* essence, the changeless, in and beyond all diversities in beings. He must cognize both the phenomenal world and the noumenal world at the same time, neither abstract philosophical understanding nor specific knowledge being sufficient in itself. *Nirodha* is described as that state wherein comprehension of *both* exists. “Be ye wise as serpents and harmless as doves” is a saying which indicates the necessity for knowing the complexities of the objective world while retaining the calmness of spiritual understanding of the whole as the whole.

It is not possible to think of two “things” or “subjects” at the same time, but it is possible and finally necessary to see both aspects of life, phenomenal and noumenal, at the same time.

Aphorism 10: What more could be asked of the mind than an uniform flow” — NIRODHA? Or, could it logically be concluded that this refers to the flow between higher

and lower manas?

It is one thing to observe the inter-penetration of two different spheres of intelligence, and quite another, to form from that preliminary knowledge a perfect synthesis. A “uniform flow” between higher and lower manas means that the body and the psychic energies are controlled by understanding, but it is said that the trained seer can see the “All” in any one “object.” Nirodha might be regarded as a state of wise flexibility, while *Ekagrata* is the attainment of a wise concentration. It is interesting to note that here, as in many other portions of Patanjali’s instructions, the teacher describes state after state of Yogic attainment. The reader may be somewhat disconcerted to discover that just when Patanjali seems to have described *the* state most important to attain, he immediately proceeds to outline further steps in the deepening of perception. The profundity of this method should not escape notice, for it conveys the constant suggestion of further evolution, through and beyond *any* state. Patanjali’s disciples could not think there is a final achievement in real Yoga. To formulate *the* end of all attainment would invite the student to imagine he had mastered ultimate knowledge every time he reached anything that vaguely resembled “The Goal.” Actually, there will always be further steps in spiritual evolution. The first sign of progress toward a goal is not proof that the goal has been attained. The man who seeks *Samadhi*, for instance, may think that almost any semi-spiritual psychic experience *is Samadhi*—if *Samadhi* is the only description offered him of a “spiritual state.” One of the minor curses of profane, popular religions is in their over-simplification of all descriptions of inner attainment. Not one word-symbol, nor two, but many are needed to impress powerfully upon the aspirant that evolution is an *endless* series of progressive awakenings.

Aphorism 14: Is this Aphorism to be understood—together with the note—in connection with Aphorism 45, Book I? Is there any relation with EKAGRATA, of Aphorism 12, Book III? If EKAGRATA is a synonym of Mahat, as the GLOSSARY states, it would seem impossible to reach such a state.

All roads to perception of Reality, whether they begin with the problem of understanding the phenomenal world, or the problem of understanding the

noumenal world, must end with perception of the “two in one.” Concentration upon any “subtle object,” states Aphorism 45, Book I, “ends with the indissoluble element called primordial matter.” Primordial and universal Mahat—Eka.—are both descriptions of reality. Mind and matter are not separate, even though, as stated in the *Voice*, “the self of matter and the SELF of Spirit can never meet.” To see truly that there is universal intelligence *in* matter—and universal matter in intelligence—is to enter a state of “Ekagrata.”

Aphorism 19: Here it is stated: The nature of the mind of another person becomes known to the ascetic when he concentrates his own mind on that of another person.” Yet, Aphorism 20 shows that only the performance of SANYAMA with that object in view will reveal the FUNDAMENTAL BASIS of the other person’s mind.

(a) Why is MOTIVE so little emphasized in Patanjali?

(b) Is the present-day mind reader” to be considered in the class with Patanjali’s ascetic”?

*(a) Motive is not under-emphasized in Patanjali. It is simply not called motive. It should be remembered that Patanjali’s Yoga instructions are entirely in the nature of a scientific treatise, and exclude religious or devotional exhortation. Motive in Patanjali is discussed indirectly in terms of the highest states of consciousness, for these involve an ever-clearer perception of the “One in All” —the basis for universal interdependence and the feeling of brotherhood. Patanjali may be said to insist upon two points in respect to what we call motive. First, that the highest motive is impossible without the highest knowledge. Second, that the *first stages* of concentration and meditation may be attained by any man who desires them ardently, with *whatever* motive. But Patanjali insists that until the higher forms of knowledge are attained (right motive), it is impossible to have *perfection* of any of the powers of Yoga. Patanjali is attempting to lay a basis for understanding what “right motive” is, rather than telling his disciples to be sure to have it—as the protagonists of all religions never tire of doing.*

(b) None of the modern “mind readers” have followed the disciplines which Patanjali lists as prerequisites for the ascetic, so they can hardly be considered

“in the same class.”

There is an extremely important distinction between casual “mind reading” and that concentration which enables a man to know the fundamental basis of another’s mind. The former “accomplishment” may be purely a passive psychic sensitivity which enables specific astral impressions to be read. The latter has to do, not with petty details, nor yet with invading the privacy of a man’s creative thoughts, but rather with understanding the whole general trend and color of another’s life-current of thought. Only an adept can accurately sense the nature of this general trend.

EVERYDAY QUESTIONS
ON PATANJALI’S YOGA APHORISMS Vol. 35 p. 514

APHORISM 21 (Book III): *The note on this Aphorism speaks of luminousness as the manifestation of SATTVA, while the eye is also a manifestation of SATTVA in another aspect. Now, according to the GLOSSARY, Sattva is goodness, or purity— one of the three divisions of nature—and it is difficult to see the connection between the quality of goodness in nature and such an objective quality as luminousness, while the human eye is even more objective. Please explain.*

It is necessary for the theosophical student to return in this instance, as in so many others, to some of the fundamental clarifications made by H. P. Blavatsky in the *Secret Doctrine*. Spirit and matter, she states, are *not* two realities but *two aspects* of the same reality. Similarly, the quality of *tamas* or inertia is not a description of matter, but rather the description of a certain aspect of matter—more clearly, spirit-intelligence *temporarily* represented as matter and exhibiting one characteristic predominantly. So with *sattva*, there is not “a certain proportion” of matter, out of which human eyes are constructed, which is “Sattvic.” Spirit-matter, in a certain condition, produces an aspect able to exhibit the unique qualities of luminousness.

It is not difficult to see why “goodness” and “luminousness” are both associated with Sattva, since one is the most highly perceptive state viewed

from the standpoint of the soul, and the other is the most perceptive state afforded by conditions of matter.

Aphorism 22: I can understand how a power over oneself, one's own organs and functions, is lawful, but it does not seem lawful to use such power over others. Nor, in Aphorism 24, can I understand there to be any wisdom in being able to acquire the friendship of whomsoever one may desire. How can one want a friendship that is not mutually desirable? I hold the same reserve with regard to Aphorism 35.

It may first be noted that such powers are described as being held *only* over the five physical senses. This is not, for instance, a power to interfere with the egoic discriminative faculties. Rather its exercise might be used in order to avoid the *distraction* of perceptive intelligence by sensory impressions, so that the perception itself might become clear. It is common human experience to have one's most dispassionate discriminative faculties hindered by the intrusion of sights, sounds, and odors. The ascetic of pure mind would, by his own superior powers of concentration, be able to inspire continued attention of others upon soul realities—oblivious of external intrusions. And this possibly to such a degree that awareness of objects of sense would disappear altogether.

To have the power of acquiring "a friendship of whomsoever he may desire" does not mean that the devotee of yoga is able to create a "friendship" that is *not mutually* desirable. Rather, the powers of the yogi simply make his friendship discernible and desirable to others. This may be done by projecting enough of the yogi's essential feeling and quality of character to demonstrate the levels of real communication which exist, even if usually hidden, between any two souls. Aphorism 35 does not suggest that the yogi *judges* the "mental conditions, purposes, and thoughts of others" but simply that he is able to see them clearly. This is not a special faculty to be developed apart from growth in general discrimination. It is simply the inevitable outcome of understanding one's own nature thoroughly—which, before its completion, does involve such specific matters as awareness of the condition of all the nervous centers of the body. The word "heart" may symbolize both the qualities of soul and the nature of a specific psycho-physical condition in the nervous system. Though the words and approach are entirely different, this would indicate a knowledge of

what is now called psycho-biology, common enough in Patanjali's time, but built upon a more solid philosophical foundation than that supplied by the orthodox assumptions of contemporary materialism.

Aphorisms 30-33: Is not this type of concentration dangerous for the Westerner, or for anyone, without the guru's direction and protection? The worst danger seems indicated in Aphorism 52, as a corollary of Aphorism 33.

This type of concentration would not be "dangerous for the Westerner" if all the preliminary steps of training assumed by Patanjali had been taken in proper fashion. However, an almost unsolvable difficulty lies in the fact that the whole psychic environment of our latter "Iron Age" militates against knowledge and a control of occult forces and powers. The conditions under which the equivalent of Patanjali's "Guru assistance" might exist today would obviously be extremely difficult to obtain. The freakish psychic involvements of many theosophists in the periods of Theosophical Society-confusion which followed the deaths of H. P. Blavatsky and W. Q. Judge do indicate that certain forms of insanity may be contracted through exercising the desire to establish *personal* communication with "higher entities." The most amusing as well as the most tragic illustration of this is to be found in the cases of C. W. Leadbeater and Mrs. Besant, who gave out interviews with the Manu and Solar Logos. There are many ways in which undisciplined psychics may suffer "a renewal of afflictions of the mind," as indicated in Aphorism 52. The legends of occultism contain mysterious references to the "star rishis," elementals apparently charged with sufficient sensual power to confuse the psychic and the biological natures of those who trespass with questionable motives upon realms presently beyond normal ability to control.

How does the practice shown in Aphorism 34 differ essentially from "New Thought" practices? According to that cult, if, for instance, you desire money—concentrate on getting it, and you will get it.

The essential difference between the practices suggested by Aphorism and those of "New Thought" is that Patanjali describes concentration upon a desired *understanding*, whereas "New Thought" involves concentration upon a

physical consummation of wish-fulfillment. There is not, however, an “essential difference” between “New Thought” procedures and the habits of *Hatha* Yoga. This for the reason that in neither instance is there a primary concern with understanding. Those who separated the schools of Hatha Yoga from Raja Yoga in Patanjali’s time—and this was done then as well as during later periods of great philosophical corruption in Eastern lands—were divorcing the Science of Ends from the Science of Means. The whole karma of Western culture is a crude and awful reflection of the same psychological tendency.

The desire for *knowledge* is always pure, and the Means undertaken, if this End be genuinely in view, will not corrupt the practitioner. Aphorism 34, in its suggestion that after long practice the ascetic can “disregard the various aids to concentration hereinbefore recommended,” is another indication that Patanjali’s whole emphasis was upon knowledge or understanding. The greatest teachers and instructors are never primarily concerned with the specific results which may be attained by a pupil; they are rather themselves concentrated upon aiding the student to understand the basic *principles* and *theories* of their science. This will be found to hold true even today in the meticulous disciplines of the physical sciences. “New Thought” practices are like irresponsible scientific experimentation; they produce results, but those results confuse, rather than improve the processes of thought.

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ON PATANJALI’S YOGA APHORISMS Vol. 35, p. 563

APHORISM 28 (*Book III*): *By concentrating his mind upon the moon, there arises in the ascetic a knowledge of the fixed stars.” How is this to be explained? In S.D. II, 701, it is said that “even great adepts, trained seers though they are, can claim acquaintance with the nature and appearance of planets and their inhabitants belonging to our solar system only.”*

In the passage from the *Secret Doctrine* cited by the questioner, it is very plainly indicated that we are to regard the matter of “fixed stars” from the viewpoint of archaic as well as modern science. Our sun, however slowly, revolves around a fixed point in the Milky Way. It would appear, then, that

Aphorism 29 gives a clue to Aphorism 28, by pointing us to the law of cycles, and stating that by concentration of the mind upon the polar star, the ascetic is able to know the *fixed time* and *motion* of every star in the universe. Since no atom in the universe is without life and consciousness and motion, and man's principles are allied to the planets of our solar-system—their atoms and molecules in constant circulation—and since the ascetic *can* know of the spheres between the earth and sun (Aphorism 27), then, it must be that he can know, analogically, the rate of motion of our sun. The moon is not only the nearest geographical point of reference for the ascetic, but has also the strongest astral connection with our earth, of all the planets.

That the sun and moon are the deities of our planetary macrocosmos, (*S.D.* II, 639 fn) is a clue to the intelligences using those mediums of expression, or motions. The *Secret Doctrine* statement quoted in the question also indicates quite another matter for our consideration, namely that the *nature* of the planets and their “inhabitants” *outside* our solar-system can not be thoroughly known even to high adepts, who can have access, even in spirit, only to the planes of consciousness *within* our solar system. The work of the highest adept is, after all, work in the context of a particular or historical cycle. Their activity requires specific knowledge of the evolutionary status of beings involved in our solar system, while like knowledge of the beings in other solar systems is unnecessary.

(a) Aphorism 33: “By concentrating his mind upon the light in the head the ascetic acquires the power of seeing divine beings.” The note says that the seeing of divine beings can be accomplished by concentrating upon that part of the body more nearly connected with them.” But I would think that divine beings could be contacted only through one's own divine nature—not through the BODY.

There is no form, however divine, which cannot be perceived *through the medium* of the body. In this instance, the head is said to collect some of “the luminous principle in nature,” and becomes an appropriate means or instrument for the faculty in question. The body thus serves to condense the more highly refined matter which is the substratum of such visions. As intimated by Aphorism 33, this variety of substance is not an integral part of

the physical organism. Yet it is *connected* with the more gross form of the brain. The highest powers come into use with the blending of the essences of all planes. Every being has, by definition, a Form, and this form can be perceived by the faculty of the *total* human organism which corresponds to the matter and qualities of appearance on that particular plane. There are “lives,” for instance, of differing development informing every one of the physical organs of man’s body, and each class of intelligence has a distinctive rapport with all life of that class and degree. The “Elementals” of Theosophical parlance are all “divine beings,” whether presently embodied or disembodied. The four lower principles of the seven-principled man serve as connecting links for the mind-soul in learning how to understand and finally to utilize the elemental forces of all nature.

(b) Then turn to Aphorism 52 Why should one want to see divine beings, if it means to renew the afflictions of the mind? Aphorism 52 suggests a very different point of view from Aphorism 33

Aphorism 38 described the nature of the “affliction” of the mind which Aphorism 52 suggests may flow from association with celestial beings: “The powers hereinbefore described are liable to become obstacles in the way of perfect concentration, because of the possibility of wonder and pleasure from their exercise, *but are not obstacles for the ascetic who is perfect in the practice enjoined.*” It is then necessary to contrast “association” with “seeing,” since the vision mentioned in Aphorism 33 could mean simply a clear *perception* that a divine luminousness exists in varying degrees with varying beings, yet to attempt definite contact or association might well be a mixing of karma and lead to the type of psychological confusion described.

Aphorism 39: The inner self of the ascetic may be transferred to any other body and there have complete control.” Is this the rationale of the borrowed body,” or does it simply mean the identifying of the ascetic’s mind with the mind of another—or both?

This Aphorism illustrates amply what Mr. Judge meant on page xi, Preface, by saying that Patanjali had no need to enforce the doctrine of reincarnation, and that it is assumed all through the Aphorisms. Here, we find the intimation

that the ascetic consciously and voluntarily enters body after body, and assumes control in each one, because in preceding bodies that inner self had gained philosophical knowledge as well as the power to control bodily and sensory operations. All men use “borrowed bodies,” since all bodies are made up of terrestrial and chemical elements which are returned after the death of the body; but, the ascetic “borrows” in full knowledge of the process. The inner self does not attach itself to a “foreign” mind and body—that is, to a body not belonging to it under Karma.

It seems as if the questioner is considering the possibility of the ascetic controlling the will and choice of *other* minds. Such control would be utterly contrary to the science of Raja Yoga. All that may be done is to intensify the spiritual force of another mind, at that other’s wish and desire. It may be done by a sort of spiritual osmosis, or participation in the spiritual or luminous essence of the true adept. The case of “borrowed bodies” in a specific sense, when a body must be deserted by its inmate, and is taken over by one who knows how to do so, and who can use it for the benefit of mankind, follows the same occult law. There must be some karmic relationship between the one who is through with a particular body, and the one who is able to revivify it for a high purpose.

Aphorism 42: (a) By concentrating his mind upon the relations between the ear and AKASA, the ascetic acquires the power of hearing all sounds, whether upon the earth or in the aether, and whether far or near.” How relate this to Aphorism 17?

This Aphorism simply chooses another suggestive way of saying that all powers and faculties in the universe are related to man’s sevenfold organism. Here again an understanding of the Aphorism demands recognition of the fundamental occult fact that *no knowledge is possible on any plane without a grasp of the principles which apply on all planes*. Akasa is the universal principle corresponding to Sound, and once the ascetic can attune the physical organ of sound with the true medium of its transmission—the Akasa—no sound in the visible or invisible worlds would be beyond his power to hear. Aphorism 17 discusses the “power of understanding the meaning of any sound uttered by any sentient being.” This might be regarded as the object to be held in view

in the practice of Aphorism 42, for unless a power is used to extend understanding, it does not become part of the soul, and therefore is lost at death.

(b) Science considers that sound is transmitted through material mediums, as earth, water, air; that each liquid and solid has a characteristic rate of sound transmission, and gases have a range of rates depending on their pressure; but in a void or vacuum there is no transmission of sound. What, then, is the basis of the note, saying that Sound is the distinctive property of aether, when physical vacuums do not affect the aether, but do affect physical sound?

It is a fundamental postulate of occultism that no absolute vacuum exists. A given area in space may be denuded of all those properties which act as known transmitting agents for the vibration of sound, while within that relative vacuum there are still forms of life and substance through which sound can be transmitted. It is necessary to recognize this principle, since, actually, for science as for occultism, there can be no break in the organic continuity of nature forces, even though such forces go through numerous transformations. A corollary from the science of today is suggested in the present investigation of supersonic waves and of innumerable sounds which cannot be recorded by the physical ear. From this it would follow most naturally that there are still other agencies of sound which as yet have not been represented by mathematical equation, nor given a place in the formulation of scientific

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APHORISM 2 (Book IV) seems to find its explanation in ISIS UNVEILED, II, 615, where it says, "Whenever a denizen of earth desires to enter into communication with his invisible brethren, he has to assimilate himself to their nature, i.e., he meets these beings half-way, and, furnished by them with a supply of spiritual essence, endows them, in his turn, with a portion of his physical nature, thus enabling them sometimes to appear in a semi- objective form. It is a temporary exchange of natures, called theurgy." If my

surmise is correct, it throws further light on the “celestial beings” of Book III. Is there a distinction between these and “one’s favorite deity,” Book II, Aphorism 44?

There is, of course, a correlation between this Aphorism and the whole highly abstruse subject of “Elementals,” as indicated by the passage from *Isis Unveiled*. Yet at the outset, it seems well to remember that each Aphorism of Patanjali needs to be first referred to the book of which it is an integral part, and finally to the three other books. Therefore, the subject of the second Aphorism of Book IV is not really “elementals,” per se, but the way in which a disciple undertaking regular self-discipline can alter portions of his being to partake of a greater “luminousness” or perceptiveness. Also important is the philosophical context in which one must place the title of Book IV, “The Essential Nature of Isolation.” Isolation, it can be seen from pondering the implications of Aphorism 2, is not a substitute for incarnation, but rather a state of inner equilibrium attended by various forms of “transfusions of natures” — or incarnations. Finally, when one has attained isolation—the subject of Patanjali’s discourses—he is only then ready to incarnate *fully*, with all faculties unclouded and alert.

The key to the development of any faculty is an increase of sensitivity to all those forms of intelligence which represent the higher evolutionary attainments of that plane. The elementals—presently disembodied forms of intelligence—permeate the higher astral realms. A man able to feel a complete inspiration in certain surroundings or in certain combinations of circumstances is “communing” with elemental intelligences representing various perfections on that particular plane. For some, an ideal family life—a perfect balance of psychic and mental interrelationships—provides such inspiration in all its details, since attendance to each one of those details evokes the hidden forms of intelligence associated with “perfections” at that level of experience. A wilderness inspired Thoreau, and at the source of his inspiration, perhaps, was a communion with elemental forces unspoiled by the pollution of Kama-Manas. It might be said that he was communing in some sense with his “favorite deity.” From a psychological point of view, man’s relationship with the “elementals” cannot be discussed in precise English terms, for the “temporary exchange of natures” which takes place normally with many

sensitive men may express itself simply by a quickening of sympathy or inspiration.

A correlation of a different sort is suggested by H. P. Blavatsky's relationship with her Adept Teachers, a case in which, as per the section from *Isis Unveiled*, a being on this plane is able to endow another of "celestial" attainments "with a portion of his physical nature, thus enabling them sometimes to appear in a semi-objective form." *Sympathy* is the most easily understandable key to theurgy.

Aphorism 4 : In what sense is the word egoism" to be understood in this Aphorism? In the usual sense of the term, one could call this a dangerous practice—as if those minds give up their integrity to one who serves his own purposes. Also, in Aphorism 5, are we to infer that the different activities of those various minds" in the various bodies voluntarily assumed by the ascetic, are something apart from the ascetic himself? That is, do they indicate mental activities experienced in bodies by the ascetic prior to becoming an ascetic?

Aphorisms 4 and 5 seem to be Patanjali's way of saying that all of our faculties are constructed, vivified and colored by the individual mind—"the moving cause" (Aphorism 5). Aphorism 4 does not necessarily imply the "borrowing of other bodies," and in such instances it seems prudent to restrict the interpretation of the Aphorism to its most universal philosophical meaning. The influencing of the "various minds in the various bodies" is a proper evolutionary use of "egoism." In Book II, Patanjali, of course, lists egoism as one of the five afflictions of the mind, as an involvement of the power that sees with the power of seeing. This is simply one of the dangers of "incarnation," which does not make incarnation any the less an evolutionary necessity for all man's sheaths and instruments as well as for himself.

It is not legitimate to infer from Patanjali's terms that the "various minds in the various bodies" are "something apart from the ascetic himself." If the ascetic has incarnated properly in his various instruments, he will have assimilated to himself and identified with his purposes the natural uses of the organs and faculties. This is quite different from identifying himself with the

faculties. It is true also, however, that the ascetic is sometimes drawn to unite himself once more with those sheaths previously used by him in incomplete or somewhat unenlightened fashion by karmic necessity. These are the skandhas.

Aphorism 7 : In the explanatory note on this Aphorism, we find that the three kinds of work are (1) pure in action and motive; (2) dark, such as that of infernal beings; (3) that of the general run of men, pure-dark. Would not that of the ascetic be PURE, rather than neither pure nor dark"? Could this cryptic Aphorism be explained more clearly?

To say that the ascetic performs work that is “neither pure nor dark” appears cryptic only because it is extremely difficult for the ordinary Western mind to realize that reality is neither good nor bad, nor a combination of the two. The Western ascetic strives for “goodness,” which usually means he strives to follow certain rules which keep him away from those areas of action generally called “evil.” The true ascetic does not follow any specific type of religious discipline; *he seeks not good, nor its opposite.* Once again we come close to the mystery of incarnation, and to the cardinal point of the *Secret Doctrine*—that isolation and emancipation are only means to an end and never ends in themselves. The end of life becomes the ability to incarnate wisely in any circumstance and in any form, without regard for the fact that any forms thus embodied may have previously been associated with “the dark.” And here, again, we have the difference between the temperament of religious fanaticism and the inner temper of understanding that compels love from all beings, high or low, pure and dark.

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APHORISMS 8-9 (Book IV): What is the relation, if any, between Mental Deposits and the Skandhas? Both these Aphorisms refer to mental deposits. The note to Aphorism 9 states that memory is not due to mere brain matter, but is possessed by the incarnating ego, which holds all the mental deposits in a latent state, each one becoming manifest whenever the suitable bodily constitution and environment are provided for it."

Two articles deal specifically with the subject of skandhas: "The Persian Student's

Doctrine" (THEOSOPHY II, 375), by Mr. Judge, and "Propensity or Skandhic Memory" (xix, 505). These articles indicate that the skandhas are those "lives" or elementals which once entered into the composition of our principles, but when cast off by us are taken up by other beings and kingdoms to which they are drawn by natural affinity. It is obvious that upon rebirth the ego repossesses the skandhas once in use by him.

Now, do the mental deposits exert the attractive power which draws the skandhas together once more, or rather, does the ego use the deposits as the attractive power, and thus the deposits bear a relation to the skandhas similar to the magnet which attracts the iron filings? Or is another solution suggested by H.P.B.'s article on "Memory" (THEOSOPHY XXVII, 411), where it is stated that the brain cells are not the RETAINERS of impressions, but only their RECEIVERS and CONVEYORS? If this be true, are not both the mental deposits and the skandhas merely the "window panes" or lenses through which the ego looks in order to recover the memory of the past? Or, are the deposits astral images?

In his comment on Aphorism 6, Mr. Judge writes that "each life leaves in the Ego mental deposits which form the basis upon which subsequent vicissitudes follow." The note on Aphorism 9 might be regarded as equivocal in respect to the resting place of these "deposits," but the words "in the Ego" are categorical. This phrasing needs examination, since "ego" is often used as synonymous with the "Perceiver," or spiritual center in man, though it may be recalled that Mr. Judge in *The Ocean of Theosophy* states that the real memories of all past lives are retained by *mans*, the reincarnating ego. "This and none other," says Mr. Judge, "are we."

The root of individuality, here, is the conjunction of both personal and spiritual powers of perception. Unless the soul gains by accretion and by modification during the course of evolution, there is no such thing as immortality, for immortality means the retention of significant experiences in terms of altered soul-characteristics. What is the retaining agent? It may be remembered that *manas*, as the connecting link between higher and lower modes of perception, has a substantial aspect, referred to in the *S.D.* as "fifth state matter." Mental deposits can then be thought to have a substantial base in a form of highly developed matter, which accompanies the spiritual ego

through incarnations, and which is inseparable from him during the course of an entire manvantara.

Every experience is simply the meeting of two different forms and degrees of intelligence. As manas retains those modifications of its substance caused by evolutionary experience, so do all forms of elemental intelligence likewise involved in the actions of the soul retain the impact of the contacts which produced the experiences. These are the skandhas. They retain a potential magnetic affinity for the manasic substance of that ego with whom they were previously associated. A full manifestation of skandhic karma occurs when the mental deposits of manas and the retained impressions of lower forms of sensitive life become re-united. The "mental deposit" tends to condition the action of the soul in meeting the external pressure of skandhic involvement, yet it may be at least partially dissolved *by mental* action.

We have probably all had the experience of "settling" our troubled relationships with other human beings without any direct contact and though they be hundreds or thousands of miles distant. Here the mental deposits have been themselves altered by mental evolution. In such instances, while the skandhas will be once again drawn into contact with the ego, difficulties in meeting intelligently such ghosts of the past can be considerably lessened. Since Manas, when united to Buddhi, is creative rather than repetitive, the study of true philosophy and the practice of occult disciplines may ultimately make possible an entirely different type of interaction between the soul and the skandhic aggregates, when they are rejoined.

The mental deposits may also be regarded as astral images, if it be remembered that a form of astral matter actually accompanies the reincarnating ego.

The unnumbered mental deposits which are a part of every being, save those who have finished with the necessary lessons of evolution, require a certain amount of energy to maintain their coherence. They are a drain on the vital creative forces of the higher nature. The correct comprehension of philosophy can reclaim some of this lost energy and thus accelerate the progress of the soul.

This might be suggested as one of the reasons why study of Theosophy *as a philosophy* becomes for the individual himself—if applied to his mental evolution—a matter of practical psychology. Thus the constant asking of questions which tend to break up mental fixations is part of the Theosophic as well as the Socratic method of education:

“Ask the Self questions, and the Self will answer,” as Mr. Judge once wrote to an inquirer. Karmic returns cause us to question our attitudes of mind, that we may not re-energize skandhas of ignorance.

Aphorism 10: The note on this Aphorism indicates that ALL mental deposits result from a desire for enjoyment. Now, can it be that mental deposits are of less force when the mind feels a disgust for vice and foolishness in others, or has a feeling of horror when tales of tragedy or crime are being told? Can it be said that a “mental deposit” is a memory” picture in the lower order of nature providing a suitable environment?

The mental deposit is not in any strict sense a “memory picture,” if we mean by memory actual visualization of past events. Rather, a mental deposit cannot be thoroughly dissipated until a suitable environment is furnished by the lower orders of nature, even though philosophical study can prepare the way for this release. Disgust and horror, as *negations* of enjoyment, however, are themselves mental deposits of a very lasting and dangerous sort. The wisest response to vice, tragedy or crime would seem to be a complete immobility as far as personal feelings are concerned, so that the mind may see the more quickly what definite and positive action may be taken in regard to the situation. Disgust or horror in the presence of bestiality may, of course, serve the same sort of intermediary function as is sometimes accomplished by religious restrictions and taboos. In such instances these emotions can be a *protection* to the ego, but they cannot of themselves lead to understanding. “Be ye wise as serpents and harmless as doves,” appears to be an injunction especially meant for those who have passed beyond the need of ceremonial and other emotional aids in avoiding dangerous situations. Such men, obviously, are few indeed.

Aphorism 17: “The modifications of the mind are always known to the presiding spirit, because it is not subject to modification.” How is this so? One feels, in a sense, this must be so, or illusions could never be overcome; nor would one feel that secret sense of

unreality about illusions to which the personal man becomes subject. And yet, that awareness is certainly different from consciously realized knowledge in waking life, it is as though one knows, and yet does not know. Yet, why does the presiding spirit permit the modifications?

The “presiding spirit” neither permits nor opposes the modifying illusions of the mind, but simply perceives them. In a sense, the “Presiding Spirit”, itself creates all modifications, or it might be said that the presiding spirit “cooperates” with the modifications of the thinking principle, without itself being modified. In other words, the intuitive faculties of the higher soul *must incarnate in* the modifications, in order to raise the nature of evolutionary relationships.

The spiritual awareness, on this plane, that the personal man is involved in many illusions grows to the degree that he begins to ask himself fundamental questions. Only one who is willing to continually reevaluate his entire store of understanding can develop this spiritual faculty to the full. In all human beings, however, the sense of a need for asking basic questions persists. Kipling apparently knew this well when he wrote *Kim*. Many a thoughtful person must have been struck by the way in which the hero, a youth of singular talents, favored by a host of exciting adventures, returns in solitude with frank wonder to the query, “Who is Kim?” Kim did not know the full answer to this question, nor do we, yet he knew one thing we too may know—that the persistent questioning of every modification of the mind is in itself a link to reality.

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APHORISM 18 (Book IV): *“The mind is not self-illuminative, because it is an instrument of the soul, is colored and modified by experiences and objects, and is cognized by the soul.” In this Aphorism I find what relieves me of most of my perplexities in Patanjali. Certainly, Higher Manas is “self-illuminative.” “Mind born sons” of the SECRET DOCTRINE are luminous.” Therefore, it is clear that all through these Aphorisms, it is the lower mind which has to be restrained and controlled, and which is subject to modification and coloring. Is, then, the “Soul” of Patanjali but what H.P.B. describes as Higher Manas?*

Mind is the connecting link between the Egoic power of perception and the objects which must be correctly perceived in order to provide a working knowledge of the manifested world. Manas is intelligence and, more specifically, *manifested* intelligence. The intensification of Buddhi-Manas means the successful incarnation of the Buddhistic powers into that semi-substantial, plastic intelligence which is the highest efflorescence of the material world. Higher Manas is “developed,” *on this plane*, through the interaction of Buddhi and the intelligence of matter. We might regard the powers of Higher Manas as higher faculties, and Buddhi as a symbol of the power which makes attainment of those faculties possible. In the terms of William Q. Judge’s *Ocean of Theosophy*, Higher Manas—that is, Manas *with* Buddhi—is the incarnated Ego or Soul. The work of “restraining and controlling the lower mind” is not to be regarded as negative or non-constructive endeavor, for it is also the work, here, in a sense, of “producing” Higher Manas—that is, those faculties which convey accurately to the five senses and organs the behests of Spiritual Intuition.

When the problem of making fine distinctions between the various faculties of man arises, it is helpful to consider some of the immediate implications of the Third Fundamental Proposition of the *Secret Doctrine*: (a) All intelligence is of the same essence, even though not of the same degree. (b) Since evolution begins with a Spiritual impulse given to matter, the development of Higher Manas begins with the incarnation of the spiritual individuality. Therefore, each Manvantara calls for a new development of higher manasic faculties—the absorption of the purposes of lesser intelligences in the wider and more comprehensive purposes of the Spiritual Will. Higher Manas does not develop *from* lower manas, yet in the long course of evolution gains accretions, so to speak, from the material of lower manas.

“We must help personalities to become living Souls,” wrote Robert Crosbie. This is the process through which the qualities of intelligence are refined and identified with the permanent in man. Higher Manas is the key to what we call individuality, for the abilities of perception which it represents are acquired in ways distinctive for each individual, and it is Higher Manas which provides the attractive focus which draws the skandhas together in each new

incarnation.

Aphorism 19: In view of this Aphorism, and when we consider how many people listen to the radio, read a book or paper, and carry on a conversation at the same time, is it legitimate to conclude that such diffusion of concentration is likely to induce a current of passivity and mediumship in the race-mind?

The implication of the question is obviously correct. The inveterate radio-listeners—whether or not they do anything else at the same time—usually find it increasingly difficult to be alone with themselves. It is as if the Ego makes an indefinable demand for evaluative thinking when one is alone, and if a person has avoided any steps which might utilize this internal demand—if he simply does not know how to reflect—the result is a feeling of oppression, or egoic “frustration,” of which modern psychology is still ignorant. The feeling of oppression, incidentally, is as far as “soul thinking” can get in an unwelcome solitude, and may drive the man to resume almost immediately a distracting activity.

It may be possible to concentrate on a great many things at the same time, *if* one knows exactly why one is paying attention to each of them, but it is impossible to have real concentration without a sense of moral direction or balance. Only when this is obtained is it possible to “render unto Caesar those things that are Caesar’s.” Sometimes, a disagreeable task must be accomplished by concentration upon the end to be accomplished, rather than the event itself. A properly trained body and lower mind can provide their own “concentration” for the accomplishment of various physical tasks, and the most worthwhile assistance to the lower mind thus engaged will come when the higher mind is focussed on a moral objective.

Aphorism 22: Kindly explain what distinction may exist between this Aphorism and Aphorism 23, Book II. To me, they seem identical, but I realize there must be a clue I have not caught.

The distinction between Aphorism 23, Book II, and Aphorism 22, Book IV, is that the former speaks of the mind as the tool which must be used in

discovering the essentials of Soul knowledge, while the latter describes a state already attained. There is a difference between understanding the *nature* of the Universe,” and “embracing universally all objects.” Any man, by a study of correct philosophical principles, can gain a perspective of the purpose of evolutionary endeavor, while to “embrace universally all objects” means that a complete mastery of the specifics of manifestation has become one with the broader understanding of universals.

Aphorism 32: (a) Can this Aphorism be interpreted to mean that when emancipation” has been reached, one’s view is no longer of time, but of and in duration? This would seem justified by the description of Soul at the time of concentration (Book I, Aphorism 3) as abiding in the state of a spectator without a spectacle.”

(b) In the above connection, I should like to know how the definition of concentration differs from that of sleep, as given in Book I, Aphorism 10?

(a) The question has stated the case. All human difficulties are proved by each one as being involved in Maya, precisely because the passage of time alters or changes completely one’s feeling about them. The mastery of the “time sense” is also a mastery of the whole material world with its disturbing effect upon Egoic clarity. The man who has reached the state of “spectator without a spectacle” no longer sees “through a glass darkly.” Soul vision is that vision which includes past, present and future in one cognition.

(b) Concentration is a description of the mental state wherein the mind embraces and includes all subjects and objects. The *final* stage of concentration brings the universal perception that all subjects and objects are in essence “one.” Perception of differences and distinctions cease because those qualities are understood by the Soul. In the case of sleep it is also true that “differences and distinctions” cease, but only because of withdrawal from the material world. Many difficult problems not yet solved have temporarily retreated beyond the horizon. There is, however, a very real correspondence between a state of highest concentration and deep sleep, when the Soul is in a state of absolute consciousness. (*Secret Doctrine*, I, 266.)

I FIND *myself still confused on the subject of meditation. Can it be that the kind of meditation referred to under Aphorism 17 Book I, as also in the first four Aphorisms, Book III, is to be applied to mundane matters—from the bottom up,* so to say; while that kind referred to in Aphorisms 13-16, of Book 1 is rather from above down,” and is to be correlated with the Isolation described in Book IV, Aphorism 33?

There is a very clear distinction, made throughout the four books of the Aphorisms, between “meditation with a seed” and “meditation without a seed.” Successful meditation with a seed leads to intellectual or cognitive clarity. Meditation without a seed leads to *moral* clarity, or spiritual vision. In Western philosophy, we are able to sense this same distinction between the perspective encouraged by Aristotle, whose concern was primarily intellectual, and that of Plato, whose concern was primarily moral.

Aphorism 19 of Book I relates that “the meditative state attained by those whose discrimination does not extend to pure spirit, depends upon the phenomenal world.” Patanjali begins his course of instruction by insisting on the necessity of a universal view before one engages in the mastery of particulars. The understanding of details is to be accompanied by “a firm position observed out of regard for the end in view” —the attainment which enables a man to “act for and as the Self of all creatures.” Aphorisms 45 to 49 of Book I further illuminate the limitations of that meditation “which has a subtle object in view” rather than an “end” of permanent moral significance.

The Isolation described by Aphorism 3, Book IV, is “the abiding of the Soul united with understanding in its own nature.” The implications of this phrase may be expanded by the student to explain both the superiority of the meditation which focusses upon The Self over the meditation centered upon objects—the selves of matter—and also the *temporary* necessity for the latter meditation in seeking complete understanding of the phenomenal world. The first task of philosophy is to create a vision of universality as to spirit and interdependence as to beings. The specifics of Occult Science are then concerned with establishing egoic comprehension of every object and relationship of the material world. Yet if this mastery over particulars is accompanied by a steadfast retention of a moral “end in view,” the original

philosophical vision is not lost. Spiritual emancipation. is attained by blending direct perception of all phases of the objective world in that spiritual vision which—while not relinquishing the acquaintance with particulars—no longer necessitates the classifying or departmentalizing of knowledge. This final state might also be regarded as descriptive of the goal of human evolution in any manvantaric period. It is never enough to see either the forest or the trees alone, nor first the one and then the other. Instead, it is incumbent, upon the Sage to see both of these at once, in the light of the principles of evolutionary action which produced both.

I am also confused on the subject of memory. In Book I, Aphorism II, memory seems to be described in one aspect only, that of recollection. But in Book IV, Aphorisms 8 and 9, memory seems to be referred to as a faculty of the reincarnating Ego—NOT as a function of mere brain matter. From this, I would judge that memory is primarily the basis of individual consciousness. Can memory, either latent or active, be the real basis of mind itself in a manvantaric cycle?

Since memory is a word which stands in the average mind for recollection of *things* perceived, it might be confusing to say that memory is the primary basis of individual consciousness. It is true that individual consciousness is always accompanied by some perception of continuity, but this does not depend upon the visualization of any specific past events. The first “perception” of the incarnating Ego is that of continuity itself—a sense of the enduring—and the first memory of an egoic nature is that which abides within the Soul as a perception of the interdependence between “events” and beings. Mr. Judge’s commentary states that memory is “possessed” by the incarnating Ego, not that it *causes* egoic perception. There is, of course, the memory of impacted and assimilated experience in the “three lines of evolution” which signifies attainment of the man-state. Only the *personal* self-consciousness depends upon memory (see *The Secret Doctrine*, I, 292).

The majority of our definitions are overlaid with centuries-old habits of superficiality and materialization. “Reminiscence” today is more apt to bring to mind the picture of a man in a nostalgic reverie involving the lost romances of youth, than to suggest Plato’s “reminiscence” —which meant the intuitive

retention of the essence of experiences gained in former incarnations. Acting in our age, we are constantly hampered by too many “mental deposits” — which Patanjali speaks of elsewhere — and thus allow the deeper memory of Soul little opportunity to manifest.

Another concept I would like to be entirely clear on: as Patanjali uses mind, it seems always to be the lower mind (KAMA-MANAS) to which he refers. His soul seems to be what H.P.B. refers to as Higher MANAS, it being “unconditionally omniscient on its own plane,” as she points out in her article, “Psychic and Noëtic Action.” Patanjali makes it plain, as H.P.B. does, that ATMA is the Universal Spirit above and inclusive of all other principles. If this is correct, then, Self-realization makes of man a God, and this is the object of Patanjali’s whole treatise. For the ascetic, or adept, it is no longer Desire, but Higher MANAS that is the mover of the Will. Can this be confirmed?

Desire is a word which expresses either a primary action of the personal man or a primary action of the spiritual man. The universal applicability of the saying, “behind will stands desire,” is noted in Mr. Judge’s statement in the *Ocean of Theosophy*, that even a Buddha “had first to make a vow.” Would we say that Buddha first intellectually perceived a need for knowledge, or that he first *desired* knowledge? There is, in our own experience, a mover of the mind behind every mental effort made, whether toward self-aggrandizement or to serve the need of humankind. And so it was, perhaps, with Buddha. His initial impulse must have come from the egoic perception of the inter-relatedness of all life. His first experiences in the world served to deepen this feeling and *then* he deliberately sought to develop the highest faculties of mind in a search for the laws which apparently decreed suffering for all that lived.

In the life of a Sage, impersonal Higher Manas is the mover of the will. That is, Higher Manas fires the otherwise latent Buddhi, which exists in the lower orders of nature as an energizing force. There, we call it Fohatic intelligence. Higher Manas draws the energies of this intelligence into a pattern of action which we call special abilities and faculties, to be gained only through the continuous working over of the material principles. Thus Higher Manas eventually attracts all the elements of nature into its service, and the Spiritual

Will is said to be operative when all the forces used by the Ego are directed by one single purpose.

EVERYDAY QUESTIONS
ON PATANJALI'S YOGA APHORISMS Vol. 36, p. 228

THE whole of Patanjali seems to be concerned with the problems of self-discipline—but self-discipline of a very specialized sort. Little or nothing is written about the modes of discipline necessary for entering a field of action. Rather the emphasis is upon ways of leaving the involvements of the manifested world. But would not the student of occult science seek to learn both how to leave such involvements and also how to incarnate” in them most fully and intelligently?

This question raises a very interesting consideration. All genuine religions and occult disciplines catalogue necessary restraints against purely impulsive action in the physical world. It has not been customary to found a religion upon the need of every Soul to involve itself with matter, for the karmic forces of evolution precipitate each being without delay into as many tangible experiences as consciousness is able to assimilate. The voice of the great religions of the past has expressed in a thousand different ways, “Take heed lest you forget you are a Soul,” and, “Move slowly and carefully in your selection of experiences in the world so that spiritual vision be not blurred.” When and if a once genuine religion becomes self-satisfied or reactionary, however, there come reformers and revolutionary prophets to demand that men desert the philosophy of escapism for the philosophy of obligation to one’s fellows. The message of Buddha was primarily an inspired revolt against the mental inertia which had submerged Brahmanism. Both Socrates and Christ also remonstrated against the habit of rejecting an unjust world, which is simply an indifference to the idea that there are necessary involvements and obligations. So the subtle “middle way” or “golden mean” represented by the Wisdom Religion has been neither a counsel to avoid involvement or participation in human experience, nor a counsel to welcome involvement for its own sake. Nevertheless the emphasis on one or the other of these factors has changed from age to age, as the teachers of Occult Science have encountered the obstacles characteristic of the minds of their times.

Our present period, as a natural moment of fruition in Kali-Yuga, has tumbled together all of the virtues and vices of the past—the strengths and weaknesses of the men who determined the course of history in past centuries and millenniums. At this time man encounters both indifference to courageous and vital living and the tendency to submerge human life indiscriminately in the sensations of matter. Further, the things that were once states of mind have crystallized into oppressive social, political and economic situations. The indifference of nineteenth-century capitalism was, in occult terms, “a refusal to incarnate” in the problems of all mankind—to recognize a fraternity with the poorer and the less fortunately endowed. The callous institution of slavery had a similar origin. During the many years when both of these human institutions flourished, religion came to be more and more a false withdrawal from the world, losing all semblance to the wise counsels of old, which had stressed a thoughtful and careful, rather than an impulsive, entrance into the struggle of human affairs.

Patanjali, it must be remembered, was Teacher in an age prior to our own religious and social crystallizations of indifference and sensualism. He is counseling the adoption of a state of mind rather than any specific mode of action. The political or social reformer, the religious revolutionary, and the determined individual ascetic can all make use of Patanjali’s classifications of mental states, regardless of how busy his hands or emotions may be in the work he has set himself to perform. Few are the writers that show as clearly as does Patanjali the possibility, and finally the necessity, of exercising continually the three powers of creation, preservation and destruction in ordering one’s own mind and actions. It may be remembered, too, that though Patanjali’s Self-governed Sage, “Emancipated” and dwelling in “Isolation,” has learned to refrain from ill-considered action—he has not forgotten action itself, nor the desire to be a moving force in evolution.

While I can find many a nugget of wisdom and many a hint that is valuable and practical in Patanjali, still, as a whole, this little book seems to me far beyond a Westerner’s capacity. Nowhere does one gain so full a sense of the powers latent in man, but most Westerners are not desirous of obtaining such

powers. Ought there not to be some method suggested whereby one could really get at the core of this teaching? Can any be offered for consideration?

The writer can do no better on this point than quote directly from Mr. Judge's Path Magazine, September, 1888, where this very question is taken up. "Study of Patanjali," it is stated (III, 200), "will repay you amply":

So deep is it that, no matter how much you perceive in each aphorism, there are still mines below. The best study is done in this wise. After the mind has extracted all it can from an aphorism, then hold it in your brain; take it about with you, as it were, into the street cars, while you wait for lunch, or where not else. Simply brood it,—as we say of a bird that she broods the nest. The subconscious mind knows the under-side of that aphorism; it is based upon the finer forces; it attracts them and they will enlighten you. This process is mysterious,—that is to say, it cannot be better put into words. It must be experienced to be known. And thus you apply to Patanjali his own method of abstract meditation.

This process—the full control of the brain-mind—involves a restraint of the characteristic motions of kama-manas, as detailed by Mr. Judge in the Ocean. In intellectual terms, these are (1) the tendency to rush away from any concept or idea, as to a maze of peripheral questions or associated notions; (2) the tendency to fix on the agreeable aspect of the idea; (3) a fascination with its disagreeable or personally disturbing implications; and (4) the inclination to remain passive, considering the idea not at all. Patanjali's doctrine, like any other philosophy, grows on and in the mind not in these sporadic motions, but by the everyday questions and answers which open up communication between higher and lower manas.