



GEMS OF WISDOM

from

MAURICE NICOLL



ESSENTIAL EXCERPTS from
PSYCHOLOGICAL COMMENTARIES on the
TEACHING of GURDJIEFF and OUSPENSKY



**INNER WORLD
BOOKS**

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***PSYCHOLOGICAL COMMENTARIES
ON THE TEACHING OF
GURDJIEFF AND OUSPENSKY***

INNER WORLD BOOKS

Edited by Chuck Sher

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PREFACE

“Man’s possibilities are very great. You cannot even conceive a shadow of what man is capable of attaining. But nothing can be attained in sleep. In the consciousness of a sleeping man his illusions, his ‘dreams’, are mixed with reality. He lives in a subjective world and he can never escape from it. And this is the reason why he can never make use of all the powers he possesses and why he lives in only a small part of himself.”

— G. I. Gurdjieff

George Gurdjieff brought to the West a teaching unlike anything seen or heard of in the modern world—a profound and revolutionary understanding of man’s inner psychology uniquely linked to a cosmology describing his place in the universe.

Gurdjieff insisted that these ideas, which he told us have existed in one form or another since ancient times, are not merely to be the subject of philosophical speculation, but that a man must verify for himself the truth about himself with specific practical inner work—a work designed to assist a man in awakening from his inner sleep.

Such a practical study of ourselves along these lines is today referenced as the ‘Gurdjieff Work’ and Gurdjieff urges us to begin our inner journey with an examination of the very state in which we find ourselves ... our present psychological condition.

This collection of excerpts from Dr. Nicoll’s five-volume *Psychological Commentaries* presents the essence of Dr. Nicoll’s personal experience of the Gurdjieff teaching. Following each excerpt is the volume number and the page number that it was taken from.

Dr. Maurice Nicoll (1884-1953) was a British physician, specializing in psychological medicine. He was a student and close colleague of C.G. Jung when he met P.D. Ouspensky in 1921 and became interested in

the teachings of G.I. Gurdjieff. He and his wife lived and worked at Gurdjieff's extraordinary *Institute for the Harmonious Development of Man* in Fontainebleau, France for a year. He then returned to London where he continued to study with Ouspensky, and later to organize his own groups. Dr. Nicoll and his wife Catherine were close friends of Mr. Ouspensky's for many years.

Dr. Nicoll is also the author of *Living Time*, *The Mark*, and *The New Man: An Interpretation of Some Parables and Miracles of Christ*.

Psychological Commentaries on the Teaching of Gurdjieff and Ouspensky was written for—and read to—the members of his study groups from 1941 until shortly before his death in 1953. This epic, five-volume work (plus a new index) is available from the publisher, Eureka Editions, on their website, www.eurekaeditions.com or on Amazon.com websites.

Although almost all of the words and phrases referenced in this book are non-technical, nevertheless their full meaning emerges only as part of the process of an individual's inner work. An unsurpassed introductory description of the Gurdjieff Work can be found in P. D. Ouspensky's *In Search of the Miraculous: Fragments of an Unknown Teaching*.

SECTION I

The Core Perspective of the Work

CHAPTER 1 - OVERVIEW

‘A HIGHER LEVEL OF BEING’

“A higher level of being lies immediately above all of us at this very moment. It does not lie in the future of time but in ourselves at this very moment, now . . . The work is about a certain transformation of the instant, of the moment, of the present.” V. 1, p. 2

THE MYSTERY OF EXISTENCE

“People take this mystery of their own existence and the Universe for granted. It is only when one begins to feel and ponder this mystery that it becomes possible to awaken from sleep. This capacity is called Magnetic Centre.” V. 4, p. 1255

TWO REALITIES

“We stand between two realities, one given by the senses and the other given by our relationship to Higher Centres. One is external and the other is internal and, I would add, eternal. It has often been said that this Work is to prepare the lower centres for the reception of Higher Centres.” V. 4, p. 1322

LIFE AS WORK

“If a man begins to take life as work, then his whole relationship to existence begins to change, because the meaning of life changes for him. He sees life in another light, not as an end, but as a means, and this enables him not to identify with life and its happenings, as he formerly did.” V. 1, p. 66

RADICAL ACCEPTANCE OF LIFE

“Everything that happens to one in life is the best thing that could happen to one, if one takes it as work—as a means of development.

You realize in a practical way how you are created a self-developing organism. You no longer take life as an end in itself or expect it to be as you wished, but you take it as a means to an end.” V. 3, p. 863

INNER DEVELOPMENT

“A seed must be planted to develop, and have the right food, air and light. So it is with us, if we become planted in the ground of esoteric teaching. This is not a fanciful idea. It is not an idealistic idea. It is not a pious idea. It is not a sentimental idea. It is a fact. Given the right conditions, a man, a woman, can begin to undergo what he and what she were originally created for. We were not created merely to live in life.” V. 2, p. 680

CONSCIOUSNESS

“What is the most precious, the most mysterious, and the most indefinable possession we have been given? The answer is—Consciousness. We are given a little of this indescribable and unfathomable mystery. But, as we are, in a state of hypnotic sleep, we do not use this gift, but, as it were, surrender it to every pleasing mood, every passing thought.” V. 3, p. 1163

LACK OF CONSCIOUSNESS

“In assembling the different parts of the Work to form an instrument in the mind for the reception of the finer vibrations continually coming from the two Higher Centres that are present in Man, the idea that we are not properly conscious is one of the main supporting parts of the framework . . . But unless it becomes a truth of experience it cannot take its necessary place in the instrument.” V. 5, p. 1522

WHAT IS YOUR TASK?

“People live and die, just the same, not seeing their task . . . namely, to work against their daily mechanicalness and awaken from themselves.” V. 3, p. 1190

WHAT IS YOUR TASK? II

“What is your task? Why are you down here? What is it that you have to change? What is it that you have to learn about yourself, this

thing you take for granted, this thing that is your apparatus for living? Does your apparatus for living give you the results you wish for? Yourself, your personality, is the apparatus you are using for living life... This is the thing we wheel out every morning to face the day with. And this is the thing the Work speaks of in all its stages—the thing you can work upon and alter. Try to think that it is not life you can change, but yourself in your reaction to life.” V. 1, p. 139

INNER DEVELOPMENT II

“You cannot alter yourself directly. You can only alter by means of certain kinds of effort. These efforts are shown us. There is the great effort of non-identifying—not identifying with yourself, to begin with. (What a fine fellow I am!) There is the great effort of Self-Remembering . . . There is the great effort of self-observation . . . All this increases consciousness. Things alter by your becoming more conscious, more aware of them, by observation, by noticing without criticism, by gradual separation from them.” V. 2, p. 681

CLEANING THE MACHINE

“The first stages of the Work are sometimes called ‘cleaning the machine.’ . . . The Work tells you more about what not to do than about what to do. Now people often ask: ‘What am I to do?’ On that side the Work says only two definite things: ‘Remember yourself’ and ‘Observe or notice yourself.’ That is what you must try to do. But on the other side the Work says many things about what not to do. It says, for example, that you must try to struggle against being identified, try to struggle with mechanicalness, with mechanical and wrong talking, with every kind of internal considering, with every kind of self-justifying, with all the different pictures of yourself, with your special forms of imagination, with mechanical disliking, with all varieties of your self-pity and self-esteem, with your jealousy, with your hatreds, with your vanity, your inner falseness, with your lying, with your self-conceit, with your attitudes, prejudices, and so on.”

V. 1, pp. 160-1

ENLARGING CONSCIOUSNESS

“The idea of this Work is to enlarge consciousness. We have, we are told, to become far more conscious to ourselves through direct self-observation, so that all sorts of narrow pictures that we have of ourselves are destroyed and we begin to live in a larger edition of ourselves. We can take it as a general rule in the Work that when we are up against someone else we may be sure that that is the very thing we have to work on in ourselves. This gives us an entirely different orientation and in my opinion it is the beginning of real work.” V. 3, p. 831

LIFE AS TEACHER

“We have to practice non-identifying in the midst of the happenings of life; we have to practice self-remembering in the midst of affairs; and we have to notice and separate ourselves from our negative emotions in the midst of all hurts and smarts in daily life.” V.1, p. 14

‘NEVER FORGET THE WORK’

“A man must never forget what he is doing in the Work. He must, as G. once said, reach a state such that, in whatever direction he is twisted and turned, however badly he is treated, he never forgets the Work, and never acts save through the medium of the Work.” V. 1, p. 226

INNER STABILITY

“Other feelings of oneself are possible that are not derived from life and personality, and these feelings give a man a sense of stability that nothing outside him can take away. And it is from these feelings that a man begins to feel himself free, because they depend on nothing outside him...Personality, roughly speaking, lives by comparison with others...Real ‘I’ does not exist through comparison.” V. 1, pp. 274-5

INNER STABILITY II

“We have to make something very strong in ourselves by the help of the Work little by little so that we can withstand the shifting scene, moments of happiness followed by moments of depression, moments of hope followed by moments of despair, in order that we may have a centre of gravity within ourselves . . . a certain point of consciousness that is invulnerable. This is the beginning of the birth of Real I in

you which is not influenced by outer circumstances. One then works the other way round—that is, the machine formerly driven by outer events is now worked from within—from what is higher than life.”

V. 4, p. 1343

WEAKENING THE HOLD OF PERSONALITY

“Now the realization of one’s mechanicalness and the realization of one’s ignorance—for all knowledge leads into mystery—are necessary for any transformation of oneself to take place. Why? Because they weaken the hold of the acquired Personality.” V. 3, p. 1051

ADDING VERSUS TAKING AWAY

“The first step in the Work is to begin to free oneself from oneself. This Work is not adding something to oneself but taking away from oneself and it is only what is useless to one’s development that the Work seeks to take away.” V. 2, p. 425

THE POSSIBILITY OF ESCAPE

“It is a marvelous thing to find you can move in new directions internally and escape from this spurious invention of yourself. Just say to yourself: ‘Why am I always like this? Why do I always feel this? Why, in short, am I always the same fixed person?’ ” V. 3, p. 983

THE TRAJECTORY OF WORK

“The increasing feeling of the Work as stronger than life and all its ups and downs and swinging to and fro between the opposites brings about a state of Self-Remembering that is not due to chance nor is merely a fleeting experience. But for a very long time we mix the Work with our associations, with the machine of personality, which is driven by life and reacts to it mechanically. And this is inevitable because only a gradual separation is possible. A person cannot be torn away suddenly from personality. It would destroy him. So even though we try to work, we identify with the reactions of personality.” V. 1, p. 332

THE TRAJECTORY OF WORK II

“You may be sure that once your evaluation of the Work is strong

enough and you hear it enough and reflect upon it enough, you will see gradually unfolding the mystery of your own development. This mystery is different in each person. That is why it is so important not to compare yourself with other people. A great deal of negative emotion arises from comparison. Remember always that the Work is equally difficult for everyone and that it does not become easier. It is always difficult. And yet it is not too difficult if one will remember enough and maintain a certain inner strength of will in regard to it.” V. 3, p. 959

A NEW MAN

“The Work forms in us a new instrument of reception, a new apparatus for receiving impressions, both from outside and from inside.

. . . The Work is actually a whole and complete organism which is given little by little, part by part, but all these parts are parts of a true whole. If the Work is thus formed in you, you have a new thing, a new organized instrument, in you. Even a single part of the Work, if taken in with valuation and understanding, will begin to work a change in you because it will transmit new influences. But the whole of the Work must be formed in a man. This can be thought of as another body—another organized thing in a man—if the man lives the Work. Then it will control the man he was.” V. 1, p. 217

WHY INSIGHTS FADE

“We have to realize that it may be possible internally, in oneself, to catch real and new meanings for a time and not later on. Remember that the Enneagram turns. Its different points of meaning and force are turning. What you see today may not be possible tomorrow—or even a second later. But it will return. That is the point. It will come back.” V. 2, p. 470

NO FINAL SOLUTIONS

“Remember that there are no final solutions to anything. To try to find final solutions to things is like trying to do away with the waves of the storms of the sea. You have to have a good ship, a good rudder and a good compass. The solution to things lies in seamanship.”

V. 1, p. 368

CHAPTER 2

INTERNAL SEPARATION

MULTIPLE 'I's

INNER SEPERATION

"If he divides himself into an observing side and an observed side—that is, becomes *two*—then he begins to be able to shift his position, to change internally. Do you understand the depth of this idea? It is the way out of the prison of oneself." V. 1, p.169

SEEING DIFFERENT 'I's

"Perhaps, owing to a grain of modesty or a sense of humiliation or, better still, owing to increasing consciousness of yourself, you may realize that you are not one—not a fully conscious individual, willing his life consciously at every moment, but at one moment a mean person, at the next an irritable person, at the next a benevolent person and the next a scandalous or slanderous person, at the next a saint, at the next a liar." V. 1, p. 26

WHO IS RUNNING THE SHOW?

"Have you seen a view of yourself marching along as a crowd of 'I's, some good, some evil, some in tatters, some over-dressed, some well-meaning, some slanderous, some brave, some self-pitying, some intelligent, some stupid, some a little developed, some undeveloped and childish, and so on? This marching column, marching anyhow, now some leading, now others, this haphazard crew, *is leading one's life for one.*" V. 3, p. 975

"THIS IS NOT I."

"If you say: 'I am very irritable,' you put the feeling of I into irritable 'I's, and therefore you cannot separate from them . . . Now a man cannot begin to change until he is able as the result of self-observation to say, '*This is not I.*' As soon as he can begin to say this internally to something he observes in himself, he begins to separate it from himself. . . If he observes himself rightly, he notices these thoughts not as himself but as coming from a negative 'I' in him. . . . As a result

what it says does not get power over him, because he is separate from it." V.5, p. 1726, V.1, p. 22

A SIMPLE STATEMENT

"Unless a person begins to see that he is not one but many different 'I's he cannot be otherwise than completely identified with himself in everything that he does and thinks and feels. Now such a man cannot evolve." V. 2, p. 444

WHAT PREVENTS INTERNAL GROWTH

"In order to grow, a man must first divide himself into two parts—an observing and an observed side. Of course, he cannot do this. Why? Because he is convinced he is in charge of his life and everything he thinks, does, and feels. Why cannot he give up this idea and get another sense of himself, another idea of himself? Because he cannot get over this illusion that he is *one*, in consequence of which he attributes, ascribes, everything to himself." V. 4, p. 1236

OBSERVING STATES OF BEING

"Every 'I' produces its own state. Everyone is in a certain state at a certain moment owing to an 'I' that produces this state in him or her...An 'I' can only be detected by the state it produces in you. . . . We have no Real 'I,' no permanent 'I,' and have to realize it. We have to see the truth for ourselves. This continual change of different 'I's in us is exactly what we are told to observe." V. 3, p. 803-5

THE FEELING OF 'I'

"Observing 'I' must be given as far as possible the feeling of 'I' at the moment and the observed side given the feeling of 'not I.' . . . It requires long work and great sincerity and particularly great evaluation of the Work and its meaning to realize that you are not one but many 'I's. Even your very pride will prevent you, unless you feel the existence of something greater than your pride." V. 1, p. 311

PRACTICAL INNER SEPARATION

“We have to learn to speak of ourselves in the third person...I remember Mr. O saying to me: ‘Why don’t you say sometimes: “What is Nicoll up to?”’ . . . Such a feeling, such an inner sense, is the beginning of Self-Remembering.” V. 3, p. 892, V. 2, p. 698, 532

GROWTH BY DIVISION

“All growth is by division. One cell divides into two. Man as a self-developing organism, a cell, must become two first of all. In my case I and Nicoll must become a very real experience of inner separation. I observe Nicoll doing things yet am not Nicoll. This is not easy. It is easy to hear—not easy to do.” V. 3, p. 879

DISTRUSTING SMALL ‘I’S

“As Work-memory is increased, through self-observation, we begin to distrust the particular ‘I’ we happen to be in at the particular moment of time. When I say that we do not trust it, I mean that we do not quite believe what it is saying, what it is thinking, what it is feeling, just at that moment.” V. 2, p. 721

NEGATIVE STATES

“There are inner states—states within us all—that we must avoid as one avoids walking into mud in the external, visible world. One must not listen to them, must not go with them, must not touch them or let them touch you. This is inner separation. But you cannot practice inner separation if you ascribe everything that takes place in your inner invisible life—where you really all live—to yourselves.” V. 1, p. 61

INNER SEPARATION II

“Suppose you are standing on a plank and trying to lift it and struggling as hard as you can to do so. Will you succeed? No, because you yourself are trying to lift yourself and this is impossible...This massive stumbling-block lies across everyone’s path and long, very long overcoming of it is the task of *Work on Oneself*...I have watched people in the work, often for many years, who still take everything that takes place in them as ‘I’ and say ‘I’ to every mood, every thought, every impulse, every feeling, every sensation, every criticism, every feeling

of anger, every negative state, every objection, every dislike, every hate, every dejection, every depression, every whim, every excitement, every doubt, every fear...Whereas the case really is that everything in us, practically speaking, is 'It'—that is, a machine going by itself. Instead of saying 'I think,' we should realize it would be far nearer the truth if we said 'It thinks.' And instead of saying 'I feel' it would be nearer the mark to say, 'It feels.'" V. 1, p. 61-2

NEGATIVE STATES II

"In dealing with negative states, look at the 'I' in you and not at the person with whom you are negative. The real cause of the negative state is the 'I' that is speaking in you...Its only object is to make you negative and absorb as much of your force as it can. Every negative 'I' has only one purpose—to get hold of you and feed upon you and strengthen itself at your expense." V. 1, p. 162

'WHEN YOU ARE READY'

"The Work acts on people very gently and only in reference to what each of us can stand. When you really begin to see something in yourself, then it means that you can stand it. If you cannot see any 'I's it means you are not ready." V. 1, p. 276

'I'S ARE PARTICULAR

"Remember that all 'I's are specialized—that is, of different kinds. One is fond of this, another of that. One likes to say or do this, another to say or do that, and so on...Every 'I' makes, as it were, a little momentary world into which we pass when we identify with it." V. 1, p. 313

WHICH 'I' IS SPEAKING?

"When a person, totally identified with his acquired personality, says, for example, 'I think this,' 'I think that,' the Work answer is 'Which 'I' is speaking?' Do you see how powerful this idea is? And can you begin to apply the power of this Work-idea to yourself? Certainly not, if you do not begin to break yourself up into different 'I's...It is a great shock to self-conceit to realize that there is no such person as 'I.' But unless this begins to dawn on you, you will never begin to be passive *to yourself*." V. 1, p. 277

BEING PASSIVE TO REACTIONS

“Now let us come back to the meaning of *being passive*. In the full sense it means being passive to the personality, and this, in turn, means being passive to oneself. Can you be passive to your mechanically-arising objections for even five minutes? Well, I advise you to observe how your personality reacts every moment to everyone and everything...Notice when you begin to object inside—notice what reactions arise in you—and try to be passive to them, not to the people who cause them to arise. Is this clear? You must make yourself passive to your own reactions, not to the people you are reacting to.”

V. 1, p. 276

WHICH ‘I’ IS SPEAKING? II

“What ‘I’s control you? What ‘I’s govern your life? What ‘I’s do you consent to? Can you bear to break yourself up into different ‘I’s and see what they say and do and what they think and feel? This is to break up the power of imagination.” V. 1, p. 310,

A LONG-TERM PROJECT

“In the case of Mr. Smith, his prison is Mr. Smith whom he does not observe at all and whom he takes as himself. What does he have to do? *He has to divide himself into ‘I’ and Mr. Smith...* Then his life will become divided into two streams: one will be the life of Mr. Smith and the other will be the history and reflections of the ‘I’ observing Mr. Smith. Then for a long time he will live this twin life . . . but if he does not allow himself to get negative he will notice gradually that new meanings enter his understanding. Something begins to happen to him . . . new influences begin to reach a man.” V. 2, p. 417

MARSHALLING FORCES

“When this Observing ‘I’ is established it collects other ‘I’s round it that wish to work, that wish to understand better, that wish to find the secret of one’s existence.” V. 2, p. 535

THE NEXT STEP

“Let us note here that the position of Observing ‘I’ is always *internal* to what it observes...As self-observation becomes *deeper*, more

emotional, more *real* and more *necessary*, the position of Observing 'I' becomes more internal. Self-Observation ceases to be superficial. Now around Observing 'I' gather all those 'I's in a man that wish to work and bring about order in the house that a man is. This forms what is called *Deputy-Steward*. The position of Deputy-Steward is therefore *internal* to the superficial man, the man turned to life and driven by outer circumstances...A man who has begun to have something internally organized in him is no longer so easily driven by outer life but is at times controlled from something within himself."

V. 1, p. 218-9

THE VALUATION OF DEPUTY-STEWARD

"Now all evolution in the Work-sense depends on a certain number of 'I's moving into new positions and gradually gaining an increasing control over the remaining 'I's...They must have a special place, they cannot be on the same level as the other 'I's, they must be given a certain rank, a certain distinction, or, as the Work puts it, a certain valuation." V. 2, p. 444

CHAPTER 3

SELF-OBSERVATION

WHY SELF-OBSERVATION?

“One object of self-observation is to make us feel distinctly our own existences. We are carried along on the tide of life in a state of sleep. We scarcely feel our own existences any more than does a machine. But although we have become asleep and like machines, there is one great difference. The machine cannot become conscious of itself but we can.” V. 4, p. 1395

THE FIRST SECRET

“To be conscious of a state, to observe it, means you are not that state. *This is the secret*—the first secret of esotericism.” V. 3, p. 1005

THE VALUE OF SELF-OBSERVATION

“The object of self-observation is to get behind yourself, to become more internal to yourself . . . to let a ray of light into oneself. . . . When light is let in in this way many things begin to change of themselves.” V. 2, p. 557, 560

THE VALUE OF SELF-OBSERVATION II

“It is only by means of observing himself uncritically and over a considerable period that a man begins to understand that he does not remember himself. He realizes that most of the time he lives in dreams. He realizes that he forgets himself, forgets his aims, forgets what he was doing or thinking and so on. But this is not all that he begins to understand. He begins to realize what it means to awaken to some extent and what it means to be asleep. Through self-observation he begins to feel the taste of what it might be to be more awake, more conscious of himself.” V. 1, p. 198

THE VALUE OF SELF-OBSERVATION III

“If you make use of this inner sense—this inner camera—of self-observation, you begin to open a mind above the level of the sensual mind. . . . When you do observe something you try to change it right

away. This is not what the Work teaches. What it says is that you must practice inner separation—a practice of disjoining yourself from yourself.” V. 5, p. 1682

A USEFUL METAPHOR

“A man is composed of many ‘I’s amongst which sits Observing ‘I’. These ‘I’s are all looking at a play on the stage: the play represents life. This is the situation of Man asleep. When a man begins to observe himself, Observing ‘I’ turns round from the stage and looks at the audience and notices how each one is reacting. Some of these ‘I’s are perhaps jumping up and down and shaking their fists at the play, others are absorbed in it, others snoring, and so on. Observing ‘I’ begins to notice all these different reactions in the audience. This is self-observation.” V. 3, p. 873-4

A SECOND METAPHOR

“This Work tells *you yourself* to *observe yourself* in the light of what the Work teaches, so that you can change yourself. That is, it starts inside you, like a spy, inside your heavily guarded fortifications. Yes, Observing ‘I’ is a spy.” V. 3, p. 1183

OBSERVING CENTRES AT WORK

“Now observe your centres. Observe how you behave mechanically *in each centre*... Notice them and keep on noticing them. Gradually something will alter.” V. 4, p. 1396

OBSERVING PARTICULAR QUALITIES

“Self-observation is . . . the employment of a new sense, an inner sense, called Observing I, which looks inwards at the kind of person one is. For example, if you are accused of anything, you will tend to justify yourself. . . . A man who has enlarged his consciousness through self-observation will not be so sensitive of criticism because he will already know practically that he is not perfect—a great step.”

V. 4, p. 1280-1

OBSERVING PARTICULAR QUALITIES II

“To observe that one has, say, been a nuisance to other people, to

catch a real God-given glimpse of it, is to begin to observe oneself sincerely and such a form of consciousness can change both the past and the future.” V. 4, p. 1332

UNCRITICAL SELF-OBSERVATION

“Remember that it is said that self-observation must be uncritical. You do not observe yourself in order to criticize yourself. If you do so it will at once stop self-observation and lead to internal considering. . . . In self-observation we do not try to analyze—i.e. find the causes and origins of different ‘I’s in us—but seek only to become conscious of them.” V. 2, p. 560, 571

UNCRITICAL II

“The Observing ‘I’ in the sense of the Work does not take sides with anything. It merely records what you are doing, what you are saying, at different moments, through the action of different ‘I’s, and does not say that this is better or this is worse. Observing ‘I’ is not shocked by anything. It is not a kind of Grandmamma or Grandpapa in you, but is quite pure and simple...It will have its own uncritical, gentle memory of all the different sides of you... We have to acknowledge and accept all sides of ourselves, because only through the acknowledgement, the acceptance, the consciousness of all sides of ourselves can we advance at all.” V. 2, p. 722, 724

THE VALUE OF SELF-OBSERVATION III

“Self-Observation clears a space in your mind so that you can see things coming in and going out. If the energy which was about to go into a negative emotion is prevented from doing so, it may pass on and may create a moment of Self-Remembering. All this means that you have brought the Work up to the point of incoming impressions.” V. 1, p. 199

SELF-OBSERVATION AND ‘KNOWING’

“To know and to observe are not the same thing. Speaking superficially, you may *know* you are sitting in a chair in your room, but can you say that you actually *observe* it? Speaking more deeply, you may know you are in a negative state, but that does not mean that you

are observing it...Self-observation, which is active, is a means of self-change, whereas merely knowing, which is passive, is not. . . . The attention comes from the *observing side*, whereas the thoughts and emotions belong to the *observed side* in yourself. This is dividing yourself into two. There is a saying: 'A man is first one, then two, and then one.' . . . To think is quite different from observing oneself. A man may think about himself all day and never observe himself once." V. 1, p. 213-4

INNER SEPERATION AND SELF-OBSERVATION

"In all self-observation, if it is to become full self-observation, you must observe IT. That is, you must see all your reactions to life and circumstances as IT in you and not as 'I.' . . . The instrument of self-observation is like a knife that cuts us away from what is not us. If you begin to see what it means to say: 'This is not I,' then you begin to use this instrument. When you can really say: 'What is IT doing?' instead of 'What am I doing?' you begin to understand the Work." V. 1, p. 216-7

OBSERVING AN INNER STATE

"We should observe not only vaguely our emotional state but the words or gestures or expressions that accompany this state—and this means to observe two centres." V. 4, p. 14002

FULL OBSERVATION

"You frown. This is in Moving Centre. But this frowning is represented in the Emotional Centre as a feeling, and it is represented in the Intellectual Centre as a thought or a gramophone record—that is, a series of thoughts going round and round mechanically. Full observation of an 'I' is the observation of it in all the three centres of its origin simultaneously." V. 1, p. 136

APPLYING IDEAS

"The next stage is that you must apply these ideas to yourself through self-observation. Self-observation connects the ideas of the Work to yourself . . . that is, one observes oneself from the teaching and the ideas and knowledge of the work." V. 3, p. 793, V. 1, p. 43

APPLYING IDEAS II

“Reference was made to the Sly Man in the Fourth Way who knows how to make a pill and swallow it, instead of making all kinds of painful, prolonged efforts such as the Fakir or Monk makes...The Sly Man sees what is wrong with him at the moment by self-observation and acknowledges it—that is, swallows it—and thereafter remembers himself in connection with it...In this way, one sees what effort is needed for oneself at a particular point in order to keep awake.”

V. 3, p. 941

COMPLETE SELF-OBSERVATION

“The Work will look after your good ‘I’s. But, as regards your bad ‘I’s, the way of release is in stripping and skinning them, in tearing from them the precious feeling of I that you have been so foolishly squandering, allowing them to steal it from you all this time, and without which they would be formless. But incomplete observation will not free you. Gradually your observation must become complete observation so that all the feeling of I is withdrawn from them. Then they vanish. You are released from possession by them.” V. 5, p. 1554

CHAPTER 4

SELF-REMEMBERING

A DIFFERENT STATE OF BEING

“If you feel the extraordinariness of your own existence, if you feel the miracle of your body, of your consciousness, of the world that surrounds you, if you begin to wonder who you are, then you are in the state necessary for Self-Remembering.” V. 2, p. 601-2

SOMETHING HIGHER NEEDED

“One cannot remember oneself unless there is an element of acknowledgement of the existence of Greater Mind during the act.”

V. 3, p. 1194

SOMETHING HIGHER NEEDED II

“It is only through a feeling of something higher that you can separate from something lower, and, after a time, when you have experienced what this means, you will do everything you can to keep the feeling of something higher alive in you at all costs and you will begin to hate those periods in which you are totally identified with external things.” V. 2, p. 602

A PRELIMINARY STEP

“If you have no conception of what Self-Remembering is, if you understand nothing about there being a higher level in yourself that you can attain to, then simply try to practice complete stopping of thought for a second if you can, because it is better than nothing. It will at least break the chain of mechanical associations for a moment and may possibly enable something else to reach you which otherwise is impossible.” V. 2, p. 772

INNER STOP

“People keep on *thinking* of self-remembering, but they do not do it. It is necessary to stop the chain of automatic associations every day. This can be done by *inner stop*—that is, stopping everything, all thoughts, etc. This is the beginning of self-remembering. But people,

as I say, keep on *thinking* of remembering themselves, and never *do*. To remember oneself one must stop everything and lift oneself into total silence and total loss of all ordinary sense of oneself. This takes a little time. But most people cannot spare even one minute to do it because they are slaves to their machines, so they are bound and glued to the ceaseless and useless flow of mechanical thoughts, negative emotions, personal accounts, etc.” V. 1, p.90

INNER STOP II

“In. . .the practice of *Inner Stop*, you stand motionless in your mind. Thoughts pass you, speak to you, ask you what you are up to and so on, but you pay no attention to them...The Inner Stop exercise is not the same as trying to stop your thoughts. Try to stop your thoughts . . . you will admit it cannot be done. But to stand motionless *in your mind* is another matter. You can stand internally motionless in the mind, just as your body can externally stand motionless in the world...You are then remembering yourself.” V. 5, p. 1518

A LEARNED SKILL

“The act of trying to remember myself is to endeavor by trial and error to reach some new state of oneself called the State of Self-Remembering...But I cannot expect at first by performing the act of Self-Remembering to reach the State. It will only be by long work, by innumerable acts, that I gain any success.” V. 2, p. 534

ANOTHER DEFINITION

“Self-Remembering from one aspect is the practice of a certain relation of consciousness to one’s body and through it to the world as rendered by our senses. If we take it like that, then there are three things: 1) consciousness, 2) the body with its external senses, 3) the external world of things and people. If you can reach and maintain this relation, you will experience quite definitely the taste of Self-Remembering. You will taste it as long as you can maintain the triple relation—I, looking through the machine of my body into the apparently coloured and moving world of things and people.” V. 4, p. 1450

YET ANOTHER DEFINITION

“A moment of Self-Remembering, the whole idea of Self-Remembering, is to draw into oneself all these scattered elements that have been glued to events.” V.4, p. 1342

SEEING

“G. said: ‘You always think, think, think. I look.’ ” V.5, p. 1540

DIFFERENT FORMS OF SELF-REMEMBERING

“Since we are different at different moments, Self-Remembering is different at different times. The ‘Sly Man’ knows this. He does not always practice the same method. To do so is to make it mechanical...He notices what was and is no longer useful and invents some other way...There are many ways of Self-Remembering. But they all depend on the feeling that there is something else, that this life on this extremely bad planet is not explicable in terms of itself. There is something else.” V. 2, pp. 374-5

DIFFERENT FORMS II

“Try to get out of your own way. Try to let something get in that cannot because *you* are in the way. Can you stop the noise of yourself for even a moment? Can you get out of the ordinary feeling of yourself? Can you become *no one* for a moment to yourself? Or, by contrast, can you feel the intense reality of yourself? Can you feel *I* in all you have to do, for a time? All these are different ways of remembering oneself. There are many other ways, but try to discover *one* for yourself, to begin with, and get to know the taste of it.” V. 2, p. 375

DIFFERENT FORMS III

“If you are in a bad state you remember yourself in one way, and when in a good state you have to remember yourself in another way and it is often more difficult.” V. 3, p. 926

DIFFERENT FORMS IV

“It is only by applying the Work to oneself in one’s own particular case that one can realize what Self-Remembering is...Try to observe what particular person you go most asleep about, the person with

whom you are most negatively identified...You cannot remember yourself unless *you know through sincere observation that you are asleep* in some specific sense. Then you must awaken in this part of yourself and try to *be* what you *know*." V. 4, p. 1404

AN INTERNAL MOVEMENT

"To remember oneself it is necessary to look in and look out. One must see the outer and see oneself in relation to the outer. But actually no one can see in and see out at the same time any more than a person can breathe in and breathe out at the same time...And so Self-Remembering can be thought of as consisting in some to and from motion, psychological in nature, that has to be carried out consciously—that is, with a certain pressure of the attention that is given by aim or by the feeling of the Work. For example, I look at the person, and then at my reaction in the light of my aim, then outward again at the person, then inward at my reaction, and so on. Identifying then becomes impossible." V. 2, p. 410

WHAT IT ISN'T

"Self-Remembering is not going against the flood-stream of inner and outer things. It is raising oneself—not contending. Contending is another kind of effort. Self-Remembering is a non-identifying with oneself—for an instant—as if one were merely acting and had forgotten." V. 2, p. 461

THE EMOTIONAL ASPECT

"Impressions that are taken in in a state of Self-Remembering become emotional. Even the simplest thing can become interesting or beautiful and reflect some meaning you had never perceived." V. 1, p. 199

THE PHYSICAL ASPECT

"The Work says that a moment of Self-Remembering supplies every cell in the body with food of a kind that it does not ordinarily get." V. 2, p. 656

RELAXING

"Sometimes by completely relaxing, knowing that one is in a wrong

state, and trying to stop all thought and movement and tension both in the muscles and in the brain, the situation is quite suddenly reversed and a better state takes its place... This stopping of thoughts and relaxing, which it is so important to practice every day, is a form of Self-Remembering... It is a marvelous thing to experience a moment of not being identified with oneself, with all this uproar, with all this ever-returning and useless turmoil... And we realize how true it is that help cannot reach us while we are in this ordinary state." V. 2, p. 450

THREE CENTRE WORK

"Every conscious perception and every manifestation of a man, everything taken in and given out, should be the result of the co-ordinated working of the three centres, each of which should furnish its own share of associations and knowledge and experience... This extension or expansion of consciousness to include at the same time all the centres is not supernormal but is actually what a normal man should possess. This is the third state of consciousness—the state of Self-Remembering or Self-Awareness." V. 1, pp. 157-8

SELF-OBSERVATION AND SELF-REMEMBERING

"The act of Self-Remembering must have a certain emotional quality. It is owing to the emotional quality that one is put at once into higher parts of centres, into bigger 'I's... No one can work continuously but only at times. But it is possible to awake a little all the time and at least observe oneself. Self-observation should accompany our ordinary life and can do so. But Self-Remembering is on quite a different level." V. 2, p. 587

ATTRACTING HELP

"It is a necessary part of this Work that everyone must eventually pass, to see in himself by sincere observation, how he clings to his negative emotions with one hand and tries to free himself with the other. The Work inevitably leads everyone to the same places and the same experiences. A man must reach the point of discerning his own helplessness—of realizing his own mechanicalness. And this, if it is not a negative experience, will bring him into a state of *self-remembering*. Through seeing his helplessness he attracts help." V. 1, p. 85

A FULL FORM

“So when we are told to remember ourselves and ask: ‘Which self?’ what answer can we expect after a time almost with certainty? We can expect the answer: ‘The self that knows its own nothingness.’ Yes, this would be a full form of Self-Remembering. The result of work is gradually to make us see we cannot do.” V. 4, p. 1248

PRAYER

“The original idea of prayer was to put us in a state of Self-Remembering, to let go our troubles, or, as it were, to ask for help and acknowledge our powerlessness *to do*... To remember oneself is a surrender of oneself. One realizes one’s helplessness... A man can neither pray nor remember himself unless he feels there is both a higher state of himself and something higher than he is.” V. 1, pp. 156, 313, 333

CHAPTER 5

TAKING IN IMPRESSIONS

A SIMPLE STATEMENT

“You know what it is to do your daily work mechanically and the difference if you do it more consciously. In the one case, you get no impressions: in the other case, you get some impressions.” V. 2, p. 377

TAKING IN IMPRESSIONS CONSCIOUSLY

“In this Work we gradually learn to take in impressions more and more consciously—that is, to take in impressions voluntarily. What does this mean? Voluntarily means this: ‘I see myself taking in this impression in this way and notice what response it makes.’ ”

V. 3, p. 1054

THE MOST IMPORTANT FOOD

“Ordinarily people can live with ordinary food and air and very few impressions, but if a man begins to work on himself he must think a great deal about what it means to take in more impressions. One way to take in more impressions is to try to look at things without associations. This is a very interesting method. Another way is to see everything happening in life in the light of the Work—that is to bring the Work up to the place of incoming impressions...But you must remember that everything tends to become mechanical. In consequence, if you can find a way of taking in impressions more fully, you must not expect it to continue to give results. One has to be clever.”

V. 2, p. 573-4

TRANSFORMING IMPRESSIONS

“The point of the Work is to create a conscious place . . . where we can be conscious of the quality of incoming impressions and so detect a typical *event*, and what would be our mechanical reaction to it *before* we react mechanically to it.” V. 4, p. 1256-7

TRANSFORMING IMPRESSIONS II

“The work must be brought forward, as it were, to that point where

impressions enter and are being distributed mechanically to their customary place in personality to evoke the old reactions...The work comes up to the place where life is entering him as impressions and stands beside him. He begins to see life through the work . . . he seeks for the power of the work to help him to change these mechanical reactions." V. 1, p. 58, V. 3, p. 981

TRANSFORMING IMPRESSIONS III

"You all can understand that life is continually causing us to react to it. All these reactions form our life—our own personal life...If the reactions that form your own personal life are mainly negative, then that is your life. Your life is chiefly a mass of negative reactions to the impressions that have come in every day. The transformation of impressions so that they do not always provoke negative reactions is then one's task, if one wishes to work on oneself. But for this, self-observation at the point where impressions enter us is necessary. . . . If one fails to transform impressions at the moment of their entry, one can always work on the results of these impressions and prevent them from having their full mechanical effect." V. 1, pp.52-3

TRANSFORMING IMPRESSIONS IV

"When we are awake—i.e. when we are surrounded by the strength of the Work and are conscious of what it teaches—then impressions of life are transformed. They have another meaning. It is not the external situation that we think about and react to, but the ideas of the Work to which we react. Life does not fall directly on us, but passes through the medium of the Work, and then life becomes a teacher to us through this medium of the Work." V. 2, p. 556

TRANSFORMING IMPRESSIONS V

"How can a man bring the work up to the place of incoming impressions? In brief, *by remembering the work emotionally*. The more a man through right self-observation feels his own helplessness, the more he realizes his ignorance, the more he sees his mechanicalness and that he is a machine, the more he perceives his own utter nothingness, the more emotional will the work become in him." V. 1, p. 58

TRANSFORMING IMPRESSIONS VI

“The First Conscious Shock . . . consists in seeing the object and seeing one’s reaction to it simultaneously . . . These efforts gradually cause the machine to work more rightly. Many wrong functions, both in the psychic and physical spheres, then begin to disappear of themselves.” V. 1, p.56-7

DIGESTING IMPRESSIONS AFTER THE FACT

“We can digest impressions taken in during the day at night-time or even the next day . . . Past moments of sleep, past moments of identifying with wrong ‘I’s in ourselves, can be to a certain extent cancelled by consciously going over the whole situation in our minds afterwards. You must never think that you cannot work on a thing in your past. Never think you cannot alter it. You can alter the present, you can alter the past, and you can alter the future.” V. 1, p.339

TAKING IN IMPRESSIONS CONSCIOUSLY II

“Now if you have cleared a portico, a hall, a space in yourself by self-observation so that you can see a negative impression coming in and are able to not let it enter freely, not say ‘I’ to it, then you keep clear of the mechanical result of that impression. This is magic . . . *This is taking impressions in consciously.* This is called the *First Conscious Shock*—when a man, a woman begins to be a man, or woman, for the first time.” V. 3, p. 1002

LIVING IN THE MOMENT

“As long as impressions fall on Personality they will always produce the *same* effects mechanically. But when they begin to fall on Essence everything is always new and far richer and more varied. In fact, everything is wonderful. Instead of having the feeling that everything is repeating itself, everything is the same, one begins to feel that nothing is ever the same. But one condition that is necessary is that one lives more in the moment and notices those forces coming at the moment . . . If one is always living in imagination or in the past this is impossible.” V. 2, pp. 574-5

CHAPTER 6

WILL AND WORK AIMS

AIM AND WORK

“The Work explains to us that we must have an aim. It says that without an aim we cannot *do* the Work.” V. 5, p. 1662

THE QUESTION OF WILL

“The Work says that Man has no real permanent will because he has no real permanent ‘I.’ But it says that Man has a small degree of will, comparable with the degree of freedom of movement of a violin in its case. But it will all depend on *in what direction* he uses the small will that he naturally has.” V. 1, p. 249

REAL EFFORT

“When you make a real effort or a relatively real effort, you never become negative when you fail. This is a sign. Your failure makes you think more and remember more.” V. 3, p. 830

AIM AND WORK II

“Unless you have an aim, to make force by working against some mechanical or habitual side of yourself is not enough. One must work on oneself, deny oneself, so that the force goes into one’s aim.” V. 3, p. 1217

WILLING ‘WHAT IS’

“Whatever you have to do, *will* to do it and you will get through the job without becoming negative...If you object to everything you will internally consider all day. You will make internal accounts against everyone. But if you *will* the existence of someone you object to, everything will change—miraculously. If you *will* what happens to you, you will gain force. If you object to what happens to you, you will lose force. This Work is about how to gain force.” V. 3, pp. 1117-8

WILLING ‘WHAT IS’ II

“We are told in this Work that we must bring a more conscious attitude

to the whole of our lives—to will what is inevitable... When I was a pupil of Dr. Jung in Zurich, he said one day . . . ‘Come, Nicoll, I have to give a lecture tonight at the University. Of course, it will be hopeless. No one will believe what I say. But come, Nicoll, *let’s go to it.*’”

V. 4, pp. 1389-90

SPECIFIC AIMS

“Aim must have a definite formulation. To aim to be better in a vague sense, is not *asking*. When it is said: ‘Ask and ye shall receive,’ it means to ask something real, something you have seen and wish to change... If you went into that great shop . . . of the Universe. . . and said: ‘Yes, I want to stop making these internal accounts against others, I want to cease always blaming life and others, always feeling resentful, and thinking that others have not behaved rightly to me, always thinking that if I had different conditions I would have been marvelous. I want you to *sell me something* to make me see I am wrong, because I dimly see the idea and yet I cannot get ahold of it deeply enough,’ Well, what do you think? That is a real request.”

V. 3, p. 1096

TAKING ON AN AIM

“It is really quite simple. Make a clear-cut definite Work-aim of this kind and try to keep consciousness in it for a time. You will then see for yourself the result. But as a rule people never will make a simple clear-cut Work-aim of this kind. They merely worry or vaguely wonder what to do.” V. 3, p. 908

TAKING ON AN AIM II

“Aim must be made consciously, with insight, after long observation, in view of realizing what is putting you to sleep and what helps you to keep awake. . Aim cannot come from small scattered attentions, which belong to mechanical divisions of centres... Aim must not come and go. It must belong to you... Start with one single thing that you have noticed and begin to watch it and try to work against it. But start with something you have no doubt about. Start with something clear and distinct and try for a time to observe it and not consent to it internally. Once you start, the way opens out.” V. 1, p. 175-8

TAKING ON AN AIM III

“If we remember our aim in the midst of life we feel at once that two quite different things are acting on us—namely, life, which will always make us behave mechanically and this aim in which we are standing for the moment, which prevents us from behaving entirely mechanically . . . and although it may eventually fail we at least get the taste for a moment of what it might mean to stand within the influences of the Work, and so have a certain power over the influences of life acting on our mechanical Personality.” V. 3, p. 907

TAKING ON AN AIM IV

“We do not exist at all except as puppets jerked by strings. Now how can such a puppet make an aim save to be a greater puppet? If a puppet makes an aim it will be mere puppetry. . . . Standing over this puppet is the Work which tells us what kind of aim to make, and you can be sure that this aim is always against this puppet.

. . . You must start from what the Work teaches because the Work replaces Real Conscience for us as we are. It teaches what Real Conscience would teach us if it were awakened in us.” V. 2, pp. 633, 627

TAKING ON AN AIM V

“Now a real aim depends on an *emotional perception* of something you dislike in yourself and which you wish to change eventually. It depends on a certain integrity of feeling that persists in spite of downfalls. Thus great patience is necessary in connection with any real aim.” V. 2, p. 630

AIM STARTING FROM PASSIVE DO

“Aim should always start from understanding—that is, from a passive *Do*. Only passive *Do* can lead to an ascending octave. If a man thinks he can do in regard to his aim, he will inevitably be unable to keep it. He will start from active *Do*. Many aims are made in this way by little ‘I’s without a man realizing what he is doing and what second force he will be up against if he tries to follow his decision. Of course he fails almost at once to keep his aim. . . . Passive *Do* means that (it) can be acted on by something above it in scale. It yields to what is higher than itself.” V. 3, p. 924, V. 5, p. 1615

AIM AND UNDERSTANDING

“To *understand* why something is undesirable is quite different from merely resisting it. The results on ourselves are quite different. The inner or essential side of ourselves can only grow through understanding... Seeing for yourself how, let us say, being negative is wrong in itself, and so not being negative for this internal reason, makes your whole life different.” V. 4, p. 1453

AIM AND SACRIFICE

“If the response the impression is about to cause is contrary to the man’s aim and the man says ‘No’ to it, then he is keeping his aim. He is working on himself and *in that moment* he has sacrificed something. What has he sacrificed? The satisfaction of reacting as usual—that is, mechanically—the satisfaction, let us say, of feeling aggrieved, or the satisfaction of some unpleasant thought or some unpleasant manifestation and so on. . . . (This) takes place *where* a man should be conscious, *where* he should be awake—and where, actually, he is asleep. *This place can be found*. It is the place where the *First Conscious Shock* is given.” V. 1, p. 200

OBEDIENCE

“When you begin to obey this Work you cannot do as you like. However, it takes us a very long time before this begins to become clear. It is not something that can be learned by heart or told you by someone else but it is actually a growth of one’s own experience. It is of course connected with keeping one’s aim... The difficulty is that people do not see that they have to obey and will this Work in their daily lives—in daily incidents. People hear this Work time and again and still behave in daily life as if they have never heard what it teaches.” V. 3, pp. 821, 935

OBEDIENCE II

“If he persists for a long time, he finds that the Work is in him as well as outside him. Then he must obey the Work. He may not know for a long time how to. But the intention must be there in him.” V. 3, p. 822

OBEDIENCE III

“The Work begins in a man or a woman who is beginning to understand that he or she cannot with impunity think or feel mechanically. Higher Centres are near or far according to the inner state of yourself. If your inner state of yourself is one of envy, malice, hatred, bitterness, judgment, your psychological body—that is, your inner state—is wet, a sodden mess, and will never conduct the higher vibrations of intelligence and meaning that come from Higher Centres. That is why the Work starts with self-observation, observation of what’s going on, observation of what your state is... You must observe how you take in the impressions of life, and transform them through your understanding of the Work. Then you begin to *hear* Higher Centres.”

V. 4, pp. 1233-1323

AIM OVER TIME

“If you make an aim in the Work—as, for instance, not to feel always this background of tears, discontent, of not being appreciated . . . it will be given to you not to have it—usually in short flashes. But only if you really want this aim and have realized what it might mean *not to have it* will it eventually be given you fully. You are tested first. People love their negative emotions. Remove these by magic—then do you think they will praise you? No—they will hate you. This is our curious situation.” V. 3, p. 1097

AIMS NOT VERBAL

“We make decisions of this small kind continually, as when we have eaten too much we make a decision not to eat so much again and all these decisions are made on the superficial level of the opposites and are practically always, if you notice, formed in words. Real decisions are not formed in words because they come from a much deeper source.” V. 3, p. 785

RIGHT EFFORT

“I have often thought that effort that shows *outside* . . . must inevitably be *wrong effort*... Effort is in secret between you and your understanding of the Work... It is not altering others to suit your idea of what they should be. It is not standing high in yourself and making

the Sun turn round you...Effort is observing calmly what attitudes and cruelties in your outlook make you all wrong with your life. And right effort begins with self-observation and continues into Self-Remembering. Pray that you can understand and make these efforts instead of thinking that effort means something totally useless.”

V. 3, p. 1202

WHY ARE YOU HERE?

“I remember G. saying one night: ‘Remember, remember, remember, remember why you are in the Work.’ Why are you in the Work? Why are you here?” V. 2, p. 594

FIGHTING FOR SELF-REMEMBERING

“To ordinary people it would not seem like a decision, this decision that one should remember oneself, this decision to fight for Self-Remembering every day in spite of everything.” V. 3, p. 788-9

CHAPTER 7

PRACTICING WORK AIMS

PRACTICAL EXAMPLES

“Mr. Ouspensky used to say: ‘I want examples, not theoretical talk. Give me a good example of self-observation or a moment of work on yourself, a moment of real effort consciously made.’” V. 2, p. 670

SEEING AND SEPARATING

“Try through sincere observation to see, to become aware of, one or two characteristic features that belong to your Personality, and try to separate. That is, try not to let the energy of your daily life run all the time into the familiar mold of Personality.” V. 4, p. 1425

BEHAVING CONSCIOUSLY

“Try to make the work-exercise of behaving consciously for a small part of one day in your life. Because everything we do affects us forever. A single moment in which one is conscious enough not to behave mechanically, if it is done willingly, can change many future events.” V. 1, pp.26-7

REGULAR PRACTICE

“If you try to sincerely observe yourself two or three times a day, although you cannot alter yourself, you can at least become conscious of how you are behaving. This daily work on yourself builds up new memory which can begin to change you. It will begin to weaken your immediate reaction to the situation...It is only by developing this consciousness in Time-body that you can begin to see your Chief Feature.” V. 4, p. 1372

SEEING MECHANICALNESS

“Our life is not action as we imagine, but reaction; and we react to things in the same mechanical way over and over again. It is only by seeing one is a machine, first in this small respect, then in that small respect, that one can get the right emotion to help one to change... To take it as a theory is worse than useless...Let us take an example:

let us suppose you always get upset when you can't find something... First the effort of self-observation is needed. Suppose you react by being negative if you can't find a thing. This is the first effort and belongs to the general effort of self-observation—that is, of becoming more conscious, of noticing oneself and not always taking oneself for granted. Next, observe your thoughts. What thought comes to you always when you have lost something? Then observe the emotion; notice it, its taste. Then notice your movements, your expression, etc. Next time it will not be so easy to react mechanically when you lose something." V. 1, p. 99

MECHANICAL ASSOCIATIONS

"It is very interesting to make some observations about mechanical chains of associations and I would be glad if any of you would be able to give some actual observations of purely mechanical associations that you have noticed in yourselves." V. 3, p. 892

REACTIONS

"Change of being begins with changing your reactions to actual incidents of the day... Notice your mechanical reactions to all the little events that happen and to other people and notice what you say, feel, think and so on. Then try to see how you can change these reactions... Remember that the slightest thing counts in regard to mechanical reaction to ordinary daily life—the slightest negative reaction matters, and the slightest wrong thinking about oneself or another, or internal considering, or negative imagination, and so on." V. 1, pp. 26-7

'DON'T LET A DAY GO BY'

"I find it difficult to imagine that anyone who has heard this Work for some years can pass a whole day without observing some negative state in himself or herself and without making some Work-effort to separate from this state either by non-identifying with it or by what I call neutralizing it through seeing the same thing in oneself as one saw in the other person." V. 2, p. 711

NON-IDENTIFYING

“Now as regards *efforts on being*... If you practice non-identifying, it becomes conscious effort. Only do it for a certain time—say an hour—and keep conscious and observe yourself carefully. For instance, make your aim not to object to anything for an hour.” V. 1, pp. 94

SEEING ATTITUDES

“Now try to see an attitude in yourself. I mean, *really try*. Realize that you have *not got* an open mind. I want—as always—examples based on your own self-observation... A man cannot change himself unless he changes his attitudes. Try therefore to see the results of attitudes. Notice when you feel shocked, for example. Notice when you feel intolerant, contemptuous, etc. Notice when you tut-tut at things. Notice when you judge, and if you can, notice when you are speaking from attitude.” V. 3, p. 1172.

OBSERVING TALKING

“Talking is the most mechanical action. But one can be conscious of this most mechanical action. One can observe it while it is going on. Then one is conscious of what is mechanically going on. This seems paradoxical. But try it and see for yourself. It needs a very light touch. The first object is to observe oneself *without* criticism. We are told to observe, not stop.” V. 3, p. 1050

EXTERNAL CONSIDERING

“So now become the person you think has treated you badly or the person you are jealous of, etc. Try to do this sincerely. It requires a conscious effort. Visualize yourself as the person and reverse the position—that is, you become the person you dislike or hate or criticize, and you are now looking at another person, called yourself. As a rule this will cure you if you can do it. But if you are in an evil state of negative emotion—as we all are at times—nothing will help you save realizing what you yourself are like—that is, what evil you have in you and what you are really like. This is painful. But we cannot change without pain.” V. 1, p.94

BALANCING CENTRES

“Now, in making a Work-aim, try to observe what functions need development in you...Can you express your thoughts? Can you formulate, for instance? Are you very ignorant? Well, try to do something about it...Can you use your hands? Well, if not, you must learn to do so. Do you understand anything about art? Well, begin to try. Have you read anything? Well, start.” V. 4, p. 1246

ASSIMILATING PARTS OF THE UNCONSCIOUS

“Let us take an example, step by step. Someone speaks and behaves in a way I resent violently...*First step*: I observe I am violent and bitter. This is quite different from just being violent and bitter...*Second step*: I recall that no matter who is to blame I am to blame for being negative...*Third step*: I must ask what is it connected with in the customary feeling of myself, that is behind the outburst...I decide that it seems to be a criticism of my efficiency. Have I then a picture of my being efficient and is this a component part of my customary feeling of myself? I did not quite realize it. As time goes on I become more and more conscious that it is so...My task is then clear. I must notice where I am not at all efficient and slowly include this in my feeling of myself.” V. 5, pp. 1529-30

KARMA-YOGA

“Karma-Yoga is the science of action with non-identifying...The essence of the idea of Karma-Yoga is to meet with unpleasant things equally with pleasant things. That is, in practicing Karma-Yoga one does not seek always to avoid unpleasant things, as people ordinarily do...Nothing can change *being* so much as this practice—namely, to take the unpleasant things in life as an exercise.” V. 1, p. 88

STARTING THE DAY

“It is a very good thing, which is worth doing, to work on oneself in the early morning, before, as it were, descending into life and duty. . . . Then something fresh and new begins the day, and the staleness of life is prevented which is really the staleness of *oneself* always reacting in the same way to everything, always having the same views, always taking others in the same way, and so on.” V. 1, p.138

STARTING THE DAY II

“People often open letters the moment they get up. I wonder why? Is it necessary to be plunged immediately into the accidents of life without having formed in yourself a certain resistance to life, without having a certain sacred moment with yourself of Self-Remembering, so that life and all its accidents do not instantly rush in and occupy the whole psychology?” V. 3, p. 803

STARTING THE DAY III

“In one of teachings of Hermes, it is said before you get up in the morning you should seal every centre from being negative, your thoughts, your emotions and your movements, for a man can only attain his individuality by sealing himself off from the effect of the events of life upon him.” V. 4, p. 1306

OBEDIENCE

“Here there comes in another aspect of the shock at point 6 (of the Enneagram). It consists in always trying to give the chief valuation to Work ‘I’s at difficult periods. Try to obey what the Work says in any particular situation. Think out how it would be to act in a Work way and try to obey what you perceive.” V. 2, p. 413

OBSERVING PERSONALITY

“View your connection with this machine, say, over a day. What has it been up to? What has it been saying? Where has it been? What did it want? Do you like it? Will you justify it? Are you more free from it if you do something with attention? Observe yourself in this way at this very moment. When we realize that this machine of Personality moves us to and fro and takes charge of us at every moment we begin to get glimpses of what it means to realize our mechanicalness.” V. 2, p. 416

OBSERVING PERSONALITY II

“Where through self-observation do you perceive that you avoid making certain kinds of efforts? Where do you always get negative? At what point do you always identify? At what point do you find things intolerable? Or again, what do you feel is your right? What is owed

to you before you can consent to do anything? We all have a favourable idea of ourselves but when we are stirred up by what we think are intolerable circumstances we soon realize that we are very limited people capable of only a very little good-will and very little effort. You may be sure that your Chief Feature has something to do with all this." V. 2, p. 769

GETTING HELP

"If you find a friend in the work, you should ask this friend to criticize you. This belongs to the Second Line (of work). The result may be quite surprising. If you do not get negative, then you will begin to have more consciousness of what you are like. Some illusions of yourself may even be destroyed. But it is strong medicine." V. 4, p. 1304

SECTION II

Working With The Way Things Are

CHAPTER 8

RECOGNIZING OUR INNER STATES

INNER TASTE

“By inner taste you can recognize that you are lying or in a negative state without difficulty, although you are justifying yourself and protesting you are not. Here the whole thing turns upon whether you possess inner sincerity or not. If not, then best to give up the work. *Inner taste* can be said to be the faint beginning of Real Conscience because it is something that *recognizes the quality* of one’s inner state.” V. 1, p. 42

INNER AND OUTER WORLDS

“Just as a man can be in a better or worse place in the outer world, so can he be in a better or worse place in the inner world. But because it is difficult to look into the inner world, and see where one is standing in it, people let themselves, as it were, be *anywhere* inside, although they would not think for a moment of letting themselves be anywhere outside...Nothing is more useful or more interesting than to pull yourself up suddenly and notice *where you are inside* and *where* you are going.” V. 1, p. 141

INNER AND OUTER WORLDS II

“Whatever state you are in, there you place yourself. Suppose you have mean, narrow thoughts and instantly you were to find yourself physically in a mean, narrow street. That would certainly give you a shock. This does not happen in physical space—and just as well. But it happens in psychological space always and instantly.” V. 3, p. 997

PRETENDING

“The Work says that one of the greatest evils is to pretend. A change

in consciousness arises through self-observation, and the feeling of oneself changes, and with this there is less and less pretending and more and more realization of what exists in oneself and what is the state of one's Being." V. 2, p. 543

TYPICAL ATTITUDES

"It is far more difficult to observe typical attitudes in oneself and yet this has to be done. You can notice it partly by watching your intonation." V. 3, p. 889

TYPICAL ATTITUDES II

"Stuffed full of attitudes, often of the most absurd kind, and, shall I add, out-of-date attitudes, you move about in life as a kind of stuffed idiot—yes, in saying this I am thinking of myself also."

V. 3, p. 1174

TYPICAL ATTITUDES III

"Once a system of similar thoughts has become crystallized into an attitude it is not directly observable. It has become part of you and acts invisibly and automatically without your knowing about it. Now a thought will not necessarily make you act, but an attitude will." V. 5, p. 1543

TYPICAL ATTITUDES IV

"You sigh, you have a sad, far-away look; or you act as if you are agrieved, or you seem surprised when you are given anything, and so on. All this is caused by attitude operating from the background. The hidden attitude makes you act *mechanically*—in short it causes you to sigh, to look unhappy, to act as if you were neglected and so on—although there is absolutely no outer reason why you should.

. . . This kind of useless suffering is extremely common." V. 5, p. 1544

SEEING MECHANICALNESS

"I assure you that you can take every life-situation, every life-event, in an entirely new way—if you can see how you have hitherto taken it as a machine." V. 3, p. 1014

A DEFINITION OF NOTHINGNESS

“A sincere and scrupulous self-observation begins to show us that we are *nobody*—nothing—just a confusion of things, inwardly, however our facade may suggest to others that we are something definite.”

V. 3, p. 1122

CHAPTER 9

WORKING WITH OUR NORMAL STATE OF BEING

WHO'S IN CONTROL?

“When a man begins to observe himself and becomes interested in his self-observation, he very soon realizes, of course, that he rules nothing within the psychological world of himself. In this invisible world in which each of us lives we control nothing.” V. 2, p. 683

INABILITY TO WAKE UP

“Now in the Work we are often like that, going about all day feeling we are asleep and being unable to give ourselves shock—that is, the First Conscious Shock of Self-Remembering—which requires an effort of concentration, of inner attention.” V. 2, p. 512

THE STATE OF SLEEP

“Let us take once more the idea that Man is asleep. . . What is the preparation that begins to make it possible to understand this idea rightly? The preparation consists in realizing through self-observation that one is oneself asleep... When this preparation has reached a certain point, the vision of man asleep—of the world asleep—comes to a person in the right way. It no longer comes in a negative form, or with a feeling of superiority, but as an actual perception without any negative emotion or personal identification connected with it.”

V. 3, p. 906

IMAGINARY ‘I’

“Imaginary ‘I’ is the imagination that you are always one and the same person and that you speak consciously on every occasion, that you know what you are doing, and, in fact, that you can do...

[Imaginary ‘I’] prevents self-observation... It nourishes internal considering and negative states and endless other things contributing to human misery that would never affect us *once we realized that this ‘I’ does not exist save in imagination*. It is, in fact, composed of imagination.” V. 3, pp. 886-7, V. 5, pp. 1667, 1662

SEEING THINGS AS THEY ARE

“Are you not all convinced that your views, your judgments, the way you take things, and the way you touch life, are right? Yes, of course you are. To realize that you *yourself* must change is an awkward business. It ceases to be a joke. Yes, the Work is serious. It requires an inner self-glance—not once, but twice, and not twice, but a thousand times—to see what this acquired person called yourself is really like.” V. 2, p. 439

SEEING THINGS AS THEY ARE II

“If the Work has for a long time a continual, even slight, action on you, you will be brought to see your first most important buffer—that is, the discrepancy between your imagination of what you are and what you are really... You are not your invention and you have to pay an enormous quantity of force in order to keep your invention of yourself going. It is such a new experience to give up one side of this invented stuff and come to terms with yourself—to terms of peace with yourself.” V. 2, pp. 758-9

SEEING THINGS AS THEY ARE III

“We always defend ourselves, even when we know better.. This is because those two giants called *pride* and *vanity* will not allow us to yield—at least to others. And for this reason only self-observation can help. You yourself, by seeing yourself, can yield to yourself.
... If you have a picture of yourself as always being truthful, then you must observe over a long period how often you lie. Only this *inner realization* will destroy the power of the picture with which you have been identified and to which you have been a slave.” V. 1, p. 286

SELF-IMAGES

“We all have pictures of ourselves. Wherever they lie, there they stop development in a more real sense than a ton of concrete will prevent anything from growing beneath it. We think of the imagination as a light airy nothingness. But the imagination is very powerful—very real—like concrete. Pictures are formed out of imagination, controlled by vanity. They are fixed forms of imagination, woven by vanity... Of course we do not see either our vanity or our pictures

of ourselves. They are too close to us...A terrific fight is necessary before this power of imagination can be loosened, and a great deal of thought and trial and experiment and failure and quietness and patience." V. 2, p. 455, 460

SELF-IMAGES II

"The 'rich man' is the kind of man (or woman) who is very identified with everything, with their virtues, goodness, meritoriousness, charitable actions, talents, cleverness, appearance, position, possessions—and so, *per contra*, with their setbacks, negative moods, failures, etc. In short, they are identified with the prevailing pictures of themselves. These they carry in the album of themselves, and constantly glance at even in the most crowded moments of life." V. 4, p. 1445

SELF-IMAGES III

"Accompanying self-glorification are a great number and variety of pictures which stimulate us in the pursuit of self-glory...They arise from 'I's in us which use fantasies to gain power over us...Each of these pictures appeals to different people's self-glory—you know criminals glory in their crimes. In every case the person is unconscious that it is a *picture* that controls him or her...Like a knife cutting a stem, consciousness will cut you away from that picture. You will be released at last from its power. When dragged into consciousness—painfully, at the expense of your self-conceit—it loses its power." V. 5, pp. 1579-81

IMAGINATION

"When a man is very much under his Personality and feels very strongly his own virtues he is comparable with this driver sitting in the public house intoxicating himself with his own imagination about himself." V. 2, p. 590

IMAGINATION II

"You are not what you imagine you are, and you have got eventually in the Work to realize this. This indeed is the only real stimulus for working on oneself—seeing one is not what one imagines. It is very strong medicine, which only a few can take." V. 3, p. 1100

FREEDOM FROM . . .

“Consider the endless enslavements that vanity compels you to be under, both in yourself and in relation to others, inventing yourself and inventing your relation to another. When you think of the meaning of freedom you must ask: ‘Freedom from what?’ What do you ask to be free from?” V. 2, p. 503

FREEDOM FROM . . . II

“Do you understand that you cannot change your being if you still have the same thing predominating in your being—for example, always being anxious about everything?” V. 4, p. 1464

PERSONALITY AND THE WORK I

“If one just remains as one is, not trying to change one’s way of taking life, but expecting that the Work is going to *add* something on to the person one is at present, a mistake is made. This mistake runs through every wrong form of esoteric teaching... You have to change yourself to get new influences, and changing yourself is always ‘getting rid of yourself.’ ” V. 2, pp. 471, 480

PERSONALITY AND THE WORK II

“Remember the sign of intelligence is the power of adaption and that all strength in the Work means flexibility, not rigidity. Your ‘strong man’ in life is usually, from the Work angle, merely a man crystallized in Personality—a one-track man, as it is called... When my wife and I went to the Institute in France, G said: ‘Remember, Personality has scarcely any right to exist here.’ Think what that means!”

V. 1, pp. 236, 238

SELF-JUSTIFYING

“You know that one of the specific efforts we are taught to make in our personal work is the effort against self-justifying. Self-justifying is a complicated and very interesting process of inner and outer lying whereby we put ourselves in the right... If you are always going to be right, you will never be in the wrong, and if you are never in the wrong, you will never change. To feel one is always right is to block the way to any self-change... Remember, the more you find yourself

self-justifying the more certain you may be that you are lying.” V. 1, p. 142, V. 2, p. 558

SELF-JUSTIFYING II

“Suppose a person is suddenly asked why he is so negative? Probably either he will indignantly deny that he is negative or say that he has good reason to be. In both cases, he justifies himself—that is, he justifies his negative emotions. . . The root of the matter lies in this picture of always being right and so never being actually in the wrong. Here a very powerful force is at work to keep us asleep in illusions about ourselves.” V. 3, p. 999

SELF-JUSTIFYING III

“If you justify everything in yourself, all you think and feel and do, of course you will never see that you are a machine. Have you realized this? Seeing that one is a machine therefore demands non-justifying.” V. 3, p. 1012

SELF-JUSTIFYING IV

“When we know a thing is true about ourselves, and acknowledge it internally, accusation can never make us indignant...” Self-justifying cannot work in the presence of acknowledged truth.” V. 1, p. 144

THE BASIS OF SELF-JUSTIFICATION

“Justifying yourself is always from your own idea of justice... Everyone has a sense of what is justice for them and finding that life does not correspond to it they cling to this sense of what they think should be justice for them. Consequently we justify our negative states, our internal considering, and our account-making.” V. 3, p. 851

LYING TO ONESELF

“If you observe wrong inner talking you will notice it is only half-truths, or truths connected in the wrong order, or with something added or left out. In other words, it is simply lying to oneself. If you say: ‘Is this quite true?’ it may stop it, but it will find another set of lies. Eventually you must dislike it.” V. 1, p. 215

LYING TO ONESELF II

“The first form of lying we have to study in ourselves, the Work says, is that in which we always tend to tell about something that happened to ourselves to our own advantage. When you have to report what you said and what the other person said in some Work conversation you will find that it is practically impossible to put the matter rightly. You will tend to put the whole report to your own advantage, by leaving out some things you said and slightly over-emphasizing other things you said.” V. 2, p. 609

LYING TO ONESELF III

“Begin with one thing and observe it in yourself. Begin, say, with observing that you *pretend you know*. This is one of the worst forms of lying. Many people pretend they know what they do not know and keep up the picture all their lives. You must, in the Work, try to see that you follow, and are a slave to, life-long ideas. Only then can you begin to understand what inner sincerity means.” V. 3, p. 1160

LYING TO ONESELF IV

“What is the whole object of this being truthful in the Work? It is not based on moral grounds. It is based on the possible development of something called Essence that can never grow through pretense or falsity. All those ‘I’s that lie habitually, all those ‘I’s that protect the central kingdom of the False Personality and justify everything, twist everything, turn everything to their own advantage, prevent this inner development of Essence from taking place. For this reason, the Work teaches, it is so important to tell the truth to your teacher, because by this exercise you learn how to tell the truth to yourself.” V. 2, p. 609

LYING TO ONESELF V

“A person can lie with a single gesture, a single look, a single intonation, a casual mannerism, a sigh, a heartbroken expression, an illness, by a hearty manner, by being always fit and well. We all know how marvelously we have behaved and we all know what intolerable conditions we have been subjected to. The Work says we all lead an imaginary life with ourselves. Now this romance may take a great

deal of strength from us and in all cases it prevents us from any real self-observation. It has to be torn out of the heart.” V. 2, p. 610

LYING TO ONESELF VI

“Have you ever come to the point of really seeing that your suffering is all lies, and experienced that extraordinary inner calm that results through seeing the truth about yourself? Because just as all lies make us restless, so does truth make us calm and at peace with ourselves.” V. 2, p. 616

ANOTHER SIMPLE STATEMENT

“All negative states make you lie.” V. 2, p. 720

AWAKENING

“All this ascription to ourselves of powers that we do not possess is the real lying that the Work is ultimately concerned with. And this unconscious lying is what through self-observation we have to become gradually conscious of. Unless this begins in us, Personality—which of course thinks it can do—remains active and Essence passive. This becoming gradually conscious of the part that pride, vanity, buffers and deep sleep play in our ordinary thinking and behavior is called the first phase of the Work. What is this phase called? It is called *Awakening*.” V. 3, p. 1160

INNER ACCOUNTS

“How will you escape from prison if you do not feel free to leave it and wish first of all to accept from the gaoler what you feel he owes you and see that everyone is properly punished who has in any way hurt your feelings? Try therefore to see through self-observation over a long time where you are caught and held down by the making of inner accounts.” V. 2, p. 572

INNER ACCOUNTS II

“Can you say with sincerity that you know very well what forms making accounts takes in your life? Have you observed them today? Against whom do you make them? Against God, or Fate, or Luck, or man or woman, or government, or your superiors or inferiors? You always personify what you blame.” V. 5, p. 1585

JUDGEMENTS

“Mechanical criticism of others produces a great many psychological difficulties in the person who criticizes—that is, wrong ‘I’s which hinder their own inner development and freedom...After a time you will learn that you cannot *afford* to sleep too much and to talk and act mechanically and let your life be in the hands of wrong ‘I’s.” V. 1, p. 150-1

INNER TALKING

“When you come into the Work one of the things that the Work teaches you is to try to stop inner talking because it is very dangerous...The first thing that we must do in regard to inner talking is to observe it and notice what this inner talking is saying...A great deal of inner talking is connected with self-justifying—namely with the attempt to put yourself in the right. You feel, for example, that someone has not treated you rightly. This will start off inner talking. . . . Inner talking is never dialogue but is always a monologue. Inner talking is always negative in character.” V. 2, p. 774-5

INNER TALKING II

“Now we have to cancel all sense of people owing us anything at all. This is extremely difficult. But it is one of the few things mentioned in the Lord’s Prayer: ‘Cancel what we owe as we cancel what others owe us.’ When a person allows inner talking to go on and on in himself he is losing force all the time...When you are in attention your inner talking stops.” V. 2, pp. 775, 777

INNER TALKING III

“In this Work you cannot go far with pleasing self-made pictures of your own nobility or value. When you begin to observe yourself deeply enough, these pictures, these fantasies, begin to change. You know that you yourself are just as bad or worse than the other person. Then I am quite sure from my own experience that a great deal of your inner talking will stop. You do not seek to justify yourself.” V. 2, p. 776

INNER TALKING IV

“Try to change inner talking, which, as I said, is always a monologue, directed against another person, into a dialogue with another person, and give this other person an existence and say to him or her: ‘I do not think that I have been rightly treated,’ and try to make this other person reply. Inner dialogue is an extremely useful thing to cultivate. You may be surprised that this other person whom you have materialized in your mind may suddenly say to you: ‘Who do you think you are?’ It will be a very surprising experience to have someone in you saying that to you.” V. 2, p. 776-7

INNER TALKING V

“Sometimes it is a good thing to put up the Work against you when you are in inner talking. Notice what your inner talking is up to. Then repeat it to this image of the Work that you have summoned up in yourself and just see what the Work says. It is calling up ‘I’s which are rather more conscious to have a dialogue with your mechanical ‘I’s which are not conscious.” V. 2, p. 777

KARMA

“We pay for every wrong attitude, for everything we do not forgive, for everything we lie to ourselves about, for every negative state.”
V. 3, p. 1150

CHAPTER 10

FALSE PERSONALITY

OBSERVATION OF FALSE PERSONALITY

“False Personality is a kind of painted up thing or a picture. So the Work begins with self-observation whose object is to free you from this wrong thing that you imagine yourself to be and which, as often as not, tortures you all your life.” V. 4, p. 1323

OBSERVATION OF FALSE PERSONALITY II

“One special thing we have to start with in self-observation is to try to observe False Personality, which is never *you*... Here you are giving yourself airs. Is that really you? You dress in different parts in life, but are you sure this is you? So it is necessary to get behind these dressed up ‘I’s, because Essence can only grow from truth. I am not saying that everything in Personality, the acquired side of you, is false, but a great deal is.” V. 4, p. 1472

STRESS CREATED

“False Personality never admits anything. It is always right. If it pretends to confess its sins, it does so out of vanity, as a pose, to show off, to gain merit and applause... We cannot deeply relax when we serve in this way, for False Personality will keep on making us correspond to what it imagines itself to be. It will not allow a person to be at rest, but must prod him to act in the way he is supposed to act, to keep up his reputation, his character-role.” V. 3, p. 909

STRESS CREATED II

“The False Personality, always preoccupied with different forms of internal considering, with questions of whether a good impression is being made and appearances kept up, causes a strain in Being. It is as if a man kept on standing on his toes, and did not understand why he felt exhausted... Anxiety and fear, which prevents us relaxing, subtly arises when a man endeavors to maintain what is not really himself.” V. 3, p. 909

FALSE PERSONALITY AND NOTHINGNESS

“You have to realize gradually that you are absolutely nobody, nothing but a kind of invention.” V. 2, p. 715

OBSERVATION OF FALSE PERSONALITY III

“In regard to the existence of False Personality—try to notice your affectations. Try to observe your insincerity, try to make conscious your artificial ways, your sweet false intonations.” V. 4, p. 1262

ITS NEED FOR PRAISE

“When you do a thing from False Personality, you expect at least praise of some kind... Yes, it is very difficult to make effort without getting any acknowledgement. Yet so much of the Work depends just on this. Why? Because, don’t you see, otherwise it would increase False Personality.” V. 5, p. 1593

VARIOUS FORMS

“False Personality in one person may sing: ‘What a fine fellow I am,’ and in another person sing: ‘Poor little me.’ But . . . its power to produce disharmony in Being is the same.” V. 3, p. 966

FALSE PERSONALITY AND BUFFERS

“The strength of False Personality depends on buffers . . . that lie like walls in centres and prevent us from seeing more than one side at a time... The Work . . . make(s) us simultaneously more and more conscious of what lies on each side of a buffer.” V. 3, p. 909

INTERNAL PHARISEES

“They read about the Pharisees and Christ’s continual condemnation of them, but they do not see that it applies to themselves—to their own False Personality. The Pharisee in you is your False Personality; it is always pretending to be what it is not.” V. 3, p. 916

LIFE WITHOUT FALSE PERSONALITY

“Suppose at one stroke a magician could remove from all humanity Vanity and Self-Conceit—that is, False Personality—can you conceive

the transformation that would take place all the world over? Can you imagine how many lies would cease to be told and lived and how many useless activities would straightaway end? I think it is not too much to say that a major part of life as we know it would cease to exist.” V. 3, p. 922-3

PSYCHOLOGICAL DEAFNESS

“The False Personality is only turned outwards. To begin to ‘hear’ — in the Work sense—this must be gradually made passive. Then we begin to ‘hear’ internally...In this connection the curing of the *deaf* in the New Testament means this psychological deafness.”

V. 3, p. 1142

THE ULTIMATE RELAXATION

“Now the Work teaches that we have to relax. First of all, we understand by relaxing, relaxing the body and the muscles, especially the small muscles of the face. But the supreme feeling of relaxation is to relax from the picture of yourself—in short, from your False Personality.” V. 4, p. 1324

TRANSCENDING PERSONALITY

“All this Work from this point of view is to make Essence grow through becoming more and more conscious of Personality and seeing it as not me, not I. Can this be done in life? Yes.” V. 4, p. 1472

TRANSCENDING PERSONALITY II

“If your Personality becomes more passive the energy that used to go into keeping it going will pass into a development of Essence...”

Only by stripping ourselves slowly, layer by layer, coat by coat, of what is not ourselves, can we begin to feel the vibration of Real I.”

V. 4, pp. 1378, 1333

‘TO BE AWAKE IS TO HAVE NO FALSE PERSONALITY’

“To be awake is to have no False Personality. Even those of you who have had moments, however brief, of being relatively free from False Personality, know already that there is a definite new state of oneself

possible in this respect. We have to declare to ourselves each definite experience and privately register its validity—otherwise the Work has no structure within us.” V. 4, p. 1242

CHAPTER 11

WORK ON THE INTELLECTUAL CENTRE

CHANGE OF MIND

“The mind must change before the rest of the man can change. This is the same teaching as in the Gospels where it is said a man must first *repent* which really means in the Greek, *change his mind*. To change one’s mind means to think in a new way. But, to think in a new way, one requires to have new ideas and new knowledge.” V. 2, p. 430

CHANGE OF MIND II

“Now Man, a self-developing organism by creation, does not realize how much he owes by remaining asleep in life. He thinks he is owed. Thinking sensually, he must. This attitude needs to be reversed. It cannot be except by ideas that bring about *metanoia*—that is, change of mind...Now when a man in the Work begins to realize how much he owes by his life of sleep and yet can have it cancelled, he ceases to preoccupy himself daily with what he believes others owe him.”

V. 5, pp. 1649-50

THE POWER OF IDEAS

“What you think and how you reason about the Universe and the meaning of your existence in it, either *shuts* or *opens* the most important divisions of the Intellectual and Emotional Centres. Ideas are very powerful. One idea can shut and another idea can open the inner mind and heart.” V. 5, p. 1700

THE POWER OF IDEAS II

“This Work is to make us *think*. All the ideas of this Work can act as shocks if we *think* about them *for ourselves*. The ideas will lift us up to a different level. They will shake us out of the dullness and stupidity of small ‘I’s that direct our lives all the time.” V. 2, p. 420

THINKING’S LIMITED RANGE

“For some reason or other, we all think we already have all points of view, all possible thoughts. This is utterly wrong. Each one of you is

limited completely and totally by the small range of thinking that you have acquired by your mental prejudices, attitudes, and so on. . . . We have attitudes about life, about society, about religion, about people, about politics, about sex, about art, and so on, which prevent us from experiencing anything new. It is necessary to free the mind from these acquired attitudes, for they prevent a person from thinking for himself." V. 1, p. 337, V. 3, p. 1170

'YOU ARE NOT YOUR THOUGHTS'

"*You* are *not* your thoughts. *Any* thought can enter the mind. All sorts of hopeless, bad, useless, stupid, formless and imbecile thoughts can enter the mind. And if you say 'I' to them all, where will *you* be? . . . Very few of our thoughts are worth following and in order to begin to think rightly, nearly all the thoughts that casually come into the mind have to be rejected as useless or worse." V. 1, pp. 288-9

THINKING VERSUS THOUGHTS

"We are not responsible for our thoughts but responsible for our thinking. . . . A thought enters the mind and seeks to attract you. If it does, you begin to 'think it'—that is, think from it. You begin to enlarge this thought, by paying attention to it and thinking from it, until it grows in all directions and forms, as it were, a little tree of thought in you, that bears fruit, and seeds other similar thoughts. . . . What is necessary to realize at present is that thoughts are of every possible kind and that they are not yours, but that you make them yours by identifying with them." V. 1, pp. 289-90

MOVING BEYOND MERE THINKING

"If the Work is still something on the blackboard and not in your most intimate thoughts, then nothing will help you. You will still be running around trying to find a bigger blackboard." V. 3, p. 1124

'MOVE THE BRAIN'

"G. said it is necessary to move the brain once a day—apart from the bowels." V. 3, p. 972

REAL THOUGHTS

“Have you ever had real private thoughts—thoughts that have nothing to do with outside matters, with passing examinations, with putting up your daily show? Have you ever really thought—quite deep down—thought what it is all about and who you are and so on? It is here, at this level, that the Work begins and that Real Will begins...One of the remarkable things about this indefinable kind of thought is that it easily understands the ideas of the Work. It seems, in fact, to be the Work itself...In this state of thought and inner perception you can even detect what it is you really need to do—which is always surprising, always something you could never have thought of yourself. And you can then know for certain that it is not self-will.” V. 2, pp. 488-9

ANOTHER INTELLIGENCE

“This feeling of another Intelligence behind any intelligence that I have is the beginning of the feeling of Real I.” V. 4, p. 1388

CHAPTER 12

WORK ON THE MOVING CENTRE

RELAXATION

“G. always said that there were two supreme things in the Work-discipline—to *remember oneself* and to *relax*. The practice of relaxing, he taught us, begins with inner attention, so that Consciousness can be placed in each part of the Body. He said: ‘Begin with the small muscles of the face.’ . . . This is an example of starting from the Moving Centre, in order to control the Emotional Centre.” V. 3, p. 1087

RELAXATION II

“G. and O. taught us to remember ourselves for only a very short time at a time, and, as far as I can remember, G. indicated that relaxation must only be for a short time at first.” V. 3, p. 1088

RELAXATION III

“Relaxation must begin with the small muscles, such as the small muscles of the face, the fingers and the toes...For example, stop frowning for a short time . . . and lo and behold, all your frowning thoughts will disappear. This means that they are kept going by the posture of your face.” V. 3, pp. 806, 810

RELAXATION IV

“You will remember that every psychological or inner state finds some outer representation via the moving centre—that is, it is represented in some particular muscular movements or contractions, etc. You may have noticed that a state of worry is often reflected by a contracted wrinkling of the forehead or a twisting of the hands.

. . . *To stop worry*, people who worry and thereby frown too much. . . should begin here—*by relaxing the muscles* expressing the emotional state, and freeing the breath. Relaxing in general has behind it, esoterically speaking, the idea of *preventing* negative states...That is why it is said so often that it is necessary to practice relaxing every day, by passing the attention over the body and deliberately relaxing all tense muscles.” V. 1, p. 136

BODILY AWARENESS

“Directed attention practiced, say, for five minutes, by putting consciousness into every part of the body, beginning with the face-muscles, will give definite results at any moment when it is done in order to prevent some difficult period of being identified.” V. 4, p. 1252

ON PHYSICAL WORK

“G. said that in all physical work all centers should be employed and then it becomes intelligent and useful...A man, G. said, who is working physically, should try to master what he is doing—namely, to notice what he is doing and how to do it more easily, faster and more intelligently.” V. 2, p. 768

MOVING CENTRE’S IMPRESSIONS

“When, for example, we are in a car accident, we may become conscious in Moving Centre. This centre works 30,000 times more quickly than does the ordinary part of Intellectual Centre that we use. We then see everything as if in slow motion. Why? Because we are taking in far more impressions.” V. 3, p. 1128

CHAPTER 13

WORK ON THE EMOTIONAL CENTRE

A NEW KIND OF EMOTION

“This new kind of thinking gradually becomes emotional and affects Being. It begins to awaken the Emotional Centre which is the supreme object of the Work—not the Emotional Centre that you have at present which is filled with self-feelings, but a different Emotional Centre. It is this which changes you.” V. 3, p. 792

EMOTIONAL KNOWLEDGE

“Real emotions always teach you something—not in *words*, but in *ideas*, emotionally apperceived. We do not receive knowledge only through the intellect...Mr. Ouspensky once said: ‘Don’t listen to words: listen to the meaning behind the words.’”

V. 3, pp. 1154, 1158

EMOTIONAL CENTRE WORK

“Work on being, in regard to the Emotional Centre, demands therefore, among other things, efforts to observe and realize the existence of these emotions in oneself, noticing their origin, and the course they take, and the effects they give rise to. When we are properly conscious of something in ourselves, we are on the way to changing it.”

V. 1, p. 152

EMOTIONAL CENTRE WORK II

“It is a good thing to observe the state of one’s Emotional Centre, to observe it in action—i.e., to observe how it mechanically reacts to external events and particularly other people. Here lies a great task, which is really a life task.” V. 3, p. 911

NEGATIVE EMOTIONS I

“Negative emotions govern the world. They are extremely infectious. One man can make a thousand negative. One negative person can turn a house into a hell. This ability to affect others gives the negative person a sense of power...A discipline is needed in regard to negative

emotions. It must begin with self-observation. You must know and acknowledge when you are negative. People will not do this...It is necessary to find and invent every method you can to prevent recurring events from making you negative." V. 5, pp. 1709-10

NEGATIVE EMOTIONS II

"Other emotions become dull, compared with the curious delights of being negative, such as planning revenges...Does a negative emotion give some kind of similar solace as does a drug? Could the world really do without its negative emotions? I do not think so myself. But in the Work we have to learn to do so...It is always worth while observing and tracing the subtle action of negative emotions in you. They are the source of so many things you do which you think you are doing for some other reason." V. 5, pp. 1675-6

NEGATIVE EMOTIONS III

"To let in without resistance and add fuel to and enjoy one's negative emotions is to miss the mark that the Work has in view. It is to *sin* against the Work because the Work teaches that negative emotions prevent awakening." V. 5, p. 1705

NEGATIVE EMOTIONS IV

"It is possible gradually to free oneself from these unnecessary negative emotions...He need never be at a loss, whatever his circumstances, for he will always know what he has to do in any situation—that is, not to express negative emotions, and then, to separate from them, and finally not to have them at all." V. 3, pp. 911-2

NEGATIVE EMOTIONS V

"All progress in emotional development is marked by a dislike of former emotions. The emotion, the feeling of dislike of jealousy (for example), the joy of being free from it and its evil prison-house, can become strong enough to master it. For you know that one emotion can only be conquered by another and stronger emotion. By itself the Intellectual Centre cannot do this. Reasoning may help, but it is not enough." V. 4, p. 1499

TRANSFORMATION OF NEGATIVE EMOTIONS

“The observation of our negative states and the separation from them is one of the most important sides of practical work. The transformation of negative emotions belongs to the Second Conscious Shock and here the whole Work comes in and the whole evaluation of it. You may be negative but you must feel that it is not you that is negative but *It*. This is the beginning of inner separation, of not identifying with negative states, of not identifying with oneself.” V. 2, p. 530

OBSERVING NEGATIVE ‘I’S

“In the Work, the enjoyment of negative states must be observed sincerely, especially the secret enjoyment of them. The reason is that if a man enjoys being negative, in whatever forms, and they are legion, he can never separate from them. You cannot separate yourself from what you have a secret affection for.” V. 1, p. 214

WATCHING REACTIONS

“Once you have realized that this reaction of yours is quite typical, and you have always had complaints in exactly the same way, it will give you a shock. It will startle you. You will see that it is this complaining itself that you have to notice in yourself and not what you imagine causes it. Next time that these complaining ‘I’s begin to resume their customary activity, the shock that you had may just be able to give you the emotional force to observe them before they start using your mouth, in your name. You will have the shock of remembering yourself.” V. 2, p. 449

WORRYING

“What is worrying? . . . There is no centre of gravity. There is no direction, no clear aim; everything is, as it were, running about in oneself in every direction. It is as if all the different ‘I’s in oneself got up and rushed about wringing their hands and saying anything that the negative imagination, which dominates the scene, suggests to them.” V. 1, p. 138

WORRYING II

“Worrying is the wrong work of centres. It is always useless. It is a

form of inner considering—i.e., of identifying. It makes only wrong connections in centres. It is a sort of lying, among the many other kinds of lying that go on in us.” V. 1, p. 137

WORRYING III

“Control of the emotional centre is difficult directly, partly because it works so quickly—30,000 times more quickly than the formatory part of the intellectual centre, so that a man gets worried or negative before he knows it. But the emotional centre is sometimes in the Work compared with an uncontrolled rogue elephant with two controlled elephants on either side of it—namely, the intellectual centre and the moving centre...Let us consider what it means to use the intellectual centre in this respect. This means that you must notice the thoughts that are going on when you are worrying. We have a certain amount of will over the intellectual centre—that we can control thought to a small extent. By stopping, or not going with, not believing in, not consenting to, the thought-part of worrying, one elephant, so to speak, is brought alongside the uncontrolled emotional centre.

The other controllable element is the moving centre, over which we have will if we direct attention to it. We can relax muscles and so on. As you know, in the directions given in the Work about relaxing, it is said first that the small muscles must be relaxed—the small muscles of the face, the muscles of expression, particularly.” V. 1, p.136-7

WORRYING IV

“You can and should feel ‘anxiety’ about another person in danger—a mixture of hope and fear—but worrying is quite different, for then the imagination comes in. It becomes a habit, just as do so many other negative states, and people even imagine they are better than others by having them and even feel merit in worrying...In this connection, you will remember one of the Work sayings—that you are asked above all to do one thing, to give up your particular form of suffering. This sounds easy. Try it. The reason why it is so difficult is because to do so is to destroy whole systems of ‘I’s in yourself that enjoy making you suffer and that you think you are.” V. 1, p. 137

‘YOU HAVE A RIGHT NOT TO BE NEGATIVE’

“Now the Work says you have a right not to be negative... To be able to feel this draws down force to help you. You stand upright, as it were, in yourself, among all the mess of your negativeness, and you feel and know that it is not necessary to lie down in that mess. To say this phrase in the right way to yourself, to feel the meaning of the words: ‘I have a right not to be negative,’ is actually a form of self-remembering, of feeling a trace of real ‘I,’ that lifts you up above the level of your negative ‘I’s which are all the time telling you without a pause that *you have every right to be negative.*” V. 1, p. 161

GIVING UP SUFFERING

“A man, a woman, cannot *awaken* if they retain this dreadful weight, their mechanical suffering, and nourish it, by a continual process of justifying it.” V. 4, p. 1240

GIVING UP SUFFERING II

“A man, a woman, must give up their suffering and sacrifice that first of all, because this can lead to a change of Being. For this to happen one must be able to see through self-observation what one suffers from... There is the suffering of man towards woman, of woman towards man... Then take all the mechanical forms of suffering that arise from feeling that you have never been understood by your parents, your husband, your wife, or your children... It is exactly this suffering derived from life and all its awkwardness that has to be sacrificed.” V. 3, pp. 850, 852

GIVING UP SUFFERING III

“To serve the Work means to obey what it teaches you to practice on yourself. You want to be gloomy and moody, to object, and so on, and you observe your state and begin to separate from it—then you are serving the Work. And in so doing you are giving up some of your mechanical suffering.” V. 3, p. 855

GIVING UP SUFFERING IV

“By work on oneself . . . one rises in the ‘Ladder of Being’ represented by the Ray of Creation. But this rising is only possible by *sacrifice*. To

behave as you always do, and expect to rise, is impossible. One must, to begin with, *sacrifice one's suffering*. All self-pity, all self-cradling, vanity, secret absurd fears, all self-sentimentality, all inner accounting, all pitiful pictures, all sighs, inner groans, and complaints, must be burned up in the fire of increasing Consciousness." V. 3, p. 1090

GIVING UP SUFFERING V

"All our mechanical suffering is fraudulent only we will not admit it. Fraudulent suffering is the keynote to what we have to sacrifice. Real suffering is utterly different and always opens us up to a higher level: fraudulent suffering closes us." V. 3, p. 853

WATCHING EMOTIONS

"In yourself everyone else is helpless. You can, as it were, drag a person into the cave of yourself and do what you like with her or him. You may be polite naturally, but in the Work, which is all about purifying or organizing the inner life, it is not enough. It is how you behave internally, invisibly to one another that really counts... Your most negative and most dangerous 'I's may come forward when you are alone. . . when you feel that no one is looking. Yes, but *you* must look." V. 1, pp. 216, 256

WATCHING EMOTIONS II

"You may treat a person outside you well. Yes, but how do you treat the person internally? . . . After a time in the Work, if it begins to act on you, you feel far more uncomfortable through wrong feeling than through anything you may have done outwardly. The Work is not mainly about outer life, but about inner life, and here sincerity and valuation are necessary—not pious, not artificial, but genuine. . . . You have to reach a stage in which when you are alone everyone you know, whether you dislike them or otherwise, can pass through without being sniped or butchered." V. 2, p. 694, V. 4, p. 1355

BEARING UNPLEASANT MANIFESTATIONS

"One sign of Being is the capacity to bear the unpleasant manifestations of others. Why is this a sign of greater Being? The answer is that you cannot do this unless you have seen in yourself what you dis-

like in others... When you have just criticized someone, go over what you said carefully and apply it to yourself. This neutralizes poison in you." V. 1, pp. 168, 176

ON NOT MINDING THINGS

"Just to say . . . 'I must not mind' over and over again is not the Work, and has nothing to do with the Work. But if you say now: 'Why do I mind?' then perhaps, through sincere observation, you may notice something in you that has reigned undisturbed in you, some acquired idea of life or of others or of yourself that is the cause of your minding so much." V. 2, p. 549

'SINGING SOME SAD SONG'

"On one occasion I was sitting with Mr. Ouspensky. We had been silent. He looked up at me with a smile and asked me why I was so sad. I said I didn't know that I was. He said: 'It is a habit. You are listening to some 'I's that are singing some sad far-away song, perhaps a song without words or words you have forgotten. Try to observe it. It takes force from you and is quite useless.' And he added, 'This is an example of the Moon eating you.' " V. 1, p. 256

ON BEING PASSIVE TO NEGATIVE STATES

"Sometimes when one is in a bad state and attempts to get out of it and fails to do so, one can be consciously passive to it, without being negative and without identifying with it fully, having the inner certainty that it will pass provided one does not let negative imagination work and does not consent to its presence. This is a form of Self-Remembering, and it is just as if one has to wait, and knows that one has to, because it is raining too heavily and one cannot go out just at present and yet remains certain it will clear." V. 1, p. 368

RESPONSIBILITY FOR NEGATIVE STATES

"If you are in a negative state, *it is always your own fault*, from the Work point of view. No matter what happened, what someone said, what someone did, we have to become responsible for our negative states—ourselves. . . When you feel the presence of negative emotions in you, as a foreign substance, as acutely as a stomach-ache, then you

will seek, for your own reasons, to work on yourself and transform your inner state for your own inner health...But this takes many years and requires a certain inner courage, an inner bravery, an inner determination, until something new is born distinct from life."

V. 2, p. 695

USING NEGATIVE STATES

"The negative swing of the Pendulum for most people is simply a blank. But it should not be a blank. It should be a phase inhabited by consciousness and by a sense of the Work in which one collects oneself together again and reflects, and does not necessarily think that everything is over, at an end." V. 2, p. 732

USING NEGATIVE STATES II

"You must understand that *no work is possible unless you get into these bad states* because they are tests or, if you like, temptations, which are absolutely necessary in order to make us skillful in dealing with them...And it is always surprising that some of you think that if you pass into a bad state it is because you cannot do the Work. It is just in these bad states that one can work and learn what it is about."

V. 1, p. 368

TWO-CENTERED WORK

"Now once you begin to feel negative emotions are mechanical . . . and *mentally see* they tell lies, then you are using two centres consciously and that makes something very powerful that can resist the great power of mechanicalness. It is these quiet emotions and insights and perceptions of truth that have the greatest healing power and help us against the tyranny of the machine." V. 3, p. 1013

TRANSFORMING NEGATIVE STATES

"Sly Man. . . notices distinctly that he lies, for example. He observes it over a period and does not seek to disguise it to himself, to justify himself. He notices it, sees it, acknowledges it, accepts it, and so swallows this particular pill. Then he must digest it. It tastes bitter in the mouth. But once digested it becomes sweet...It seems paradoxical to say that if you will accept what you disapprove of you reach a higher

level. People imagine that by increasing their sense of self-merit and virtue, they get higher. On the contrary, they descend. This is worth thinking about.” V. 3, p. 1000

TRANSFORMING NEGATIVE STATES II

“G once said: ‘One emotion can only be conquered by another emotion.’ . . . The feeling of helplessness and the feeling of nothingness that come from the realization that one is a machine have nothing to do with negative emotions. At the back of negative emotions lie anger, violence, suspicion, bitterness, internal accounts, and so on. But behind the emotion arising from the realization of mechanicalness lies peace. And it is this emotion that can overcome negative emotions.” V. 3, p. 1013

EMOTIONAL CENTRE’S LANGUAGE

“What language does the Emotional Centre use? It uses the language of visual imagery. The Emotional Centre does not know any intellectual words or theories, but it understands visual images. For instance, if you are in danger and feel nervous, and you meet a man who is visibly quiet, it helps the horse—that is, the Emotional Centre. The calm man is a visual image and this affects the horse and calms him.” V. 2, p. 465

OVERCOMING THE PAST

“The overcoming of the past is one great line of personal work on yourself. Most people have such a great register of unhappy moments which they have nourished so much...The whole of the past must be cancelled eventually. In other words, you must have nothing against anyone.” V. 3, p. 811

OVERCOMING THE PAST II

“It is quite useless to forgive: you have to cancel. And this is always done by finding the same thing in yourself, and you will always find it if you are sincere...You must remember here that you may not have said something unpleasant externally yourself but you have thought something and consented to it.” V. 3, p. 812

REAL POSITIVE EMOTIONS

“If you, all alone, in this solitary place, in yourself, full of the integrity of your most Real I, have decided, made a decision, not to identify or feed a particular negative emotion . . . you will taste positive emotion for a brief moment—something blessed—that is, filled with such bliss that *nothing* of human love-hate emotions can be compared with it . . . Such emotions . . . never change into their opposites but visit us and then withdraw.” V. 4, pp. 1238-9

CHAPTER 14

SEEING SELF-LOVE AT WORK

A DESCRIPTION

"I well know as a medical psychologist the awkward point where I had to say to the patient: 'Yes—I can see you have been badly treated, never appreciated, never properly understood. You have told me all that very clearly. But do you think that it is possible that you are not quite the ideal person that you seem to imagine yourself to be, and that there may be some quite serious faults in yourself?' Now you can all imagine the haughty look, the frozen smile, the magnificent rising from the chair—and the slamming of the door—without, of course, the fee being paid. Yes—but what has happened. . . What has been touched? What would you call it? Whatever you call it, it is this factor that prevents self-change... If he sees *for himself* something of this factor in him, which is so formidable and the source of so much violence, then it is not aroused antagonistically. He sees himself: he begins to accept what he would never have accepted from another. It is in this way that the Work deals with this otherwise intractable factor in Man." V. 3, pp. 1165-1166

PRIDE AND VANITY

"You must study Pride and Vanity in yourselves and all their different gradations. Do you know your own forms of Vanity and how much they occupy you? Do you know where your Pride lies? Where do you feel that you love yourself, that you admire yourself? Where do you most feel that you are utterly different from other people? Where are you most conceited? What do you boast about? What are you silent about? Vanity is frequently very talkative, whereas Pride is silent. Which is the deeper wound, wounded Vanity or wounded Pride? What is it you cannot forgive? You know that if you cannot forgive it is because of some form of self-love which, ideally speaking, has to be smashed out of you." V. 1, p. 360

SELF-LOVE

"One can feel very startled when one realizes that it is always this thing called *oneself* that is being comforted, exalted, titillated, soothed, flat-

tered, satisfied, and that when it is not, it begins to whimper like a baby. And it is always this odd restless thing that is being offended, upset, negative, indignant, downcast. Cast down from what? From its centrepiece of self-love." V. 2, p. 472

SELF-LOVE II

"Ask yourself sometimes: 'Why am I doing this?' or 'Why am I saying this?' or 'Why am I behaving in this way?' or 'Why am I writing this?' Whatever imaginary robes of self-righteousness we clothe ourselves in, these questions tend to undress us again... When we have gone more deeply into self-observation and self-knowledge, we simply have to give up a lot of the manifestations of the self-love, disguised as something genuine." V. 2, p. 476

SELF-LOVE III

"No one can possibly act beyond some degree of 'self-love'—that is, beyond self-interest, self-feeling, self-esteem, self-admiration, self-delight, self-praise, self-seeking, and so on... It is difficult to catch even a glimpse of the forest of self-love and all its pseudo-creations. However, if one does, it is a very startling experience. It is a real shock, like the realization of mechanicalness. It creates a sense of being undermined, an empty feeling... When you feel you have been betrayed by a friend you feel undermined. But to feel you have been betrayed by yourself is worse." V. 2, p. 471-2

SELF-LOVE IV

"One can hate its falsities. But what do we find? We find it seems impossible to get rid of it. We seem fastened to it. We react to its influences continually. It has so many tricks, so many pretenses and deceptions, that we simply cannot deal with it. We are just too late. But new emotions can catch it in time. You remember that the speed of emotions is greater than that of thoughts. In short, we cannot deal with it without the help of something else. . . The object of all real esotericism is connect Man with the Will of God and to break him from his own self-will." V. 2, pp. 472, 479

SELF-LOVE V

“The life of self-love is death...The self-love always regards itself. It cannot look up...Self-love is not cognitive. It lays down no memory for ‘next time.’ It makes darkness, not light...You can cease to do this only by observing little by little, what you are really like.”

V. 5, pp. 1638-9

SELF-LOVE VI

“You cannot get to certain emotions that come from beyond the zone of self-love, if you take yourself as one... Something else in you, apart from the self-love, has to see the truth of such ideas. And if there were no emotions possible beyond those belonging to the self-love this would not be possible and so no development would be possible. It is upon the appearance of these other and new emotions and their gradual strengthening, that development depends, and this is when *being* changes.” V. 2, p. 474

LAUGHING AT ONESELF

“Now one way to attack the self-love is through self-observation. . . . It is wonderful to catch a glimpse of your self-love and be able to laugh at it. One loses the former highly-explosive over-sensitive feeling of ‘I’ more and more. That means more balance. That means becoming softer.” V. 5, p. 1604

ENDURING DEVALUATION

“It would be impossible to catch a glimpse of one’s level of Being unless one could endure it. Now the only way you can endure it is by having something else you can hold onto. If you have something else that you value and that you can hold on to and trust, you can then endure a certain amount of devaluation of yourself.” V. 2, p.509

ENDURING DEVALUATION II

“When you begin to feel your own nothingness you begin to receive the help of the Work to replace that nothingness by something. So you have to go down a long way before you begin to go up.”

V. 3, p. 878

A CHANGE OF STATE

“You cannot change your inner state if you cling to what you are based on, just as you cannot leave your room if you persist in clinging to all the articles of furniture in it... The feeling of Real ‘I’ can only come to you when all such false ‘I’s are diminished in you. All of you may think that you never speak like that man (in the Gospels) who prayed: ‘Thank God I am not as other men,’ but have you actually observed how often you do enact this without actually saying it, how often you act from this basis?” V. 1, p. 344

TWO KINDS OF ‘SELF’

“We know that all these different divergent elements in us can be fused into a unity, which means that our present level of being in the total Scale of Being from a stone up to Divine Being is far lower than it was made to be; and this we need to feel at all times. Why? It helps us to undermine self-complacency, self-righteousness, and self-merit, self-applause, and all this tedious *self* stuff, except Self-Remembering. It *is* Self-Remembering. The Self you try to remember is above yourself. It is there: and you need always to feel so, for that lets in a certain influx of interior light, which self-emotions shut out.”

V. 4, p. 1495

CHAPTER 15

NON-IDENTIFYING

WITHDRAWING THE FEELING OF 'I'

"Now you cease identifying when you withdraw the feeling of I from a thing...You say to every 'I': 'This is I,' 'This is me.' You make yourself the same as these different 'I's. It is necessary to withdraw the feeling of I from them. Then after a time you can say: 'This is not I, but *an* 'I' in me that has been a great nuisance over the years and which I now see is not me.' " V. 5, p. 1722

WITHDRAWING THE FEELING OF 'I' - II

"We are imprisoned by 'I's that are anachronisms—that is, that do not belong to the present time but to the past. Distinct, calm observation of them as being early 'I's belonging to situations long ended and not valid anymore and saying to them: 'This is not *I*' . . . and seeing that even though they spoke some truth once upon a time they do not now do so . . . can, after a determined struggle, cause them gradually to wane to shadows." V. 5, p. 1723

INTERNAL SEPARATION

"For example, in becoming more conscious of Nicoll, I begin to feel distinct from Nicoll, and realize that all my life I have been identified with Nicoll and that Nicoll is not really me. But such increase of consciousness does not take place in a moment. It certainly may come in a moment of illumination. But for such an increase of consciousness to become a permanent state a long time must elapse." V. 4, p. 1444

INTERNAL SEPARATION II

"Try in practical work to see what you have been most identified with today or yesterday and try to separate from this particular form of being identified and try for the time being to make an aim to remember yourself at such times. Certainly you will not be able to carry this out for long because you will find that your efforts become mechanical, so much so that you cease to understand what it is you are doing. There is nothing extraordinary in this. It is everyone's experience, so do not

be downcast: try to make effort in some other direction until that becomes mechanical. That is why O. said: 'We must have many irons in the fire.' " V. 4, pp. 1444-5

LOSING FORCE

"Try to observe what is taking all your force. Is it important? . . . We make, I say, the most trivial and silly things of enormous importance and therefore suffer most patently from this great illness, this disease of sleeping mankind, which the Work diagnoses as *Identifying*."

V. 3, pp. 1186, 1222

WATCHING IDENTIFICATION HAPPEN

"If later you learn to concentrate, by which I mean become very quiet in yourself, you then stand as it were motionless in the middle of the merry-go-round and witness an extraordinary throng... These are thoughts which you usually mount. If you identify with any you move from the centre and go round yourself—that is, you and the thought become one and you now say: 'I think.' " V. 5, p. 1543

ANOTHER SIMPLE STATEMENT

"To non-identify, take nothing seriously except the Work." V. 3, p. 812

NON-IDENTIFYING

"Every act of non-identifying saves force. We are speaking of force necessary for awakening. If we identify with everything, inner and outer, we cannot have force for doing or understanding the Work."

V. 2, p. 373

NON-IDENTIFYING II

"If I become conscious of my mechanical forms of suffering and internal account-making and my negative states, they are no longer me. I detach myself from them. I let them go, as it were, I no longer feel myself by means of them. As a result, my feeling of myself will change... It is like standing on a plank and trying to lift the plank. You have to step aside, and then it is quite easy to lift it."

V. 3, pp. 897-8

NON-IDENTIFYING III

“One becomes aware of something separating from what hitherto was the undigested mass of oneself, covered over with advertisements and pictures of oneself.” V. 3, p. 1011

SACRIFICE

“There are valuable things in a good Personality but they belong, so to speak, to the attitude ‘I can do.’ It is not these good things you have learned that have to be sacrificed. It is their framework, the feeling, the identification with them, that has to be surrendered.”

V. 3, p. 1198

NON-IDENTIFYING IN THE MIDST OF LIFE

“A hermit was a person who followed the teaching of Hermes and sought to seal himself off from the effects of life by going into a cave or desert. This is not the idea of the Work. It would be getting rid of life artificially. We have to seal ourselves from the effects of external life when they are actually happening to us. Here comes in the idea of practicing non-identifying.” V. 3, p. 862

NON-IDENTIFYING IN THE MIDST OF LIFE II

“In esotericism a man must become hermetically sealed, as an ancient phrase puts it, and this refers to something internal, connected with the power of silence...If you leak all the time and have no insulation from life, there will never be enough force in you to lead to the growth of anything.” V. 1, p.28

INTERNAL FREEDOM

“G. once said: ‘A man should be able to turn round in himself.’ Now this means that he is stuck to nothing in himself. When we identify we stick to things and so cannot get free and cannot turn round.”

V. 3, p. 926

GOSPEL PARABLE INTERPRETED

“How rich that young man felt himself, how identified he was with all his virtues and talents and excellences. He was told to go and sell all

he had before he could awaken. He was very sorrowful. Think what it would mean to cease to ascribe to yourself everything you do and think you are—that is, to *sell* all your possessions. Who can imagine what this really means? Have you caught even a single glimpse yet of its meaning in regard to yourself? If so, you will begin to realize where your force goes every moment, how it is used and why people are asleep without knowing it...When you feel you are right you may be sure you are asleep.” V. 2, pp. 374-5

IDENTIFICATION UNNECESSARY

“It is not merely that you must not identify, because that puts it in the form of a commandment. There are no commandments of that kind in this Work...There is great beauty in realizing that it is unnecessary to be identified and you have the sanction of the Work not to identify.” V. 4, pp. 1478-9

INNER PEACE

“Can you in the midst of a negative scene say: ‘This is not I?’ If so, you eventually can relax to an extent that I simply cannot describe to you. Only non-identifying gives inner peace.” V. 3. p. 1091

CHAPTER 16

INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL CONSIDERING

INTERNAL CONSIDERING

“Have you observed your typical forms of internal considering? Did you think that someone ought to have answered your letter earlier or said Good-morning to you? In other words, did you think that someone ought to have treated you differently? This form of internal considering is called making accounts, feeling that you are owed something by others, feeling that you are not properly treated in general and that your peculiar excellence and value are not appreciated.” V. 2, p. 747

INTERNAL CONSIDERING II

“To live the life of pure internal considering and of making accounts gives a very unsatisfactory basis to our existences as it depends entirely on how people behave towards us, and this means that we have no centre of gravity in ourselves, so that strictly speaking we do not exist except as functions of the praise or blame of other people. Adversity will hit us very hard, whereas success will raise us to an entirely wrong feeling of ourselves.” V. 2, p. 654

AN ELEGANT FORMULATION

“External Considering means to put yourself in the position of the other person: Internal Considering is to put him or her in your position.” V. 4, p. 1480

INTERNAL CONSIDERING III

“Since internal considering is a form of identifying you will realize that the practice of non-identifying which Mr. Ouspensky outlined in terms of the word *detachment* is the cure for internal considering.

. . . You have got to study it in yourselves and notice what harm it does you and from that gain a real desire to free yourself from it.”

V. 1, p. 260

INTERNAL CONSIDERING IV

“We have all sorts of long-standing accounts against others, some of them stored up in the past, unfortunately for ourselves. They all begin with this mysterious question of *one’s own valuation of oneself*. A person with some self-observation might well exclaim: ‘What is this thing in me that is offended at this moment and has already begun to make accounts?’ . . . A high estimate of yourself naturally will make it more easy for you to feel that others do not estimate you at your proper value. So you will internally consider more easily. . . Or again, some persons may value themselves above others because of sufferings. People cling to their own suffering and come to regard themselves as worthy of special evaluation because they have had all kinds of hardships, miseries and sufferings. . . They (do not) realize that to see selfishness in others is to see the reflection of one’s own selfishness, for the more requirements you make from others, the more selfish will others appear to you.” V. 1, pp. 263-4

ONE EXAMPLE

“Now this word *unfair* is, I think, a favorite word in internal considering. Do you see it in yourself? Do you not secretly think that everything is *unfair*? If so, you have an admirable source of continual internal considering, and will lose force every minute of the day.”

V. 3, p. 1117

THE SOURCE OF INTERNAL CONSIDERING

“What is this emotion that is the source of internal considering? Let us speak of it gently, for all of us, however grand or brave or hard-boiled we fancy ourselves, have this emotion, this feeling, deep within us—unless, by some miracle, the love of God has entered into our hearts and we have come to understand that this Earth is a place of test.” V. 3, p. 1116

THE PRECURSOR TO EXTERNAL CONSIDERING

“You are told at first in making effort in the second line of Work *not* to try to like one another, *but* to stop dislike. This is one kind of anti-mechanical effort. This is surely very clear. *It can be done*. You can *stop* disliking. . . A person whom one dislikes should become a matter

of genuine interest—and here one will have some real work to do—some real conscious observation and non-identifying and finding the same qualities in oneself.” V. 3, pp. 973, 976

THE PRECURSOR TO EXTERNAL CONSIDERING II

“We dislike people, for one reason, because they behave mechanically—that is, always saying the same things, behaving in the same way—and we do not realize that they dislike us for the same reason. That is to say, they dislike us for our mechanicalness...But we do not realize that we or they cannot speak or act much differently. All this wrong attitude is based on the illusion that we ourselves and others are *conscious* people.” V. 4, p. 1290

EXTERNAL CONSIDERING

“External considering is thinking of others. It is one of the few things in the Work that we are actually told to do...If you have taken an album of good photographs of yourself through long self-observation, then you will not have to look far in it to find in yourself what you object to so much in the other person and then you will be able to put yourself in the other person’s position...Remember that when you find the same thing in yourself that you are blaming in someone else it has the magical effect of cancelling the whole situation out. This is real ‘forgiving.’ ” V. 1, p. 259

EXTERNAL CONSIDERING II

“External considering can only begin, in its practical application, with putting yourself in the other person’s place, and looking out, as it were, of the other person’s mind and consciousness at yourself as he sees you. So do not think that external considering is merely doing something for the other person.” V. 1, p. 268

EXTERNAL CONSIDERING III

“The object of the Work is to become more conscious. Self-observation makes you more conscious of yourself: external considering makes you more conscious also of others. Through external considering, things you were not conscious of before are revealed to you.” V. 1, p. 265

MUTUAL EXCLUSIVITY

“To put yourself in another person’s position calls upon your whole understanding. It requires a directed effort of the mind and feelings and not merely once but time and again. And you will certainly be quite incapable of doing this if you are always preoccupied with your own personal problems and woes and with the way you are being treated—that is, if you are always taking your life from the standpoint of internal considering...But external considering is utterly different. It cleanses you. It frees you...An hour of external considering will free you from the effects of weeks of internal considering.”

V. 1, pp. 265, 268

MUTUAL EXCLUSIVITY II

“When my wife and I went to the Institute in France . . . the saying put up in the theatre that we built ourselves all through a harsh winter was: ‘Always remember you are here having already understood the necessity of contending only with yourself. Thank everyone who affords you that opportunity.’ ” V. 4, p. 1260

EXTERNAL CONSIDERING IV

“Let us suppose, then, that you have to live with a person that is you. . . . Of course, if you have no self-observation you may actually imagine this would be charming and that if everyone were just like you, the world would indeed be a happy place. There are no limits to vanity and self-conceit. Now in putting yourself into another person’s position you are also putting yourself into his point of view, into *how* he sees you, and hears you, and experiences you in your daily behavior. You are seeing yourself through his eyes...It is you who have to see how difficult you are for the other person. Let me tell you that all this is not at all easy to grasp. You may think you know it already. You may have heard it already, but a life-time at least is needed to see all that it implies.” V. 1, pp. 266-7

EXTERNAL CONSIDERING V

“It is only according to your degree of self-observation and self-knowledge that you can externally consider another person...Can you yet think of different ‘I’s in yourself and not say ‘I’ to everything in

you? Then you will, in the same degree, be able to see different 'I's in another person. You will see his good and bad 'I's. This will help you to externally consider the other person." V. 1, pp. 269, 273

THE BASIS OF EXTERNAL CONSIDERING

"Without being far more conscious of oneself one cannot become conscious of another person, save in an illusory way, in imagination. We have first of all to be able to bear ourselves before we can bear others." V. 2, p. 498

THE BASIS OF EXTERNAL CONSIDERING II

"Real inner change is a development of essence—that is, of what is the most real and deepest part of you. For this to take place, personality must gradually become passive...So when it is said that in real external considering you must be passive, the meaning is that you must become passive *to the reactions of your personality*. And this requires the most conscious and most concentrated work on oneself. That is, it requires a very active conscious inner state. And we must not suppose we are capable of reaching this state in a moment."

V. 1, p. 275

EXTERNAL CONSIDERING VI

"Now you may dislike certain 'I's in a person, and, provided you dislike certain 'I's in yourself also, it does not mean that you cannot connect yourself with that person for you may like other 'I's in that person...Unless you can break yourself up into *many* you cannot see *many* in others." V. 2, p. 695

EXTERNAL CONSIDERING VII

"When you have realized that you cannot help doing something, you will realize that other people cannot help doing something and you will no longer feel this fatal criticism, this contempt, that underlies so many people's psychology. This will give you a right basis to begin to have relationship in the Work-sense to other people." V. 3, p. 782

EXTERNAL CONSIDERING VIII

"When, through self-observation and work on yourself, you see more

and more clearly that you are as bad as anyone else, then you ascend the Ladder of Being...Observing, in quiet, the same fault in yourself as you have heatedly or bitterly pointed out in another seems to me to be practical love...But you must know yourself to begin with. You must begin to be conscious of yourself. This is the most necessary part of Conscious Love, which is not blind." V.4, p.1240, V. 5, p. 1636

EXERCISE IN EXTERNAL CONSIDERING

"I suggest that for practical work each of you decide to externally consider a particular person during this next week. Observe your mechanical reactions to this person. Observe your mechanical criticisms. Observe where you feel superior. Try to find in yourself the same things that you complain of in the other person...Put yourself in the other person's place. Try to see where the trouble lies in yourself as well as the other person. Try not to identify. Notice your inner talking and what it is up to. Keep awake to what you are doing, which will be your aim for a week. Remember it every day on getting up. Think of it at night—where you failed, why you failed, where you began to internally consider instead of to externally consider. Then you will see better the meaning of externally considering and how it can change being." V. 1, p. 263

IN WORK RELATIONSHIPS

"In the Work, relationship is important. Work relationship is impossible without external considering. In general we must approach one another through the medium of the Work. The Work and its teachings must lie between you and the other person. You must look at one another through the common window of the Work...One person can, if a Work-group is established, give force to another, without knowing it, simply by working against his or her mechanicalness privately... You do not blame but accept and by doing this you make room for the other person to alter." V. 1, p. 267, V. 3, p. 973, 1025

WORK RELATIONSHIPS II

"If people have worked on themselves and have admitted into consciousness their various inadequacies, lacks, doubts, weaknesses, fears, they can really meet one another in the Work sense, but they meet

one another on a quite different level. Why? Because of being more conscious of themselves through self-observation, they will find that other people are much the same as themselves.” V. 4, p. 1345

CHAPTER 17

INTERPERSONAL RELATIONS

SEEING OTHERS

“Remember that we see one another by our associations, once we become ‘familiar,’ as it is called, with each other. What we do not understand is that seeing a person by one’s own associations with him or her has nothing to do with what the person really is. Try to see another person without associations.” V. 1, p. 296

THE SPIDERWEB OF ASSOCIATIONS

“If we could see without mechanical associations laid down in us we would really see what things and people are like. Unfortunately impressions fall on a network of associations and prevent us after a certain age from seeing the essential meaning of things. We see life, as it were, through a thick network, a spiderweb of associations, and in consequence we never really *see* anything or anyone.” V. 4, p. 1399

ON ‘NOT FIXING’

“As long as you externally consider another person with a view to trying to change him or her—that is, as long as you think the other person should be different—you are not externally considering, but internally considering. The basis of internal considering is that others should be different, and from this comes ‘making accounts’ against others...One thing is quite certain, and that is that the more sincerely we observe ourselves and what is in us, the less smug we shall be. And from this it follows that we shall be less satisfied to think that we know what the other person should be like.” V. 1, pp. 268-9

TRANSFORMING MECHANICAL REACTIONS

“To be offended is extremely easy. It is a mechanical reaction. Not to be offended, or to *transform* being offended is difficult. It requires a lot of thought, a lot of inner adjustment, a lot of remembering what one is like oneself, and so on, to transform the first impact of being offended. That is real work on oneself.” V. 1, p. 270

TRANSFORMING MECHANICAL REACTIONS II

“When you find a person who obviously dislikes you there is another task for personal work. Notice what he dislikes in you if you can. Remember that we have to thank those who make it necessary for us to work on ourselves.” V. 3, p. 976

COMPASSION

“Now suppose you are sufficiently interested and sufficiently conscious to notice how these impressions fall on you mechanically, and suppose that you have sufficient valuation of the Work to wish to transform these impressions, which means not letting them simply fall on their usual place, exciting your usual dislikes and hatreds.

. . . If you understand something of what it means when it is said in the Work that people are mechanical, then you will not accept the impression so easily. You will realize that it is not the person’s fault. You will realize that the person always does this, always says this, because he is a machine...(At the same time) you see your own mechanicalness and how you are constantly doing the same thing.”

V. 1, p. 339

COMPASSION II

“It is impossible to endure one another’s unpleasant manifestations in the right sense of the meaning of the word unless we see our own unpleasant manifestations and know them and accept them...(We) begin to realize our own helplessness, so we can endure the helplessness of others.” V. 3, p. 832

RELATIONS WITH PEOPLE OUTSIDE THE WORK

“You must have already got some idea of what it means to be ‘all things to all men.’ You must be able to eat and drink and joke and listen and talk without any trace of the Work being behind you. You *may* have an opportunity to say something, and you may not. That doesn’t matter. A person in the Fourth Way of Work must be able to be quite ordinary in life. There must be no kind of superiority, no hinting, no persuasion, no dark remarks. But if you *work* on yourself, when the other person is difficult, that will make the other person aware that *you are different*.” V. 1, p. 271

OUTSIDE THE WORK II

“A person in this Work, surrounded by people in life who have no magnetic centre, must behave in an ordinary way—he must be silent, not in an obvious or intriguing way, but really internally silent, so that others notice nothing unusual. This will be part of his work. His other work will consist in not reacting mechanically as he always did.” V. 1, p. 272

OUTSIDE THE WORK III

“You know how in life people are always trying to improve one another by reproving one another, always finding fault with one another. This is quite useless and leads to all the endless strife in life. But making oneself *passive* to a person and working on oneself therefrom—for to be passive requires constant inner work on yourself—this, I assure you, can effect a change in the other person, because your work makes *room* for him to alter.” V. 1, p. 271

OUTSIDE THE WORK IV

“The first step in increase of consciousness is to see through yourself and acknowledge what you see. What is the result? Instantly other people who are keeping up their facade of False Personality will feel more at ease with you.” V. 4, p. 1345

WILLING EACH OTHER’S EXISTENCE

“This paper is about two ways of taking the events of life. One is that you do not identify with them; the other is to will them. Sometimes we have to use one method, but sometimes to use the other, or both. I will also tell you a secret. We have to will one another: this is the beginning of conscious love.” V. 4, p. 1316

SECTION III

Developing Our Being

CHAPTER 18

LEVELS OF BEING

RECEIVING HELP

“Now Real ‘I’, as is said, comes down *from above*, but only when there is something to come down to...Have you yet begun to separate from yourself, from your machine? How, if not, can you expect any taste of Real Will, of Master? Why, there is no room for him.” V. 2, p. 489

RECEIVING HELP II

“If we were not given occasionally inner perceptions and experiences a little above our ordinary level, we could not grow. The point is, we do actually have traces of experiences beyond our ordinary level. This is one of the most remarkable things about our human existence and points to our having something more in us than what we are.” V. 2, pp. 588-9

DIFFERENT LEVELS OF BEING

“The Work is to make us live on a higher level of ourselves. For example, suppose you begin to internally consider. You start making accounts, making out that others owe you, thinking that you are badly treated, worrying about what others think of you, and so on. This is an activity of a *lower level* in yourself...Now suppose you begin to dislike the inner taste of considering. Then when internal considering starts in you and you notice it you will feel uncomfortable. Why? Because you have already begun to feel what a higher level is like. You feel uncomfortable by reason of the contrast. You have seen something better. You are now in a position to make an inner choice...Better states belong to higher levels of yourself. They are in you, as different levels...But you have to see all this for yourself and get to know *where you are in yourself*. Ask yourself: ‘Where am I?’ With what thoughts and emotions are you going, with what moods, with what ‘I’s?’” V. 1, p. 162

A BETTER WORLD

“If we knew for certain that there was another and better world and had seen it, we would not be drowned so much by the events of this very imperfect one... Would it not be wonderful to know for certain, like that? By our knowledge and certainty we would be protected from identifying in the way that we do with everything and everyone.”

V. 2, p. 493

APPLYING THE WORK

“Many of us know what the Work means to a certain extent and yet at the same time we do not apply it to the immediate contact with external life, with these incoming events. That is, we do not apply it to ourselves and to how we are taking things at this moment, today.”

V. 4, p. 1346

APPLYING THE WORK II

“If you want to change your level of Being you have got to see what your level of Being is—that is, what kind of a person you are over a period—or, more strictly, what kind of ‘I’s you allow to take charge of you at different moments, over a period, and remember what you observed. If any ‘I’ in you can jump up and speak through your mouth then your state of Being is mechanical and cannot change.”

V. 1, p. 168

‘YOUR BEING ATTRACTS YOUR LIFE’

“The Work says: ‘Your being attracts your life.’ Do you see the connection? . . . The Universe can be taken as *response to request*. Man requests, and the Universe in all its full and total reality, outer and inner, responds according to the request... You may ask intellectually for happiness but not see how factors that govern your being, as love of your negative states, your grievances, your secret jealousies, your laziness, your dislikes, and so on, are asking for something quite different, and that the Universe is responding to these factors in your being that you are secretly willing and affirming without seeing that you are.” V. 1, p. 154

ON MEANING

“The working or vibrations of a psychic centre become conscious to us as meanings on different levels. Where with a lower centre we see only one meaning, we see many interblending meanings with a Higher Centre.” V. 3, p. 1009

THE SACRED PART

“Everyone has a consecrated feeling about themselves, just as they are. But it is in the wrong place—in personality. The personality is not the sacred thing in oneself.” V. 2, p. 423

THE SACRED PART II

“Unless a man can believe in *Greater Mind*, he is useless in the Work.” V. 3, p. 885

THE SACRED PART III

“We have to understand that we are not born through our parents but that our Essence comes down from the stars as something quite independent of our origin.” V. 3, p. 886

A DEEPER LEVEL

“Now suppose one begins to see more deeply what is meant by struggling against identifying with oneself and the reason for it. Then the matter is no longer a question of obeying something you heard from outside. . .but something better understood from within.

. . . Then one is under deeper influences of the Work—that is, higher in the Ray and so more internally perceived. The Ray is internal. This is the direction of Master and Steward. First, Steward: he is deeper insight. He is not external—a command. He understands for himself. He knows...He knows there is a better level.” V. 2, p. 494

ANOTHER SIMPLE STATEMENT

“You will never get to a new level if you are going to feel negative when your present level is attacked and diminished in self-importance.” V. 2, p. 489

OBSERVING ONE'S LEVEL

"Can you catch a glimpse of what it might mean to live amongst more conscious people? Can you see why you cannot?" V. 3, p. 1004

QUALITIES OF AN EVOLVED PERSON

"We realize what an immense gap lies between ourselves and a man who is living more consciously than we do, a man who notices when he is becoming identified, a man who sees when he is becoming prey to imaginary anxieties and fears, a man who is sharply aware of the fact that he is justifying himself. This is a gap so great that if we ever have such a moment of insight we cannot help feeling by contract the enormous deficiencies in our quality of Being... But let me add one thing here—i.e., that if you begin to see all this about your state of Being you are already much further on, however hopeless you may feel, than a person who has never caught such glimpses of himself or herself, because it is exactly this feeling of vacuum, of deficiency, of lack, that is the starting point of work on one's own Being."

V. 2, pp. 704-5

OUSPENSKY'S DESCRIPTION OF A HIGHER STATE

"In subsequent experiments the same sensation of the disappearance of 'I' began to produce in me a feeling of extraordinary calmness and confidence, which nothing can equal in our ordinary sensations. I seemed to understand at that time that all the usual troubles, cares and anxieties are connected with the usual sensation of 'I', result from it, and at the same time, constitute it and sustain it. Therefore, when 'I' disappeared, all troubles, cares and anxieties disappeared. When I felt that I did not exist, everything else became very simple and easy. At these moments I even regarded it as strange that we could take upon ourselves so terrible a responsibility as to bring 'I' into everything, and start from 'I' in everything. In the idea of 'I', in the sensation of 'I', such as we ordinarily have, there was something almost abnormal, a kind of fantastic conceit which bordered on blasphemy, as if each one of us called himself God. I felt then that only God could call himself 'I', that only God was 'I.'" V. 5, p. 1549

CHAPTER 19

INTENTIONAL SUFFERING

INTENTIONAL SUFFERING

“Now self-observation is very harsh and becomes more harsh. If done sincerely it will hurt. But it lets light in and stops all sorts of rank weeds from growing within, and amongst them all the strange growths due to internal considering and self-pity and song-singing. And then at last we begin to see what it means that a man must realize that he is nothing before he can expect to *be* something.” V. 1, p. 259

INTENTIONAL SUFFERING II

“You may often say you are to blame for something, but if someone agrees with you, it is startling and you feel offended. Yes, we easily *pretend* we are wrong. But to *see* it, direct and unmistakable, in one-self, is *pain*. This is real, and so useful, suffering, for all real suffering purifies the emotions.” V. 1, p. 166

INTENTIONAL SUFFERING III

“I have found nothing flattering in this teaching. There is nothing flattering, for axample, in being told that we are machines that have no Real ‘I’, that we are nothing but pictures of ourselves, that what we call ‘I’ is nothing but imagination, that we have no Real Will, that we are a mass of contradictions which we do not notice owing to having so many buffers and different forms of padding, that we are not conscious yet, and so on...All awakening has a sour taste—like going back to school.” V. 3, p. 825

INTENTIONAL SUFFERING IV

“A man must suffer from his observation of himself, but never become negative.” V. 3, p. 1203

SELF-SATISFACTION

“*Try to see what you are resting on*, all of you. Try to see the basis of your self-satisfaction. You will understand that unless this basis is completely broken up there can be no change of being.” V. 1, p. 338

SELF-SATISFACTION II

“As regards the remark that this Work is selfish, you must all understand that this Work . . . is something that destroys your self-complacency, your selfishness, your self-esteem, your fantasies about yourself, your pictures of yourself and, in short, your False Personality. It makes you see yourself naked—makes you see that you have to do something about yourself before you try to help other people.” V. 3, p. 849

SUFFERING ONE’S SELF

“When I am in that state of insight I will continually suffer from myself—from Nicoll and his mechanical reactions. Then I will in a certain sense have to endure this external, mechanical, reacting person that hitherto I have taken as myself but which the Work has gradually shown me I must separate from.” V. 2, p. 644

CHAPTER 20

THE NATURE AND STAGES OF WORK

‘BEING EQUAL TO LIFE’

“There is no escape from life until you have become in some sense equal to it...Eventually, for this Work to act in its full way on you, you must have done something, borne something, endured something, long enough to be equal to life.” V. 5, p. 1755

A POSITIVE ATTITUDE

“For the Work to enter, you must invite it and agree with it and will it, and treat it internally with the highest consideration and the greatest courtesy and with true delight.” V. 4, p. 1497

A POSITIVE ATTITUDE II

“It is necessary to say sometimes: ‘I *can* work.’ To say to oneself: ‘I can work’ is a good thing and gives a little shock to oneself. It scatters those stealthy negative ‘I’s that tend to come in through one’s unguarded spots...[At the Institute] I remember G. once making us all shout at the top of our voices: ‘I can work.’ ” V. 3, p. 1109, V. 2, pp. 549

A POSITIVE ATTITUDE III

“To do a thing willingly from a delight in doing it, will effect a change in you. And when a person begins to take up his own ‘cross’ —that is, the burden of some difficult thing in himself that he has at last come to observe—and does it in such a spirit, then he will get results. But if he does it heavily, out of the conviction of sin, nothing will ever come out of it.” V. 5, p. 1743

BEHIND THE MACHINERY

“A machine cannot know itself. But a *man-machine* can get to know itself. That is the difference. All right effort is to know our machine and not go always, every moment, with its mechanical reactions. Then something else is created in oneself. Something forms behind this machinery.” V. 3, p. 1110

THE NEED TO 'UNKNOWN'

"The reason why you don't see yourselves is that you take what you know as fixed and final. You think you know. You are certain you know what is good and bad. It is not merely your vanity that makes you think you know, but also your ignorance. From the standpoint of Higher Man we are all ridiculous, just like monkeys. When you come in touch with this Work, you should begin, if you feel the Work, to realize gradually that you do not know and that you need to unknow." V. 5, p. 1757

THE NEED TO 'UNKNOWN' II

"If a person really felt he or she knew nothing, could he or she ever object to anything? But are not all of you continually objecting, finding fault, judging people, condemning people, and so on? . . . How marvelous it is when a person begins to unknow a little and not always know! How marvelous it is when a man or woman changes, becomes softer, quieter. How marvelous not to have to be what you think you are, to keep up this False Personality, this pseudo self! How extraordinary it is to move towards Real I, which is only moved towards by actual separation from false things in yourself, one by one." V. 5, pp. 1758-9

REMEMBERING WORK DONE

"That small amount of awakening you had yesterday should have been put into the room of your inner memory which is outside time . . . arranged vertically in scale of value. Such moments eventually begin to lift us. They enable us to remember ourselves—out of time and its cares." V. 5, p. 1528

INTERNAL EVOLUTION

"When a man begins to see the truth of this Work for himself, without the help of others, he begins to have his own source of work in himself. It grows on him. V. 3, p. 842

INTERNAL EVOLUTION

"The Work is not something that you hear about from time to time but is something that must eventually be always with you, something

that you eventually think about even more than your interests and problems in life. This takes time.” V. 2, p. 765

“ASK, AND YE SHALL RECEIVE’

“We . . . reflect on the nature of Balanced Man and on our own situation in comparison to him. By this comparison we may perceive more clearly what is necessary to ask for and estimate where to work on ourselves. For if we ask nothing, we get nothing. This is in the nature of the Universe.” V. 5, p. 1529

SERVING THE WORK

“When you begin to serve this Work really you have to lose these petty, daily, small self-emotions and you can only do so by realizing that the Work is much bigger than you... You have to serve the Work and not yourself. The Work must not be a function of yourself but you must become a function of the Work... It is required of you to think and work secretly in the Name of the Work and not for reward. Otherwise it becomes meritorious and so goes into Personality.”

V. 3, p. 855, V. 5, p. 1648

INTERNAL HOUSECLEANING

“The object of the Work is to cleanse our *lower* centres, to clear them out, to open their windows, so that they can begin to transmit these ideas and directions coming from higher centres.” V. 2, p. 512

THE BEGINNING OF A WORK OCTAVE

“In terms of the Work-Octave we have to return to the note *Do* and sound it more strongly. Many ‘I’s attack this note and seek to drain its energy of vibration—mocking ‘I’s, clownish ‘I’s, ugly ‘I’s, cruel ‘I’s, hard ‘I’s, arguing ‘I’s, denying ‘I’s, mob ‘I’s. All unpleasant things in you seek to attack this opening note of the Work.”

V. 5, p. 1525

THE BEGINNING OF A WORK OCTAVE II

“The Work Octave starts with evaluation as *Do*, and application of the ideas to yourself as *Re*. Certainly this is a big step. Remember that you are the subject of the Work, you yourself... This is not under-

stood save after long contact with the ideas and a real struggle about the whole matter." V. 2, p. 592, V. 3, p. 879

TRANSFORMING MOMENTS

"After a time, when the Work is beginning to touch you, you will hate feeling that you are simply doing everything mechanically. Then perhaps you will begin to know what it means to transform the day, to transform the moment, this very moment." V. 2, p. 769

DIRECTED ATTENTION

"Attention to anything always helps, for directed attention puts us into more conscious parts of centres." V. 1, p. 137

DIRECTED ATTENTION II

"Simply to see a bus or tree requires zero attention. To observe them—their color, shape, and so on—requires directed attention. You see hundreds of buses and trees every day but do not observe them. It is all a vague, confused picture. In the same way, your inner life is a vague, confused picture. You do not observe it, but you are in general aware of it, as you are of buses and trees." V. 3, p. 1142

INTERNAL SEPARATION IN PRACTICE

"When you realize beyond any doubt that you have different 'I's in you, when you can hear them speaking or notice them working in your emotions, and yet remain separate from them, you begin to understand the Work on its practical side." V. 2, p. 596

BALANCE

"All real effort—that is, intelligent effort—is about developing the undeveloped sides of ourselves." V. 2, p. 766

MAN NUMBER FOUR

"It seems a paradox to say that to become conscious of an unattractive feature operating all through one's life of which one was formerly ignorant gives a sense of liberation; but you can find the reason for yourself...No. 4 Man or Balanced Man *cannot* be one-sided. He must be conscious of everything in himself and so will

project nothing. If he projects nothing onto others, he will not become identified with others. He will thus attain a great freedom.”

V. 5, pp. 1523-4

MAN NUMBER FOUR - II

“As regards himself, he no longer sees himself as good and others who do not agree as bad. He no longer sees and values himself, as he once did, but sees himself from many sides and accepts his contradictions...He can see his mechanical reactions as not him and feel himself as distinct from them—as if they were going on below him. All this brings him closer and closer to his real self, his Real I.”

V. 4, p. 1247

UNDERSTANDING I

“Nothing can take the place of understanding. Being told is not the same as seeing...It is quite easy to see when a person only has knowledge but not understanding of this Work. If you understand something you can speak of it in different ways; if it is merely knowledge you will speak of it from memory.” V. 2, p. 481, V. 1, p. 94

UNDERSTANDING II

“G. said, in so many words . . . This system promises nothing. But if a man works, he will get something. Let us say, he will receive leather with which to make shoes. But he must make the shoes himself, so that they fit him. They must be his own shoes—not borrowed shoes.”

V. 3, p. 1004

SEEING AND DOING

“Our receptive side is greater than our doing side. We therefore find ourselves in the position in this Work of being able to *see* better than we can *do*. In certain situations we have flashes of understanding in which perhaps we see quite clearly what we should do and yet we find it impossible to do what we have seen.” V. 3, p. 846

PASSIVE EFFORT

“All effort in the Work is passive. Self-development starts from passive *Do*. Effort is something very quiet and deep and clearly seen. It

is not noisy, not pretense. It is not contracting muscles and thrusting chins out...Effort in the Work is about being sincere to oneself and so knowing what one's motives really are, and not pretending."

V. 3, p. 1005

DROPPING SELF-JUSTIFYING

"The side of what we actually are, and the side of what we pretend and imagine we are, are two contradictory sides. These two contradictory sides, however, exist in everyone without exception. The action of the Work, once it is beginning to be wished for, makes us become gradually aware of this contradiction—over many years. Then we begin to have traces of real suffering—interspersed with all sorts of attempts at self-justifying and excuses and reactions—until we become, by inner taste, sick of self-justifying and excuses and so on. This marks a stage in the Work, a definite point in self-development."

V. 2, p. 456

DROPPING SELF-JUSTIFYING II

"When you see you are in the wrong—that is, when you get a little behind False Personality with all its Vanities and Prides—you take force backwards or interiorly into yourself and these moments of confession or separation from what is false will cause Essence to grow because you give it energy that would otherwise have gone into self-justifying...This inner confession, this giving way, this surrender of something . . . this giving up of what you have always known to be a liar in you, is one of the most blessed experiences that you can have in this Work." V. 4, p. 1378

ASSIMILATING THE PAST

"We are called upon to observe ourselves uncritically and sincerely and, leaving aside imagination, to begin to assimilate what we notice about ourselves...If I observe something in myself now and remember what I observe, I will become slowly aware of its having existed before I observed it. The observation begins to travel backwards in time, usually very gradually. But it may happen that one experiences a flash of consciousness extending far back into the past of what one has just begun to be conscious of now in the present. One sees one has always been like that." V. 5, p. 1520

STAGES OF SELF-OBSERVATION

“The power of self-observation increases as Observing ‘I’ moves more internally.... Then self-observation is no longer some theoretical thing that one must try to do because one is told to do it, but it becomes a constant accompaniment to one’s life. It becomes something that does not interrupt but accompanies. And when this accompaniment ceases, one knows instantly that one is asleep.”

V. 3, p. 967, V. 2, pp. 560

STAGES OF SELF-OBSERVATION II

“These conscious self-observations are, as was said, not continuous observations. They are to be regarded as discrete, discontinuous *events* of a very special kind that ordinarily people rarely experience...

But the organization of these snapshot observations, these discontinuous personal events, into a full-size photograph is not one’s own work. We did not see the connections of our observations. But something in us did and finally presented us with the photograph. ‘This,’ it says, ‘is one aspect of your life that can no longer imprison you.’ ”

V. 5, p. 1600-01

ON MEANING

“Whenever we move inwards meaning increases...Where we saw one thing before, we begin, by self-observation, by inner sincerity, and by much thought, to see a hundred meanings...Internally one feels loosened. But nothing could be better. How else can anything new enter—and how indeed can Real ‘I’ enter when one is tightly shut up in one’s own narrow ideas?” V. 2, p. 496

ON MEANING II

“A higher state of a man does not lie on the line AB (the line of passing time), but *above* the man—namely, on the vertical line. This line is what gives *meaning* to all things. It represents the eternal scale of meaning...Man is born as a self-evolving organism. He can rise from one level to another in this vertical scale...When a man remembers himself he lifts himself in the vertical line upwards and tastes for a moment a new state...The vertical line represents the

line of *transformation*, and this line cuts at right angles the horizontal line of Time, which is the line of *change*.” V. 1, pp. 100, 103-5

KEEPING THE WORK ALIVE

“The Work begins *in you* when you have to struggle for it yourself and keep it alive for and by yourself—because all that is best in you really wants it and feels a loss if it is not present...What then does *inner* or *higher* mean? . . . It means a continual struggle in yourself to get to what is real and to discard the pretended and invented side. Here one enters a sort of desert in which one is tempted a great deal in regard to the Work itself.” V. 2, p. 505

DISBELIEF OF THE WORK

“Now if you fundamentally disbelieve this Work and the ideas in the Gospels, but do not observe that you do, you will be indignant with those who seem to disbelieve it. This is simply due to seeing what is really *in you* as if it were outside you in others. This is a common enough occurrence. It is necessary therefore to bring your own disbelief into your consciousness so that you can face it yourself. . .If you face your disbelief sincerely, you will be helped if there is any willingness to believe.” V. 5, p. 1704

PERSONALITY AND ESSENCE

“As the feeling of ‘I’ is drawn out of the active man (personality) so does the passive man (essence) become strengthened until the time comes when the passive man becomes active and the active man passive. That is, a reversal takes places and the inner controls the outer, not the outer the inner...If we were all more in Essence than we are at present everything would be much more real, much more genuine, much more simple, much more true.” V. 1, p. 286, V. 2, p. 718

ESSENCE AND SINCERITY

“Now for the Essence, or inner part of us, to grow and become gradually active, a man must be able to be utterly sincere with himself when the occasion arises. Essence cannot grow from anything false.” V. 2, p. 445

SELF-OBSERVATION OVER TIME

“Suppose that you have observed yourself for some considerable time and you begin to see yourself over the period of time acting in a certain way. You see how something starts, leads to something else, and so on. In fact, you see yourself in action, in movement, so to speak, inner and outer, in some typical way of behavior. This is a photograph....Now when these photographs begin to form themselves the next stage is that one notices flashes of insight into one’s life that go far back. Then one begins to become more conscious of one’s level of Being, of the kind of person one has been all this time and has never seen owing to action of buffers.” V. 2, pp. 509-10

STABILITY

“So you will find that your understanding keeps on changing as the life of the Work grows in you, and yet it is always the same thing.” V. 2, p. 514

THE WORK’S VALUE

“If something stronger than life governs you . . . you will find that in place of internally considering you will begin to externally consider and then a great deal of peace will come to you and a great deal of strength that hitherto has been wasted in Internal Considering. Also, you will begin to understand other people far better, and instead of worrying about everything you will have real thoughts about other people and about yourself, and everything will become much more simple and quieter.” V. 2, p. 707

‘UNCLEAN’ STATES

“The Work is a very strong, clean thing, and so demands a great deal of inner cleanness and strength and sincerity with oneself. Who are the unclean in the Gospels? Every form of hypocrisy and pretense, every form of looking down one’s nose, every form of sighing slightly, every form of pseudo patience—yes, all this is uncleanness and we come to know it. It is a very good stage to reach, when one knows it.” V. 2, p. 551

A DREAM OF NICOLL'S

"I see someone teaching or drilling some recruits. That is all. At first sight there seems nothing marvelous. He smiles. He indicates somehow that he does not necessarily expect to get any results from what he is doing. He does not seem to mind. He does not show any signs of impatience when they are rude to him. The lesson is nearly over, but this will not make any difference to him. It is as if he said, 'Well, this has to be done. One cannot expect much. One must give them help, though they don't want it.' It is his invulnerability that strikes me. He is not hurt or angered by their sneers or lack of discipline. He has some curious power but hardly uses it... He seemed purified from all violence. That was the secret. That was the source of the curious power I detected in him. A man without violence... From this glance I know better what going in a new direction is and what a new will purified from violence means. I know also that the possibilities of following this new will and new direction lie in every moment of one's life."

V. 4, p. 1500

THE DEMISE OF FALSE PERSONALITY

"All self-realization, all self-knowledge which is real, destroys the imagination of oneself—i.e. the False Personality. The result is an immense broadening of one's powers and not a weakening of them. It is the False Personality that weakens us so much and renders us so brittle, so easily upset, so narrow, and so mean in our understanding, both of others and of ourselves." V. 2, p. 705

THE DISSOLUTION OF PERSONALITY

"When the Work really strikes home, this house of cards that one takes as oneself begins to fall to bits. You know the Work speaks about the necessity of coming to the point where one realizes one's own utter *nothingness*. This, however, is mercifully delayed and it is not something you can artificially realize." V. 2, p. 533

THE DISSOLUTION OF PERSONALITY II

"Self-Remembering comes down from above and full Self-Remembering is a state of consciousness in which the Personality and all its pretenses almost cease to exist and you are, so to speak, nobody, and

yet the fullness of this state, which is really bliss, makes you, for the first time, somebody." V. 2, p. 533

DEATH AND REBIRTH

"Easter is not something that comes once a year but something that comes every day: the idea of non-identifying, or dying to some typical mechanical reaction, is a daily possibility, and if it is done in a spirit of a kind of gaiety, it will gradually result in energy being transformed daily and passing upwards to another level which after a time will become a distinct experience to you." V. 2, p. 664

CHAPTER 21

ESCAPING FROM THE LAW OF THE PENDULUM

THE LAW OF THE PENDULUM

“Our moods are all hung on to pendulums. *We should not trust them.* Unfortunately, we identify with them. We take them as ourselves. We say: ‘I feel,’ ‘I think,’ and so on. We forget that ‘Real I’ is in the centre of the pendulum-swing, and we allow ourselves to swing between excitement and dejection, between enthusiasm and depression, between over-valuation and under-valuation, between conceit and humility, and so on, endlessly. In all this there is no centre of gravity.” V. 1, pp. 328-9

THE LAW OF THE PENDULUM II

“Our whole lives, ordinarily, are governed by the Law of the Pendulum. We all swing to and fro. When you are in one opposite you are unconscious of the other, and vice versa. You may have idle dreams of rising and rising, of progressing and progressing, of getting better and better, but all these are indeed idle dreams...What do you think self-knowledge means? It means knowledge of all sides of yourself... If you can see both sides of yourself, what you call your good side and your bad, then you begin to be conscious in opposites at the same time.” V. 1, p. 325

ON HAVING NO MIDDLE

“The pendulum is the great thief within. I only remind you that you have to find some method of managing it; or else it will take away anything that it gives...If you let yourself identify mechanically with each of the two opposites in turn—that is, with one side and then the other side of the emotional pendulum, wholly believing each with your whole feeling of ‘I’—you will remain helplessly on the pendulum, swinging to and fro from excitement to depression, from depression to excitement... We have to draw the feeling of I out of the opposites. That means one attempts to withdraw the feeling of I from the feeling that one is good or the feeling that one is bad...The feeling of I can be squandered in infinite ways.” V. 5, pp. 1561, 1655-6

ON OBTAINING A MIDDLE

“We have to observe the whole swing from one extreme to the other in order to discover our particular opposites...An increase in consciousness in regard to our emotional life through the making of the opposites conscious by following the swing in Time, and so seeing how they are connected, shifts consciousness gradually towards the middle zone of the pendulum, to a third place lying between the opposites which becomes receptive of new emotions not on the pendulum. We acquire a middle.” V. 5, p. 1563

SEEING THE OPPOSITES

“Try sometimes to see the opposite point of view to that which you hold...If the opposite is genuinely and with effort included in consciousness the sphere of consciousness is greatly increased and a number of unpleasant features in us disappear. Our one-sidedness, which causes our over-sensitive reactions and also our totally wrong ways of self-evaluation, is replaced by a broader, fuller consciousness. We can no longer insist we are right nor be cast down when proved to be wrong. We find it more difficult to be petty. In fact, we begin to escape from the prison of ourselves whose bars and gates result from our one-sidedness.” V. 5, p. 1521

THIRD FORCE

“The Work teaches that there are three forces in every manifestation. We see only two—if we see as far as that...Third Force lies between the opposites and so we can picture it as the mid-point of the pendulum-swing. If you take the feeling of ‘I’ out of both sides of the pendulum, then you do not feel yourself through the opposites and the feeling of ‘I’ moves to the centre, into nothingness, or, if you prefer, into not-somethingness. Here in the middle is the place or state where ‘Real I’ is.” V. 1, pp. 329-30

INNER SILENCE

“Different ‘I’s, ranged along the orbit of the swing, wish to say now this and now that, as the light of consciousness touches them, wakes them to momentary life. To a limited extent one may permit them to speak, provided one has a distinct idea that neither side is right.

Inner silence means being silent *in oneself*. It means not taking sides in yourself and so being silent. This is impossible if you identify with every 'I.' You may let talk take place on one side or the other, but you observe it and are in yourself silent." V. 1, p. 334

THE FEELING OF NOTHINGNESS

"When the Work says that a man must come to realize his own nothingness before he can be re-born, it does not mean that he must humble himself and so on, but that he must by long self-observation actually begin to realize that he is nothing and that there is no such person as himself. The object of this is to get into a position, psychologically speaking, between the opposites... Why is it so important to get somewhere into the centre of the pendulum and not swing to and fro? Because here, between the opposites, lie all the possibilities of growth. Here influences from higher levels can reach us. Here, in this place where one can feel one's own nothingness (and where one is therefore free from contradictions), influences and meanings coming from higher centres, *which have no contradictions*, can be felt. Not regarding yourself as good or bad, not priding yourself on being just or otherwise, not thinking you are well-treated or badly-treated, not being caught by either movement through identifying, you come into this mid-position. This is not easy! With personality active, it is impossible." V. 1, p. 329

CHAPTER 22

SEEING THE LAW OF THREE

SEEING THREE FORCES INTERNALLY

“To be conscious in First Force is to know what one wants; to be conscious in Second Force is to know what difficulties stand in the way; to be conscious in Third Force at the same time is to be conscious of how what one wants and what opposes it can eventually reach some solution. Each Force modifies the other and indeed so much so that in the final solution the result is never like what you set out to attain—i.e., it is never like the Active Force with which you started.” V. 2, p. 517

FIRST FORCE

“If we take what we want, desire, wish for, expect, hope for, as 1st Force, then, whatever the nature of our wish, it will arouse a specific and definite 2nd Force that opposes the wish... We cannot study 2nd Force in ourselves unless we are more conscious of 1st Force, which, as was said, may be acting all the time without our seeing it... So it is the 1st Force that one has to look at and observe, and gradually become conscious of. What do you want? Consider in this connection the ideas contained in the Sermon on the Mount and the ideas in the Lord’s Prayer.” V. 2, pp. 542, 544

SECOND FORCE

“Second Force is in the nature of things, and is not an evil god but an aspect of God in which you have to fight with Him in order to develop. Perhaps you will understand that without Second Force no one could grow internally... How can we expect, if we are created as self-developing beings, that we could develop if everything went as we wanted it to go?” V. 4, p. 1464

SECOND FORCE II

“If you deal cleverly with this Second Force it will give you results and, instead of being simply a blind, opposing force, will become gradually what you want. You do not instantly become negative when opposed. You try this way and that, and gradually this formidable

opposition yields and becomes what you want—or, let us say, rather, what is possible in your wanting...That is, Will, passing through patience as Third Force, attains what it wants.” V. 3, p. 1017

THIRD FORCE

“If there were no Neutralizing or connecting force, Active and Passive Forces would stand in opposition to one another and nothing could happen. Now if the connecting force alters, the other two forces alter. We have to think of Neutralizing Force as something capable of tilting the balance between Active and Passive Force in such a way that active can become passive and passive can become active. If you think of a triad as being like a plank supported near its middle on a stand or fulcrum so that one end is up and the other down, then if the fulcrum is moved a little towards the down-side, the end that is up will go down, and visa versa, as would a see-saw.” V. 5, p. 1642

THIRD FORCE II

“It is necessary for us to have the opposites in us before we can think for ourselves and with individual thinking through the power of the Work something comes that unites the opposites...Have any of you ever had a thought of your own quite independently of what your acquired psychology tends to make you think? If you notice where a new thought comes from, it is never from either one side or the other of the opposites. It comes in between as the reconciling force.”

V. 4, p. 1374

THREE FORCES AT WORK

“When you live for a time in the consciousness of what you want, you will at the same time see more and more the Second Force that it gives rise to, so the more will you become conscious in two forces simultaneously...By not identifying with either . . . you may catch a glimpse of the Third Force entering by magic that makes the First and Second Force come into a possible relationship...This is finding a solution and you will notice that it has to do with *Will*...You must see that Will from the Work point of view refers to something responding, something flexible and intelligent that is not one-sided but three-sided.” V. 2, p. 518

THE WORK AS THIRD FORCE

“The long period of search for the Neutralizing Force of the Work begins when you realize that you are *not* working in the right way. This realization is a passing feeling, a momentary taste. It is not a thought...It is only through understanding, which means *seeing for yourself why a thing is necessary*, that inner development can take place.

. . . Both the teaching of Christ and the teaching of the Work are about the Third or Neutralizing Force, which renders Personality passive and Essence active. They are descriptions and instructions concerning it.” V. 5, pp. 1711, 1646

CHAPTER 23

A NEW CONCEPT OF TIME

TIME IS RELATIVE

“If you can grasp that a higher speed of working of a centre means *expanded* time and a lower speed of working means *contracted* time it may help you to realize that our experience of ‘time’ is relative to our state.” V. 3, p. 1128

TIME IS CURVED

“As you know, modern physics says that Time is curved. This means that it is a circle. It is not an extended line, but a line that bends round on itself and comes back to the same place...The past is *living* in us. It is all round us—not a long way off. Whatever you do now alters the past, as well as the future...Every act of work vibrates through the whole Time-Body and alters things in it...The ‘present’ is no longer confined to the instant—but broadens gradually into all one’s life, as consciousness expands.” V. 2, pp. 752, 552, 946-7

TIME IS CURVED II

“The whole Time-Body is a living thing, sensitive to what you are doing now.” V. 4, p. 1430

RECURRENCE

“When you see that your past lies in front of you, then your thoughts about your past become useful.” V. 2, p. 422

RECURRENCE II

“In recurrence you will meet your more conscious self, as it is *now*, much earlier, even perhaps at school, and feel there is someone showing you something, someone speaking to you. It is yourself.”

V. 2, p. 552

TIME IS ELASTIC

“Time understood psychologically is a pattern of events, a checker-board of black and white. It is necessary to expand the better and

contract the worse events. You see now that Time is elastic—not clock time.” V. 2, p.426

TIME AND ETERNITY

“Man is both in Time and in Eternity. Eternity is vertical to Time—and this is the direction of Self-Remembering—the feeling of oneself *now*. Every *now* is eternal. To remember oneself the feeling of now must enter—I *here now*—I *myself now*.” V. 3, p. 945

CHAPTER 24

THOUGHTS ON THE COSMOLOGY OF THE WORK

HIGHER INFLUENCES

“The idea of new influences and of coming in contact with them is the centre of the Work. If there were none, the Work would be about nothing. It would be mere nonsense. However, the Work is actually about something real, because higher influences exist and contact with them depends on *inner* change.” V. 2, p. 495

THE RAY OF CREATION

“The Ray of Creation, when held in the mind, can by itself produce a change of consciousness, because it is supremely a vertical diagram of scale, of different categories, of different levels. What else can cure us of small emotions and thoughts, which spread over the day like a fungus?” V. 3, p. 1011

THE RAY OF CREATION II

“This Work teaches that Greater Mind exists and that unless a person can realize this, he will not be able to work on himself. Unless you realize the miracle of nature and the miracle of your own created existence, you cannot work; you will never, for instance, be able to separate yourself from the state of being continually identified with yourself, because you imagine *you* are the biggest person and that there can be nothing bigger than you. And here, I would like to draw your attention to the Ray of Creation and ask you to reflect upon where *you* come into it.” V. 3, p. 1182

THE VALUE OF WORK COSMOLOGY

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

V. 4, p. 1294

ON HYDROGENS

“The Universe is not all on the same level but is like a ladder. These different intelligences at different levels are designated by numbers and these numbers refer to intelligent energies on different scales, termed ‘Hydrogens.’ ” V. 3, p. 1191

ON HYDROGENS II

“If then we only grasp at present that the act of creation is a series of successive *condensations* we shall not be far wrong. Seen in this light the Universe, as a Scale of Descent proceeding from the Absolute, is a series of energies or *matter-energies*. Or, in brief, a series of *different materialities*. In this system these different points in the Universe or different matters are called *Hydrogens*. . . The first four Hydrogens, 6, 12, 24 and 48 are *Psychic*. That is, they are the energies that are ‘psychological.’ They are the energies that the centres of Man work with. The fifth Hydrogen—96—is called ‘Animal Magnetism.’ The sixth—192—is called ‘air.’ Then comes 384 ‘water,’ 768 ‘Food,’ then 1536, which includes substances like wood, fibres, grass, then 3072, called minerals. All these Hydrogens occur in *Man*.” V. 1, p. 183

THE FOOD OCTAVE

“Now although the Octave of Creation itself is a descending octave, the octaves in the human machine are all *ascending* octaves. They go in the reverse way. The three Hydrogens in the Universe used by Man for his life enter him from outside and form starting points or *Do’s* for ascending octaves and this is *life* for Man. That is, Man as a living being *transforms* lower energy-matters into higher energy-matters.”

V. 1, p.188

THINKING FROM HYDROGEN 24

“A higher Hydrogen is more intelligent than a lower. . . Thinking from the intelligence belonging to *Hydrogen 24* is far more full of inner connections and meaning than thinking from the intelligence of *Hydrogen 48*. By means of *Hydrogen 24* you can see yourself walking about on this earth, you can stand outside yourself, because you are lifted out of yourself. . . By means of this psychic energy we see everything in a much finer way, in a much more subtle interconnection, so

that the stark opposites disappear and everything appears blended in a marvellous harmony.” V. 2, pp. 430, 435

HYDROGEN 96

“Hydrogen 96 at the note *Fa*, or *Fa* 96 is called ‘*Animal Magnetism*.’ . . . If we call it simply *vitality* or *health*, we may not be using quite the right term for it. . . . A man may not enjoy very good physical health, in the ordinary sense, and yet possess the resiliency and strength that comes from having *Fa* 96. A person, indeed, may be ill physically and yet possess sufficient quantities of the substance called *Fa* 96 to make him transcend illness, and on the other hand he may be well physically and possess insufficient quantities of *Fa* 96 and have little power of making others feel better. Long ago someone asked G what *Fa* 96 signified: the answer was that if you had sufficient quantities of this Hydrogen ‘fleas would not bite you.’ . . .

Now let us look at its position. As was said, it is manufactured in the second story. As you know, in the diagram of the centres in Man, the *emotional centre* comes in the second story. It dominates it. Therefore the formation of *Fa* 96 is interfered with if the emotional state is wrong. . . . *Fa* 96 is something that protects us, as it were, like an ‘envelope’ surrounding us. . . . But remember only for the time being that all negative states of oneself can prevent the proper formation of *Fa* 96, which is a very important energy in the human machine and protects us from many ills, both physical and psychic.” V. 1, pp. 190-1

CROSSING FROM *Mi* TO *Fa*

“In whatever branch of life you are, to strike *Fa* means at once that you are on a far higher level than others are. The reason is that the person has made some curiously indefinable individual effort that lifts him beyond this gap, this missing semi-tone, and establishes him at the note *Fa*.” V. 3, p. 1076

SCALE OF BEING

“Essence is (to begin with) under the Laws of the Planetary World—that is, 24 laws—and Personality is under the Law of the Earth—that is, 48 laws—and it is added that False Personality is under the Laws of the Moon—that is, 96 laws. . . . Behind Essence lies Real ‘T’ which is

under 12 laws and corresponds diagrammatically to the level represented by the Sun. That is, Essence is above Personality in the Scale of Being, and Real 'I' is above Essence." V. 3, p. 1019, V. 2, p. 563

CHAPTER 25

REBIRTH

THE BEGINNING OF REBIRTH

“Although we hear the Work often, we do not really apply it internally to ourselves as a result of the unmistakable evidence of our own self-observation. So it does not connect with us. If it did, we would receive, little by little, as we can stand it, the waiting help necessary to make Personality passive so that the miracle of re-birth can begin to take place.” V. 5, p. 1665

NATURE OF THE SECOND BODY

“In what way can we picture *another* or *second* body? . . . Imagine one man standing behind another man and controlling him in everything he does or says. . . We can take the man in front as the first body and the man behind as another or *second* body. . . In the Gospels Christ says that unless a man is *re-born*, he cannot enter the Kingdom of Heaven. Birth means a body and Re-birth a second body. To be re-born is to have a second body.” V. 1, p. 220

NATURE OF THE SECOND BODY II

“The Work speaks almost from its starting-point of the Essence in Man being undeveloped. It defines a growth of Essence as a change in the level of Being; and it speaks very often about making Personality passive so that Essence can develop. . . It is where a man can grow from. And in connection with the development of Essence a second body can grow. But it cannot do so as long as Personality is active and controls the inner life.” V. 1, p. 221

NATURE OF THE SECOND BODY III

“*Unless a man divides himself in two, into an observing and an observed side, he can never shift from where he is.* This is the starting point of all else. It is actually the starting point of *another body* in the sense that unless this division begins in a man, unless he can become the subject of his own observation, nothing can ever develop in him that can eventually control him internally and make the outer *man-machine* obey.” V. 1, p. 218

REBIRTH AND FAITH

“He must pay attention to this new-born thing in him which is the beginning of his own re-birth. This new thing, this child, can easily die if he goes to sleep. When this child exists in a man or woman it must be given the right food and they must be very careful of it.

. . . You will have a period of enthusiasm and then when you are offended, having no real power of inner conception, your children will die. It is a very strange thing to reflect on what it means to keep this Work alive and young in yourselves. . . In this Work you have to keep something invisible going in spite of all external difficulties. In the Gospels it is called Faith.” V. 2, p. 437-8

REBIRTH AND FAITH II

“ ‘Faith . . . is the evidence of things not seen.’ Now when you understand something and see the truth of it in your own mind, do you wish to be supported by the evidence of things seen? Do you wish to have people agree with you or are you strong enough to do without the proof of external and visible things? . . . Every time you connect thoughts, see new meaning, apply the Work to yourself, notice what you are saying, see your own mechanicalness, separate from negative emotions, not allow yourself to go with weak, silly ‘I’s or dangerous ‘I’s—in short, every time you give yourself the First Conscious Shock, the Shock of this Work—you give nourishment to this child that is your new self.” V. 2, p. 438

CHAPTER 26

MISCELLANEOUS EXCERPTS

BASIC ORIENTATION TO LIFE

“If you believe internally that Nature somehow created itself, and that there is no meaning, and only blind forces exist and all the rest, your thinking will be upside down. You will then be restless and unhappy, just because you see nothing above Nature. Where there is no meaning, you necessarily sicken and perish. Violence and ugliness and cruelty attract you—the lowest meanings...As we are raised in being, so is meaning transformed.” V. 5, p. 1541-2

THE WORK AS INTERMEDIARY

“The Master can speak through the Work, and the Work can speak to us, but the Master cannot speak to us directly.” V. 2, p. 500

CHIEF FEATURE

“Now as regards the kinds of things that form Chief Feature—in the first place, they are never nice things...(It) is the axle on which your personality turns, and it is the wrong axle, so, unless you build up something behind your personality, you cannot find yourself. But if you can get a trace of real ‘I’ to bear upon Chief Feature, you will see what makes your life wrong. And if you feel that the discovery of this is the real meaning of life for you, then life can never become meaningless.” V. 2, p. 510 , V. 1, p. 89

DEPUTY STEWARD METAPHOR

“Deputy Steward is exactly like the formation of a group in the Work, only it is internal, invisible, *in you*, and not outside you as a visible group of people.” V. 5, p. 1640

CONNECTING KNOWLEDGE AND BEING

“Work is the effort to connect one’s Knowledge of the Work with one’s Being—that is, the effort to bring *what one knows* into relation with *what one is*. For this, self-observation is obviously necessary in order to notice what one is. And again, for this, Knowledge is neces-

sary, to show what to observe...It is Being that *receives* Knowledge and transforms it into Understanding." V. 2, p. 527, V. 3, p. 1040

BREAKING BUFFERS

"Buffers make a man's life more easy. They prevent him from feeling Real Conscience. But they also prevent him from developing...To break a buffer it is necessary to observe oneself over a long period and remember how one felt and how one is feeling. That is, it is necessary to see on both sides of a buffer together, to see the contradictory sides of oneself that are separated by the buffer. Once a buffer is broken it cannot form again." V. 1, p. 41

RELAXATION

"G. once said: 'Bring all things into the Work. Do not go into life as a relaxation from the Work but connect your relaxation in life with the Work.' " V. 2, p. 632

REAL CONSCIENCE

"This Work takes the place of Real Conscience for you but as this buried Conscience begins to come to the surface and replaces your purely acquired local conscience the Work merges into Conscience and the two become one and the same thing." V. 2, p. 759

"WHAT ARE YOU BASED ON?"

"You have to think about what can be taken away from you by life. . . . There is one thing that can never be taken from you and that is your understanding. If you have a point in the Work . . . you will be able to stand the loss of many external personal things...So please think what you rest on most internally. There is something which cannot be taken away from you. Have you got to this place? Everything else can be taken away by these 'bailiffs' that may come at any time and remove everything that is not your own." V. 1, pp. 340-1

A SENSE OF WONDER

"We take ourselves for granted. We take the fact that we can speak or think or move or see or hear all for granted. We do not realize that we can explain nothing of all this, and that we simply *do not know*. To

become aware of this gives a sense of wonder, of helplessness, which has a close connection with one aspect of realizing our mechanicalness.” V. 2, p. 415

COMPLETE ACCEPTANCE

“It is true that at any moment in time everything is where it is and must be...The planets are just where they are, the flying birds are just where they are, the tea-leaves in the cup just where they are.
... Let your consciousness expand so that it can behold that.”
V. 4, p. 1485

THE GOSPELS

“Christ was No. 8 Man. But we have very little reported on what he taught and most of what we have in the Gospels is by people who never knew Christ and no doubt added or distorted things, to fit their own views.” V. 3, p. 1118

MECHANICAL RELIGION

“Once you use the word God too familiarly, I fancy you really mean what *you want*.” V. 4, p. 1387

AWAKENING

“Some people say: If there be such a thing as the Conscious Circle of Humanity, why do they not appear openly and tell everyone exactly what to do? ... Man is created a self-developing organism. Any religious system of force is at once a dead system. You cannot make a man awaken by external force or compulsion. A man can only begin to awaken from his own understanding and his own will to awaken—which begins when he sees his state.” V. 3, p. 865

ESSENCE, REAL ‘I’ AND GOD

“There is, however, a trace of Real I in us, we are told. . .G once said: ‘Behind Essence lies Real I, and behind Real I lies God.’ ”
V. 5, p. 1661, V. 4, p. 1266

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