

Meditation Group For The New Age

THIRD YEAR SET IV July 21- August 20

Part I

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Part I

Introduction

The glamors which were discussed in Set III were of a self-assertive or aggressive and positive quality. Those in the second category are of an opposite nature and are therefore called "negative." They are of a milder character and do not generally evoke the antagonism which the positive glamors do, or have such a disrupting effect on those around.

There is also another difference. The glamors of the first group are easily seen; they are largely extravertive, expressed openly. Those who have them are usually quite aware of them, but they do not consider them glamors; in fact, they regard them as useful qualities or assets and are even proud of them. Most of the negative glamors, on the other hand, are not recognized so readily, either by those who have them or by other people. They are often disguised in some way or even hidden by another glamor, and they may lie deep in the unconscious. This means that they are generally more complex and need deeper study to understand them. Many others could be added to the following list, but from it the nature and far-reaching extent of the negative glamors can be seen:

Fear	Frustration
Insecurity	Self-Pity
Anxiety	Loneliness
Depression	Self-effacement
Sense of futility	Inertia.
Inadequacy and Inferiority	

Fear

The most widespread glamor in this category is *fear*. It is one of the greatest causes of human suffering, and there are few who do not know it in one form or another. Even if we are unconscious of its far-reaching effects, it often has a deep underlying grip on us, inhibiting our action, undermining our morale and causing all kinds of psychological and emotional problems.

Fear begins in childhood; at this age fears are often very intense, but because they are irrational and childish they are not given the attention and careful, delicate consideration they should have. Instead, these fears are often driven deeper and deeper into the

child through unconsciously cruel behavior of adults. It is useless to tell children that their fears are nonsense and they should know better. It does not help at all to tell them, for instance, that there is no need to be afraid of the dark. Children have to be patiently, lovingly, and skillfully educated out of their fears. This requires understanding and wisdom, and their confidence has to be obtained before they can be helped.

Each age has its own specific fears – those which are strongest at each stage of growth. For example, teen-agers have different fears from grown-ups, such as being afraid they will not succeed, while adults are more prone to fear of opposition, fear of poverty, death and so on. There are too many developments of fear to go into them all, but one of the most fundamental problems is fear of death.

Fear of Death

Sometimes this fear may begin very early in life; in fact, the primary instinct of self-preservation has embedded a streak of it in all living things, but it is generally put aside by the young because other fears of a more pressing nature arise and more positive experiences obliterate it for the time being. With the aged, however, the problem of facing death becomes more immediate and imposes itself on their consciousness.

Here lies the value of *real* faith and of a *genuine* spiritual outlook on life. The words “real” and “genuine” are stressed, because many religious people believe in immortality or paradise, and yet are terrorized by death. This is of course irrational, but it is easily explained by the fact that we live on different levels in our personality.

Our minds may be convinced of the truth of immortality; a part of our feelings may also be inclined to accept it; but our more personal emotional life, and especially that part which is rooted in the instinct of physical self-preservation, is afraid. The animal instinct of self-preservation exists in the body of every human being, and therefore on this level the fear is not irrational. Our physical bodies are “animal” bodies. They have all the animal instincts and the chief one is self-preservation. This is necessary. Without it, life would not continue. The physical body has to fight continually against everything that menaces its integrity and survival.

The glamor is due to the fact that we, as beings in the fourth, or human, kingdom, identify ourselves with what belongs to the third or animal kingdom. This is the problem. Even those who have some contact with the Fifth, or Spiritual, Kingdom, and who have genuine spiritual experiences, still have an animal body. It has to be remembered that advanced people live at the same time in three kingdoms, and this makes for great complexity. To the extent that we are Soul-infused we are in the Fifth Kingdom; normally as human beings we live in the fourth kingdom, but we still function in an animal body of the third kingdom. This explains a great deal. Each has its own level of consciousness. The physical aspect of our nature has therefore every right to be afraid of death. The whole question is the identification of the conscious self – on which level we identify ourselves. This is the significant point.

Dis-identification from fear does not mean we do not feel it. The physical body conveys its fear to our consciousness, but we do not identify our *selves* with it. In other words, we can say, “There is this fear in me, but it is not me. it belongs to the “animal” part of me, it is not “me.” This shifting of identification from the “animal,” or instinctual, consciousness to human self consciousness, and from that to the Soul, is a matter of gradual transmutation and conquest.

Fear of death is therefore not irrational on its own physical plane, but we have to realize that the physical body is only a temporary instrument, and that when it is of no more use we shall be glad to discard it. Then we are not in fear and dread of physical disintegration; we become prepared to let the physical body go. So called death can be considered an interlude, or vacation, before undertaking another cycle of experiences.

There are other ways of strengthening this attitude – psychological methods such as cultivating courage, serenity, detachment, acting “as if.” They all contribute, but the radical cure is to start by accepting the fears of the physical and emotional parts of our nature. They have the right to their fears, which come from the collective unconscious, from unpleasant experiences and causes far beyond memory. Therefore, we must first accept these fears and *then* deal with them. We should beware of the vicious circle of

being afraid of our fears, and admit them as “raw material” which can be worked upon and transmuted.

To strengthen realization of our immortality, repetition of the following lines from *The Bhagavad Gita* will be found most helpful. Affirmation and repetition play a great part in reconditioning and reeducating both the unconscious and the conscious mind, and these words are a triumphant affirmation of the truth of our immortality.

Never the spirit was born;
The spirit shall cease to be never.
Never was time it was not;
End and beginning are dreams!
Birthless and deathless and changeless
Remaineth the spirit forever;
Death hath not touched it at all,
Dead though the house of it seems.

The Fear of Life

Paradoxically, the fear of death has its counterpart in the fear of life. Fundamentally, this is caused by fear of pain or painful experiences of some sort. This, too, is justified, because personal life is often painful in various ways, especially at present with the increasing awareness and sensitivity of humanity. This general cause

— the fear of pain — becomes diversified and develops into other specific fears. One aspect is *fear of failure*, which is basically fear of the pain which failure produces, pain which may also be linked with other glamors such as minding what other people think, inferiority complex, and so on.

But this can also be transmuted through the methods just mentioned. The first is always dis-identification. We take our stand as the observer and ask “Who fails? What is failure?” Then we realize that it is just a part of the personality in a certain situation, a limited part in a particular circumstance. This technique can be applied with great benefit in the case of fear of failing examinations, which sometimes becomes a phobia with students. Also, there is the paradoxical situation that the less you fear failure the more likely you are to succeed.

One of the ways to eliminate or prevent the vicious circles that these glamors are apt to create is that of *catharsis*, that is,

expression, throwing out the emotional charge attached to the glamor. Another is the acceptance, the *temporary* acceptance, of the possibility we fear. Let us take, for instance, fear of failure; if we face the possibility of a failure we see that it will not be a catastrophe, that we can survive it, can learn from it, and next time may succeed.

This can be brought to the point of what Frankl calls “paradoxical intention,” that is, arriving at the point of desiring the very thing that we fear. He applies it as a therapeutic technique, with success particularly in insomnia. People who have difficulty in getting to sleep, or who wake too early, often become too much concerned with it and fearful about it, and that of course fixes the trouble. Then, Frankl suggests, instead of worrying about it, we should welcome it and say, “Oh well, I am glad I can’t sleep. I shall be able to read and make good use of the time.” Then one falls asleep! It is the fear of it that enhances insomnia, and so by reading and forgetting it we get to sleep.

Fear of what other people may think or say is yet another aspect of the fear of pain, this time on the emotional and mental levels. The glamor of over-sensitivity is largely to blame for fear of criticism, and the answer to it is the adopting of a detached attitude; this lessens the emotional and mental reaction to criticism. Also the cultivation of qualities such as decentralization, inner confidence, and serenity will gradually increase our immunity from the impact of others and bring release from this fear. It is a fear that can have a very inhibiting effect, and most sensitive people need to assess the extent of its hold upon them, and endeavor to release themselves from it into a freer and more joyous way of life.

Insecurity

Lack of security is another fear which is very general, but is the result of the *glamor of security*. This is a glamor because there is really no such thing as security. In the Universe stars are exploding the Universe itself is said to be expanding, and all kinds of things are happening, so how can we expect security on our little planet?

This glamor wastes a great deal of emotional energy, because often the things we are afraid of never happen. On the other hand, other things happen which we had not expected at all! If we accept this fact, and live on the basis of this acknowledgement, we can then

accept whatever security we have gratefully and be well prepared for whatever may occur. Of course this is not easy, especially if our livelihood, home, or something that will seriously affect us is concerned.

The glamor of security also restricts our vision. It means we look in only one direction, seek only to retain the “safe” situation. But there are many other and perhaps unexpected ways along which our lives may develop, and it is really lack of faith in the infinite resources of life, both inner and outer, to fear that there is no other right path than the one we are following. Therefore we should accept insecurity as a basic fact generally speaking, knowing that all things must change in order to go forward and develop; but at the same time we can counteract the fear of it by faith in the infinite resources which life has to offer.

This basic factor of liability to change can also be taken as a challenge and used to evoke our capacities and potentialities, and we can meet it in a spirit of determination to rise to the occasion, and take advantage of whatever may appear. In this way we may rise to new heights and expand to an extent we would never have reached but for the “prod” of insecurity.

Anxiety

Before leaving the subject of fear, a word must be added about *anxiety*. This is a state of unease which is caused by fear of all kinds — fear of failure, illness, and what may happen in different ways. Worry easily grows into a habitual attitude, and with some it becomes an overwhelming factor in their lives. Their time is spent in anxious conjecture — generally anticipating the worst! They are ridden by and debilitated by a continual series of unwarranted fears, and often make themselves quite ill through this attitude.

It is not only undermining and depressing, but is actually contributing to the things dreaded most, because it is building them in thought and giving them thought energy. We really work against ourselves when we worry to this extent.

Anxiety is increased by an over-active imagination and gathers potency as we give more and more thought to it. There are few better examples of the way in which our minds can take control of us than the manner in which a particular anxiety can sweep us along, taking us down ever more and more horrific byways until

we are exhausted and terrified, our judgment is impaired, and we are utterly its victim.

The answer to this is, obviously, to keep control of our minds, and the training of meditation is of the greatest help here. Of course we should not refuse to recognize likely problems and dangers, but we can assess them intelligently and detachedly and then carry on with positivity. The worst may never come! And we should certainly not give it the aid of our expectation and creative thought.

The glamor of anxiety is, however, a complex and difficult one. There are states of anxiety not connected with any definite fear, but related to the sense of emptiness, futility, and frustration, and those who are extremely sensitive and of a nervous disposition have an innate “anxiety response” which is difficult to control. It is due to their finely attuned systems and their lack of the tougher attitudes which are automatically protective. Here, again, control of thought so that it does not lead down negative channels is needed.

Anxiety is a common glamor; we all have it to some extent, but those who are its prey can save themselves a great deal of misery, as well as avoid this drain upon their energy, by keeping their thinking “above” the problem or situation involved, by not letting their imagination run away with them, and by practicing that universal remedy — detachment.

Depression

One of the most widespread glamors at present is depression. This is not surprising because it arises from many different causes which frequently combine to create it.

It might be questioned by some whether depression is in fact a glamor, because when we feel it, or more exactly, feel depression in ourselves, it seems very real. It is, of course, psychologically real in the sense that it is *experienced*, but it is a glamor in the sense that it is not justified. It is due fundamentally to failure to recognize Reality in the long-term sense, and to letting oneself become completely immersed in the immediate present without seeing the wider picture and the light and joy of true Reality.

With depression, as with other glamors, it is better to try to find the causes and then eliminate them than to try to combat it directly. In this way we cut the roots of it. These causes may be at any level of our being. At the physical level, low vitality and fatigue – which in itself may be the reaction of excessive tension – very often produce depression. Then, at the emotional level, all the negative glamors previously mentioned, and especially a sense of inferiority and frustration, can cause deep depression.

Mentally, depression is easily brought about by negative thinking, and on this level lies the best means of off-setting it. If we refuse to give entry to negative thought currents and keep our thinking positive and creative there will be little room for depression to come in and exert its negativizing, paralyzing influence.

A less easily recognized but frequent cause of depression is the influence of negative currents from outside. These may be from both individuals and the collective waves of depression and anxiety which are sweeping powerfully through the mass consciousness all the time. Sensitive people, especially, are easily affected by these currents, and often, not recognizing the cause of their depression, they attribute it to their own feelings and blame themselves, whereas, in reality, it is due to a “psychological poisoning” from outside. This is another instance of the vicious circles which glamors are apt to create.

Another cause of depression is the holding of too high and rigid an idea of what we ought to be or what we should achieve. The discrepancy between the perfection or ideal expected and the factual condition that eventually becomes apparent is a constant cause of depression among idealists and those who impractically expect too much of themselves and others. Perfection is a gradual and slow attainment. We need to accept our present limitations and imperfections with a certain magnanimity and, while working to overcome them, not be too demanding of ourselves or others, and certainly not become depressed or irritated if perfection is not achieved.

The Technique of Right Proportions is helpful for dealing with depression, but perhaps above all *Cultivation of the Opposite* – in this case *joy* – is the most direct method of counteracting this glamor. In using this technique one thing should be remembered:

it is difficult to invoke a quality successfully when we are under the influence of its opposite, for instance, joy when we are depressed.

The development of a quality is a long process which requires steady effort and time for growth. Therefore, as we build up our bank balance in good times, the qualities we need to cultivate should be built in when we are not under their opposing glamor. In the case of joy, we can do much to invoke it beyond using the exercise to cultivate it. We can, in fact, develop it continuously by remembering that joy is an inner quality of the soul, not necessarily connected with outer circumstances at all, and by deliberately trying to induce it and channel it in everything we do. In this way we build an energy into ourselves which acts as an antidote to the encroaches of depression. This applies to the establishing of all other qualities also.

Sense of Futility

Among the chief causes of depression are the glamors of inadequacy, inferiority, and sense of futility. The feeling of futility has two aspects: in the general sense – the feeling that life as a whole has no meaning, and in the personal – the feeling that one's own life and efforts are futile. In the general sense, it is due to failure to recognize that there is purpose underlying life. As long as we deny or question this and fail to see that the difficult or negative aspects of life – the pain, obstacles, and conflicts – all have their usefulness and justification, we are bound to feel a sense of futility and be sometimes even desperately depressed.

The radical cure for this type of depression is recognition that life *has* meaning, that a high, magnificent purpose underlies and includes all its aspects, even those that are negative. We cannot expect to understand the great goal of evolution, but we can see that there is some immense purpose at work in all its processes and in all the vicissitudes of the opposites which are gradually but surely bringing us towards that goal.

Victor Frankl wrote of the profound importance to the individual of this recognition in his book *“From Prison Camp to Existentialism,”* where he cites some of his own experiences in the last war. Those in the prison camps who had some deep faith or conviction and who acknowledged a purpose underlying life had

far greater ability to survive than those who had no such beliefs, who were among the first to die.

The personal sense of futility is somewhat different and is closely associated with the feeling of inadequacy. Here the individual feels that he is useless, that his life has no point or value and is leading nowhere. This is a glamor because every form of existence *has* its place in the whole; the smallest wheel is necessary for the function of the whole machine.

The story of the three stone-cutters illustrates the value of this realization. As the story goes, a medieval cathedral was being built and three stone-cutters were asked what they were doing. The first replied miserably, "As you see, I am cutting stones"; the second answered, "I am earning a living for myself and my family"; but the third said joyously, "I am building a great cathedral!" They were all doing exactly the same thing, but the first had a sense of futility because of the dull and humble nature of his work. The second found a small, personal purpose in it, but was wearied by it. The third, on the other hand, saw the real purpose of the stone-cutting; without it the cathedral could not be built and he was infused with the joy of his partnership in a glorious goal.

To eliminate the glamor of futility we have to ask ourselves where our lives fit in the pattern of the whole, where we belong in the wider picture. This may be difficult to see, but we should beware of the glamor of believing that we should always be doing something active and tangible to be leading a worthwhile life. We can outwardly be doing little or nothing, and yet be accomplishing much inwardly and leading a life that is far from futile. In Milton's well-known words:
"They also serve who only stand and wait."

All our meditation work is based upon the reality and effectiveness of *inner* action, which is often not at all apparent. It can be undertaken wherever we are, even lying in bed in the hospital, and there are many aspects of this form of achievement.

One is connected with the mysterious, spiritual value of pain. Many feel that they are so limited physically that their lives are futile, but the sustaining and accepting of pain is a subtle but real and high form of inner action. Transmutation of a high nature is involved; not only changes in the individual are brought about, but

through increasing understanding, a higher part of the pain of the world is undertaken and resolved. Those whose lives are restricted by ill- health should therefore not let the glamor of futility encroach upon them; they have inner opportunities not open to those leading more active and apparently full lives. (For a fuller study of this subject see *Pain and its Transforming Power*, by Nancy Magor, Sundial House Publications, Tunbridge Wells, England. ¹)

¹Available through Meditation Groups, Inc. P.O. Box 566 Ojai, CA 93023

Inadequacy and Inferiority

The feeling that we are inadequate is another frequent cause of depression. It is a glamor which undermines and limits a great many, and we should remember the “snow-balling” tendency of all these glamors. We feel we are inadequate and so we hold back from undertaking something; then we feel that our lives are futile; then despondency and depression deepen.

Lack of confidence in ourselves and our abilities is often caused by the tendency to compare ourselves with others, but this is not a rational process. No one is identical with another, with the same capacities, abilities, and qualities, and no one will act in exactly the same way as another. So we cannot measure our achievements accurately against those of others. People who are less able in some respects have qualities that others may lack, and all have different limitations. We need to accept ourselves and our abilities – or lack of them – and not mind if we seem to be “out-shone.” If we are using our own “equipment” as best we can, our achievements may be just as great for *us* as the successes of others which are more spectacular. In a sense, it is a form of pride to want to equal or excel those around us, and to feel that we should do so lets in glamors of various kinds.

A sense of inferiority can become a complex of a crippling nature, restricting us and negativizing our potential in every way. Fear of failure is one of its chief causes, and those with this glamor have to learn not to care so much about results – to do and be their best, but remain emotionally detached from the result of their endeavors. We should not be afraid of failure; it brings experience and can teach us many lessons. It also strengthens and enriches us for future achievements.

A less introspective attitude should also be adopted. Many are apt to look too critically at themselves and constantly pull themselves to pieces. This obviously makes things even more difficult for them and only increases the negative effects of these glamors. There is no need to point out again the value of the techniques of *dis-identification* and *right proportions* and of *cultivating the opposite*.

Frustration

Frustration is a negative glamor which, again, saps the initiative of many people and prevents them from leading useful lives, but

from a different, and sometimes opposite angle to that just gone into. Those with a feeling of frustration have capabilities, energies or qualities which they believe are not being recognized or used as they should be.

The mechanical nature of a great deal of work today and the bureaucratic order of modern society cause an almost claustrophobic sense of frustration in those who have any pronounced spirit of adventure and initiative. But we all need to find channels which not only provide an outlet for our qualities, but a means to cultivate them and give a sense that we are being useful and are going forward.

At the same time it should be recognized that we all have to fit into various patterns of life, and a certain amount of acceptance will always be required. Again, a detached attitude, whether the limitations that frustrate us are personal or environmental, will help to eliminate conflict. We should regard them as only temporary restrictions within which we are working for the present, and find whenever possible other outlets for the qualities we believe we have.

Self-Pity

In general it may be said that all negative emotions are apt to cause depression, but one which causes it particularly is the glamor of self-pity. We are all prone to it, but often do not recognize it as such. All kinds of grumbling and resentment are more or less disguised forms of self-pity. We are sorry for ourselves because things are difficult, because we have financial troubles, because we are not appreciated as we think we should be – even because the weather is bad! All these are ramifications of self-pity and it is good to recognize this common denominator and unmask it.

Self-pity is also sometimes caused by an overwhelming sense of inadequacy and inferiority, or it occurs if there is deep resentment of others or of our circumstances. It acts as a kind of shield behind which we shelter, feeling unjustly treated and therefore not responsible for our seeming inadequacy or failure to lead a better life.

We feel that our pathetic situation ought to evoke the help of others, or at least their sympathy. But in fact it often has the opposite effect, and this attitude will not resolve the situation.

On the contrary, the more sturdy attitude of recognizing our position and resolving to make the best of it begins to dissipate the glamor immediately – it “stops the rot.” The radical, or root, cure is to recognize the universality of human suffering and difficulty, to remember how much pain there is in the world, how many have great deal more to endure than we have, and to achieve a broader and more long-term view of our own position.

One way of increasing our awareness of all this is to have more direct contact with those who suffer. We are often apt to avoid this if we can because it is unpleasant and makes us feel uncomfortable, especially if we are sensitive. But it is something we should undertake, in order to get out of our selfish isolation and re-educate ourselves out of self-pity. We can visit the old or the sick or those in the hospital, or find other forms of service which will transmute our self-centeredness and bring real joy both to others and ourselves. Our compassion and understanding will also be developed, and a real desire aroused to help to alleviate the suffering in the world.

The great medicine for more or less the whole chain of negative glamors such as depression, frustration, and self-pity is joy. It has been said: “Be joyful, for joy lets in the light and when there is joy there is little room for glamor or misunderstanding.” So let us cultivate joy as we would a most precious flower.

Loneliness

Another widespread glamor at present is the sense of being alone; and, paradoxically, it is strongest in those who live in large cities where they are surrounded by people. Those met at work or in the environment are generally only superficial contacts, and there is no real interest or relationship involved and no deep psychological contact is made.

The sense of loneliness is the product of a self-centered attitude or excessive introversion. It is fundamentally a lack of love, of ability to love, and willingness to go out toward others. Such people feel isolated and complain that nobody loves them, not realizing that to be loved one has to love as well, and begin the process be being

outgoing and showing interest in and concern for others. So they put the blame on others while the fundamental deficiency is in themselves.

But apart from this primary cause, there is often a secondary factor

— sensitivity and the consequent attempt to protect oneself. Sensitive people, who may have been disappointed or hurt, or who have a sense of inadequacy or inferiority, are apt to build a defense mechanism around themselves; this can in time become a rigid armor which shuts them off from the impacts which they do not want, but it also cuts off all positive relationships with other people.

The sense of being alone is a real glamor because it is an unnatural state. Human beings are gregarious naturally, and social in a psychological interplay, even if it consists of conflict – and this is better than isolation, because conflict can sometimes lead to conciliation and later to understanding. One might say that conflicts are natural but isolation is unnatural. Loneliness is a very painful and harmful glamor, because it is apt to increase in intensity as its “victims” build an ever more impregnable shell around themselves, and it can lead to desperation and even the temptation to suicide. It is a form of psychological mutilation and at worst psychological suicide.

The technique to overcome it is clear: development of the capacity to love, to go out toward others and be interested in them and willing to risk the frictions and difficulties of being involved with them, because this is always better than isolation.

Once the main cause of the sense of aloneness is uncovered that, too, can be dealt with; for example, those who are introverted must cultivate extraversion, those with a sense of inferiority need to take the measures to off-set it mentioned earlier. But those who have this glamor of loneliness should above all make a special study of the *Law of Right Human Relations* and meditate on its meaning and potentiality. Not only will this bring about a clearer recognition and understanding of their problem and its solution, but it will open them to the divine reality of our relationship within the Whole and help to establish it in their lives.

Self-effacement

Among what might be called the “higher” glamors is self-effacement, the predisposition to keep in the background and avoid all contacts.

It is generally those who suffer from a sense of inferiority and lack of confidence who seek to efface themselves in this way. They are reluctant to be exposed to impacts and to new situations and so they retreat into obscurity as much as they can, often sheltering behind the idea that self-effacement is a virtue. But it is this only to a limited extent. False modesty can be as much a glamor as over-estimation of ourselves, and too much self-effacement diminishes and negates valuable qualities and capabilities.

In effacing ourselves we minimize our potential, because we do not take up the opportunities that are presented; this means we lessen our achievements and only add to our glamor, because none of us knows our highest capacities until we stretch ourselves to the utmost.

Self-effacement can also arise out of reluctance to face responsibility. We hide our true worth and keep ourselves in the background so that we do not have to undertake more onerous and exacting tasks. This may not be a conscious process, but the unconscious is apt to play all kinds of tricks on us. It has been said that we are all as lazy as we dare to be, and inertia often lies at the root of this glamor.

Those who recognize it in themselves should use all the techniques previously mentioned to establish a more positive attitude and a true sense of their role in life. We each have our rightful part to play, and as said earlier, our individual part in the whole, and its value cannot be measured by its seeming lack of importance. To take command of our lives with a spirit of creativity and determination to lead life fully will have a psychological effect that soon begins to redeem this glamor.

Inertia

Fear in one form or another, as we have seen, underlies the majority of the negative glamors to a great extent, but there is another fundamental cause of many of them – inertia. This may have its origin in the physical body, but it can act like a creeping

paralysis, inhibiting endeavor on many levels and therefore limiting achievement.

Inertia is an example of the glamors which are often disguised by another glamor. For instance, a sense of futility may be due fundamentally to mental, emotional or physical inertia, to unwillingness to make an effort and unresponsiveness to an opportunity, a challenge or a need. So, too, can self-effacement be due in reality to a slothful reluctance to take on a more active role and fulfill the requirements of a more prominent position. It is always wise to look more closely at what may appear as a simple glamor and see what it may be hiding – from ourselves – and what may be its causes.

The will is the great antidote to inertia, and those who have this problem will find it helpful to study *Set IV of the Second Year*, where the cultivation and right use of the will are examined extensively.

However, we can also deal with inertia in other less direct ways. One is by arousing desire to carry out some needed action, and enthusiasm for it when we recognize that inertia is preventing us from undertaking it. This brings emotional energy to our aid. Another method is to evoke the interest of the mind, which then brings its own energy to bear. Another aid is the stimulus of challenge. Sometimes inertia sets in because our lives have become too static, and we need then to make changes in our mode of living. Such indirect approaches to our glamors should always be used, as well as the more obvious and direct techniques.

The following summary of the various ways in which inertia manifests will help to show to what extent it is affecting us and in what areas of our lives:

Characteristics of Inertia

1. *General*

Laziness — Following the line of least resistance —
Unwillingness to make efforts — Reluctance to change and
grow.

2. *Physical*

The pull of matter — Heaviness — Tendency to a *static*
equilibrium (homeostasis) — Laziness.

3. *Emotional*

Selfish indifference to the trials and sufferings of other living beings — Lack of empathy, of sense of responsibility, of concern.

4. *Mental*

Mental laziness — Opposition to the new, fearing or realizing that it involves relinquishing set opinions and theories, efforts at mental assimilation, and readjustments.

5. *Spiritual*

Passive reliance on God's providence — expecting to be "saved" without any cooperation and effort on one's own part — failure to meet spiritual opportunities or to endeavor to handle life from that level.

Techniques

Desensitization

The fifth technique is called *desensitization*, but a simpler and more descriptive way of speaking of it is to call it “imaginative training.” It is based on the creative power of imaginative visualization, and has two fundamental aspects.

6. The first is the release and gradual elimination of the emotional charge connected with a particular glamor — for example, the fear associated with some event or undertaking like an examination, interview or public appearance. This release is brought about by visualizing the event and going through every aspect of it in the imagination so that the emotions connected with — which may exist in the unconscious as well as consciously — are gradually discharged. They are brought to the surface, so to speak, experienced, and expressed outwardly, so that they lose their intensity.
7. The second aspect of the technique is the creative use of imaginative visualization to evoke positive images. For example, if the ordeal feared is imagined as being carried out successfully, a positive thought current concerning it is set in motion. This stimulates confidence and arouses the needed impulse to meet the situation satisfactorily.

To practice this technique the situation is first visualized in detail, the place pictured, the experience entered into in imagination exactly as if it were being factually undertaken. While all this is vividly imagined (and time should be taken to go into it fully) the emotional reactions to it must be allowed to emerge freely, without any inhibition.

The exercise generally has to be done several times before the fear or glamor concerned lessens its hold, but each time the technique is carried out, imagining the experience fully and letting the emotional reactions to it come freely to the surface, we are fractionally discharging the glamor connected with it. Eventually we find we are able to go into the situation without any of the glamor rising up at all.

Desensitization could, in fact, be called “deglamorizing,” because the process gradually releases, disperses, and eventually eliminates the glamor concerned.

The value of this technique has been proved by many students with intense fear of exams. But, as well as dispelling fear of particular situations, it can be used to eliminate reactions in daily life such as antagonism, jealousy, impatience, and so on. The emotional charge connected with many problems, such as handling a difficult child or working with an aggressive or nagging associate, can be released in this way, and a constructive and positive attitude substituted for the glamor.

The method is, in a sense, opposite to the “as if” technique, because it not only permits but encourages the emotions produced by the glamor concerned to rise up and come out, whereas in the “as if” method, the emotional reactions are ignored and the experience is undertaken *in spire of* them and *as if* they did not exist.

The selection of which technique to use depends on various facts:

1. The urgency of dealing with the glamor.
2. The ability to visualize — whether innate or developed through practice.
3. The psychological type of the individual.

Some prefer to go ahead in spite of everything; they can therefore use the “as if” method in an energetic way. On the other hand, those of a less positive temperament may find this difficult and fail to carry it out successfully. This type of person will find desensitization more helpful. But each technique should be experimented with, so that the one which is most helpful individually and suitable to the situation may be found. The “as if” technique is a good “emergency method,” and useful under the pressure of circumstances, but it does not solve the problem of *eliminating* the glamor that it off-sets. It keeps it in abeyance rather as a wild animal might be kept in a cage, but it does not dispose of it. If a glamor is deep-rooted, then it should be dealt with through

the *technique of desensitization*: and other techniques may also be required.

The following is a simple example of an exercise in *Desensitization* which may be adapted to meet any particular circumstance or individual need.

Exercise in Desensitization

- I. As in all the exercises and meditations, sit in a comfortable but upright position and relax.
- II. Think about the event or situation which is causing you fear (or other emotion) and imagine it in detail. Visualize it as if it were actually happening, and see yourself approaching it, meeting it, and going through it. At the same time let your feelings regarding it come up without restriction. Try to *experience* the whole episode, going through it step by step. This releases the emotional charge connected with it. Therefore all feelings and reactions must be allowed full play and not be inhibited.
- III. Now see yourself getting through the undertaking or ordeal strongly and successfully. Imagine yourself emerging from it triumphant and serene. Try to experience for a minute the joy of this successful outcome.
- IV. Realize that you *can* do it successfully. This arouses confidence and the power of right expectation. Affirm joyously and confidently "I can go through this with — , "naming whatever quality you most need — courage, patience, serenity, etc.

Transmutation

Transmutation is a fundamental process which is going on all the time at all levels. On the physical level constant and countless transmutations are going on continuously. The most obvious and simple examples are the transformation of the energy of heat and water into electrical power, which is then being transformed all the time through our many present day appliances and vehicles into heat or motion. Now, too, we have the amazing transmutation of nuclear energy into power which can be utilized for many purposes.

In biological life also there is a constant process of transmutation going on. The physical body is a wonderful machine for the

transmutation of vegetable into animal substance. The digestion of food and its transmutation into muscle and nerve tissue and all the other constituents of the body is essential for the growth and constant functioning of any living organism. And consider how grass is transformed into milk by the cow!

Although these things are generally recognized, the psychological and spiritual transmutations going on all the time are less acknowledged and understood, and are consequently very little utilized. Yet these aspects are certainly no less important.

Transmutation of psychic energies is occurring spontaneously in ourselves all the time. Let us take for instance the emotion of anger; it stimulates the production of adrenalin, and consequently the heart beat becomes accelerated, the blood pressure heightened, and stimulating chemicals are released in the system. Fear, too, has definite physiological effects, such as trembling and pallor. This is the basis of psychosomatic medicine.

But psychic energies can also be transmuted on their own psychological level. When we are angry, for instance, and write a furious letter, we are transmuting our emotional anger into verbal expression. As a Latin poet said, he turned his indignation into satirical poems. Heine, the German poet, wrote, "from my great pain I make little poems" This is equally true of other emotions, and it offers countless opportunities for inner action and outward utilization.

Sublimation, that is employing psychic energies for higher aims or spiritual purposes, is an important form of transmutation. It can be consciously applied, and the energies which normally go to feed some glamor can be transmuted and utilized for higher purposes. An example is acquisitiveness – the desire for material possessions; this can be transmuted into desire for nonmaterial possessions, for higher spiritual abilities and qualities. In general, desire can be transmuted into aspiration, the horizontal direction of desire can be gradually redirected and become the vertical aspiration to possess higher qualities, and attain higher goals.

This process can easily be seen in connection with love. The gradual transmutation of love is demonstrated in the different stages of sex, emotional love, altruistic love, and the mystical love in which human love is transmuted into the love of God. But here

we must make clear that love of God is not the mere projection or sublimation of human love. There is a direct, genuine feeling of love toward God in those mystically inclined which has a higher origin. The transmutation of human or emotional love only adds intensity and warmth to the true love of God. This an important point because it is often thought that mystical love is only sublimated emotional love, whereas it is a great deal more.

The best kind of creative, artistic activity is often the outcome of sublimation. Wagner was fully aware of this when he said that “as my love could not be expressed in life, I created out of it *Tristan and Isolde*.”

When considering how we can use this technique in connection with a particular glamor it will be necessary to recognize the higher correspondence of that glamor. To give some examples: the energy which promotes anger can be used to fight for the good of others; and

self-pity can be transmuted into compassion, the glamor of being busy into service, the tendency to analyze and dissect into discrimination, personal devotion into dedication to the good of the whole, over-organization into right use of time and energy.

This technique has to be practiced continually in our lives through recollection, recognition, and use of the will. Transmutation cannot be achieved through simply using an exercise for a few moments of each day, but the following outline will form a point of focus for our efforts, and if carried out daily will contribute very much to the process of transmutation.

Exercise in Transmutation

- I. Sit in a relaxed position; still the emotions and thinking
- II. Take the glamor you wish to dispel and consider the higher use to which you can put the energy that underlies it. Remember that energy per se is neutral and only adopts the quality of a particular glamor because it has been allied to it.
- III. Recognize the possibilities that lie in the transmutation of this energy, the new capacities you can develop, the lines of service you can open up.

IV. Resolve to transform the glamor concerned into a higher expression of the energy involved on every occasion that it arises, and determine to develop in yourself this higher quality in all possible ways. Make an affirmation to this effect and close with the words *So let it be*.

This exercise should be carried out regularly and as often as possible.

Part III

The Principle of Unanimity and Glamor

Unanimity may, at first sight, seem to be so closely related to Group Endeavor that the same glamors must obstruct them both, and this is true to a large extent. But the Principle of Unanimity is of a different level and of far greater significance than the combining together which constitutes a group effort. It is, in fact, what might be called the vertical impulse which flows down into the horizontal activity of true group endeavor, because – as the word *un-ani-mous* denotes – it is fundamentally a oneness of soul, a unity on soul levels.

This means that, as well as the glamors which hinder cooperation with others and group endeavor, we need to consider those which prevent response to soul impulse and realization of the group consciousness and more inclusive awareness that exists on soul levels.

When individuals work together for expedient or materialistic reasons, their cooperation is partial and temporary without unanimity. No driving force of a united purpose, no mental intention, binds them together in a deeper, more significant unity. Unanimity alone arouses the urge to serve with selflessness, the will to harmonize, cooperate, share the load, and achieve *mutually* that which is acknowledged as the common goal.

The Principle of Unanimity brings the pulse of a greater, more inclusive livingness, and therefore, when it is at the heart of an undertaking of a wider nature than our personal activities and objectives, it strengthens, stimulates, and lifts it into new dimensions. Unanimity is not uniformity, and when it is at the core of any group endeavor it is the great antidote to all the problems that are liable to beset the group at the personality level.

There are various ways in which we can try to open ourselves to this principle and take advantage of its *reality*. Recognition of the vivid, eternal truth of the Inner Life, development of group awareness, and the cultivation of concern for others, empathy, and a sense of responsibility all help to put us in touch with the spirit of unanimity

There are greater, unanimous purposes than we realize underlying our lives as individuals, groups, races, and humanity as a whole, as well as –to take an even wider perspective –the life of all kingdoms on earth. We cannot know the divine Intention, but we can recognize its manifestation in what we know to be good and see to be redemptive for the *whole*. With these demonstrations of Reality we can ally ourselves, cooperate and work; to them we can give our allegiance, and we will find that the strength which they channel from their Source then surges through us –we become aligned with the heartbeat of the Greater Life in which, as Souls, we are one — *un-ani-mous*.

Many of the glamors already spoken of hinder the expression of Unanimity, especially the positive glamors which tend toward and extreme sense of independence and individuality, and which build up self-aggrandizement and make it very difficult to subordinate the personal self to the group good, and the individual will to that of the greater whole.

The new age impulse to freedom is also apt to hold many back from undertaking group work, but we should remember that unanimity has its origins on more subjective and universal levels than the practical, physical spheres of outer group participation. Teilhard de Chardin wrote of it:

The approach of spirit to spirit enriches all. . . Achieved with sympathy, union does not restrict but exalts the possibilities of our being. It is a simple question of tension within the field that polarizes and attracts . . .of *Unanimity*.

It is in these higher dimensions that we find the true motivation for group endeavor and discover that we are not as shackled by it as we feared. On the contrary, we are united at high, essential levels, united in *will*, and in the purpose of our higher Selves. We are carried forward then with a joy not known in lower, personal fields, and with a strength which is far beyond that of ourselves as individuals.

Tabulation

I. Glamors which obstruct Unanimity

Self-sufficiency

Assertive personal will

Over-emphasis on detail and outer achievement

Love of organization and order to the extent of forgetting whether they are fulfilling the originating purpose

Lack of inclusiveness

Desire for personal freedom

Failure to see the more far-reaching and widely shared goals

Lack of concern for the good of the whole

Insensitivity to the subtler but more inclusive impulse of the the Soul

II. Points for reflection

1. How can a greater sense of Unanimity be developed?
Does it require more dedication to shared goals?
More readiness to work for the good of the whole?
More Soul communication and responsiveness to spiritual impulse?
2. What are some of the mutual goals of humanity?
To list some of these will quickly show where the Principle of Unanimity is working out and where we can cooperate with it more that we do.

Meditation Outline

I. Alignment

Through

1. Relaxation – physical, emotional, and mental
2. Aspiration
3. Mental Concentration
4. Linking with all those doing this Meditation all over the world

II. Dedication

“I dedicate myself, with all men and women of goodwill, to the building of the New Age.”

III. Meditation on Recognition of Reality through dissipating Glamor

a. *Stage of Recognition*

Raise the focus to the mental plane and, keeping the attention there, turn the searchlight of the mind upon the glamor selected, seeing it clearly in this light and reflecting on the work to be done. Do not let any emotional reaction interpose itself.

b. *Stage of Direction*

Realize that it is through the higher light, the light of the Higher Self, or Soul, that the personality life can be illuminated. *Identify* with this light and *direct it*, with the aid of creative imagination, upon the glamor under consideration, visualizing the light encompassing it, penetrating it. and dissipating it.

c. *Creative Stage*

Now relate the Principle of Unanimity to your work deliberately and creatively bring its *reality* into the thoughtform being held. *Affirm*, by an act of the will, that it can manifest, can triumph.

IV. Invocation

Repeat the Great Invocation, seeing the light, the love, and Negative Glamors the will of God streaming in to dissipate world glamour and establish a spiritual New Age.

The Great Invocation

From the point of Light within the Mind of God

Let light stream forth into the minds of men.

Let Light descend on Earth.

From the point of Love within the Heart of God

Let love stream forth into the hearts of men.

May Christ return to Earth.

From the center where the Will of God is known

Let purpose guide the little wills of men

The purpose which the Masters know and serve,

From the center which we call the race of men

Let the Plan of Love and Light work out

And may it seal the door where evil dwells.

Let Light and Love and Power restore the Plan on Earth.