



SPIRITUAL LIBERTY

by

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The Sufi Emblem

The Sufi Emblem is an illustration of several esoteric concepts related to the Religion of the Heart

The main symbol in the emblem suggests a mystical attunement to the heart as a divine temple within.

The two wings illustrate the flight of the heart ascending toward higher spheres, where human love and divine love meet across the threshold of self-denial.

The crescent moon, in its waxing and waning play with light, presents an inspiring picture of the heart's artful ability to offer unconditionally as well as to receive in humility and appreciation.

The five-pointed star, among the oldest symbols of guidance, is seen in the emblem as a reminder of the bright light within, which constantly guides the longing heart, all along the journey toward its divine destination

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THE MESSAGE IN OUR TIME

As we march courageously onward through the darkness of human ignorance, steadfastly displaying the banner of spiritual liberty, we may perhaps discover that truth could be interpreted as an invitation to become as living altars of all religious beliefs, communicating in each one's language, while safely holding on to the only secret that there is to inner peace, to happiness, to spirituality: the supremacy of truth, which cannot be defined.

There is only one truth: the nobility of the heart. There is only one true heart: selfless feelings within. The inner self, the all-pervading, is revealed at all levels of mystical understanding when the illusion of the self is transcended. This is the path of the wise, who recognize that all they know is what they imagine knowing. Wisdom is only wisdom when not pretending to others about one's own wisdom, but when offering a silent example of an awakening to the everlasting riddle: who, what, why, how, which, whence, whither?

Religious ideals, which were originally destined to offer a helping hand towards the realization of truth, tend to be confined within different religious forms and clad in various garbs by those who do not see that the means to attain an objective cannot be the goal; the goal is further still. The path is the means of reaching the goal, but if one argues over the authenticity of the path, one is detained by differences and can never ever reach the goal, which is certainly to become conscious of that divine heritage which reveals itself in the awakening to the inner call. Our Divine heritage can only be revealed along the course of a very thorny path called the art of personality, and the journey on this path requires constant effort to forge the character into a living example of love, harmony and beauty. One can be a bringer of happiness when overlooking all that disturbs one when others are not in accord with one's own thinking, making thereby every effort to work on one's own shortcomings rather than to judge others.

Even in a fall there is a hidden stepping-stone by which one may rise above shortcomings, distinctions and differences. In this way one may tune one's ego to a higher pitch, so as to harmonize with those whom one meets, and in whose company one might discover sparks of hidden guidance. There is no experience in life which is really worthless, and there is not one moment which is really wasted, providing one is wise enough to carefully assemble the elements of past memories and learn from these with the idea of accomplishing one's life's purpose, although one's vision of right and wrong might not always correspond to that of others. Each time that we set aside our own ego, even for a moment, we offer a little bit of our heart to the Divine Presence, and in return the light of the Spirit of Guidance becomes brighter and brighter, so that there remains no shadow to hide the perfection of the all-pervading.

Any role that one performs in the play of life soon becomes intoxicating, and under that spell one cherishes the illusion of one's identity. As soon as one discovers that nothing is really absolute, however, one realizes that all is but a momentary game, whatever be one's condition, whether bright or gloomy, and that all values are only comparative, dependant upon the angle from which they are considered, and only true to a certain extent in comparison to unlimited truth, which is beyond all speculation. The self which one clings to, and which is only a phantom of one's true identity, is, however, the channel through which the soul is ultimately the spectator of all happenings, reflected

as images upon a mirror. Yet the images have only reached its surface without causing any permanent alteration, leaving the mirror of the soul immaculately pure.

Every effort towards the fulfillment of one's life's purpose, whether it be a material or a spiritual one, brings one step by step to the ultimate goal. This process could be seen as a humble contribution to the fulfillment of the Divine goal, since the entire creation is in a constant state of formation according to a central theme. The purpose of life is not only to rise to the greatest heights but also to dive deep into the deepest depths, whereby the self is lost, but finds itself again as a result of the widening of the consciousness, just as the seed finds the fulfillment of its purpose when diving into the earth and then rising as a plant to spread out in full bloom under the rays of the sun.

Sufism is neither a religion nor a cult, neither a doctrine nor a dogmatic institution. Perhaps one could say that Sufism has always been, ever since wisdom was wisdom. Esoteric schools can be traced as far back as the time of Abraham, and even earlier. In Arabia, esoteric schools were known for their metaphysical teaching. In Persia, literature, poetry and music were the sources of inspiration. In India, the esoteric schools were mainly of a meditative character. Although these and others may perhaps differ slightly in the methods of inner training, yet all are united in their object, because esotericism does not belong to just one esoteric school.

The term "Sufi," meaning wisdom, does not refer only to ancient schools, known or unknown, where spiritual concepts blossomed through the ages and subsequently crystallized within various orders, it refers in reality to all efforts made to raise human understanding to a level of spiritual awakening, which is the outcome of the purification of the mind from the limitations of traditional barriers, as well as from one's own preconceived ideas unconsciously built up day by day. Wisdom cannot be worded, nor can it be identified as being the property of one single transmission because of its universal nature. It is a message of "human rights of thought and feeling" that has been calling since eternity but is not always heard, which explains why artificial terminologies generally misrepresent true inner realization. Unless there is an awakening to the basic moral principles of honesty in spirituality, the religious contingent of mankind remains enslaved by the tyranny of the illusion of Truth.

Another subject found in Sufi teaching is the 'alchemy of happiness,' which, as we know from fairy tales, is the use of a magic formula to turn base metal into gold. This mystical illustration symbolizes so beautifully the basic principle of the inner school of the Sufis, where deep consideration is offered to the transformation of one's gross ego into a humble attitude of respect, awakening one's heart to the consciousness of the privilege of being the temple of God, radiating God's love upon all who come one's way.

For a Sufi, the diversity of names and forms of the world's religious doctrines are like veils covering the phenomenon of the Spirit of Guidance constantly manifesting at all levels of evolution. This explains why one of the great ideals of a Sufi is the awakening of the heart qualities, resulting in a broader outlook, reaching far beyond concepts of faith and belief, and a compassionate attitude toward the tragic misunderstandings which divide the earnest followers of religious and philosophical traditions. The Sufi thoughtfully avoids making a display of speculative concepts, using only the language of the heart when communicating with others, respectful of all interpretations of the one and only object of worship.

All down the ages, the world Messengers have come to humanity with the great ideal of liberating the religious impulse from the various dogmas that over and over again through the centuries have built up speculative theories about abstract concepts. The “followers of the followers of the followers” impose these forms upon innocent believers, perpetuating thereby the specter of fanaticism even in this age when science has successfully catapulted factual knowledge as far as the surface of the moon, beyond the tragic limitations of what is held as religious knowledge describing heaven in terms which appeal to the ignorant.

The message of all times, which is sounding again in our century, reminds mankind that those religious traditions highly respected within the “museum of the past” now face the reality of new visions, such as the concept of the “unity of religious ideals.” Obviously, this concept becomes a normal understanding as soon as one’s inner awareness opens to the light of the “pearls of the ocean unseen” displayed in all religious symbolism. This light, which is hidden beneath so many layers of disguise, pretence, and fanatical thinking, may also be seen within one’s own heart, which, to the mystic, is the living altar.

The Divine message, which comes in all ages under different names, is now the message of wisdom. This message is not meant only for a certain culture nor is it destined for just one part of the world; it is for the whole of humanity. It is a universal message, expressed in a “Universal Worship” inspired by teachings from the great religions, known and unknown to the world at large. The religious ideal is focused upon the Spirit of Guidance, the Teacher of all teachers, offering inspiration to the world of science, freedom to the world of art, liberty to the social world, and to the religious world, the spirit of guidance offers the realization of the Divine within all creation.

To the question, ‘What is the Message?’ the answer differs in accordance with the understanding, because each person represents a different point of view, yet all venture to drink from the same water, whether it be called a stream, a river, a lake, a sea, an ocean or the Divine source itself.

I – UNITY OF RELIGIOUS IDEALS¹

1 - SACRED HISTORICAL LEGENDS

Rama

As a young man Rama received spiritual and ethical education under the guidance of Vashishta, the great spiritual master in that time.

One day, when the hand of Sita, the king's daughter, was asked by the different rajas of that time, Rama went to that ceremony, where all the princes were dressed in gorgeous clothes and jewels except himself, because he had been living a country life. Nevertheless, Rama won in the end since he was the one who struck the right note in the heart of Sita, but Rama's father decided that Rama should go to the forest together with Sita for many years and live the life of an ascetic, before he could be entitled to rule the country. Unfortunately Ravan, the prince who was most opposed to Rama's success as a suitor, followed Rama and Sita in the forest, and seized the opportunity, which presented itself to capture Sita, and fly away with her, while Rama had gone to fetch some fruits and water.

There were several tests for Rama to grow through. The first test was for him, as a prince, to stay outside of his country, and the second test was to lose all that he had, which was Sita his bride. Here he showed balance in all things, and wisdom. Instead of giving up hope, he trusted Sita's love and had faith in providence. Instead of despairing he went searching for Sita. In the end she was found captive in the garden of the palace of prince Ravan.

The story says that Rama accepted the help of Hanuman, the king of the monkeys, who sympathized with him. Hanuman was not really a monkey, but he was called so because he belonged to a pre-historical race, originating from the animal kingdom living in the forests. Owing to Rama's balance and wisdom Rama was able to control an army of that kind of wild people, and to be successful in a war with a mighty prince, and he fought and rescued Sita, and brought her over to his land. The most interesting part of the story is that they could fly on a "pushkappa". There are a great many examples of this to be found in the Ramayana, which has been handed down for thousands of years.

After all these trials, Rama was able to rule his country in an ideal way. Such qualities as courage, hope, confidence and trust all denote balance and wisdom.

Krishna

In the life of Krishna, it is said that from his early childhood he was given in the hands of Yashoda, a milkmaid, and was brought up in the house of a peasant, although Krishna was of Kingly birth with a kingly spirit. He moved about and played with the gopis and the milkmaids and was the life and light

¹ This chapter consists of reflections on the Message Lectures by Hazrat Inayat Khan which were given in the years 1922-1926

of the whole village, attracting already in his early days all those who lived in that area, and in time his magnetism expanded throughout the whole country.

The greatest task given to a prophet was given to Krishna, who, as the “Godhead”, was destined to give a message of love, of kindness, and of harmlessness. That sacred task given to Krishna was to be faced with a situation in which he was committed to help a prince called Arjuna, whose kingdom had been captured. It was a most difficult situation for a prophet, to have to stand by the prince Arjuna, in a fight to re-conquer a lost kingdom, although Krishna was destined to give the message of God. This was like being torn between two sides.

Krishna explains this dilemma in his sacred book called Bhagavad-Gita, in which, from beginning to end, one reaches every aspect of wisdom. In the Bhagavad-Gita, there is kindness, there is wisdom, there is bravery, there is courage, there is intellect, there is philosophy, and there is mysticism. The whole philosophy of life is put in this book in a most concise form.

One might ask: “Why did such a great soul as Krishna have to stand by a prince? What would it have mattered, from a spiritual point of view, whether Arjuna’s kingdom was reconquered or not?”

If we look at this dilemma from a psychological point of view, the worldly kingdom of Arjuna symbolizes the divine kingdom, which is lost to every soul when coming to manifestation. In order to regain this divine kingdom, every soul has to open not only to spiritual realization, but also to ways of self-defense, such as how to struggle along in life and yet to stick firmly to the path of truth. Krishna gave an example of how one can be spiritual, and yet have all the capabilities of a king, of a general, of a judge, or of a statesman, showing perfection on all sides.

The range of the Hindu Religion is so vast that it can fit in with people of every level of evolution; it fits very well with the understanding of the Sudras, the Kshatrias, the Vaishas, as well as also with the Brahmins, the deep thinkers, and the meditative people.

In the Hindu Temple Krishna’s statue is placed in the cradle, while women are singing, and men come, joining their palms in respect. Here, everyone from pariahs to Brahmins, all take part in that worship. This ceremony also offers scope to those who appreciate discovering a religion, which is as refined as possible. All that which is good and beautiful and all that which is worthwhile is found in this Religion; there is everything: there is art, there is literature, there is philosophy, there is wisdom, there is play, there is thought, there is meditation.

Shiva

The particularity of Shiva – also known as “Mahadev” — was that he offered an example of “Vairagya”, which is not only asceticism, as it is often believed to be. Asceticism is a crude interpretation of Vairagya, which really means “success in renouncing”.

Shiva’s philosophy is all about renunciation, indifference, and independence. Shiva transmitted the most profound philosophy to his consort Parvati, who asked him questions which he answered gently. All through his ascetic life Shiva never created a philosophic system, but he lived it through his life, as an example of mastery.

From time to time Shiva opened his lips and Parvati took down the philosophical teaching he gave, which one finds in the known dialogues between Shiva and Parvati. Among other sayings, Shiva said: “when giving out the science of Yoga, never pass this science on to the unfaithful, but only give it to the simple ones, to the pure ones.”

Buddha

Buddha’s parents had kept him secluded in the palace until he was grown-up, and they never allowed him to see the misery of the world. Buddha only knew the servants, and the royal comforts experienced in the palace. But there came a day when his father decided that the young Siddhartha should go out and see the world, and should no longer be kept in confinement.

When Buddha was sent into the world, his first glance upon the woes took away all his interest in the life in the palace, as well as earthly grandeur, success and gain. Wherever he looked, he saw pain hiding behind happiness, and saw that no matter what one possesses, whether wealth, power, position, pleasure or happiness, one has still not found peace within. He said that if there is any way to be freed from one’s own imperfections, it is the way of spiritual realization, which is the key to spiritual power, inspiration and real peace within oneself.

Later, Buddha’s whole life was devoted to the finding of the remedy that would relieve mankind. He meditated, and examined the different aspects of life. He talked with the people, consoled them, and served them. Every moment of his life was devoted to finding a remedy to relieve others in whatever way possible.

The Buddhist religion has taught humanity the sense of compassion towards life in every form and in all forms. The central theme of Buddha’s teaching is “Ahimsa parmo dharma”, which means that harmlessness is the essence of Religion. This teaching is so deep, so wide, so full of sense and beauty that in every direction of life one finds that there is so much to be done without having to also think about occult and psychic mysteries. Life begins to unfold its mystery as soon as compassion is awakened in the heart to all that which is living, and one then has regard for everyone and all that lives. The outlook on life changes, and the result is that the soul attains to that peace, which is elevating.

In the pursuit of this remedy to relieve humanity, Buddha discovered the same mystery, which all the great prophets have found, which is self-realization. He realized that all religion, meditation, philosophy and wisdom lead to the one object, which is self-realization.

The statue of Buddha is an example to look up to, for those who are striving for peace, which is so hard to attain in this unrestful world.

Shankaracharya

The particularity of the life of Shankaracharya is that he was the last prophet of India, although he was not really a prophet, but he was the spiritual representative of Rama, Shiva, Krishna and Buddha.

Shankaracharya had these four different aspects of wisdom gathered within him, and in turn it was his responsibility to re-give those four different aspects of wisdom to his country. From then on Brahmanism developed, whereas Buddhism practically disappeared from India; it only remained in the South of India — East Asia, in China and in Japan.

Later, when Buddhism returned to India, it in turn enriched Brahmanism, and the followers of Brahmanism remained the admirers of the four previous different prophets, for whom they had love and devotion, considering them all as Avatars, of one and the same soul, the same spirit, the Spirit of Guidance. It is in this way that the essence of these four different messages was given in Brahmanism.

Zoroaster

The Zoroastrian religion is a religion of purity. It is a religion, which reveals the way in which to create a God for oneself, which is the first step on the path to God.

By pointing out life's power coming through the plants, the water, the sun, the wind and through everything that one marvels at in nature, Zarathustra teaches mankind to think of the connection between all these marvels and God; in this, making God a living God.

When going through the affirmations of Zarathustra we see that the only way to make God a living God is by communicating with God through nature.

Abraham

Abraham is considered to be the father of three great religions: Judaism, Christianity and Islam. The Old Testament is the backbone of the New Testament and the Koran is an interpretation of the Hebrew religion. The Hebrew religion is a continuation of the message, which was first given by Abraham. Therefore one finds in these three religions the influence of this great master of whom so little is known.

Abraham was a great prophet and at the same time a teacher of esoteric knowledge, a great initiator and mystic. His mission was to remove the superstitions which were associated with many gods, and to establish the idea of the infinite Being.

The initiation of Abraham took place in the ancient school of Egypt, and when he returned from Egypt after the initiation, Abraham intuitively found the place where his message was going to become a world message. In that place Abraham placed a stone called the Ka'aba stone, which was visited by the great prophets of Beni Israel, in homage of the sacredness of that stone. Since hundreds of years millions of people have been attracted by that sacred place, where they go on pilgrimage.

The Sufis of the ancient schools which still exist in different parts of Asia, trace their origin from the time of Abraham, and this relation to Abraham also links the Sufi schools with the ancient school of Egypt. The psychology of Abraham's story of sacrifice is also in accordance with Sufi principles.

In order to test his devotion, God asked Abraham to sacrifice his son, and Abraham obeyed and brought his son to the altar. Then it is told that when he picked up the knife, Abraham saw a sheep

instead of his son, lying on the altar, while his son was standing on one side. Abraham, who had passed the test, thanked God for his great mercy. What was asked of Abraham was to annihilate the Nafs, in order to prepare him for the service of God, because no one can fully serve God unless that part that is called Nafs, the material part, is under control.

This sacrifice is symbolical, expressing the main object there is in developing the Sufi ideal which is called Fanà, meaning annihilation; the annihilation of the false ego. The symbology of this story offers a lesson for every soul, showing that after one has annihilated the false ego, one is then prepared to give oneself to divine guidance on the path of truth.

Moses

One is amazed at the story of Moses, who was found on the water, and taken home by the princess, which in itself proved to be an unusual plan of destiny. Moses showed spirit and will-power as he grew up, and through all difficulties he maintained his conviction until his goal was reached.

Mount Sinai, where Moses was in communication with God symbolizes the highest point to where the consciousness can reach. It is when the consciousness touches the highest point that the message of God is received, and climbing the Mount Sinai means climbing the heights that mark the distance between imperfection and perfection.

The heart which can reach the plane of the “Perfect Being”, while retaining its individual consciousness, is able to communicate with the “Perfect Being” and is also able to interpret that which is then experienced.

The message of Moses also emphasizes the importance of the law, which has always been the central theme. It was of the greatest importance, especially at the time when it was given to a nation of corrupt people who were far removed from order and peace. There was avariciousness, there was greed, there was falsehood, and there was great treachery, one killing another just in a little quarrel.

What was most necessary at that time was not only a form of worship or a message of wisdom, but principally the divine law given through the lips of a prophet. For the collectivity there must be a law of harmony. Unfortunately, people look it up in the scriptures, and then shut the book and go on doing whatever they like.

Moses also gave a mystical teaching, known to very few, which was based on the mystery of the rhythm of the universe. It is from the rhythm of the universe that the science of numbers derives. Many say that they know something about the mystery of numbers, but the real mystery remains hidden, it is mysticism. This mystic teaching of Moses was handed down to the mystics all through the ages and they named it ‘Ilm-e Zafar’, the science of Zafar

Together with divine inspiration on the one side and deep perception of the hidden law of nature on the other side, Moses was inspired to give to the world the law that was to become the foundation for the conduct of future generations.

Christ

Jesus Christ was born in a stable and was in trouble from his birth with king Herod, and oppositions continued all through his life. Before he could even speak as an infant, his movements, his glance inspired and blessed those who came in contact with him, and later, in his early age, he spoke with the religious authorities and they became speechless.

When reading in the Bible and studying the answers that the Master gave to his disciples coming with their doubts, with their reasoning and their confusions, while others came with faith and devotion, we see that the Master's compassion with each of them was great. His answers were given in such simple words, each proving to be a torch on the path.

The teaching of Jesus Christ was pure mysticism. A mysticism of love. To judge no one, and to forgive all. To develop that quality which attracts others to come to one. To seek that knowledge which inspires humility.

Self-sacrifice was the central theme of the message given in the Beatitudes, from beginning to end. When one starts practicing any of these or all of them, one finds that it is all about self-sacrifice, self-denial, erasing the self. The thought of gentleness, the thought of meekness, the thought of mildness, all shows that the mission of Jesus Christ was to melt the hearts and to remove all grossness, denseness and hardness, making them refined, liberated and enlightened.

In the teaching: "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and all else will be added unto you", he showed that there is only one Ideal, which is the first and the last, and that is God. In this simple statement "Be ye perfect as your Father in heaven is perfect" the final word was spoken. What can be said in metaphysics or philosophy is, that the only aim is perfection and that we can reach that perfection, which is the perfection of our father in heaven, if we attempt it, if we try it.

Besides the philosophy of our dependence upon God, Jesus Christ also taught, by giving an example of the lilies, that when one makes God a living God, and when one depends upon God for all one's needs, God provides for all, and when learning this lesson, one begins to discover the phenomena of life.

The coming and going of Jesus Christ was an example of a soul that is brought on earth to accomplish something great, and is then called back.

Mohammed

In the life of the prophet Mohammed it is said that his father Abdullah died before his birth, and the child was left in the care of his mother, who was also soon taken away.

Later when the Prophet began to receive the message of God, the voice from within was so strong that he heard the resonance in the wind, in the fluttering of the leaves, in the running of the water, in the sky, and the whole atmosphere was filled with the resonance of the living word. It seemed as though the Absolute was speaking, and as though there was nothing in space. In the same way as Moses, who received the message on the mount Sinai, the Prophet went to the mountain called Ghar-

i Hira. and, in the same way as Buddha, the Prophet was given the task to find the remedy for the suffering of Humanity.

The central theme of the Message of Mohammed is a message of unity. Mohammed said that when the sultan and the slave come near the Ka'aba stone, they are to stand shoulder to shoulder, with all their family distinctions and traditions, saying "Kulle Muslim akhwanul" which means: all Muslims are brothers. This was fifteen hundred years ago, but that lesson has not yet been learned when one is inclined to say of another: "This person belongs to a different race, a different religion or of a different class."

One of the teachings of the Prophet was to respect one's relationship with one's mother, with one's father, one's brothers and sisters, one's children and one's neighbors, besides also with the helpless, the poor and the orphans, as well as with those of a higher rank and those with a lower rank. We can never understand fully, how much there is to be learned in connection with our relationship with all those we meet in everyday life. The teaching of the Prophet was simple, and deep at the same time: that the spirit of respectfulness should be awakened in a person. It cannot come about by the art of the sword; it is the art of personality that wins humanity for centuries and centuries.

One might ask : "Why did the Prophet make use of the sword?"

It was obvious that no one could have lived without a sword at that time, and no one other than a soldier, who showed himself to be one of them, would have made any impression on those who were always ready to fight. It was not the age of Buddha, nor were they the same kind of people as there were in India in those days. The Arabs were different people, and they would never have listened to a message of kindness. They did not know what kindness meant.

All the imagery that Mohammed described was intended for people of that particular condition. He could not have told them about the soul's greatness, or about nature's evolution. When they asked what is paradise, they were told that they would find streams of honey and fountains of milk in paradise, because honey and milk were more important to them than wisdom. Mohammed had to frighten them with the idea of the fire of hell, in order to stop them from fighting for no special purpose.

Even today, when two Bedouins — who are the most savage people living in the desert — are fighting with their knives, if a third person comes and says: "Sablu Allah Nabi", which means friends think of your Prophet, respect your Prophet, they shall not dare fight any further, but shall at once throw away their knives and take each other's hands and kiss them.

The charm of Mohammed's personality, his tenderness, his gentleness, his mildness were so very great and his words were more powerful than swords, winning the hearts of millions who recognized the Prophet as the messenger of God. Could there have been a greater miracle ?

Later in his life, there was an opportunity for the Prophet to be made king of the Hejaz, because he was the conqueror of his own people. They had none other among them so great and good and they all considered it their greatest privilege and honor to have the Prophet as their sultan. But the Prophet refused; the wealth of the earth was nothing to him. His whole life was given to the cause of humanity, to the work of God.

The Prophet was an example of the art of being human, and of the art of personality. Both sides of his nature were equally balanced, the Jelal and the Jemal sides; ready to handle the sword and ready to defend his country, to toil for the land, to march like a soldier, to take an interest in business and industry and in the affairs of the nation. And on the other hand, the Prophet was so meditative; he would go to the forest, meditating and communicating with his Lord, and he could also live in the midst of the world and yet not being of the world. It was his example, which conquered the followers, and even today when one mentions the name of the Prophet, thousands have tears in their eyes.

All this shows that every time when the message of God has been given to the world, there was a certain peculiarity in the way it was presented, because every messenger was meant to fit in with his own time and his message was suited for that particular time. But behind it all, there is one truth and one divine wisdom in every religion.

Jelaluddin Rumi

Jelal-ud-din Rumi was one of the greatest poets of Persia and a great teacher on the spiritual path in India, in Persia, in Egypt, in Afghanistan, and in Baluchistan.

The wonderful effect that is produced after studying Rumi's principal work called the Masnavi-i-Manavi is, that one begins to show more humanity in one's nature. It is the most valuable material for the beginning as well as for the end of one's spiritual awakening.

There are some places where Rumi tells stories, which are meant to explain a particular aspect of life. A story sometimes explains this better than simple words, because a story brings out a picture. The other part of Rumi's work consists in direct statements.

Rumi's work is in verse and it seems that he never had to stop and think what he would write next. It seems that the singer sang and his hand moved while writing; as he went on singing so he went on writing and the whole book is written in that way. He was one of the best-educated men in his time. He was a statesman; he was a politician, a man of letters, a lawyer and at the same time he was so simple.

The first time that Rumi saw Shams-e-Tabriz, who was to become his teacher, he said: "God whom I have worshipped all through my life came today before me in the guise of a human being." Shams-e-Tabriz came as a simple dervish to Rumi who was a leading personality in his city, endowed with authority, power and position, but Rumi listened to the simple dervish like an innocent child.

Rumi appreciated all he heard from the dervish, and following the Ideal which he had of him; he raised the dervish to that point to where a really devoted mureed raises his teacher. This shows how both devotion and intellect can harmonize.

Rumi teaches that God can best be understood by recognizing God in the whole manifestation, not just by thinking that God is in heaven, and that the most ideal manifestation of God is that of the godly person, the one who represents God. In this way the godly person brings heaven on earth and raises the earth to heaven.

In those days Rumi was the first mystic who did not inflict upon people a forced renunciation or asceticism, but came forward proclaiming that the essence of spirituality is the heart-quality. No other mystic has ever said as Rumi did, that whether one loves a human being or whether one loves God, at the end of one's destiny one shall be brought before the King of Love. It was most daring, especially at that time when theology reigned supreme and when one could never speak such words. But Rumi had the courage to say it.

To Rumi, all that is called matter is spirit just the same. And he said that to God, "Earth, fire, water and air are God's living servants, working instantly at God's command." One may ponder daily upon this philosophical phrase and every time one will find new branches springing from this idea. Even if one thinks about it one's whole life, one would find every day a new inspiration coming from it. It is this philosophy that Rumi put into practice with the following Teaching: "Make God a reality and God shall make you the truth."

In relation to the spirit of the prophet, Rumi's explained that the soul is like a flute of reed. The one end of this flute is in the mouth of God and the other end of the flute is between the lips of the prophet, illustrating thereby that what the prophets have said could be understood as being the word of God.

On the subject of the prophetic personality, Rumi did not say that prophets perform miracles, or that one can recognize them by their wonders. He said that a prophet is a miracle in itself. What Rumi meant is that the presence of the prophet is a source of illumination beyond words, and that the prophet is not only the bringer of the word of God, but the prophet is the word of God.

Rumi went still further speaking about the annihilation of the false ego, which is a most uplifting philosophy. First of all Rumi said: "Your heart can be likened to a mirror and what generally happens is that this mirror becomes dusty. You have to wipe it and take the dust away." And then he added: "The method which the teacher shows to his pupil on the esoteric path is the way of wiping this mirror in order that the reflection shall be clearer."

And again Rumi added: "Your worst enemy is hiding within yourself and that enemy is your Nafs, your false ego." It is very difficult to explain the exact meaning of the expression "false ego". The best that one can say is that the false ego is the energy of every inclination, which springs from within one, without regard for love, harmony and beauty, and the more this enemy is fed, the more it will dominate one's better self. And there shall come a day when one is a slave of this enemy, which is hidden within.

This enemy is always breathing "I". Its breath is continually calling out: "I am separate from Thou". If one were without it one would never had said "I", but the day when this enemy is found and erased and crushed and crucified, that day the real "I" is found.

2 - SPIRITUAL HIERARCHY

The concept of a spiritual hierarchy has existed in all religions, and has also been adopted by mystics and esoteric institutions in all ages. Obviously, that which one cannot comprehend appears supernatural, but the difference between human and supernatural is only a difference of conception.

When observing the stars shining in the sky, it is clear that they are not all the same in size and radiance. There is a hierarchy among the stars, influencing each other within the entire cosmos.

Hierarchy is seen in worldly activities as well as in spiritual life, and all religions have been structured according to a hierarchical concept. Most esoteric schools are also structured according to a graded system of initiations, with the purpose of raising the understanding between the teacher and the disciple to a higher consciousness.

Hierarchy can be traced in two different traditional styles. One style is seen in the Hindu and Buddhist traditions, and the other is seen in the Beni Israel traditions of Judaism, Christianity and Islam. The Hindus in the ancient times did not have the feeling for worshipping a “Servant of God”; they worshiped God. In the Buddhist tradition, Buddha did not claim to be the Godhead; his claim was to have found the key to the mystery of life, and the road to perfection. No doubt this message was a most democratic one in its essence, because it indicated that the key to happiness is found within oneself, if one only searches for it. When coming to the Prophets of the Middle East, Christ, did not claim to be the Godhead; he claimed to be “God’s servant.” No doubt the Church later gave different interpretations of the words of Jesus Christ. The idea of God as Father was misinterpreted in the sense that Christ, the son, was to be seen as different from the other children of God. But in the words of Jesus Christ one does not find this idea; one only finds it in the words of those who have interpreted it in their own way. The claim of Mohammed was “I am the prophet”, because it was necessary for the Message to be given in that way to the people in that part of the world, although in the case of Mohammed, his claim was an interpretation of the concept, a “Servant of God.”

The central theme of the message is not different, although the manner in which the Message is given changes through the ages. But in time, the message shall be given without any claim.

One might ask, what is then the nature of God’s message?

Many methods are used to deliver God’s message, therefore one cannot say that the message just only comes in one way. The image of God is revealed to the eyes of the prophet, when the prophet is in communication with God. The prophet does not hear the word of God through the physical ears, but the prophet’s heart is the throne of God. This explains why every word spoken in a prophetic mission by the prophets of all ages is a living word, a divine message. At moments the consciousness of the prophet reaches as high as possible, and then at other moments that same consciousness manifests at a human level; therefore, at one moment, the prophet speaks the words of God, and at another moment his own words.

When Mohammed spoke the words of God, he said, “Qur’an”, which means the words of God. At other times when he spoke words of wisdom he called them the words of the Prophet. In this way the Hadith were distinguished from the Qur’an.

One finds the same idea in the ancient Hindu scriptures, such as in the Puranas and Vedas. Both are sacred scriptures, but the Vedas are called the words of God, and the Puranas are considered to be the sacred words given by the master Valmiki.

This distinction has been made in all ages, and it gives us a key to the prophetic mission, where the consciousness of the prophet rises to that height from whence it receives the pure essence of the

message, which is then put into words that are destined to interpret the mysteries of life, here and hereafter.

3 - RECEIVING THE DIVINE MESSAGE

There are two ways of receiving the divine message: either through the heart or through the mind. The message received through the mind will whirl around in the head until the wind of reason rises and blows it away. The message received through the heart will settle in the depths, awakening virtues, merits and inspiration, but the heart requires preparation in a process through which one overcomes the false identities of the self. And then, when discovering the real self, one offers the limited ego as a sacrifice to the truth within.

A spiritual ideal is like a ladder which helps one to reach up to the understanding of the purpose for which the Message has always been given. Therefore confidence and trust in the spiritual ideal offer the strength to stand firm in the service of God and humanity, and one should never let oneself become discouraged by lack of success, which everyone experiences in some way or other in this limited world.

The Message is in the seedling period, and the seed has not yet grown into a plant. The time shall come when this seed shall become a tree, and it shall then be able to support itself with its own strength. Our responsibility, therefore, is to tend this little seedling with much care, to rear it, to water it, to offer it sun and air, and to let it grow and spread, so that some day it shall produce the fruits and flowers which the Message is destined to offer to humanity.

The Message may be likened to the rain which is intended for each particular season, with the purpose of helping the plants and trees to grow, and to give to the earth its sustenance, besides also making the rivers run full, and the sea rejoice with the coming of water from the clouds. And as rain is the answer to the need of the earth, so is God's message the answer to the need of humanity.

The Message should not be regarded as just something to study like a science, or as a book of new ideas and new theories, but as something given in the form of higher ideals. There shall always be difficulties, because of the difficulty in understanding the truth, as well as of distinguishing truth from falsehood, which has always been the cause of misunderstandings. Human efforts are limited, human means are limited, and the human grasp of wisdom may be limited, but truth cannot be limited, and so there is no reason to be discouraged. Truth shall never fail.

Wherever the Message of God was given to the world, and at whatever period, its central theme was human brotherhood and sisterhood. The forms of the religions and the interpretations brought in the scriptures are secondary. When diving deeper into this subject, one shall find that the various teachings do not differ very much. If there is a difference it is either one of terms or in the way in which people have understood them. Therefore, the difference is not in the teaching, If one finds a difference, it is because one wants to find it, just as when one wants to find a fault in the best person, one finds it, and when one wants to find some good in the worst person, one also finds it.

The more one shall widen one's view of the horizon, the more one shall see beyond the limitations of preconceived ideas, and the more one shall realize that one cannot judge great personalities only from historical legends. Differences arise from the views of each person, according to the individual

conception of the teacher. But when one realises the greatness of the bringers of the Message, one discovers the true magic of their divine personalities, which have struck the hearts of millions of people through the ages.

The Sufi Message given to the world today is found in the prayers “Saum and Salat.” During these prayers, Muslims, Christians, Buddhists, Hindus, Jews and others can stand shoulder to shoulder in a universal congregation. In this universal worship of God, no one shall miss the name of the “Saviour” whom they worship. Some day all shall awaken to the idea that a divine personality has the names of all teachers, saints, sages and prophets, and even more names, known and unknown to the world.

THE PRAYERS “SAUM AND SALAT” ARE LIKE PILLARS UPON WHICH THE ENTIRE STRUCTURE OF THE SUFI TEACHING STANDS. THESE PRAYERS OFFER AN APPEAL FROM THE HEART, UNITING RACES, NATIONS AND FAITHS, INDEPENDENT OF RELIGIOUS PRINCIPLES AND VARIOUS CONCEPTIONS OF TRUTH.

Saum

Praise be to Thee, most supreme God,
omnipotent, omnipresent, all-pervading,
the only Being.
Take us in Thy parental arms,
raise us from the denseness of the earth.
Thy beauty do we worship,
to Thee do we give willing surrender.
Most merciful and compassionate God,
the idealized Lord of the whole humanity,
Thee only do we worship,
and towards Thee alone do we aspire.
Open our hearts towards Thy beauty,
illuminate our souls with divine Light.
O Thou, the Perfection of Love,
Harmony and Beauty,
all-powerful Creator, Sustainer, Judge and
Forgiver of our shortcomings,
Lord God of the East and of the West,
of the worlds above and below,
and of the seen and unseen beings,
pour upon us Thy Love and Thy Light,
give sustenance to our bodies, hearts and souls,
use us for the purpose that Thy wisdom chooseth,
and guide us on the path of Thine own goodness.
Draw us closer to Thee every moment of our life,
until in us be reflected Thy grace, Thy glory,
Thy wisdom, Thy joy and Thy peace.
Amen

Salat

Most gracious Lord, Master, Messiah and
Savior of humanity,
we greet Thee with all humility.
Thou art the first cause and the last effect,
the divine Light and the Spirit of Guidance,
alpha and omega.
Thy Light is in all forms, Thy love in all beings:
in a loving Mother, in a kind Father, in an innocent
Child, in a helpful Friend, in an inspiring Teacher.
Allow us to recognize Thee in all Thy holy
names and forms:
as Rama, as Krishna, as Shiva, as Buddha.
Let us know Thee as Abraham, as Solomon,
as Zarathustra, as Moses, as Jesus, as Mohammed,
and in many other names and forms,
known and unknown to the world.
We adore Thy past,
Thy presence deeply enlighteneth our being,
and we look for Thy blessing in the future.
O Messenger, Christ, Nabi, the Rasul of God!
Thou whose heart constantly reacheth upward;
Thou comest on earth with a message,
as a dove from above, when Dharma decayeth,
and speakest the word that is put into Thy mouth,
as the Light filleth the crescent moon.
Let the star of the divine Light, shining in Thy heart,
be reflected in the hearts of Thy devotees.
May the Message of God reach far and wide,
illuminating and making the whole humanity
as one single Brotherhood
in the Fatherhood of God.
Amen.

Spirituality is Natural Nobility

What is the use of a religion, a philosophy, or of mysticism if these do not awaken in one's heart that spirit and that inclination which is divine?

Spirituality, which is hidden in every soul, is natural nobility, and in the unfolding of this innate nobility one's divine origin is revealed. The purpose of all the striving on the spiritual path is to discover this nobility, although one need not really strive for it, because this divine nobility manifests by itself when one is conscious of one's divine heritage.

In Sufi terms, the nobility of spirit is called Akhlak-e-Allah, meaning the manner of God. This is a manner which is unlike any other manner known; it is the greatest religion, the truest spirituality, the real aristocracy and the perfect democracy.

The sign of the noble spirit is to comprehend all things, to assimilate all things, to tolerate all things, and to forgive all things. All disputes and disagreements, and all misunderstandings fall away the moment that the human spirit has become noble.

The nobility of spirit is seen in humility and in modesty. It is also seen in self-respect, in the sense of honor, in kindness and in graciousness. It is a manner which cannot be learned or taught.

It is one's life's purpose to bring forth this noble manner, which reveals itself as a divine blossom in the aristocracy of the human soul and in the democracy of the human ego.

In the outer world there is such a thing as aristocracy and democracy, but in spiritual unfoldment both become one, culminating in real perfection.

A flower proves to be genuine by its fragrance, a jewel by its radiance, a fruit by its sweetness, and a soul proves to be genuine when revealing itself as the seed of God.

Belief and Faith

Very often we confuse the words belief and faith. Belief is a subtle thought; as long as a thought is wavering, it is not a belief. When a person says: "I wonder whether it is so, or whether it is not so," that is not belief although it may appear to be so.

To believe means that the thought has settled in the mind and that it will be difficult to root it out. Yet belief is not necessarily faith; faith is that belief, which is no longer a subtle thought, but it is the very being of the one who has faith.

When analyzing these terms, and when understanding them from a metaphysical point of view, belief and faith are quite different from each other.

Faith in one's religion is again something else. The term faith is then used to indicate that a person belongs either to the Christian faith, or to the Jewish faith or the Muslim faith or to any other faith, yet, once one has reached faith, one no longer needs to belong to one's specific faith. One is then above all religious faiths, and at the same time belonging to all religions, because then, real faith is no longer Christian, Jewish or Muslim.

In Hindustani a distinction is made between the word "belief", which is used in everyday language, and the word "faith", which is used in connection with one's spiritual evolution. Belief used in every day language is called *Yakin*, and belief used in connection with one's spiritual evolution is called *Iman*.

According to the Sufis, there are four stages between belief and faith.

The first stage of belief is called *Iman-e Muhmil*, which means the faith of the crowd. Where ten people are standing still, the eleventh will soon join them, and when there are fifty people waiting for some event, soon there shall be a hundred people. Finally one might see a thousand people standing side by side, not knowing what to expect. Such is the psychology of the crowd, which attracts the crowd-like minds.

That which is approved of by the crowd as something beautiful is not necessarily beautiful; that which the crowd believes to be most valuable may not be so valuable. If something is considered by the crowd to be good, it may not be good at all, or something which the crowd considers great may not be great, though it may have the appearance of being great because the crowd calls it so.

Besides, whatever opinion the crowd holds does not necessarily have a long life. It does not take long for the crowd to raise a person up high and it does not take long for the crowd to throw a person down. The faith of the crowd is no faith; it is a fixed idea which can be unfixed.

The second stage is called *Iman-e Kamil* which means having belief in an authority. It is not the belief of those who say that they believe in something because someone said it. But it is when a person says: "It was told to me by someone in whom I have trust, and that is why I believe it". Or: "It is written in the scriptures in which I have trust and therefore I believe it". There are also people who will believe anything that books about history, geography, mathematics or any book in the university library tells them.

The third stage, is called *Haq-al-Iman*, which means believing that something is not so because the crowd says it, but because one thinks that it is so and therefore one believes it. It is when one believes in one's reason, independently of the crowd and of the authorities, one is ready to understand the reason of another, and one is prepared to give up one's reasoning if the reasoning of another appeals to one.

The fourth stage is called *Ain-al-Iman*, which means the perfect belief. This belief is as good as seeing something with one's own eyes, so that one cannot possibly deny it. This is the perfection of belief; or in other words real faith, and those who have reached this stage are called the faithful in the spiritual sense of the word.

Faith and Doubt

Faith and doubt are like light and darkness. The moments of faith are like moments of the day, and the moments of doubt are like the moments of night. As both day and night are a part of life, so are also the hours of faith and the hours of doubt. Nevertheless, it is the seeking of the mind to reach that stage where it has faith, and it is also the nature of the mind to gather doubts as well; therefore the mind attracts both faith and doubt. If it happens to attract faith more than doubts, then faith shall prevail; if it attracts doubts more than faith, then doubts shall prevail.

Doubts can be likened to clouds. If there is one cloud it will attract more clouds, and if there are many clouds gathered together still more will be attracted to join them. And if there is one ray of the sun shooting through the clouds, it will scatter them, and once they are scattered they will be scattered more and more, while light gradually appears.

In the same way doubts cover faith, but faith clears doubts, thus faith is more dependable whereas doubts only come and go. It would not be an exaggeration to say that doubt is like rust that eats the iron-like faith.

It is very easy to allow doubts to prevail, and it is difficult to keep on to faith. However much one is evolved, there comes a time when doubts take hold of one, and the moments when one is in doubt, the light of clear insight disappears.

When climbing a staircase of a hundred steps one may have faith during ninety-five steps, and one may lose faith when only five steps remain to be climbed. It often happens in the lives of many people that they are face to face with success, and yet they fail for lack of faith at the last minute; they have nearly approached what they wanted, and then they abandon.

Thus there is a constant conflict between doubt and faith, and if there were not this opposition, one could accomplish great things in life. This shows that the greater one's faith is, the greater one is. In everyone there is somewhere a spark of faith hidden, but sometimes it is so covered and clouded that it needs being uncovered, behind the veils of doubt.

Very often through worldly knowledge doubts are developed, because the experiences of the worldly life make one doubt more and more. And when doubt becomes predominant in one's nature, one begins to doubt everything and everyone, and then one even doubts those who should really not be doubted. Finally, one shall always have doubt before one's eyes, as soon as one casts one's glance upon a person, because the clouds of doubt shall darken one's view, following which, one's personality shall not shine.

In the business world, people do not always care about one's feelings or about how much one is evolved, or what one's principles are. All that which is taken into consideration is whether one will sign a paper, and whether there are two witnesses present; it does not matter who one is, what one is, as long as the paper is perfectly correct.

Five hundred years ago, a Hindustani poet wrote: "the days are gone when value was attached to a person's personality". And so it is; this downward trend has already been going on since years. It seems that mankind has no trust, no faith any more.

The question is, how can one find faith in oneself; how can one develop faith?

One can find faith by first practicing self-confidence, and by having confidence even in the smallest things.

Once self-confidence has been developed the second step is to learn to trust others. One might think that this is not always practical, and that it might lead to a great loss, but even that loss might prove to be a gain. One is richer if one has trusted a person, and one has lost something if one had not trusted that person. However, one could object to the idea that only simple people trust others implicitly, but there is a great difference between a wise person who trusts courageously and a simple person who trusts blindly.

The third step towards the development of faith is trust in the unseen. To trust in something which one does not see, and which reason does not explain. One does not see the reason, but one only knows that it must be reached. This trust in the unseen is called trust in God.

Idealism

An ideal is something which one keeps before one's eyes, something which is not easily reached, but which one tries to accomplish some day.

The one who has a high ideal also has a feeling heart. That person's thoughts and actions are beautiful, and the atmosphere is magnetic, because the power of the ideal is revealed in that person's personality.

If one has all that the world can offer, but without a high ideal, one shall sooner or later be tired of it all. And even if those things that one lacks were at one's disposal, one would not be completely satisfied.

There is only one thing in life which is worth living: to look up to something higher. In this way one arrives at the throne of God, that ideal which is in reality the only ideal worthwhile reaching.

The sign of life is enthusiasm, aspiration, and hope. But if one has none of these, life is not worth living. The longing for passing things makes life mortal, and aspiration for useless things makes life worthless, whereas higher aspirations ennoble the soul, thereby unfolding those virtues which are hidden within.

The one who has an ideal is living, and the one without an ideal is miserable, even with all possessions. This shows that there is a side to one's being—call it spirit—which remains unsatisfied in spite of everything that one possesses, because the satisfaction of the spirit lies only in the pursuit of a high ideal.

With all the progress of the world, the neglect of a higher ideal reveals a great lack at each step made forward. If there is anything which could offer a link between God and mankind, it is one's ideal.

When there is an ideal, optimism comes naturally, and pessimism fades away. A new hope springs forth when there is an ideal, and that hope brings new life. When there is hope, will-power also

develops. There is no hope without a desire and there is no desire without a will. All things change in one's life as soon as one has placed an ideal before oneself.

Without an ideal, one might sit in solitude, indulging in practices and meditations, and become tired out by trying to develop inwardly, because it is only through service that one reaches further on the path of Truth.

It is not necessary to wait till one becomes spiritual, for what does it mean to be spiritual? Does it mean to be generous when one's ship comes in? But who knows when the ship will come? Spirituality is not attained by saying: "I will be spiritual one day". It is only by doing all one can for others that one discovers spirituality. It is by forgetting about wanting to be spiritual that one might arrive at that stage some day. There is no need to worry about becoming spiritual. To be spiritual means to be natural. It is unnatural not to be spiritual

The one who has the perfect ideal of God is always drawn towards perfection, and need not trouble or worry. Verily, where there is an ideal, the soul is uplifted, and the higher the ideal, the higher the soul is raised.

Happiness and unhappiness depend upon one's outlook on life: whether one appreciates and values all that one has, or whether one under-estimates all.

When only thinking about what one does not have, one shall only worry about so many more things that one has not got. But when trying to realize how much one really has, there shall also come a time when one shall discover that what is lacking is less than what one does have. God's gifts are many, and if one does not see them, it is because one's desires obscure one's sight of that with which one is blessed by Providence.

The only way to cultivate the sense of appreciation is to be grateful for every little privilege experienced in life; to admire every little glimpse of beauty; to return unconditionally every sign of love and affection offered by others on one's path through life's puzzling ways. It is in this that one shall discover the kingdom of God; and as said, when once the kingdom of God is realized, all else shall be added.

Tactfulness

Tactfulness is not learned through worldly cleverness; qualities learned this way do not make one really tactful. One may imitate a tactful person, but polished manners are different from real gentleness. Tact comes from the profound depths of the heart, and it is inspired by sympathy. Therefore, falseness cannot prove to be tactful in the end. Tactfulness comes to life when one is considerate of others, and consideration comes from true inner feelings. A considerate person would not wish to cause anything displeasing or disagreeable to others, and therefore tactfulness awakens wisdom.

As one becomes more tactful, one finds more fault with oneself than with others. Many times one says things which could just as well not have been said; it is weakness on one's part to drop a word which could have been avoided. The tactful one realizes the mistake.

A tactful person is subtle and poetical; therefore, some wonder how one can be tactful and at the same time truthful, and others even say that to be tactful is being hypocritical. But what is the use of a truth with no beauty and no fineness that is thrown at one's head like a brick? Through self-discipline, the tactful one grows large in spirit, and by not always making an outward display that person's heart becomes an accommodation of wisdom and thoughtfulness, it is through tact that one maintains harmony in one's life. Otherwise life would turn into a stormy sea by the influences coming from all around in one's everyday occupations. It is through tactfulness that one can counterbalance all inharmonious influences, which have a jarring effect upon one's spirit.

What is goodness, piety or religiousness without wisdom, without tactfulness?

What does a good person really accomplish by goodness if that one is unable to give happiness to others?

Of what use is piety or spirituality if one is not creative of happiness ?

When Jesus Christ said to the fishermen: "Come, and I will make you the fishers of men", it did not mean, "I will teach you ways that will enable you to make profit from others." It meant that with tactfulness, sympathy is like the spreading of the mother's arms over the little ones.

The Sufis say: "Neither are we here to become angels nor to live like animals; we are here to sympathize with one another and to bring to others that happiness that we ourselves are always seeking."

There are many thorns on the path of life, and when we look at ourselves, we see that we have—more or less—the same faults as all others, whom we prick like thorns. Therefore, if we spared others those thorns, we would then offer others that much help.

It is through tactfulness that we accomplish our most sacred duty in life, and that we live our true religion.

Divine Guidance

Most people do not believe in divine guidance, unless it is pictured in a complex manner, but if one would only think more deeply on this subject, one could see the divine guidance already appearing in infancy in the form of the mother's and father's care, and later, in the form of the care of all those who sympathize with one, all through life's journey.

Divine guidance comes in simple ways. It comes to the lower creation in the form of instinct and to mankind in the form of intuition perceived as inspiration, vision or revelation, received at different levels of consciousness.

Intuition is already seen in childhood, when the child starts to see for itself what is wrong and what is right, but when the child begins to grow it becomes so obstinate that it does not perceive intuition anymore. Intuition disappears when one has no confidence in it, and when one does not listen to the voice that comes from within.

No one exists without a soul, and intuition is the nature of the soul. Therefore, if one is not conscious of one's intuition, it only means that one has forgotten that faculty, but it does not mean that one never had it.

Sometimes, when one's faculty of intuition is blunted, one is placed in such conditions in life, that, through an example, one might be able to see for oneself divine guidance offered in various ways. One might be faced with bad examples, in order to learn from them, but unfortunately one does not always learn from those experiences, because of one's lack of insight.

Divine guidance may speak sometimes in the loving words of a friend or even in the disturbing words of an unwise person, but when one's eyes and ears are closed, even these signs are fruitless.

It can also happen that a person may say something automatically, which could be a reflection of the inner voice of divine guidance. Very often friends tell one something without realizing its effect, and one takes it seriously because it comes from a friend. But if a stranger tells one that same thing, one does not take it so seriously, and when an enemy tells it, one takes it badly, although it might have been an inner warning, and one again misses the opportunity of receiving divine guidance.

Divine guidance is also experienced through temptation, in such forms as wealth, success, or comfort. Such temptations are meant to remind one to keep steadily on the path and not to go astray. But a reward can be most blinding, and as soon as one thinks that one is wealthy or successful forever, one becomes intoxicated. Good fortune is like quicksilver, it runs away quickly, and it is then that one realizes that one should have seen divine guidance hidden behind the veils of temptation, and that it would have been preferable to seek that guidance, rather than give in to passing attractions.

It is the same with friendship, love, sympathy, good health and happiness. One becomes intoxicated by these gifts, one abuses them, one does not value them sufficiently, and one does not appreciate them. In time, though, one is left without them all, and it is then that one begins to realize what one did have, and what one has lost, but it is then too late.

As Omar Khayam says, "life is like a winepress." Every good thing that one receives comes just like grape juice, but these rewards may intoxicate one, and one may forget to be grateful for what one has. The very fact of forgetting that privilege causes the reward to be taken away, and then, when one is empty handed, one begins to value and appreciate what one once had.

Lessons are also taught in the form of a loss in business, a loss of friendship, a loss of health and strength, or a loss of happiness and joy. Very often one says: "How cruel of God!" but one does not realize that many different aspects of Divine guidance had already been offered without these being cherished or understood.

It is out of great compassion that previous opportunities of receiving Divine guidance were offered, if only one would have learnt from them. Divine guidance is in fact an opportunity, no matter in what form of blessing or punishment it might have come, but when it does come; it comes with the purpose of raising one's consciousness to a higher pitch.

The Path of Attainment

The path of attainment can be likened to a narrow and steep path like in the mountains, which leads to the top. Therefore the path of attainment is a most difficult process to follow, as one climbs uphill. But then, after the attainment has been achieved, there is another path, which leads to the goal. It cannot very well be called a downhill path, although the journey on this path is as easy as the one, coming down from the top of the mountain. The path that goes uphill towards attainment requires a continual sacrifice, and if one is not ready to sacrifice, one remains standing either at the foot of the mountain, or on the way. One cannot go further if one cannot make a sacrifice, because the path that comes after attainment has been reached requires renunciation.

Very often people confuse sacrifice² and renunciation, and mixing up these two words is like confusing such words as pleasure and happiness, or intellect and wisdom. The one, who has never made any sacrifice in life, would not understand the difference between sacrifice and renunciation, although renunciation is something quite different to sacrifice. Everything is right in its own time, but when a sacrifice is needed and one makes a renunciation, one goes backward; and when one renounces when a sacrifice is expected, one also goes backwards.

The nature and the character of the sacrifice one has to make vary according to the object one has in view. The greater the object of attainment, the greater is the sacrifice which is demanded; but one must understand rightly what sacrifice really means. It is not always that one has to sacrifice something that one possesses; one often has to sacrifice what one is oneself, and it is then that the greatest difficulties arise.

Very often one sees renunciation in a wrong light when thinking that a sacrifice is not worth it, and then, one is not willing to make that sacrifice, and one renounces the original object of attainment, but this is a wrong conception of renunciation. People very often renounce objects of attainment only because they are unwilling to make enough sacrifices. They value themselves more than the object that they wish to attain, and they weigh the sacrifice that it demands higher than the object of attainment. When they cannot attain their object, they then call it renunciation.

When it comes to human relations such as friendship, love or kindness, one should always be prepared to make some sacrifice, if needed. To the one who has an ideal deep in the heart any sacrifice is always too small; whereas the one who has no ideal will weigh and measure and see if it comes out even or uneven, and shall then call this practicality or wisdom; but it is not wisdom, it is cleverness.

The one who does not give heart and soul to the object of attainment, however small the object may be, is not ready to take the path of indifference until attaining that object; until then, one cannot call one's indifference by the name of renunciation, because, if one cannot attain something, one does not even know what renunciation means. It is the same as with freedom, which is a great thing to achieve, but not to start with; one should begin with discipline. The one who begins with freedom ends with obligations, and the one who begins with renunciation ends with benefits; where there is a wrong beginning, there is a wrong end.

² "Sacrifice" is the surrender of one thing for the sake of another of greater worth or importance. "Renunciation" is letting go or surrender, because the goal is beyond one's reach.

Spirituality needs a greater sacrifice than anything else does. It asks for one's time and for one's thoughts; and the further one goes, the greater is the sacrifice that is awaiting one. The difference between those who advance rapidly on this path and those who go slower lies in their ability to sacrifice.

5 – THE ESOTERIC SCHOOL OF THE SUFI MOVEMENT

The most ancient esoteric school which originated in ancient Egypt, is also traced in all the different periods of the world's history, sometimes known as Sufi schools, and sometimes under other names, where Abraham, Moses, Christ and Mohammed received their initiations and also gave initiations. Other esoteric schools in India, Persia and Arabia also offered inner teachings, all down the ages. The methods adopted in most of the esoteric schools, are not always the same, because every teacher adopts a special method, suited to a particular type of culture.

The Esoteric School of inner culture is the most important Activity in the Sufi Movement, although it is not necessarily of any special interest for all; it is only for the few who earnestly, steadily, and with patience seek for truth all along the journey, and who are conscious of the dignity of a tradition of thousands of years. The methods adopted are not necessarily either Eastern or Western; they are meant to suit the people and the conditions in our time. Therefore, the teachings and the esoteric practices which are given, are in no way restricted by doctrines or tenets nor are they limited to a certain faith or belief.

One might ask, what does one learn in this school and what principle does one have to adopt? There is only one principle and that is the largeness of your heart, which is awakened by struggling with the self, and discovering the nobility of the task.

The initiation received in the esoteric school does not urge upon one a certain discipline of life, nor is one asked to follow certain rules or principles. Nevertheless, initiation awakens in some form or other a principle which is already there naturally; a principle which arises from within the heart. Initiation is regarded as the most sacred initiative, inspiring one to progress forward all along the spiritual journey.

The Sufi Movement, is structured in an organization, and in this organization those who are appointed for certain duties are recognized as such. The different distinctions, which appear in the Esoteric Activity should not be looked upon as being spiritual grades; they should be understood as being appointments corresponding to greater or smaller responsibilities which the active workers in the Divine Cause take upon themselves, while helping to spread the Message world wide.

For those who tread the spiritual path, the first lesson to learn is one of humility and respect for everyone, whatever their degree of spiritual evolution may seem. We are all equal; we are all destined to stand in the same place, shoulder to shoulder, as brother and sister, face to face to God. Nevertheless, the divine grace can favor or raise one from the depth of the earth to the highest heavens, and God's pleasure and displeasure can overlook all goodness, piety and spirituality. Therefore, we must not think that the humblest, the most modest, or the most insignificant, is not spiritual because of not having a Sufi name or for not wearing a robe. The spiritual ideal is too sacred to talk about; it is a subject, which is too delicate to discuss.

A mureed need not be too impatient to progress on the spiritual path; everything is best accomplished in its own time. There is nothing to be learned in regard to spirituality, it comes by itself, and it does not need any learning. If one has tread the path of truth continually, even to the end of one's life, and one has not yet reached the point to which one should have reached, it does not matter. The only important thing is that one goes forward. We are sowing the seed for the next generations to enjoy the crops.

Although The Sufi movement is just now only in its infancy, it is destined to be a world movement, spreading the Message in our time, in all parts of the world. It is the destiny of the Sufi Movement to help spreading the Message in our time, awakening humanity to a new spiritual consciousness. Every mureed is responsible for the dignity of the Sufi Movement. This Message of unity of religious Ideals is not restricted to one nation, or to one race or class, and no doubt it is beyond human powers to even imagine such an undertaking, but this is not a human enterprise; it is a call from above and strikes the need of the day.

May the Divine guidance lead the way to this Goal, which is our innermost sacred Ideal.

Guidance on the Spiritual Path

If one says to a child, "Do not touch the flame because you shall burn your finger," the child shall touch it anyway; it shall only learn not to touch fire after having experienced the pain of a burn. In the same way, esoteric guidance leads nowhere if the disciple is not prepared to receive it. There is also the case of a person who has trust in the guide but who has no intention of making any effort to follow that guidance; but there cannot be any guidance unless the disciple makes appropriate efforts to be guided.

Furthermore, it might happen that a person asks for guidance without really desiring it, but rather with the idea of testing the guide. There are also many who long to guide others although they are not even in a position to guide themselves, and unable to recognize that true guidance is a special vocation which requires absolute spiritual honesty at every level of consciousness. Initiation should not be understood as a commitment to a secret society involved in wonder working and to submission to the laws of a cult. The initiator does not impose any obligations and does not make any claim related to spiritual realization. The offer to guide others is expected to be made with greatest compassion and understanding arising from having had to deal with one's own problems through years of personal experience, so that one is in a position to advise others accordingly.

In reality, everyone is spiritual because life itself is spirit, but along life's path one distances oneself from inborn spirituality. Therefore, spirituality really means rebirth, in the sense that one discovers gradually that one's effort to experience something unknown leads one in fact to that which, though unrecognized, has always been one's birthright. Spirituality can only be explained by way of the heart, not through the word, which is poor and limited to each one's understanding. The more one tries to analyse spirituality, the less one understands about spirituality.

The language of the initiator is not one of words; it is one of meanings, avoiding unrealistic terminologies and speculative descriptions of concepts which cannot be defined, but rather making sure that the nuances in the voice and manner are constructive in their impact and inspiring at the disciple's level of understanding. The work of the initiator is not to teach; it is to tune, but the

initiator does not play on the instrument. During the tuning, both initiator and initiate become more and more in harmony with the inner music experienced along the spiritual path.

The spiritual bond between initiator and initiate is a unique example of perfect friendship because it is inspired by an ideal in search of perfection. In this connection the only suitable offering of recognition expected from the initiate is whole-hearted confidence and trust, whereas the initiator offers appreciative encouragement and blessings. The teacher is a source of contact between the seeker after truth and the light of the goal ahead. The teacher is also the one who brings into the daylight the good sides of the disciple's nature, like nourishing a fragile plant. In so doing, the teacher's guidance awakens growing openness in the heart of the disciple, which is comparable to watering a blossoming plant with vitalized water.

On the path of initiation, there is a harmonious relationship between teacher and disciple, which secures a balanced understanding at all levels. If the tone of the disciple tends to descend in pitch, the teacher reaches down to the level of the disciple and in doing so, displays a true example of spiritual democracy. In the exchange of democratic and aristocratic experiences of spiritual attunement, constant efforts are expected on both sides to preserve an uplifting relationship in every aspects of study, friendship, mysticism and spiritual awakening, all harmonized in perfect balance, inspired by the blessings of Divine Guidance.

6 – THE “UNIVERSELLE” OUR TEMPLE

We have been brought together by destiny, and this has a special meaning. Together, we are building something in higher spheres. This building is a Divine Temple in which God's Message shall be treasured for generations to come. It is designed by the hand of God, and is constructed upon our Ideals of Love, Harmony and Beauty. Our thoughts shall serve as stones and bricks. Our feelings shall structure the walls, and our devotion shall hold this temple erect in service of the Cause.

It is not necessary that it should be built like the palace of the pharaoh, but we must not spare ourselves to add beauty to it in whatever form we may be able to give it. This Temple shall remain on the plane of the earth as a little souvenir of our devotion for the cause, a souvenir of the struggle and fight through which all go in this pioneer work.

We read in the books of the ancient mystics and saints, that they did not come to perform miracles. But if there was a phenomenon it was themselves, it was their beings. Places flourished where holy ones lived, turning deserted areas into a places of pilgrimage.

From a religious point of view, the Message would spread universally from out a Temple of all Religious Ideals, where it would shine like the sun rising above the clouds, and reaching beyond all horizons.

Prayer:

“O Thou, the maker, molder and builder of the universe,
build with Thine own hands the “Universelle”, our Temple
for thy Divine Message of love, harmony and beauty”

II - THE ART OF PERSONALITY

1. Will-power plays a great part in character building, but will-power loses its strength when it yields to every little tendency, inclination, and fantasy. Will-power is developed through fighting against one's own negative tendencies.
2. Self-denial could be understood as a practice done with the desire to overcome undesirable tendencies, inclinations and fantasies – in which case self-denial reveals itself as being mastery over the self.
3. The impression that tendencies, inclinations and fantasies are one's real nature is an illusion, because one is overlooking the fact that these are only an acquired reflection.
4. In order to gain sufficient strength to fight the struggles of life, the first step is to fight with those tendencies which have as consequence one's lack of success in daily affairs.
5. Self-pity is great poverty. Before even having expressed self-pity in words one has already diminished oneself to half of what one really is.
6. During life's journey, the further behind one has left the self, the further one has progressed toward a higher level of consciousness, because when the limited self is lost, the unlimited real self is then discovered.
7. A machine reacts automatically to transmitted impulses, without considering consequences, but the wise person tries to consider the importance of exposing or veiling one's true feelings.
8. There are moments when it is preferable for laughter to be kept back, and perhaps expressed in tears, and there are times where it is preferable for tears to be withheld, and perhaps expressed in smiles.
9. The power of dominating one's reactions might have the appearance of hypocrisy to those who have not yet understood the importance of having mastery over the self.
10. Human nature is such that there is an inner urge to express one's thoughts and feelings and this energy may push out of oneself a word or an action. If, on afterthought, one realizes that one should not have behaved in such a way, it is already too late: the harm has been done. One has given in to a lack of will-power, and also hurt the feelings of others.
11. Every word that is said to one need not be taken so seriously that it upsets one, disturbs one's balance, and robs one of one's will-power to control one's reactions. There are things that matter and there are things that do not matter, but one is often tempted to attach undue importance to unnecessary things.

12. Evaluating the importance or the non-importance of things said does not mean that one should be indifferent to what is said; it only means to have discrimination between that which is important and that which should not demand too much of one's attention.
13. There are some who feel obliged to either say or do something which has been asked of them, and in so doing overlook the importance of being able to evaluate for oneself what should really be said and done.
14. No principle, however good, should be followed blindly. It is not a virtue if, in so doing, harmony is disturbed, or the progress of one's undertakings is handicapped.
15. In character-building, the feeling for one's responsibility towards obligations and duties to others is a main issue. In other words, being true to the confidence of others is a sacred task.
16. To be loyal to those responsibilities entrusted to one is more important than even such experiences as piety and seclusion, in which no obligation is to be expected.
17. Everyone has faults, each one of us, our friends and our enemies. If one wishes, therefore, for one's own faults not to be disclosed to others, it is obvious that one should spare others from one's own judgment.
18. In life, the one is absorbed in pleasures and obsessed by ever-changing moods, whereas the other regards with consideration the pains and pleasures of others.
19. It is often preferable to express one's honest opinion to another rather than to accept the help of a third person as an intermediary. However, in all cases, tact is the only condition for a positive outcome.
20. The basic understanding of the term 'Religion' is, to be conscious of one's duties regarding all relationships, making every possible effort for these to be harmonious. This is the understanding of the Hindu term 'Dharma,' which really defines 'religion' as devotion to a duty, a mission.
21. It is a natural inclination to react defensively to every offense. However, when every effort is made to preserve one's inner equilibrium, the outcome of those efforts is finally a gain, although it might appear to be a loss.
22. A subtle nature shows the sign of intelligence, and as such, is comparable to running water, which has the ability to flow in every direction while retaining the shape of its container, and at the same time is receptive to all reflections.
23. Rock-like personalities, lacking subtlety, are closed to any input, isolating themselves from being enriched by the example that others may have to offer in their actions, thoughts, and feelings.
24. To the question, "Can everything be put into words?" one could answer: there could never be enough words available to be able to express an idea in accordance with the situation and the

importance of what is being communicated, keeping in mind that what is said is not as important as the effect that it has upon others.

25. There is a saying that, “Lack of subtlety in word can turn truth into dogma,” whereas subtlety can turn dogma into truth, depending upon whether one considers truth to be a logical fact or an abstract concept.
26. A simple idea might be expressed in a hundred words, in which case the depth of that idea is overlooked, or it could be said in just a few words which are inspiring to the listener, who then does feel the depth behind the words.
27. There are some who have the need to be outspoken and are always ready to tell the truth in a way which is like hitting another on the head, whereas others have the art of expressing truth in a subtle manner, which brings comfort, harmony and peace to the listener. However, this subtlety of expression is judged by the unsubtle as being untruthful, although the subtle one offers it as a sign of consideration.
28. One need not make an outward display of thanksgiving if one is really grateful. Gratitude, which is the nature of the heart, can be expressed without words, and is best communicated through the truthfulness of one’s feelings. However, it is always helpful to one’s character to feel the need of expressing sincere words of gratitude and appreciation for all that comes one’s way.
29. One often meets people who are constantly complaining about everything — good and bad, right and wrong — and who do not realize that the more one complains, the more one becomes one’s own enemy, because the tendency to see wrong in others robs one of that magnetism which is so much needed to protect oneself against negative influences.
30. The attitude of looking at everything with a smile is a sign of the wise: a smile to a friend, a smile to an enemy, a smile to oneself — all this enables the heart to unfold.
31. As the sunshine lights up the darkened sky, the light within lightens one’s view of others in spite of all wrongs and limitations. This is the key to happiness.
32. There are many who are only concerned with themselves and their belongings, and who feel disturbed when confronted by the problems of others. It is advisable not to waste one’s energy in expressing one’s own point of view in such cases, because it would never be offered consideration, and if one were to do so it would only be thrown back upon oneself.
33. It has often been noticed that one is more successful when avoiding an unnecessary display of one’s plans, because in so doing, the energy working behind one’s ideal loses its strength.
34. A quiet way of working usually has a successful outcome. By making too much noise about things, one creates commotion, and a disturbance in the atmosphere, which has unsuccessful results.

35. In life there are so many responsibilities, so many duties, and there is so much to correct in oneself that it is regrettable if one wastes time correcting others, rather than concentrating on improving one's own deficiencies.
36. Often people give the impression of being deeply interested in other people's troubles, and although this could appear to be altruism, it might also be just simple inquisitiveness, with the true purpose of having the satisfaction of hearing and knowing about other people's misfortunes.
37. There are things that are worthwhile knowing and others that are not worth troubling about. In spending all one's energy to know what one need not know, one loses the opportunity to discover more about one's true self, and in discovering one's responsibilities as a human being resides the purpose of life.
38. Gossiping seems to be a natural tendency, but when one seeks to explain its cause one discovers that behind the need to gossip lies a sense of inferiority, which tries to hide its weakness by diverting the attention of oneself and others to a subject unrelated to oneself.
39. One's inner self is like a dome wherein everything thought, said and done finds either a creative or destructive echo, which has a consequent effect upon one's personality.
40. The more one is conscious of the consequence of one's dealings, the more one shall be able to use every moment in life to the best advantage.
41. Generosity could really be called 'charity of heart.' This charity can be expressed in so many little ways: in offering attention, in caring for others, sometimes just in a smile, a glance or a warm handshake; in making oneself accommodating, welcoming and thoughtful; and in making oneself generous in spirit.
42. No rank, position, or power can prove nobility. True nobility is the generosity of the heart.
43. Depression is often caused by either jealousy or envy, as well as by lack of consideration, tact or generosity.
44. Things appear to be good or bad according to one's own standard, which is usually formed by life's experiences. However, it is possible to distance oneself from one's opinion, creating space for research into the real cause of one's judgment.
45. To be a human being does not necessarily mean to be a person. To be a person means to have a personality, which is to say, characteristics developed according to one's ideals, besides those characteristics which one has inherited by birth and which can be modulated to the best advantage. The practice preparing the way for this ideal is called character-building, whereas the ideal itself is reached through an art, the Art of Personality.
46. The Art of Personality could also be understood as being the Art of Dancing in the Court of Indra, which means in other words, an art developed for the purpose of offering the beauty of one's personality to the Divine.

47. Gentleness plays a very important role in all arts: in the gentle touch of the musician on the instrument, the gentle touch of the paintbrush on the canvas, the gentle touch of the pen shaping thoughts into words, as well as the gentleness of the heart when it has discovered the beauty of the Art of Personality.
48. When seeking to accomplish a project at the cost of the feelings of others, or by sacrificing the qualities of one's own personality, that project can never bring happiness, because in so doing one has lowered one's personality to the level of the project.
49. A noble-minded person has a natural feeling for respect, which is not only expressed in the word but also in the attitude. Keeping one's word of honor under all conditions could be understood as having respect for the trust given to one.
50. In all circumstances of life, a virtue is really only a virtue as of the moment that it has been put to the test, a test which discloses the expression of a natural tendency coming from the heart.
51. A thoughtful person tries to spare others the energy of having to listen to one's speech on a subject for which they have no interest and which offers them no beauty, as the lack of response would represent a loss of one's own magnetism.
52. At times, hearing another speak can be the cause of continual tension, robbing one of time and energy, which is again a loss of magnetism.
53. The Art of Personality, which could be considered similar to all other arts, has no value without being true to the feeling of compassion for those who have not yet had the privilege of understanding the importance of that art.
54. The development of the sense of justice lies in unselfishness; one cannot be just and selfish at the same time.
55. It is in self-judgment that one learns justice, not in judging others, and in so doing one discovers so many faults and weaknesses in oneself that one hesitates to acknowledge them in others.
56. When insulting another, one places oneself upon the same level as the insult, thereby emphasizing the disagreement. What is more, when dwelling on the faults of others, one adopts those same faults oneself through the received impressions.
57. Complaining about the harm caused by others offers no remedy, whereas facing problems oneself offers a chance to right the wrong.
58. Rather than considering oneself to be above all remarks, it is wise to take advantage of the criticism of others, for it can help to correct one's mistakes.
59. One cannot be of any help by emphasizing the wrong-doings of another; it is only through one's own example that one can be of help. In any case, never allow oneself to turn a friend into an enemy, but make every effort to turn an enemy into a friend.

60. The same word spoken in different tones can express different meanings, just as one note can sound either bright or serene when played sharp or flat.
61. A continued inclination to produce beauty helps to discover the art of personality, which is the reflection of the heart.
62. Having once won the love and care of another, it is wise to consider carefully how far one is subject to following the guidance received and how far it might be preferable to use one's own judgment.
63. Never pride oneself on good deeds, for there is always someone else better than oneself, but praise others for their good deeds, because in doing so one really does a good deed.
64. It is wise to be as just as possible with others, overlooking any failure in their judgment.
65. Gracious conduct in others deserves to be graciously received; harsh conduct is preferably received with a smile, always keeping in mind that those behaving incorrectly know no better.
66. When thinking bitterly of another, one awakens unconscious, rebellious feelings which might not have been there before, and when thinking positively of the same person, friendly conduct on both sides might be experienced.
67. The Art of Personality is like music: it requires training; but to a person who is open to the music of life, that art comes naturally.
68. It is an art to see in each person a different attunement to life's puzzling ways, just like the many instruments in an orchestra, which create a variety of sounds although together they produce one music. Each person is recognizable from the mission allotted by Destiny.
69. Outer manners are meaningless when not prompted by an inner impulse.
70. One judges others on grounds of what one considers wrong, not realizing that one's judgment is based on that which one has learned from others, and overlooking the fact that wrong for one person could very well be right for another. What is more, one's insight can also change from one day to the next, allowing one to see right and wrong from an angle quite different from before.
71. That which one wants to hide most are one's own faults, whereas when acknowledging them, one has the chance to master them, if one really wishes to be free from their domination.
72. Conditions in life are not always mastered by conflict. If peace can be brought about, this is certainly preferable to a battle. The next step, however, is to rise above all that results in misunderstanding and useless conflict.
73. While climbing the mountain, if constantly delayed by useless problems one might never reach the top. In the same way, in life, if one is constantly in strife over little things one loses the opportunity to accomplish important things, while others, on the same path, rise higher and higher.

74. Any role that one plays as actor in the game of life tends to become an intoxication. In that spell, one clings to the illusion of one's identifications, even when conscious that one is the victim of an illusionary image.
75. If one is a machine, one lingers on forever in mechanical irresponsibility, but if one is an engineer, one makes the best out of one's destiny, in which case one is even more responsible for any deeds that might weigh as heavy burdens on one's conscience.
76. Good is not necessarily something which is stamped as such, because all things appear different, depending on the angle from which they are considered, being only true to a certain extent in comparison with ultimate truth. Therefore, the main thing to consider in all cases is to make every effort to act righteously according to one's own conscience.
77. Heaven and Hell are the worlds of one's own conscience, created within us in this life, where the laws of cause and effect are not illusionary, but are tangible realities.
78. The illusion of the false self seeks for happiness elsewhere, whereas happiness is found within one's own being, when the heart is open to that discovery.
79. Resignation of the self is the path of love and wisdom, feeling great happiness in offering to others without expecting anything in return. However, resignation cannot be a virtue if it is offered out of weakness or defeat, but only if it is the result of mastery over the self.
80. Spirituality is the unfoldment of inner nobility, the divine heritage of every soul, through which the light of the soul is unveiled, expressing itself in modesty, kindness, graciousness and love.
81. Rather than forcing broad-minded ideas upon the small-minded, it is wiser to formulate those ideas in accordance with the level of understanding of the person involved in the conversation.
82. Self-assertion is sometimes found under the covers of humility and modesty, which are used like a mask to hide pride, conceit, jealousy and envy, qualities encountered as gross pebbles on the path of spirituality.
83. A flower attracts by its fragrance, a fruit by its sweetness, a jewel by its radiance, and a soul by nobility of manner.
84. In Hindu mythology, "Garuda" is the symbol of sound, suggesting that when riding on the flying bird, which represents the power of the sacred word, one does not hear that which one does not wish to hear, one does not see that which one does not wish to see, and one does not express that which one does not wish to express, because the inner experience of the sacred word can never be expressed.
85. The beautiful side in another person's nature is only seen if one wishes to see it, but if one has no feeling of sympathy, one only sees shortcomings.

86. The reward or punishment for one's deeds is first felt within the heart before one comes under the judgment of others, who see right and wrong from their own point of view, lacking insight into the real cause behind the deed.
87. If there is any visible sign of progress on the spiritual path it is seen in the refinement of the feeling heart and in the humility of the attitude, which has become more dignified, showing beauty as an example for all.
88. There are some who express the desire to be corrected, but in reality make an indirect appeal for praise, and if one spoils the game by mentioning a fault, one only strengthens the root of the fault.
89. It is certainly a privilege if one can spare a moment to experience being recharged with spiritual strength, as well as it is best to offer all one's energy to those worldly activities where one is expected to show responsibility and eagerness.
90. Happiness is the birthright of all beings, but it is only there when one becomes oneself a source of happiness for others, without expecting anything in return. This can be accomplished through trying to appreciate what is worthwhile recognizing in another, and overlooking that which disturbs; by respecting the point of view of another, even though it may be contrary to one's own; and by attuning oneself to the rhythm of all those whom one meets and in whose company a hidden guidance might be discovered.
91. If God is love and if love is sacred, one avoids degrading the value of that sacredness through vain utterances. Love is in itself a revelation, for which neither study nor meditation nor religious piety is required when once the sacred spark has been kindled. Seeking spirituality without love is a vain search, because if spirituality is to be found anywhere it is in the heart, once the spark of love has grown into a glowing flame which burns out the illusion of the false self.
92. Self-denial does not mean renouncing life's duties nor nature's sources of happiness. It means to deny that little self which creeps up at every possible occasion, eclipsing the bright light of the Divine Presence. Happiness means making the right use of those means which have been granted for the purpose of accomplishing the duties which are expected of us, even though our vision of right and wrong may not always be in line with that of others.
93. Happiness is a birthright, however wisdom inspires the renunciation of projects which are either contrary to one's conscience, or obtained at the cost of the suffering of others. Seen from this angle, renunciation does not mean killing a desire, but rather realizing its true purpose, and recognizing that when obtained, both object and desire seem equally small. If one clings to the object of one's desire once obtained, one falls beneath one's own real values.
94. The training of the ego does not necessarily require a life of renunciation. It is rather a test of balance and of wisdom. Such a training implies the understanding of the reason behind a desire, of what might be the consequences of obtaining satisfaction, of whether or not one can afford the necessary price, and of whether it is a righteous or an unjust desire.

95. Under the spell of a desire, one's senses of justice, logic and duty are muted by the grip of the ego. In that state of mind, one judges according to one's perceived best interests, one reasons from the point of view of selfishness, and one adheres to standards of duty which are darkened by one's all-pervading image of self. It is then difficult to discriminate between right and wrong, between that which is really necessary and that which is not, and between that which brings happiness and that which leaves sorrow.
96. Self-consciousness displays endless facets, some reflecting inferiority complexes, such as the need for praise and admiration, and others arising from superiority complexes, such as the feeling of satisfaction in humiliating and dominating others, with an unquenchable thirst for self-assertion. The more one tries to dissimulate one's weaknesses behind a false mask, the more one's self-confidence collapses like a sand castle under the waves of the rising sea.
97. Life could be pictured as a building with doors smaller than one's own stature. At every attempt to go through, one knocks one's head against the door frame, leaving no other device than to bend the head when passing through the door.
98. Modesty is not necessarily weakness; it is a feeling which rises from the living heart which is secretly conscious of its inner beauty, while at the same time veiling itself even from its own sight.
99. How few realize that the heart is like a dome, within which all, whether good or bad, re-echoes, creating thereby either uplifting or disturbing influences that become in time the characteristics of one's own personality. The finer the ego, the less disturbing it is to others, although life's trials become much harder to endure. A thorn does not harm its likeness, but it can destroy the frailty of a delicate rose. Nevertheless, life is better lived as a rose, with its inspiring color and fragrance, than as a thorn among other thorns. This is what is understood as the art of personality.
100. The art of personality is like the art of music, wherein ear and voice training are indispensable in discerning the pitch of a tone and its interval from another for the purpose of establishing harmony in the melody. When relating this same ideal of harmony to human relations, it is clear that the beauty of the personality shines out in such tendencies as a friendly attitude in word and action, spontaneity in the art of offering one's love without any expectation of return, and in the awakening of the true sense of justice, all of which are the expressions of the heart.
101. The charm of the personality, which is expressed in beauty, is also deeply felt in the tone of sincerity. Polished manners without sincerity are not really beautiful, and frankness without beauty does not reveal the truth in all sincerity.
102. One cannot excuse negative behavior by saying, "I was only born as a thorn and not as a rose," for unlike a plant we have all been granted the gift of free will to develop as a rose rather than just persisting as a thorn. All disagreements and misunderstandings fall away the moment that one's spirit has become noble. What use is religion, philosophy and mysticism if these do not awaken that spirit which is divine?

103. It is the gratification of the ego which builds up its strength, and the more satisfaction acquired, the greater becomes the desire, thereby enslaving one to one's own self, besides awakening the fighting spirit of others whose egos are consequently disturbed.
104. Among the various subjects pertaining to education it has become obvious that basic notions of behavior, discipline, concentration, communication and the attunement to sacredness tend to be disregarded under the reign of materialism in our time. It is therefore most imperative that all those who believe in the ideal of the art of personality realize that it is in self-respect that one awakens to the silent music of the heart, and that through offering sincere respect to others one forgets oneself, developing thereby inner security and self-confidence.
105. It would be wise to be aware of the human tendency to bring down to one's own level of understanding those concepts with which one is confronted, conditioning them through the screens of ready-made opinions and interpreting them according to arbitrary evaluation.
106. Truth does not need to prove itself; it is untruth which fights for self-assertion. What is said and done does not always reveal the true purpose; it is the attitude hidden behind the words and actions which can truly express the innermost intention.
107. What could we really do for others? This question is already answered when we realize that the first effort to be made is to vanquish our own shortcomings, doubts, fears, and worries, and to accommodate ourselves to all circumstances, becoming thereby an example for others, whether or not we appreciate their understanding of good and bad, so that they may some day pick the fruits of our experiences.
108. Obviously, one can help others only insofar as one is able to solve one's own problems. Paradoxically, however, the more problems one is able to solve, the more difficult are the ones that arise, and yet one becomes at the same time more and more able to help others while solving one's own problems, inasmuch as one's example might inspire others to solve theirs.
109. The powerful steam engine serves no purpose without rails to roll on, and rails are worthless without an engine to roll on them. The rails symbolize that wisdom with which the ego can ultimately be directed, while the steam engine symbolizes that ego drive which can, in time, be brought under control. The ego's energy varies from day to day and from moment to moment, in accordance with circumstances, conditioning thereby the success or failure of our relationships with others.
110. In all we do and all we say, and in all we think and feel, there is a tremendous power of suggestion constantly manifesting. It is up to us to realize this in all human relationships, where wisdom implies employing that great power for useful and uplifting purposes. When the ego is involved, however, and that power is used for negative purposes, sooner or later one inevitably becomes the victim of one's own selfish motives.
111. The Art of Personality is neither a claim of honors, nor is it a vain display of ranks, decorations and distinctions of false pride. It is a banner of wisdom around which persons of all convictions are united in one and the same ideal, dancing to the divine music heard in the heart.

112. The personality of the mystic, called in Sufi terms, “Akhlak Allah” or divine manner, is seen in the attunement of thought, speech and action to the highest pitch. It is a manner freed from pride, inspiring godliness in all expression, a manner that springs forth as a divine blossom.
113. As workers in the cause of Love, Harmony and Beauty, it is our most religious duty to practice the Art of Personality, so that we might some day become living examples of these ideals while dancing the sacred dance in the Temple of the Divine found within our hearts.

III - INNER TEACHINGS

1. Sufism, or wisdom, related to the word Sophia, is not only acquired through knowledge but also by the grace of intuition. Sufism is not a dogmatic doctrine nor a new religion; Sufism has always been, just as wisdom has always been. Sufism could best be understood as a balanced condition amongst knowledge, wisdom, intuition and adaptation to cultural circumstance.
2. Spirituality expresses itself in different garbs, although all mystics are inspired by one and the same truth. It is the lack of understanding of this truth which has given rise to religious differences throughout the ages.
3. Real spirituality is living a life of fullness, with deep insight into all that comes one's way, and raising one's consciousness by expanding the radius of the heart, while at the same time forgetting the self.
4. Spirituality is the unfoldment of inner nobility, the divine heritage of every soul, through which the light of the soul is unveiled, expressing itself in modesty, kindness, graciousness and love.
5. What use is religion, philosophy, morality, or spirituality if there is not an inclination to sympathize, to harmonize, and to forgive? It is not by working wonders that one proves one's divine origin. If it is seen in anything, it is in the aristocracy of the soul and in the democracy of the heart, meaning the dignity of the personality and the unconditional brotherly attitude.
6. Asceticism is certainly a means of developing inner realization, but of what use is such an attainment if one is not human in spirit? Balance in all things is the greatest responsibility in the life of a mystic.
7. One cannot stop the natural course of life with either material or spiritual abilities, just as one cannot hope to stop the rain simply because one does not wish to get wet. In the same way, one cannot oblige others to act and think as one wishes, but one could make every effort to become an example to those who might thereby be inspired.
8. Whether one loves one's fellow humans or whether one loves God, when face to face with the sovereignty of love all traces of the self as lover disappear in that light where there is neither "mine" or "thine."
9. As smoke obscures the brightness of the flame, the light of the soul is dulled by the consciousness of the self. This explains why some are deeply moved by the beauty of music, poetry and art, whereas others, when the feeling for subtlety has not opened their hearts, are as blunt as stone.

10. Self-denial does not mean denying all things, but rather an awakening to the reality of the true self within, liberated to the extent that it resounds like a church bell to whatever strikes upon its feelings.
11. The heart is like an open window through which the light of the soul is projected upon the mind, and through which the impressions pictured in the mind are reflected back upon the soul.
12. When wakening from a dream, one might be sorry not to know the end of the story, and wish to go on dreaming. Similarly in life, the intoxication of one's activities can be so enslaving that one easily overlooks their pointlessness.
13. The voice of the spheres is an accumulation of an infinitude of frequencies which together resound as a universal tone, audible in many ways as it awakens within each feeling heart. When the receptive channels of the five senses are inverted, the inaudible then resounds at an abstract level of consciousness.
14. The origin of every impulse is divine, intelligible in different ways according to the degree of one's comprehension.
15. An impulse is a power in itself, and each time that the will creates an impulse, it is drawing that energy from the cosmos, which in turn returns new strength to the will.
16. The essence of life, manifested in nature, may be recognized in the flowers as perfume, in the elements as colors, and in the rocks as precious gems, all of which come as blessings to the one who discovers the divinity in all creation.
17. Do not look for thanks or appreciation for all the good done to others, nor let your good deeds stimulate vanity, but do good for the sake of goodness alone, without even the thought of being recompensed.
18. There are two main forces in life, one called "Kaza" and the other called "Kadr." The one force is all-powerful and the other is only that which is at one's individual disposal. The contrast between the two is experienced when, during the intoxication of an initiative, a much greater force suddenly blocks all attempts and one cannot proceed. This is where one's wisdom is put to the test.
19. In every person one or more elements predominate, forming the characteristics of one's behavior. The influence of the earth element is stability, that of water is receptivity, of fire is enthusiasm, of air is inspiration, and the ether is the all-pervading light of the Divine Presence.
20. Nothing has an absolute value. It is the ideal pursued, either material or spiritual, that lends it worth.
21. As storms disturb the ocean and the waves upset the surface, in the same way earthly passions disturb the spirit and upset the mind, causing restlessness which results in useless turmoil.

22. The universe is an infinite mechanism and we are all part of it. In spite of all our worldly knowledge or spiritual attunement, at times things go wrong because we are all part of the general scheme; we cannot always expect the ocean to be without storms.
23. The intensity of thought, speech and action are related to the power of the feeling heart, and even will-power is subject to that same source within, but wisdom is the holding of all impulses in perfect balance.
24. In all projects, first question oneself to be sure that there is no inner conflict. Only then shall one be convinced that success was already planned by providence.
25. Everything that one sees could at the same time be audible, and all that one hears could at the same time be visible. When a pebble is thrown into a pool, one sees the horizontal circles on the surface of the water but one does not see the circle growing beneath the surface, as well as also above, forming in reality a perfect reflection which goes on spreading in the infinite.
26. There are two aspects to all creation, the seen and the unseen aspect. In Sufi terms these are called “Sifat” and “Zat”, also referred to in Vedantic terms as “Prakriti” and “Purusha.” The one is the known aspect of oneself with which we identify ourselves and the other is the unknown. The aspect which is always apparent keeps one limited within the boundaries of self-consciousness, whereas the unknown aspect, the spirit, is free from limitations. It is when closing the eyes to the known aspect of oneself that one discovers the reality of the “Unseen.”
27. When treading the spiritual path, a battery is created out of three principles: self-discipline, self-confidence and compassion. It is understandable that the value of retention must be recognized so as to avoid the useless waste of the magnetism which is accumulated all along the path of self-realization.
28. If there is any visible sign of progress on the spiritual path it is seen in the refinement of the feeling heart, and in the humility of the attitude which has become more dignified, showing beauty as an example for all.
29. Heaven and hell are the worlds of one’s own conscience, and that which survives oneself and which one has oneself created is subject to the laws of cause and effect in the reality of this world.
30. One seeks elsewhere for happiness, whereas happiness in reality is right there within one’s own being, providing that the want for happiness for oneself has been overcome.
31. One often confuses truth with fact, but truth is of such a nature that it can eventually overrule facts when they are based on illusion.
32. If truth were so small as to be contained within the limitation of words, it could not be called truth.

33. Any role that one plays as an actor on the stage of life soon becomes an intoxication. Under that spell, one clings to one's identifications, even while realizing the illusory nature of those false images.
34. Whatever be one's condition, whether bright or gloomy, as soon as one discovers that nothing is really absolute, one realizes that all is but a moment's game, and all values are only worth what they are in comparison to others.
35. Consciousness is a spark of intelligence and intelligence is the light of the soul. Therefore, the brighter the spark of intelligence, the more the field of one's awareness expands, and the broader becomes the outlook; whereas, the smaller the field of consciousness, the dimmer is the light and the shallower is one's insight.
36. Consciousness is not tailored to a standard size of human thinking. Human thought can expand to unlimited horizons, because the mind occupies as much space of consciousness as one's thinking has expanded beyond the limitations of the self. This explains why the world can be as small as an atom for one and as large as space for another.
37. That which one wants to hide the most are one's own faults, although these should rather be acknowledged if one really wishes to be freed from them.
38. Very often the term "Initiation" is misunderstood as a commitment to a secret cult, but it is rather to be understood as an initiative freely taken on the path of spiritual liberty. On this path, each step leads to the next one, every step being a new initiative with a broader outlook. In this unfoldment, the initiator's guidance is seen as a source of inspiration to discover the light within.
39. The one giving initiation acts like a brother or sister to all, showing understanding for the opinion of others, speaking to each person in their own style, promoting the unity of religious ideals, offering all that is expected while expecting nothing in return, and silently attuning both self and others to the Spirit of Guidance.
40. The diverse names and forms of the world's religious tendencies are like veils covering the phenomena of the Spirit of Guidance manifested at all levels of evolution and reaching far beyond human concepts of faith and belief. Therefore, the solution to the problem of the day is the awakening to the divinity in all beings.
41. What we think of as "I" is our own perception of an individual entity functioning as part of an entire network, but as long as the "I" concept is limited by the idea of duality, such as 'my world' as distinct from the Divine all-pervading presence, one's soul cannot be at rest. A drop of water is an entity as long as it is seen as a drop. However, as soon as that drop falls back into the ocean, there is only ocean water and the drop is no more.
42. Among the numberless goals in our lives, which nevertheless could not be accomplished in an entire lifetime, a balanced condition of body, mind and heart are certainly essential ideals to be considered in either spiritual or material activities.

43. To the question whether a material ideal could be an obstacle to spiritual awakening, one might say that a material ideal could be seen as a humble contribution to the fulfillment of the “Divine Purpose” and could very well blossom into a spiritual one, since the entire creation is in a constant state of formation according to a central theme.
44. The purpose of life is not only fulfilled in rising to the greatest heights, but also by diving deep into the deepest depths, whereby the self is lost, but finds itself again as a result of the widening of its spheres of consciousness. It is like the seed which finds the fulfillment of its purpose when rising as a plant and spreading out in full bloom in the rays of the sun after having been laid deep beneath the earth.
45. One values most that which one has made the greatest effort to obtain, although, paradoxically, the most valuable achievements are sometimes obtained with the least effort. Regrettably, one does not always realize the true value of such achievements, and when the sense of gratitude has not been awakened those achievements were in vain.
46. Undoubtedly the self, the consciousness, rejoices or suffers unrest from positive or negative thoughts. It is when losing hold of itself and focusing upon the Divine Presence that the consciousness becomes a radiant channel through which the soul is ultimately the spectator of all happenings, but as in a mirror, the impressions reflected do not leave any enduring trace upon the soul’s immaculate surface.
47. The term ‘belief’ is used when referring to an idea or an ideal which one respects, recognizing the wisdom which it reflects. However, to follow a belief for fear of the consequences of not acting in accordance to rules is dogmatic obedience.
48. Some beliefs and superstitions descend from ancestral sources, while others are psychological impulses, which grow in time into customs and local habits, becoming part of the identity of specific cultures. There is always some wisdom hidden in every belief, but one often confuses belief with Truth. Dogmatic belief nails one to the ground, rather than helping one to fly up into higher spheres.
49. The Hindus greet by joining the palms of the hands, symbolizing the meeting of the two powers of the Kundalini energy, Ida and Pingala. The Chinese greet by first clasping the hands and then touching each other’s clasped hands, symbolizing an exchange of the Divine power within. The Arabs shake both hands together symbolizing the exchange of that same power. The Persians press one hand to the heart, suggesting being united wholeheartedly with the Divine Power. The Western custom of kissing both cheeks also symbolizes an exchange of the Jelal and the Jemal flows of Prana.
50. The ringing of bells and gongs in all religions not only indicates a call for prayer, but a mystical insight into this tradition reveals the attunement of the heart of the worshipper to the resonance of the bells, which builds up a network of vibrations creating spiritual intoxication. The mystical secret of the magic of sound has been abundantly described by the sages of all times.

51. Wisdom has been expressed all down the ages in different symbolic ways and forms appropriate to the time, by the understanding of which the seeker carefully unravels the veils of Truth, disclosing beauty which words are inadequate to reveal.
52. There is an awakening in understanding deeper subjects which do not necessarily find place in the average mode of thinking, but are expressed in symbols which speak without words and thereby offer a means of preserving the beauty of Truth for ages and ages.
53. Light has always been most attractive in such aspects as fire, jewels, and all that is bright and shining like the sun and the stars. This inspired the ancient cultures to worship the Sun as the symbol of divinity, and later, a golden disc above the head symbolized greatness or wisdom. The “Zardash” of the Zoroastrians was pictured above the heads of the great rulers, and this same symbol is also found related to saints and angels in the Christian faith, as well as in Hindu and Buddhist temples.
54. When seen as a symbol of life, the vertical line of the cross illustrates activity, whereas the horizontal line denotes obstruction and limitation. This depicts the path of self-denial, the sacrifice with which the seeker on the inner path is confronted when possessed by Truth. Crucifixion on the path of Truth means effacing the “I” concept and replacing it with “Thou art,” whereby the veil that hides the Divine Presence within is removed.
55. The Egyptian symbol of a golden disc, symbolic of the light of the spirit, flanked on either side by wings and snakes, illustrates the three powers of the spirit: The sound of the Universe, the color of the five elements, and the energy of action. The light of the spirit, like the light of the sun, contains all the colors of the rainbow, which may also be seen in the five elements, the characteristics of which are as follows: spreading (earth), flowing (water), rising (fire), turbulence (air), withdrawing (ether).
56. The manifestation of the spirit within different dimensions and directions is symbolized in various ancient cultures, such as for example in the Hindu theory related to the Kundalini energy with its two complementary streams, Ida and Pingala, the creative and the receptive powers.
57. The specific creative and receptive principles which the Sufi mystics call Jelal and Jemal, also portrayed as the Sun force and the Moon inspiration, manifest their influences either on the right side of the body or on the left side, flowing alternately through the right nostril or the left one. The secret of all success resides in the appropriate use of these energies, in harmony with the type of activity in which one is involved.
58. The Dove, which dwells in the skies while at the same time being dependent upon the laws of the earth, symbolizes the personality of those spiritual beings whose dwelling place is both heaven and earth. In the fulfillment of God’s Message to humanity, the bringer of the Message is never really separated from the divine origin, even amidst the commitments and limitations of human attachments and experiences, throughout the flight from heaven to earth and from earth to heaven in answer to the call.
59. In the Sufi emblem, the heart with wings signifies the longing for freedom from the self, when attuned to higher Ideals. The crescent moon, which receives the light of the sun and

increases thereby into fullness, symbolizes receptivity of the human heart to the light of the Divine Presence. The five-pointed star represents the ever-radiant light of the Spirit of Guidance offered to the human heart as it liberates itself from the limitations of the self, in response to the Divine Light within.

60. The dot is the essence of all forms, for in the extension of the dot resides the source of every line. Obviously, the extension in direction, horizontal or vertical, determines the angle and orientation of every line, be it up or down, to the right or the left. In Sanskrit, the dot is called Bindu, which means source and origin of all creation. The dot means zero but, paradoxically, it can expand into a circle in which there is infinite movement or perpetual motion, and therefore, from a mystical point of view, nothing and everything are two opposite expressions of one and the same reality.
61. Prana can be projected to any part of the body, charging that part with radiance and magnetism, but that phenomenon only occurs when the breathing technique has been appropriately developed.
62. Just as the most beautiful composition would not sound right on an untuned instrument, in the same way the magic powers of the Prana only circulate freely along with the Kundalini stream and along the nadis, when those fine channels have been awakened to the luminosity of the all-pervading Divine Presence. It is then that one becomes conscious of the Chakras which reveal themselves as open windows looking onto an unknown world where there is no longer any frontier between reality and unreality.
63. Breath is the central theme to be considered in life, since it governs the physical and mental mechanism of our entire being. Along with the importance of the purity of the breath channel, rhythm in breath is the magic key which can unlock all the treasures which the breath can offer.
64. When the rhythm of the breath is in disorder, all things go wrong and one shows the appearance of an unbalanced state, either physically or mentally, or both. When the breath is brought under control, it has a revivifying influence, absorbing out of space both the physical and metaphysical energies required for our well-being.
65. When the breath is developed, becoming so to speak a magnetic current of higher consciousness, it is then projected as rays of light. These rays fall upon the screen of the mind like the beams of a searchlight, helping the mind to see in all clarity the object of thought.
66. The quality of intuition and inspiration is consequent to the intensity of the rays of light shining upon the surface of the mind, and to the ability of the mind to channel received impressions to the correspondent functions of expression, through which they are then manifested as word, color or tone.
67. The vibrations of the breath are the substance of all expression. The spoken word strikes upon the heart like a hammer upon a gong, but the power of breath also strikes just as intensely, even without the help of the spoken word. This explains why the breath of a spiritually awakened person is vitalizing and is communicative of love and energy.

68. The nature of the mind is to hold impressions. This faculty is called memory. As a consequence, a thought is held in the mind whether beneficial or not, without consideration of what might be the outcome of this retention. One often retains a thought of pain or of unkindness without realizing the consequences of discomfort and distress for oneself and for others.
69. Concentration is practiced for the purpose of gradually developing willpower, which helps in making a better use of one's faculties. One tries to remember the impressions which are worth remembering, and to wipe out those which it is preferable to forget, freeing oneself thereby from that which disturbs one's peace of mind.
70. Anything that weighs upon the mind, such as worry, fear, remorse or guilt, keeps the mind attuned to a pitch which is below its natural tone, preventing one from functioning efficiently. To be so hindered is like standing in front of a barrier, not seeing that one has a hammer in one's hands with which the obstacle could be overcome. One seldom realizes that the problem lies within oneself alone.
71. Unwanted impressions may be disposed of in various ways; some could be buried peacefully under the earth; others drowned in the water so that they never rise again to the surface; some burned to ashes; others shaken away like dust in the wind, and still others deleted from the mind as though they had never even been there. These de-concentration exercises are usually done in attunement to the appropriate element.
72. Often questions arise concerning such concepts as good and bad as well as other ethical standards, which are not always understood in the same way by the followers of different religions, cultures and ethnic customs. Could one perhaps say that wrongdoing causes discomfort to the conscience, whereas righteousness brings satisfaction? But again, how good, really, would the righteous one be if, after doing good all one's life, one still had not found happiness?
73. Harmony is brought about by attuning oneself to all beings and all circumstances. When one is not able to tune oneself to others and to circumstances, but instead, tries to tune others to oneself, it is then that the string breaks, so to speak, for each is destined to a given pitch, and it is as if one were attempting to tune the string of a cello to the pitch of a violin.
74. Belief is a natural tendency which persists in its chosen course like a stream of water flowing peacefully onwards until it strikes a rock standing in the way. The rock could be understood as the stubborn resistance of reason, which claims the support of facts, and obviously the two — resistance and faith — shall sooner or later come in conflict with each other. When both have overcome their differences, one speaks no more of belief, but rather of conviction.
75. Truth knows no boundaries, as long as one's belief is built upon conviction and is guided by the light within.
76. One belief cannot possibly be the right belief for all. When adopting another person's belief out of consideration or weakness, one could very well be giving oneself away to something that one might subsequently regret. If, on the other hand, one closes the doors of one's heart

to another person's belief, which might offer guidance and enrichment, one is missing a precious opportunity. Therefore a balanced insight is required in all circumstances.

77. It is love which motivates the power of the mind and with the help of which thought becomes clear and creative. Like the plant which springs forth from the earth, nourished by rain and sun, so does love, which is of Divine origin spring forth from within the heart, nourished by devotion, prayer, and meditation.
78. Various interpretations are given to the concept of spirituality. It is seen as holiness or melancholy, as wonder working or as fanatical piety, but because spirituality cannot be confined to any form, it cannot be defined. For a saintly person, spirituality consists in seeking to please God and God's creation, without any other purpose than spreading happiness, which is God in spirit.
79. When one concentrates on the Earth element, which suggests the concept of stability, the breath adopts the tendency to spread. When one concentrates on the Water element, which suggests the concept of mobility, the breath adopts the tendency to absorb. When one concentrates on the Fire element, which suggests the concept of energizing, the breath adopts the tendency of action. When one concentrates on the Air element, which suggests the concept of upliftment, the breath adopts the tendency to accommodate. When one concentrates on the Ether element, which suggests the concept of light, the breath adopts the tendency of receptivity.
80. Some believe that their purpose in life is clear, and for others it is perplexing, but whatever one pursues, whether of a material or a spiritual nature, if one has not discovered the Divine Presence within, one has not realized what is the true purpose of life.
81. In a gain a loss may be hidden, and a loss might result in a gain.
82. However small a project may be, when once it is decided, it must be accomplished, not necessarily for the benefit of the object but for the experience in perseverance, because each accomplishment is a step toward a higher goal.
83. True satisfaction is only experienced when rising above one's accomplishments, from which perspective one may perhaps realize that the price paid was greater than the value of the object won. Nevertheless, the difference will be credited in the form of greater experience when setting out on the next project.
84. There is a belief in all religious traditions, according to which unseen help is granted when invoking the grace of saints and great beings, whose images symbolize prosperity and guidance, and it is undeniable that when love and devotion is strong, the heart becomes a receptacle of the positive influences thereby conveyed.
85. Just as there are rails on which a train travels, in the same way, tracks are traced in our lives along which the wheels of our actions roll either smoothly or chaotically, according to the impulse of our will-power. While traveling on the journey through life, one gradually discovers that there are two basic guiding rails in our lives: the unknown (Karma), or destiny, and the known (Dharma), or duty. During the journey it could occur that the wheels might

- slip off the rails owing to lack of self-discipline, in which case we only have ourselves to blame if one is not acting in harmony with the object to which one is predestined.
86. Imagination can play surprising roles in life, either beneficial or negative ones. Under the spell of superstition, one becomes the slave of one's own preconceived ideas, giving in to such states of mind as pessimism and depression, which is like the end of a path which leads nowhere.
 87. When unaware of the power of the mind-world, one's thoughts become entangled as in a spider's web which constitutes an impediment to one's own expectations. One's condition might then induce others into the labyrinth of one's own negative thinking.
 88. Autosuggestion can attract or repel whatever situation one wishes to create for oneself or for others, and can very well either determine success and happiness, or be the cause of failure and destruction.
 89. Focusing a thought is like striking an arrow, carrying with it either good or bad feelings. This is why it is so important to be aware of the effect of one's thoughts, as well as of the cause. Psychic power is like a spring of running water, and the thought is like the system through which the water is channeled.
 90. It is when we become sympathetic to the beliefs of others that we then realize that the purest essence of religion is silently manifesting in all religious ideals, inspiring the believer and offering inner security to all those who listen to the voice which is constantly coming from within.
 91. Wisdom has no claim of its own, but it does have great Ideals, among which one basic one is to help others in discovering that the purpose of religion is Unity and that Unity is the purpose of all religions. Therefore, the one flame of wisdom which kindles the many candles illustrating the various religions, symbolically represents the Spirit of Guidance shining in all and at all times.
 92. All life is one and the same abstract consciousness, which manifests in as many rays as there are beings. Manifestation is, so to speak, the crystallization of abstract consciousness within a framework or "Akasha," wherein life is all-pervading, just as it is throughout all space. Within the framework of the material body, abstract consciousness becomes intelligible as different vibrations such as light in various shades specific to the five basic elements which contain the secret code of our planet Earth.
 93. In our earnest strivings to become living examples of what wisdom really implies, we are constantly reminded that wisdom does not need to prove itself; it is the lack of wisdom which fights for self-assertion. Wisdom is there when the mask of the ego is removed, whereupon there is peace in our hearts, and when being ourselves in harmony with the Divine Presence within we feel the need to offer peace to others.
 94. It is along the flow of the incoming breath that the different characteristics inherent in the five elements are channeled by way of the five senses to the mind world. These energies,

which correspond to the natural tendencies of the elements, condition the breath with such characteristics as spreading, flowing, rising, penetrating, and unfolding.

95. Movement is induced by the law of attraction. Opposite forces, the creative or “Jelal” and the receptive or “Jemal,” seek to complete each other within the capacity of a third force, “Kemal,” which is neutral, being at the same time the source of all energy and the culmination of Jelal and Jemal, wherein their natures lose all creative and receptive characteristics.
96. When the breath happens to be under the spell of the creative energy Jelal, there is a natural tendency to act positively, to take decisions, to start projects and to defend one’s rights. Under the spell of the receptive energy Jemal, one is resigned, communicative and well disposed to inspiration. The Kemal energy, which is life itself, is beyond distinctions and differences. When attuned to this energy, one finds oneself face to face with the Divine will, and all material interests lose their hold because both the creative and the receptive dispositions are in a state of suspension.
97. Since the breath is life itself, and since the influence of the five elements is coordinated through the power of the breath, it is clear that by developing mastery over its volume, length, rhythm and subtlety, one develops a strong hold on one’s condition, as well as on one’s place in life
98. There are three characteristic types of breath. In one, there is no distinguishable rhythmic count, which carries the risk of developing a chaotic disposition. In the second type of breath, the inhalation and the exhalation follow chosen rhythmic patterns, resulting in the awakening of specific attributes. This breath is used during such auto suggestive practices as Wazifa, Fikar and Kasab. The third type of breath is the perfectly balanced one, which arises automatically during meditation, where no specific rhythm is consciously created, but the breath flows in accordance with a subtle pattern which corresponds to the nature of the meditation.
99. The five senses are like windows able to be opened or closed. When open, the senses receive impressions from the outside world such as those through the sense of smell, the sense of taste, the sight, the hearing, and the touch. When closed, the senses are then surrendered to the imagination of the seer who perceives within. This is where individual consciousness dissolves into cosmic consciousness.
100. Moses is known to have held light in the palms of his hands. Zoroaster and Christ are also often pictured with rays of light shining from the palms of the hands, which suggests the radiance which can be awakened in the fingertips and which can be directed to any part of the body. This experience is also known in the practice called Shagal, related to the inversion of the sense of touch, also called the Divine caress.
101. In reality there is no darkness. Life is light omnipotent and omnipresent. When spreading or scattered, light appears to be dim, but when gathered it becomes bright. Therefore, the practice called Shagal could be seen as an experience of drawing life forces to a center, a center within one’s consciousness. The idea is to reverse the sensory faculties so that they become conscious of the spirit within, the true seer. In other words, when closing the senses

- to all incoming impressions, one finds oneself face to face with an open window upon the innermost depth of one's own being.
102. In Hindu metaphysics, "Nada Brahma" or Sound-God, is referred to as being life's secret. This is so because sound is motion and nothing takes place without energy of some kind resulting in motion. This esoteric understanding of the mystery of sound is also found in the practice called Shagal, related to the inversion of the sense of hearing.
 103. The "Antarajani," or knower of the abstract world within, sees light with closed eyes, hears the inner sound (called Anahad or Sarmad) with closed ears, and experiences all the other inner sensations while directing the consciousness inwardly, a practice also called Suran or Suara or Swara Yoga in Hindu terms. The first and further steps are known as Sultani Nasurah, Sultani Mahmud and Sultani Kaskar.
 104. From an esoteric point of view, the breath unfolds according to two characteristic conditions: Uruj and Nazul. In the inhalation, the Uruj breath draws within us the influences of the cosmos. During the Nazul exhalation, the breath projects outwardly the influence of our own inner condition. In the first case it is our state of mind which is affected negatively or positively by the conditions of our surroundings, and in the second case, the surroundings are affected negatively or positively by our state of mind.
 105. The cosmic energies of Uruj and Nazul are also traced in nature's unfoldment, such as in Spring and Autumn, in sunrise and sunset, and in the waxing and waning moon. Since we represent the world in miniature, all of nature's characteristics can also be found within us. This explains why the rhythmic rise and fall of our breath has such great powers upon our physical and mental conditions, and consequently upon our behavior and our general conditions in life.
 106. Activities which would be successful during the rising power of Uruj, would not be advisable during Nazul, and vice versa. Just as the sun rises, reaches the zenith and sets, in the same manner the light of the mind shines brilliantly while Uruj prevails, overwhelming all limitations of reason and logic. The same light arrives at the zenith when a project reaches its culmination, which corresponds to the Kemal condition. Thereafter comes a third phase, in which the initial enthusiasm starts to decline, referred to as Nazul. This is followed by a fourth phase, which the Sufis call Zaval, when the light of the mind is no longer focused upon the project, but rests in a state of inertia at the fall of action following the project's accomplishment.
 107. All elements are present, to a greater or lesser degree, in all of nature's creation. Similarly, in each element all the colors of the rainbow may be seen, although one specific color is predominant in each.
 108. The elements present different characteristics. For instance, the earth element, which has the tendency to spread, also inspires stability and determination. The water element, which has the tendency to flow, also inspires movement in one's enterprises. The fire element, which has the tendency to rise, also offers energy and inspires action. The air element, which has the tendency to disperse, also inspires resignation to the divine will. The ether element, which has an uplifting tendency, also inspires meditation and inner contemplation. It is the

fire element which makes one rise in anger against another, while the water element in one's nature has a subduing effect. The earth element is responsible for our preconceived ideas, and the air element is a handicap when taking decisions.

109. The power of breath is also related to other major factors such as the opposite polarities of Jelal and Jemal. The Jelal nature is courageous, determined and expressive, whereas the Jemal nature is receptive, kind and inspiring.
110. The two polarities, called Shiva and Shakti in Vedantic terms, may be likened to the sun and the moon. The Kemal condition is the simultaneous activity of both polarities, resulting in the annihilation of the very nature of each, and creating thereby a perfect balance.
111. Paradoxically, the Kemal condition produces failure in material activities but is the source of spiritual attunement where the annihilation of the self prevails. This is called in Hindu poetic terms, "the bowl of poison of Mahadeva."
112. Words are the echo of thoughts, and thoughts are the echo of emotions, which finally find expression when the words are spoken. Conversely, words, which become images in the mind, can also penetrate the depths of the heart.
113. To penetrate the depths of the heart is the secret of the great powers, generated in the practice called Wazifa by the Sufis, and Mantram or Mantra Yoga in Vedantic terms, meaning the repetition of a sacred word, the influence of which is beneficial both physically and psychologically.
114. For spiritual enlightenment the sacred attributes of God are invoked, and for character building appropriate words are used in the way of autosuggestion.
115. Zikar, also called Mantra Yoga in Vedantic terms, is a Kalma Kalam, meaning a meditative, rhythmic repetition of the sacred name of God.
116. The Sufis of all ages have expressed the Zikar with the words "La el la ha, el Allah hu" or "God alone exists," repeated either in a spoken or a chanted meditation while gently rotating the torso in a perfectly synchronized movement.
117. During Zikar, the body of the Zakir, intensely tuned to the rhythm, becomes itself the repeated word, the voice radiates great warmth and the breath of the Zakir becomes magnetic; as Shams Tabriz said, "Say Allah and Allah shall you become."
118. Just as rhythm is the nature of motion, so is inhaling and exhaling the power behind all actions.
119. When the breath is chaotic every initiative fails, the memory slumbers and the will-power seems to have crept aside; whereas when the breath is harmonious, the mind is then under control, and one is better able to accomplish one's duties.
120. The practice called Fikar helps to obtain mastery over one's physical and mental conditions. This practice is a combination of rhythmic breathing together with the silent repetition of a

Wazifa or a chosen attribute, which works as an autosuggestion, unconsciously day and night, soon even becoming second nature.

121. Once one is awakened to the precious help which the Fikar practice offers in the way of securing a balanced condition in one's entire being, one then feels the need to relate that technique to one's feelings as well.
122. When relating the Fikar practice to one's feelings, there is a holding of the breath between the inhalation and the exhalation. If the inhalation takes four beats and the exhalation also takes four beats, the breath is then held between inhalation and exhalation for eight beats.
123. During Fikar, while inhaling, one mentally absorbs the vibrations of a chosen Wazifa. While holding the breath, one mentally assimilates those vibrations. While exhaling, one renders them to their source, with feelings of gratitude in one's heart.
124. When practicing Fikar as a Pranayama exercise the breath is either inhaled through the right nostril and exhaled through the left nostril (Jemal) or conversely inhaled through the left nostril and exhaled through the right one (Jelal),
125. An impression is the shadow of events received through the five senses and traced automatically upon the screen of the mind, where line, color and dimension are coordinated to form an intelligible image. Concentration fixes the impressions received and also helps to retain the thought, the memory which is dependent upon correct observation, as it is also dependent upon will-power for the creation of thought.
126. In addition to the impressions received through the five senses, there are also much finer ones which vibrate within the heart, and just as a magnet holds particles of metal by the power of attraction, in the same way concentration can become powerful when thoughts are steadily fixed in the mind by the magnetic power of the feeling heart.
127. Religion offers a help to realize the unlimited Truth, but that same help is shaped into various limited forms and garbs by those who do not see that the means to attain an objective is not the object itself. The path cannot be the goal; the goal must be further still. The path is the means of reaching the goal, but if one argues over the path and disputes about differences, when can one ever reach the destination?
128. Everything perceived through the five senses is stored deep down in the memory, but unless it is actively called upon it remains disorganized. When wanted, however, all the pieces are assembled, re-constructing the original image or reappear simultaneously.
129. In dreams, when the light of intelligence is on standby and the power of the will is slumbering, the regrouping of the thought-fragments lacks coordination, which explains the unreality of dream images. The process of unconsciously re-assembling during sleep is called dream, whereas in the waking state the same assembly, without will or intelligent direction, is called imagination.

130. Concentration is the secret of all accomplishment in ourselves, in our affairs, and in our relationships with others. As simple as it is, we only feel the importance of this subject to the extent that we understand it.
131. Concentration deserves to be an important study and practice in our lives, for it stands as the basic mechanism of every yoga system since the beginning of time.
132. Will-power plays the most important role in concentration upon a visualized image. Its action is first to provide the impulse of thought which opens the storehouse of memory, and secondly, to hold these various particles together, thereby creating an image upon which to concentrate.
133. Those who accomplish great works and those who are successful in everything they undertake are possessors of strong will. Will develops concentration, and concentration develops will.
134. Concentration is meant to enable one to hold whatever impression one wishes, not only retaining it in the mind but also building it up and projecting it any desired distance.
135. The ability to concentrate can also help one to liberate oneself from undesirable impressions through a process called de-concentration, which requires even more will-power than any other type of concentration. De-concentration must be seen as a means of purifying the mind.
136. As to observation, the more one can develop this ability, the more one shall discover the secret of strengthening the mind, or, in other words, channeling the energy of will-power, thereby developing the faculty of coordinated thinking. The consequence of all these efforts is an automatic development of the most precious of all mental faculties, the faculty of memory.
137. For some, the purpose of life is clear and for others it is perplexing, but whatever be the apparent goal, whether material or spiritual, if one has not discovered the Divine Presence within, one has not realized what is the true purpose of life.
138. Never give up, even when faced with disillusionment or by doubts about one's own abilities when comparing one's fate to that of others. The light which shines out from the depth of one's being is far more valuable than the goal for which one might be striving, and the sense of failure attenuates that light.
139. Knowledge is the result of collecting received impressions, but this term cannot refer to the awakening of inner awareness. Intellect is the ability to co-ordinate that knowledge which is engraved within the world of memory. Intelligence, which can never be subject to the limitations of preconceived ideas, is the bright light of Divine origin which casts guiding rays upon the mind.
140. The power of an impression made upon the mind can be so great that it conditions one's perception at all levels — physical, mental, emotional and spiritual. In this way, the vibrations of an idealized image of worship may be reproduced upon the mirror of the soul.

141. The first steps to be taken on the path of inner development are those of observation, concentration, creative concentration, projective concentration, and de-concentration.
142. The object of concentration can inspire one insofar as the heart is open to its message. The effect of a feeling heart can certainly be observed in the lives of great ones, whose deeds have been profoundly inspired by the admiration and devotion that they themselves had for precious ideals.
143. The most uplifting subject to concentrate upon is the personality of spiritual souls whom one idealizes and whose examples inspire spiritual guidance. Whatever be the chosen ideal, however, it is the intensity of one's devotion that secures the beauty of the achievement of one's purpose.
144. Concentration has the power to bring about desired or undesired results, either intentionally or unintentionally according to whether one is actively concentrating or passively viewing one's own mental record. Therefore, it is clear that there is the risk of becoming a slave of the power of concentration if one is unable to delete unwanted thoughts.
145. Upon opening one's heart and finding oneself face to face with the Divine Presence, one realizes that what one thought was oneself was only an illusion, because individual consciousness is at the same time God's consciousness, just as a drop of the sea is just only a drop and yet at the same time is sea water in an individual form.
146. Meditation is an escape from the outer world to land in the abode of the heart, where the consciousness is awake even in the absence of thought, and where there are no limitations connected to physical or mental conditioning. One of the main purposes of meditation is to remove for a moment the thought from the mirror of individual consciousness, so that the mind may be illuminated by the light of the soul.
147. A Meditation Practice:
First, visualize a large, luminous circle placed in front of oneself. Then imagine the circle shrinking more and more until it reaches the size of just a dot or spark of light, while at the same time becoming brighter and brighter, shining upon one's inner consciousness where there is no difference between "me" and "Thee."
148. When awakened to higher consciousness, the temporary importance of all values fades away, for one is no longer possessed by them. Desire, for instance, which only leads to transient satisfaction, can cause one to confuse contentment with that real happiness which is revealed in the absence of all notions of self-concern. When we roam toward the horizon of illusion, its countenance gently eludes us as we approach it, unless the journey to discover cosmic consciousness is free from all desire.
149. When inwardly awakened one is invariably enchanted by the great wonders of creation, which trigger one's curiosity as to the whence and whither of light, sound, color, form and energy, besides so many other wonders. One feels the need to establish intelligible definitions, to define the indefinable, but to describe cosmic consciousness undoubtedly reflects not Truth but one's own level of consciousness, thereby extending the confining labyrinth of assumptions and speculative interpretations.

150. Victory over the illusion of the self is obtained when restraining the mind from the uncontrolled recording of impressions. In doing so, rather than identifying oneself with the waves of thought awakened by the external stimulus of the senses and modified by such influences as knowledge, discrimination and emotion, one offers repose to the thinking mechanism.
151. All thoughts and actions throw the mind world into corresponding waves. When a thought or action no longer occupies one's attention, one assumes that the thought waves have ceased, but there has only been a reduction in the intensity of their motion. That motion may rise again and again, throwing up stormy waters each time that one happens to release the impressions held in the storehouse of the memory. In other words, impressions, whether good or bad, could be seen as the denial of the ultimate pacification of the waters of the mind world.
152. The "seer from within" (Purusha) is all intelligence. Yet, it is only through individual consciousness, or the ability to see (Prakriti), that the seer from within sees. The nature of the "seer from within" is to experience its own reality, which is only a reality inasmuch as the "ability to see" is there, this ability being at the same time the seer, the sight, and the purpose of seeing.
153. When drawing closer to spiritual awakening, one profoundly hopes to probe the depths of life, to discover the source and goal of all things, to unfold the mysteries of time and space, and of matter and spirit.
154. In time, all earnest attempts on the path of the seeker finally contribute toward realizing the degree of one's own limitations. This realization awakens the feeling of humility, when once the doors of the heart are open, upon finding oneself face to face with the Divine Presence within.
155. The human spirit is of divine origin, shaped by influences experienced at various stages of materialization through which it passes on the way to becoming individual consciousness, as it is understood on the physical plane.
156. Each time we set aside our ego, even for a moment, we offer a little bit of our heart to the "Divine Presence", and in return the light of the "Spirit of Guidance" becomes brighter and brighter, until in the end there remains no shadow to hide the perfection of the all-pervading.
157. The heart is like an open window through which the light of the soul is projected upon the mind, and through which the impressions pictured in the mind are reflected back upon the soul.
158. There are times in life when we might be presented with only a rattle, as infants are, but at another time a musical instrument would be more appropriate to our level of appreciation. Then, at a still later stage of inner awakening, when the horizon of our consciousness is wide enough to embrace a greater experience, we might discover that wisdom is as a fruit, which ripens through the warmth of the heart.

159. The mind world is the receptacle of knowledge and memory, besides also directed thought, such as concentration, and undirected thought, such as imagination and dreams. The mind is, furthermore, the surface of the heart's consciousness, which explains such abilities as creative thought accomplished in combination with feelings and emotion
160. The conscience is not only a record of one's own experiences and actions, but it is also heard as a living voice within the heart, which is peaceful or unrestful according to circumstances which we ourselves create. But who is it in the conscience who evaluates? Perhaps we could call it the awareness of the seer within.
161. The formation of opinions is only one facet of our reasoning faculty, a facet that derives from an uncontrolled tendency to judge, especially seen when people of different levels of evolution express their arguments. The wise, therefore, are reluctant to venture an opinion, whereas it is easy for the unwise, bringing themselves thereby under the criticism of others, particularly when an opinion is formed without complete knowledge of the facts.
162. The habit of evaluation is an attitude which greatly conditions our happiness or unhappiness in all relationships with others. As one evolves spiritually one seems to rise above a natural tendency of intolerance, because one sees that which unites hidden behind the individual characteristics which are the subject of evaluation.
163. Belief can take two forms, the one having the tendency of running water, flowing from one conception to another, and the other having the tendency of frozen water, which cannot be modified. In this latter case the believer identifies belief with ego and is not open to any other concept than the one held, whereas the belief which flows like running water adapts to progress and to circumstances, finally attaining to conviction.
164. The proportion of fate and free will can be modulated, inasmuch as one is given a choice to either surrender to circumstances or to modify them. Our life is constantly rolling onwards on the tracks of destiny, the unknown aspect of which is the rail of fate, and the known aspect the rail of duty.
165. Success or failure are dependent upon our duties accomplished or neglected, whereby we roll smoothly forward or lose contact with the rails of both duty and fate.
166. Will-power is the hidden presence of the Divine within, although this power might have the appearance of belonging to the self. That is why the more one realizes its real source, the more powerful does will-power become. As the plant springs forth from the earth, and is nourished by the rain, so does will-power spring forth from within, and is nourished by self-effacement.
167. That which is convincing in a thought is the will-power behind it, and the most powerful of all convictions is that of a feeling heart. Knowing this, one realizes that all thoughts which the mind projects consciously or unconsciously upon others must sooner or later rebound, returning in some form or other in the same way as a radio wave rebounds upon the transmitter.

168. One's greatness or smallness depends upon the motive and not always upon conditions and environment, although these can also be creative of a motive. A person with a noble motive is visibly noble, while a person with a wicked motive is visibly wicked. The movements, expressions, tone of voice, and atmosphere all speak aloud of the motive held in mind.
169. Mysticism is neither faith nor belief nor dogma nor principle. Mysticism is a divine impulse shining from within, and can only be understood by discovering that the more one is conscious of its secret guidance, the more does mysticism become a reality.
170. No one is a mystic who claims to be one, because a mystic has removed all barriers between himself and others, avoiding distinctions and differences, while contemplating all things from the point of view of others, as well as with mystical insight.
171. It is the law of manifestation that life encloses itself within an akasha, and this explains why life can manifest itself as separate identities while at the same time paradoxically remaining an undivided totality. Therefore the mystic sees the divine in all aspects of life and is inclined to consider the reason behind the reason in all things.
172. As water is found in the depths of the earth, so is love hidden in the depths of the heart. In one person it is found at a deeper level than in another, just as water is discovered at different depths beneath the earth, and that water is either clear or muddy according to the condition of the soil. Furthermore, just as water makes the earth abundant, in the same way the magic of the heart makes the mind like fertile ground, from which every thought arising must sooner or later bear sweet and fragrant fruit.
173. Life as we know it is that of our own experiences within the framework of our comprehension, which could be pictured as a bubble on the surface of the sea. This bubble is insignificant in comparison to the vast sea, and yet one cannot say that the bubble is non-existent because it forms a part of the seawater. The apparent difference between bubble and sea is that, when merged into the sea the bubble, which was a separate entity, is then no more so, while conversely the sea cannot be contained in the bubble.
174. Divine grace may be thought of as descending like a dove from above, embracing with its radiance those souls awakened to its charm. Divine grace manifests itself overwhelmingly, although most times neither identified nor understood as such. Just like the enigmatic flight of the dove in the clouds, Divine grace traces secret itineraries in its own right and in its own time, bestowing unconditionally showers of blessings in most exceptional ways, such as when channeled through the enigmatic flow of inspiration.
175. With the aid of such weapons as self-discipline and humility, our imperfections may sooner or later be vanquished for the love of the ideal before us. But unless one is attuned to an attitude of profound selflessness, the rays of the bright light within are dazzling to the eyes.
176. While progressing along the path of spiritual awakening, one encounters more and more treasures from the inner world, and one gradually realizes the importance of offering thoughtful protection to accomplishments which the grasp of the ego is always disposed to destroy.

177. It is a most important rule in psychology that every motive which takes root in the mind should be watered and reared until it flourishes. If one neglects this principle, one not only creates a handicap to the motive, but one also harms the power of will, which is thereby weakened. Even if the motive is unimportant, a steady pursuit trains the mind, strengthens the will-power and secures the entire mechanism of accomplishment.
178. The spirit of guidance, which is eternally present, becomes more and more a reality in all fields of understanding, when profound insight is acquired into such laws as that of cause and effect. This reveals a constantly guiding power at all levels of our growing consciousness. We become acquainted with the evidence of spiritual Guidance as we repeatedly remove all dust obscuring the bright light shining within.
179. The Jelal breath is expressive and creative of vital energy, whereas the Jemal breath is receptive and responsive. The Kemal breath is appropriate in meditation, wherein there is neither a Jelal nor a Jemal state of mind but one's thoughts are directed to an abstract concept on a spiritual level of consciousness.
180. During material occupations, the Kemal breath puts one completely out of control, whether physically, mentally or emotionally, and everything goes wrong, because this condition of the breath is neither Jelal nor Jemal. In other words, the breath has lost its polarity, as when there is an electric short circuit and the needles of the gauges go wild.
181. Every step taken by manifestation, resulting in various shapes and substances born out of the involution of spirit and the evolution of matter, unfolds in different proportions of the five basic elements from which all constitutions are structured. In the human being, the purpose of manifestation is seemingly accomplished, and yet improvements upon nature's creation may be understood as a most sacred responsibility entrusted to humanity.
182. The esoteric understanding of the ether element has been elaborated upon by mystics in all ages, and the various attributes of this element have at times been envisioned in the image of the sun, seen as the absolute, and of which the rising and the setting represent the universal principle of contraction and expansion.
183. The principle of contraction and expansion discloses the mystical secret of inhalation and exhalation, which is also found as the fundamental law of all motion, interpreted by the mystics as the breath of God. Expansion is termed "Uruj" by the Sufis, and contraction, "Nazul". This alternation in the movement, also called pulsation, could be understood as being the secret of time.
184. Intelligence, in Sanskrit "Jnana", could be understood as being an inheritance of divine qualities within the mind world, or sphere of consciousness, where the soul becomes more and more absorbed in the concept of 'individuality,' attracted by all those aspects of manifestation which tend to be definable when the soul is embodied in the human image.
185. In the human condition the soul experiences life on earth through the channel of the thinking power, and in this process it is the heart which, as a clear mirror, reflects back upon the soul all that is experienced, without in any way modifying the brightness of the soul's light.

186. What opens the way for the soul to enter into a physical existence, if it is not the power of the breath? All that one experiences through the five senses is accumulated in the mind and kept in memory through the power of the breath.
187. Breath, which is the power behind all actions, is that energy which keeps the entire mechanism in running order. It is the current which flows through all planes of manifestation, and at the same time works as a coordinating power assembling together action, thought and feeling in one individual being.
188. In the human condition, which can be considered as a universe in itself, there are traces of characteristics inherited from the mineral kingdom, as well as from the vegetable kingdom and the animal kingdom, and one can alter the importance of the influence of one or the other of these kingdoms within oneself.
189. What is the “matter” aspect of our being? Is it not “crystallized spirit”, which could be likened to running water which becomes ice at a certain temperature, illustrating thereby the solid condition of matter?
190. If one is responsive to one’s intuition, or even in some circumstances to an instinctive impulse, one does discover a clear inspiration as to the purpose of one’s life. Nature is continually indicating that purpose, and everything which one accomplishes is like a stepping stone leading to the goal.
191. The allegoric concepts of heaven and hell exist in all religions, providing those institutions with a strong hold upon the masses. In fact there is no such thing as an enclosure where the virtuous are rewarded and the evil are damned. However, there is certainly a heavenly and a purgatorial condition for each person according to the state of one’s conscience; and what is more, the heaven of one may be a hell for another.
192. When one stands in front of a mirror either in rags or clad in gold, the mirror holds the image which it reflects, yet is not influenced by the concept of misery in the one case nor of richness in the other. In the same way, the soul, which shall never be either saint or sinner, cannot be influenced by either of these conditions.
193. What use is there of religion, philosophy, worship or meditation if these interpretations of spirituality do not awaken the innermost inclination of the soul to reveal its divine origin, which, when materialized, is expressed in a manner that is noble, a manner misunderstood by many, a manner which cannot be taught or learned, a manner which springs forth as a divine blossom. It is by this virtue that the soul rises from human slavery to spiritual freedom.
194. If there is a purpose in life, it is certainly not to formulate a concept of the hereafter within the limitations of one’s own mind world, but to open one’s heart to the reality of that which is already there: “The Divine Presence”. The more we surrender ourselves to that reality, the more the illusion of the ego loses itself, and the more the hereafter becomes revealed in the present, whereupon one finds oneself living in the past, the present and the future simultaneously.

195. As civilization advances, the speculative interpretations of the journey in which each one believes in accordance with individual insight are more and more in need of clarification. Many find good reasons, either selfish or unselfish, to explain reincarnation in a way that best fits their own expectations, and therefore it is imperative to put into words the following: "There are as many truths as people believing in truth."
196. Since we are ignorant of what occurs on other planets in our own solar system, how can we possibly claim to know what occurs in the heavens? Would it not be better to use one's time, concentration and energy to make the best of one's life here on earth, where, in fact, all that exists is in perpetual change, transformation and an eternal recycling process.
197. Looking at the wheel of civilization we see that the human inner condition has hardly evolved, notwithstanding the many religious efforts made to guide mankind on the path of spirituality. Let us then leave the reality of God to God, and leave the reality of Matter to Matter, avoiding speculative theories, which only lead to confusion, contradiction and disillusionment.
198. The magnetism of the breath, like light, has the tendency to reach outward, but the further it spreads the more it loses its intensity, just as light diminishes in luminosity at a distance, and then, by comparison, may be termed darkness, although there is only a lesser degree of brilliance and ultimately 'dark' has no reality. The breath is also comparable to light in this sense, that when sufficiently focused its magnetic radiance can be directed to a distant receiver.
199. The breath is the vehicle upon which the mind reaches out into the world during the exhalation, and then upon the inhalation the consciousness is loaded with impressions received, which are first registered within the mechanism of the five senses before reaching the coordinating centers of the mind in which these finally become intelligible. In this process, the breath is like a bridge connecting the outer world and the inner world where the soul is ultimately the spectator.
200. According to the Vedantic theory called 'Kundalini Upanishad,' when the positive, "Pingala" vibrations of the breath current manifest more pronouncedly during exhalation through the right nostril, this indicates a creative and expressive condition, physically, mentally and emotionally. When the negative, "Ida" vibrations manifest more pronouncedly during exhalation through the left nostril, this favors a perceptive and receptive condition. When both flow simultaneously through both nostrils during exhalation, in a vibration known as "Sushumna", a chaotic situation may be expected, resulting from a clash of opposite energies, or the two opposite polarities may harmonize, creating a balanced condition which is then most appropriate for meditation.
201. Of the many functions of the breath, one is to absorb the subtle vibrations of the five elements and channel these inward along the magnetic pathways called "Nadis", reaching finally the consciousness, the ultimate observer of all that is perceived through the five senses. In this process, the influence of the earth element is security and steadiness; the water element offers progress in all activities; the fire element is cause of excitement or destruction; the air element is appropriate for inspiration and receptivity of all natures; the ether element is creative of meditative aspirations.

202. In the Vedanta, the subtle light and sound radiating along the breath flow “Prana” is called “Suran” or “Swara.” By the practice of Shagal, one withdraws the breath and then visualizes it as being directed inward to the very root of all senses, the consciousness.
203. Shagal offers the recognition of energy able to flow in two opposite directions: to draw inward from without and to arise from within. When pulling a veil over outer impressions, the senses are thereby placed on standby, reversing the sensorial functions which are then turned inward. When centralizing one’s thoughts within, the consciousness, which is normally receptive to incoming impressions, is conducted in the reverse direction, rising like the sleeping snake reacting to the sound of the flute.
204. When closing the hearing, one listens to the unstruck sound of the spheres, then audible within as “Hu”. When closing the sight, one searches for the Inner Light, revealed as luminosity with no relationship to any earthly brilliancy. When closing the sense of taste, one replaces it by an incoming feeling of savoring values unknown to the tongue. When closing the flow of breath and thereby restraining the incoming flow of breath, one absorbs the subtle fragrance of Prana. The fifth sense is turned inward when perceiving in thought the overwhelming Divine caress as an aura of light and life.
205. The Hindu term “Akasha” or “Capacity” (or Accommodation) for the worlds unseen is related to the heavens within, revealed as all-pervading light contained within itself and manifesting when finding a capacity wherein its radiance is reflected.
206. That which we recognize as space is in fact all light, which offers great luminosity when centered, but when scattered it reveals itself as movement, seen as alternations of impulses, or “Divine Vibrations” which account for the whole scenery of creation.
207. The power of light is life, and it is obviously the assumption of the beginning of individuality; reversely, it is the creation itself which enables the all-pervading life to become intelligible.
208. The soul, in its purest form as a ray of light, could be understood as being originally without any consciousness of self, roaming within an atmosphere where there is no beginning, no end; no past no future; no condition, no purpose.
209. Following birth on earth, the soul becomes captive of the thinking condition of the mind, as it feels more and more attracted by all those aspects of manifestation which tend to be definable coordinated thoughts, as it experiences embodiment in the human image.
210. In the human condition, the body expresses life through action, and the mind through the coordination of thoughts and creative thinking, whereas the heart is as a mirror reflecting back upon the soul all that is experienced, without modifying in any way the soul’s brightness.
211. From a spiritual point of view the Divine Will could be understood as an all-pervading sound which resonates in the body as instinct, which resonates in the mind as intuition, and which, when resounding within the heart, is perceived as inspiration.

212. The mind is a world within itself, a magic world that can be altered at will. The phenomenon of the mind is great, and wonders can be performed when one possesses the key to the thinking power. That key could be understood as being the discovery of the purpose of life.
213. Each being has its own purpose, which is the ultimate goal, and treads either the right or the wrong path to attain it, although, along the path of life everything points to the goal ahead.
214. Life, which is omnipresent and all pervading, divides itself in innumerable rays as it proceeds towards manifestation. In the same way, light divides itself when its rays are projected upon darkness. Although this process has no apparent purpose, yet in this lies the purpose of all purposes.
215. The outcome of the whole manifestation is to be found in the secret of knowledge, spiritual and material; therefore, knowledge could rightfully be called the goal of all creation.
216. The followers of the different beliefs are not only influenced by their own understanding of the world scriptures, but they are also influenced by interpretations made by the followers of the followers, which are successively conditioned by the power of dogmatic rigidity. However, whatever divergence may arise, the motive of all religious Ideals is ultimately the cultivation of the human heart.
217. The true Religion is the cry of the heart; the true Ideal is spiritual consciousness; the true Goal is inner awakening; the true Spiritual Path is self-denial; the true Manner is spiritual nobility; the true Art of Personality is humility; the true Moral is beneficence; the true Attitude is forgiveness; the true Beloved is love itself.
218. All creation is born of perpetual vibrations generating chain reactions within a realm of all-pervading vibrations, which ultimately merge into the original source.
219. A vibration is a world in itself, within which numerous over-tones beat indefinitely. Those pulses generate movement, and dependent upon the intensity of the activity, the materialized energy is revealed as light in different colors, as sound, as temperature or as the force of attraction.
220. All attributes, inclinations and emotions are translations of specific vibrations, the impulses of which have a direct influence on one's disposition.

IV - PHILOSOPHY, PSYCHOLOGY, MYSTICISM

PHILOSOPHY

1. Material knowledge is acquired at the level of reality, overlooking the indefinable state of “illusion,” but if all that which is changeable and subject to destruction is called reality, then what is illusion?
2. Just as the fish is ignorant of the water in which it evolves, so are we while experiencing the illusion of reality, whereas in fact, we are evolving in the reality of illusion.
3. Reality would not be conceivable if it were not seen in contrast with illusion, and this brings forth the following question: What is reality and what is illusion? Seen from the angle of eternity, reality is all that which follows a procedure of formation and thereby is destined to fade away in time, whereas that which is not subject to the concepts of beginning and ending, which is nameless, formless and everlasting and which we cannot conceive of, is apparently unreal.
4. One usually values complexity, thinking that layers of intellectual structure offer richer knowledge than simple concepts, but Truth does not require illusionary and speculative interpretations to illuminate our innermost understanding.
5. The secret of manifestation is revealed in what the Hindus call “akasha,” or “capacity.” Capacity is to be understood as being that which contains various possible realities: either a substance or an energy or individual consciousness.
6. The sea is a capacity within which sea-life is contained. The earth is a capacity where minerals and plants and various creatures evolve. Mankind is a capacity consisting of the abilities of thinking and feeling motivated by the rays of pure intelligence.
7. The soul is identified within the capacity of the physical body, through which it experiences manifestation. Without being limited within that capacity, the soul would be pure spirit.
8. The phenomenon of manifestation lies in the miracle of “capacity,” within which impulses arise, these being the source of all movement in the universe.
9. Everything that is visible, audible, tangible or perceptible in any way is structured in various proportions of the specific characteristics of the vibrations of the five elements, and is subject to the laws of cause and effect.
10. Outwardly, every thing that we perceive is understood as such an object or such a stimulus, but it is really our consciousness which is interpreting that which has been transmitted through the senses.

11. The pulse of an empty space beats to the rhythm to which that particular space is charged. This rhythm is that which we call “atmosphere.”
12. An atmosphere is created through the presence of a person, and it even lingers on within an empty space after the person has left.
13. Everyone carries along a particular atmosphere, the kind as well as the wicked, the spiritual person as well as the materialist. No one could ever falsify their own atmosphere because space, which is a capacity, holds within itself the rhythm of the vibrations of all that fills it.
14. The atmosphere of a person can be seen by a seer in the form of the aura, which is perceivable either as color or light. Therefore, an aura could be called a visible atmosphere, or an atmosphere could be called an invisible aura.
15. Rhythm is a basic law of nature. The rising and setting of the sun, the waxing and waning of the moon, the tides of the sea and the changes in seasons, all illustrate the power of sustained repetition.
16. Harmonious forms are the result of an orderly rhythm, and inharmonious forms are caused by a disorderly rhythm. Colors and sounds have their own rhythms, and even silence is a particular rhythm.
17. That which is either attractive or repulsive in a person is the result of the particularity of that person’s rhythm. One person has a soothing influence and another awakens irritation, all depending upon whether or not the rhythm of a person corresponds to one’s own.
18. Gain and loss, or success and failure in all undertakings are influenced by the characteristics of one’s own rhythm, regardless of whether the motive is right or wrong.
19. The law of rhythm could be seen as the central power governing our actions, thoughts and feelings. This explains why it is so important to be conscious of its influence and to realize that we do have the ability to control its effect, inasmuch as we are aware of the opportunity that we have to modulate it appropriately.
20. There are three stages of evolution in all creation, which the ancient Hindus called “Trimurti,” or threefold. These stages were pictured as Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva, symbolically illustrating the principle of creation, followed by the need of sustenance, and finally the accomplishment of the cycle.
21. Just as ice and water are two different aspects of one and the same substance, with the particularity of appearing as a solid block or as fluid according to the temperature, in the same way, the denser impulse of spirit materializes as matter in accordance with the type of capacity within which it is manifested.

22. The Hindu term “nada Brahma,” or God-Vibration, indicates the process through which Spirit materializes as pure intelligence within an akasha, or capacity, such as the thinking ability, the feeling heart or the physical body.
23. It is not the dense capacity or physical body which thinks, but rather the spirit within, which is the essence of all consciousness.
24. Consciousness is the knowing faculty, but it only knows when there is something to know. When consciousness is not conscious of anything, it is then reposing in a condition of pure intelligence, continually unfolding within itself.
25. Matter cannot be conceived without the contrasting concept of spirit, just as substance, which has the tendency to add substance to itself, cannot be conceived without the contrasting concept of vacuum, which has the tendency of annihilating itself as it assimilates substance.
26. The inner life is a journey, and before treading that path, a certain preparation is required. Otherwise, there is always a risk of having to return from the journey disappointed.
27. The first requirement on the inner path is to make sure that one is not indebted in any way, neither to those whom we love, nor to those who have rendered service in some way or other.
28. One must make sure that one shall not have any remorse for having engaged in the journey toward self-realization, because all undesired burdens should be avoided.
29. On this path, balance in all things, material activities as well as spiritual ones, is required, because where there is not a harmonious rhythm there can be no constructive accomplishment.
30. When treading on the spiritual path, such qualities as thoughtfulness and a feeling heart are required in order to be fully able to communicate the truth in word and action.
31. The exploration on the inner path lies in searching for truth behind all cause and effect, thereby making God no more imagination but reality.
32. Inner realization means seeking outwardly as well as inwardly in all things the secret presence of the Divine, thereby rising above the narrowness of that duality which conceives of the self as separate from the Divine Presence, so as to discover selfless love of God.
33. Those who are God-realized speak little about that experience, unlike those who have not yet reached inner realization, who try to conceal their doubts with a display of knowledge.
34. The true task to be accomplished on the inner path is the forgetting of oneself while at the same time harmonizing with all, meeting all at their own level, and speaking to all in their own language, answering the laughter of a friend with a smile, and the pain of another with sorrow.

35. One often looks at a spiritual person as being religious, philosophically minded and detached from a normal way of life, whereas in reality when treading the spiritual path life is expected to be lived fully, recognizing through experience the purpose of all things in order to rise above all that which can limit further realization.
36. When treading the spiritual path, one's vision becomes just as wide as the width of one's motive, and the wider the motive, the more powerful is the strength granted to the traveler.
37. There is the law of nature, which is known by science; the law of morality, which is known by religion; and a law beyond science and religion, which one meets on the spiritual path.
38. It is neither power nor inspiration that one is seeking on the spiritual path. However, if there is any realization on that path, it is the power of the heart and unlimited inspiration.
39. Evolution on the spiritual path does not follow a straight line, but proceeds like a constantly revolving wheel. This explains why, when treading that path, one experiences an alternation of doubts and hopes, of discouragement and accomplishment.
40. Knowledge is composed of two aspects, the acquisition of facts, and the recognition of the relationship between facts, which could be understood as 'knowing.'
41. True happiness, which is not dependent upon external conditions, and which is sought by all beings, has its secret in the knowledge of the true self, as opposed to the illusion of the false self. One seeks for happiness, which is a confirmation of the true self, because without the consciousness of happiness, the self has the impression it has lost something which it has always owned.
42. Just as a person may follow a religious ideal and never come to the realization of truth, so one may search for happiness without finding it, for the seeking obscures what is already there. Therefore neither truth nor happiness can be offered to another; what is already possessed cannot be given again; it can only be discovered.
43. All that is called either wrong or right, good or bad, must be evaluated according to the motive behind the act. When seeing from this point of view one understands how fragile judgments are. Furthermore, there is always a divine purpose acting behind our motive, although we are not always conscious of it and do not necessarily co-operate with it.
44. Happiness is the criterion for virtue, whereas unhappiness is the criterion for wrong-doing. What is good is good because it gives happiness; otherwise it cannot be virtue, it cannot be right. If one presumes to be virtuous in connection with the unhappiness of another, that cannot bring one happiness, because in wrong-doing one can only be unhappy.
45. We are each expected to perform that part for which we are intended, and if we do not contribute what is called for, we are not in tune with our destiny. But paradoxically, it is only we ourselves who can really know what is the purpose of our lives, and blessed is the one who acts according to that purpose.

46. It is often the attitude which draws friends or repels them, just as it brings happiness or unhappiness. Attitude is the source of energy behind the mechanism of the thought, but it is not the thought itself. It is the nature of that energy of attitude which influences the characteristic of the thought, resulting in a successful outcome.
47. There are different types of attitudes, the attitude towards oneself, the attitude towards one's loved ones and friends, the attitude towards strangers, and the attitude toward God. Obviously, not everyone is in harmony with themselves, and consequently can not be in harmony with loved ones, with strangers or with God.
48. The infinite and the present could be pictured as being connected by an imaginary cord, and when reaching for the one end, the infinite attunes one to the all-pervading qualities of peace, inspiration and upliftment. When holding fast to the other end, however, one faces the task of constantly attuning oneself to one's perceived obligations, for one can only be at ease with material occupations inasmuch as that attunement corresponds to the rhythm of the activity in which one is involved.
49. Battling with oneself ultimately results in peace, whereas battling with others results in the defeat of one's divine heritage.
50. Struggling with oneself implies adapting one's thoughts, speech and action to the level of one's ideals, making sure that the expression of one's ideals fits those with whom one is involved, thereby modulating one's heart so as to be either small enough or large enough to harmoniously accommodate others.
51. Consciously or unconsciously we call the circumstances which make us what we are. There is an individual inclination and there is a Divine plan, and these meet at the level of our ideal. It is with the power of our free will and our understanding of the Divine plan that life's purpose is fulfilled.
52. As each word spoken in a dome must have an echo, so must all impulses within the akasha or accommodation of life have consequent effects, which, like seeds, are perpetuated in some way or other for all eternity.
53. Even a good thought, word or action expressed at the wrong time or place proves to have a wrong result, whereas the same expression at the right time and in the appropriate circumstances offers a positive effect.
54. The present is the reflection of the past, and the future is the consequence of the present. Therefore destiny is not the picture of that which has already happened nor that which is yet to come, but is the result of that which we ourselves are creating daily.
55. Although some suppose destiny to be an inflexible plan directed by an outside source, the wise liken destiny to a picture which the artist first imagines and then gradually traces upon a canvas. In doing so, the artist might alter some of the original ideas and add a variety of

details as the work progresses. In the end the image might be quite different from the original inspiration.

56. In order to come to the realization of the will of God, it is wise to first take one's own will in hand and use it to make the best of one's life's purpose.
57. For a materialist, consciousness is the result of the evolution of the species, whereas for a mystic, consciousness is the origin of all creation.
58. The mind, which is creative of mental impulses, is comparable to a soil upon which plants grow in the form of imagination, the sprouts of which blossom either in a conscious or unconscious state, whereas thought is a condition where consciousness is captive to a chosen motive, and which is expressed in word or action.
59. The whole of creation is like a gigantic mechanism, which is the true expression of the purpose of the engineer, as well as of the will engaged in its realization, but we are not aware of the reality of the engineer, whose presence is revealed to the one admiring the miracles created through the magic effects of that great mechanism.
60. All creation is formed of vibrations, the rhythms of which specify the differentiation of species such as minerals, plants, animals and human beings, all enjoying existence within the realm of the five elements evolving in various unfoldments, which we call the cosmos.
61. The process of creation passes through the stage of sound, the structure of which is vibration. Sound requires a receptive capacity, "akasha", or cosmos within which the vibrations of sound are captured, this being the secret of movement from which all derives.
62. The heart holds the seeds of thoughts as the earth holds the seeds of a plant, and in the holding power of the heart resides the secret of the fulfillment of the thoughts.
63. Inspiration means hearing that voice which comes from within and which is expressed in word, line, color, shape, music and movement.
64. Intensity in the activity causes strong vibrations called *jelal* energy, and gentleness in the activity causes subtle vibrations called *jemal* energy. The conflict between these two energies, called *kemal* energy, causes destructive results unless one attunes oneself to a meditative condition.
65. There cannot be an energy which is devoid of consequences, just as there cannot be qualities without a possessor of such attributes, and as intelligence is inconceivable without the reality of an intelligent being. In the same way, there cannot be a creation without a creator.
66. The one who only finds faults in others is often the one who has the most faults, whereas the one whose own faults are taken into consideration with the object of improving them is the one who appreciates most the right doings of others.

67. Reasoning is like a ladder by which one can either rise or descend. If one does not rise through reasoning, one shall certainly sooner or later fall victim to one's ideas when these are closed to perceiving the reason behind the reason.
68. The secret of happiness on the path of Truth is to discover the purpose of one's life.
69. Both clay and potter are involved in the making of the pot, but only the potter enjoys the process of the making. We, as clay, cannot realize the joy of the creator in molding our existence for the purpose of creation.
70. There cannot be a desire to which there is not an answer. The answer resides in the true understanding of the desire.
71. What gives one the inclination to seek for happiness is the feeling of having lost something, but when searching for it within oneself, one discovers that it had never really been lost, as long as one is prepared to offer the fruits of one's realization to others.
72. True religion is not in performing a ceremony or a ritual but it is in the feeling for duty. Duty is not necessarily the purpose of life, but it is like a lighthouse which indicates the direction leading to one's destiny.
73. If one desires for oneself the beauty which surrounds one, one shall not be able to appreciate the beauty within, and one thereby willingly turns one's back to that which one is seeking unconsciously, for in the vision of beauty within resides the beauty of the Divine Presence.
74. Knowledge is the fruit of observation, and observation is motivated by one's appreciation for the wonders of creation.
75. The purpose of life is fulfilled in rising to the greatest heights and living the deepest depths, whereby the self is then lost from view.
76. When the heart is radiant, all things become clear. Pain, bitterness, doubt, fear and anger intoxicate and confuse one, so that the light within is darkened, but when the feeling heart unfolds, that light is always ready to brighten the path.
77. When becoming living examples ourselves of that in which we believe, we prove the truthfulness of that ideal.
78. The first step in meditation is the practice of concentration, in which will-power is exerted upon the mind, preventing it from escaping into such uncontrolled activities as imagination and dream.
79. Imagination can be helpful in concentration because as soon as the mind has focused upon a subject, an entire scenery begins to unfold, offering an opportunity to develop creative thinking using uncoordinated particles of thought drawn from the storehouse of memory.

80. In all arts and handicrafts it is the power of concentration which enables one to structure the mental picture of that which one wishes to create, and it is the power of concentration which enables one to fulfill the ideal which initially inspired the creation.
81. Meditation is a state where the mind has risen beyond the thinking power, merging within the inner being in a sphere of all pervading light, revealing thereby the reality of a Divine heritage.
82. Spirituality is expressed in wisdom and compassion, which is demonstrated when one avoids statements concerning names and forms, as a result of keen and non-judgmental insight.
83. When a desire is accomplished, one derives something which shall be helpful in accomplishing something still greater. Each accomplished desire offers a step towards a still greater accomplishment.
84. The reason for the condition of unsatisfied desire is that a momentary desire is limited, whereas the power of desire is unlimited, and as such, is much greater than any possible object of desire.
85. One often confuses sacrifice and abandonment masquerading as renunciation. The one who has never known what sacrifice means might call the inability to proceed 'renunciation', but for the one who is able to sacrifice, such renouncing is a weakness, whereas sacrifice is a great strength.
86. The inner path is a path of freedom, which explains why it is so important to avoid carrying such burdens as displeasure, dissatisfaction and discomfort. Furthermore, in one's worldly responsibilities as well as in the spiritual ones, one constantly strives for a balance of thought and emotion, determination and reason, action and restraint.
87. The inner life is not contrary to worldly life, but is life lived in all its fullness, making God a reality in the midst of one's worldly responsibilities, awakening to the beauty which is in all things of this world, and forgetting one's self in contemplation of the all-pervading Divine wisdom.
88. The light of reason can only shine when the clouds of preconceived ideas, false identifications, complexes, doubts and fears have been cleared from the mind, whereupon pure wisdom prevails.
89. When one is able to find happiness in one's own heart, independent of others, one's innermost longing is then fulfilled. Every moment in life offers an opportunity to realize the purpose of one's life, which is happiness; why not use each moment to accomplish that purpose?
90. One need not look for difficulties, because they are already there, ready to pursue one, and one should certainly not avoid confronting difficulties, but rather one should be prepared to vanquish them.

91. The first step towards awakening to the beauty of the inner life is to become fully aware of the beauty of God's creation. There can be no spirituality if one's heart is not open to beauty in all its aspects.
92. The endless variations of truth can be dogmatically encoded within different faiths, but truth in its purest essence cannot be interpreted through the limited means of words and descriptions; truth is further still.
93. Religion according to the real sense of the word is not found in the performance of rituals and ceremonies, nor in the vain recitation of doctrines. Religion is in the feeling heart, and therefore in the accomplishment of one's duty, which ultimately leads one to the purpose of one's life.
94. One does not become spiritual by renouncing worldly experiences, but when making the right use of these one acquires those qualities which constitute a balanced condition in one's life, becoming thereby an example for others to follow, and a source of inspiration to others on the path of truth.
95. When out-growing the web of cultural conventions, one discovers the real spirit of freedom, which is an inborn gift from heaven, but in this discovery wisdom and consideration are put to the test.

PSYCHOLOGY

1. The knowledge of life related to tangible realities is called science; when related to intangible realities, it is called esoteric awakening; and when the knowledge of life is related to the thinking power, it is called psychology.
2. Psychology is a vast field of knowledge concerning the ability to perceive impressions, to coordinate thoughts, as in the process of creative imagination, and to understand the cause and effect of every impulse and all types of emotions.
3. One hardly realizes to what extent one is influenced by preconceived ideas and received suggestions. For instance, there is a tendency to readily believe negative opinions concerning another, without learning for oneself the true picture, yet one usually attaches less importance to a positive opinion.
4. Most of our psychological characteristics are reflected in our attitude, conditioning thereby our relationships with others. Therefore we have a great responsibility to use our natural power of autosuggestion in the fulfillment of constructive purposes.
5. When forming an opinion as soon as one has heard about something, without considering the case from different angles, one neglects the ability to reason equitably. This failure tends to result in wrong decisions, which may cause others great loss and suffering, as well as also being detrimental to oneself.

6. Another type of negative judgment is the systematic refusal to believe anything said. This clearly denotes a lack of self-confidence, for if one does not trust oneself, one is unable to trust others.
7. The nature of the mind is such that the first impression is the deepest, whereas the following ones are less striking. Therefore, it is quite usual that when one is convinced of the wrongdoing of another, it is most difficult to rectify one's opinion if confronted with a more positive image.
8. The nature of the mind is comparable to the soil wherein plants flourish, for each thought is as a seed, which grows either as a weed, a flower, a shrub or a tree, following the stream of one's imagination or the formulations of reason.
9. All attributes, inclinations and emotions are translations of specific vibrations, the impulses of which have a direct influence on one's disposition.
10. The mind nourishes thoughts of a particular kind just as one type of soil is more suitable than another for a particular crop. However, just as an unproductive soil can be treated with appropriate minerals, in the same way the qualities of the mind can be enriched with uplifting impressions and inspiring knowledge, allowing intelligence to shine just as the sun is welcome in the ripening of the fruit.
11. The will and the consciousness are two main aspects of the nature of the mind, which either welcomes passively all incoming impressions through the five senses, or holds the thoughts in the store house of memory, with the help of will-power. Reasoning acts as a mixer through which both passively received impressions and fixed thoughts are carefully coordinated, and filtered following a subtle balance between the reactions of the feeling heart and the inducing power of the ego.
12. In ancient times, in the absence of easy communication, the masses were brought up with the idea that they were to follow the belief of one single ruling power, whereas in our times, with the over-abundance of various types of communication, the generality is incapable of believing anything but the opinion of the multitude.
13. There are those who are successful because they trust in their success, and those who, when defeated by their lot, are obsessed by the negative influence of their own failure, overlooking the fact that one can only obtain that which one's belief allows.
14. It is important to distinguish between a positive thought and a claim, the former being the result of a conviction and the latter being a desire for recognition, which is in itself a handicap to all accomplishments.
15. The colors of our immediate surroundings have a certain influence on our psychological condition, for in observing a color one is attuning oneself to the vibrations of the corresponding element and thereby bringing to life their characteristics, the effects of which are revealed in our attitude, our moods and our behavior in general.

16. The color of our clothing also has an influence upon those whom we meet. Regrettably, our present civilization does not show any understanding for the effect of color, and because the subject is carelessly overlooked, unexpected results are experienced through the unfortunate influences of some particular colors. In this connection, it is to be understood that one single color can have a different influence on different people.
17. The tone of the voice is not only suggestive of one's conscience, thoughts and feelings, but also reveals the extent of one's inner evolution.
18. It is essential to carefully consider the tone of one's own spoken word, ensuring that it is correctly understood, because the same word spoken in different tones can have different effects. The real feelings hidden behind the spoken word expressed in an appropriate tone penetrate the depth of the heart, whereas the word itself only reaches as far as the hearing.
19. According to the esoteric science known in India for centuries as 'mantra yoga,' a sacred word makes a special impression upon the mind, bringing to life the qualities in the meaning of the word. The more the word is repeated, the stronger shall be the effect, and eventually that word may be silently heard inwardly day and night.
20. Every movement reveals a hidden significance, expressing one's psychological condition in a secret language of gestures which the wise are able to decipher.
21. Spontaneous gestures reveal such feelings as astonishment, joy, fear, anxiety and many other heart-felt emotions which words could never convey with so much subtlety.
22. There are also un-spontaneous movements which are intentionally used in particular cultures and in religious ceremonies, and which are specially intended to convey symbolic meanings.
23. Each of one's movements reveals the character, the state of mind and the physical condition, as well as numerous attitudes such as pride, humility, reverence, joy, gratitude, regret, and so many others.
24. It is important to adopt a certain discipline regarding spontaneous movements, because negative impressions left by movements persist much longer than those created by the spoken word. At the same time it is important to avoid unnatural pretense.
25. Among the most inspiring movements are artistic ones emphasizing the spoken word, as well as those made with dancing steps reflecting a chosen theme, and devotional ones done in a prayerful context.
26. There are three types of suggestions: those made intentionally to affect oneself, those intentionally made with the purpose of influencing others, and those made unintentionally but which nevertheless affect oneself or others.

27. Auto-suggestions are either of a positive nature, such as those imposed on oneself in relation to characteristics which one wishes to develop, or suggestions of a negative nature of which we are not always aware, such as those which refer to one's shortcomings or one's misfortunes.
28. Suggestions made to others are of two types. The one is when addressing others with positive remarks and appreciative encouragement. The other type of suggestion is when criticizing and making negative remarks, which could have unintentionally destructive effects.
29. Thoughts and feelings can have a certain influence on animals and plants and even upon those objects which we treasure, and what is more, these thoughts and feelings rebound within our hearts, awakening thereby the subtle vibrations of the silent stories of the subject of concentration.
30. One's psychological condition is reflected in one's attitude, which can be either optimistic, persevering and enthusiastic, or pessimistic, uncertain and unstable, as a consequence of which one either succeeds in all that one decides to accomplish, or one fails in all things.
31. Accommodating the behavior of others with tact and consideration, as well as maintaining harmony in one's own behavior, creates magnetism; whereas reacting negatively to the behavior of others, along with uncontrolled behavior and artificial manners, deprives one of magnetism.
32. The effect of physical magnetism, mental magnetism and the magnetism of the heart can be understood as being related to physical charm, the brightness of the mind and the warmth of a loving heart. There is also the magnetism of the souls of inspiring beings, which radiates a magic power of attraction that lives on for ages and ages.
33. The abilities to perceive and to reason without discrimination are signs of wisdom and are creative of magnetism. Three other qualities of the mind, which is to say creativity, memory and feeling, are also creative of magnetism insofar as one makes the best out of these qualities, while sharing them in harmony with the psychological disposition of others.
34. Psychology opens one's understanding of the depth of human nature with all its positive and negative tendencies. These tendencies can be either helpful in making the best of one's life, or be obstructive, like barriers blocking the way to success and happiness.
35. Among the many practical methods used in the art of personality are those such as reasoning with oneself, and imposing upon oneself discipline of thought and action, thereby making a reality of the work in character building, like shaping a diamond is the result of hard work cutting through solid crystal in order to create a jewel.
36. There are two types of influences which affect our psychological condition: our own actions, thoughts and feelings, and on the other hand, those of others. In both cases the circumstances of our lives can be seriously affected, although we seldom realize to what extent.

37. When wishing another well, one's good thoughts offer to oneself in return those same positive feelings, even before they have been expressed. The same reaction also occurs when sending negative thoughts to others, which have a similar effect on oneself.
38. When having a momentary dispute with those whom we love, we seldom realize the extent of the damage caused, even when making-up harmoniously. We have missed an opportunity to master our irritation, and by the same token, we have disturbed the golden thread which links hearts at a higher level of understanding.
39. Every positive or negative scene pictured in our minds certainly affects our daily life. Therefore, it is so important not to give way to superstitions and preconceived ideas, letting the mind slip away into negative thoughts related either to oneself or to others.
40. It has always been known to the wise that when overdoing one's enthusiasm related to positive or negative events, one awakens "kernal" vibrations, which eventually bring about adverse effects upon all that is related to one's excitement.
41. Every word should be uttered with care, to avoid referring to things which one would prefer not to see happen and which could have a certain effect upon immediate circumstances.
42. The feelings which one sends out to others are like a ball thrown against a wall, which rebounds without fail to the sender. What one says has great power and what one thinks has greater power, but one's feelings have greater power still.
43. After carefully having taken into consideration all aspects of a motive, however small that motive might be, when once put into action it is preferable to pursue it until fulfilled, not necessarily for the benefit of the accomplishment but certainly with the purpose of strengthening one's will-power.
44. Imperfections affecting one's projects are mostly the result of alterations in either the plan or the will-power during the process of accomplishment.
45. Greatness or smallness of a person depends upon the character of the motive pursued, not necessarily upon circumstances or environment.
46. There are motives which are beneficial and there are others which are detrimental, but whatever be the project nothing can ever be accomplished without perseverance.
47. The nature of the motive is creative of one's psychological condition, and again that condition may be seen in one's entire physiognomy, as well as read in the open book of one's personality, and heard in the tone of the voice.
48. The power of the mind develops by the use of the energy of one's thinking ability, when re-creating the mental picture of a chosen object of concentration, and retaining that picture; elaborating it through different phases of concentration, and finally deleting it piece by piece, leaving in the memory the true purpose of the chosen object.

49. The nature of the mind is such that it continuously creates new thoughts, which pass onwards one by one to be stored in the labyrinth of the thinking process.
50. The power of the mind is best developed in stillness, and in maintaining the tranquility of the conscience, avoiding such disturbances as feelings of guilt, anxiety, stress, anger and worry.
51. The development of the power of thought, which is greater than the power of word and action, is accomplished when thought is channeled along the breath stream, reaching every particle of the body, and charging these with the energy of prana constantly absorbed through inhalation.
52. Concentration could be understood as making use of the thought at will, when fixing it upon a chosen concept. This is an important factor in the development of the power of the mind.
53. Every imagination arising in the mind has an effect upon oneself and others, sooner or later. Therefore it is imperative to screen these with wisdom, so that negative thoughts are avoided and positive ones are encouraged.
54. Psychic power without a spiritual motive can have a destructive influence upon the character. Therefore, it is wise to develop the art of personality as well as all that has to do with mental techniques, besides also awakening the heart qualities, so that love may spring forth in all that one undertakes.
55. Since life in the world is unpredictable, when one tries to accomplish a project one does not really know what the consequences might be for oneself and for others. Therefore, it is wise to keep in mind that according to the law of cause and effect a gain for oneself might result in a loss for others and a loss for oneself might result in a gain for others.
56. The memory, which is a mental faculty, retains all impressions and feelings received through the five senses, comparable to a photographic film; and the brain, like a recording device, stores these impressions, which can be reproduced at will, in a coordinated fashion, and translated into intelligible concepts.
57. A thought is comparable to a moving picture composed of numberless particles which together create a coordinated image. This is what occurs when repeating a Wazifa a great number of times, resulting in the formation of a psychological condition related to the characteristics of the repeated word.
58. Everything that one learns, as well as all that one expresses in word and action, is influenced by impressions received, which have a psychological effect when one is susceptible to these.
59. In the same way that light divides itself when its rays are projected, all experiences divide themselves into two kinds of impressions, some affecting the mind world and others the feeling heart, giving life thereby to the subtle vibrations which are perceived as either a peaceful or a disturbing atmosphere.

60. All psychological qualities that we require for the success of a purpose are obtainable if we make an effort to discover these in ourselves, which is preferable to depending upon the qualities of another person.
61. All that we obtain in life is either just as much or just as little as our belief allows us to obtain. The reach of one's abilities is dependent upon one's belief.
62. The psychological effects of one's attitude do not only influence unconsciously one's words and actions, but also condition the nature of one's thinking and are certainly recognizable in one's features and movements.
63. Form and feature do not only show a family resemblance, but they also disclose something of one's psychological condition, one's natural tendencies and the general picture of one's outlook on life.
64. The nature of the mind is such that the first impression is the strongest, but when reasoning with oneself one might overcome an error of judgment and action.
65. The pure mind does not seek phenomenon, but is in itself a phenomenon when becoming receptive the flow of inspiration.
66. When the mind is at rest and the heart is pure, the light of the soul is projected like the rays of a search light guiding a ship through the waves of the ocean of life.
67. The highest form of purification is to identify oneself with that which one is and not with that which one thinks one is, thereby dissipating the impressions of one's own false identity.
68. It is the condition of the mind which creates either an uplifting or a troubling atmosphere, reflecting the rhythm of one's innermost vibrations, besides also impregnating the surroundings with the impressions thereby created.
69. Originally, the mind is just an accommodation, and later all knowledge received through the five senses becomes the countenance of that accommodation.
70. The mind is the invisible presence within the physical being; the feeling heart is the invisible presence within the mind; and consciousness is the invisible presence within the feeling heart.
71. The principal abilities of the mind are: concentration, co-ordination, reasoning, imagination, memory, dreaming and creativity. The world of the heart is experienced in the emotions of love, anger, hatred, will, joy, sorrow and ecstasy.
72. Intellectuality cannot be of much value where there is no inclination to sentiment, because the faculty of reasoning cannot be nurtured without an outflow of feeling.

73. Just as there are several notes to a musical scale, in the same way each person's heart differs in pitch, and the greatness or smallness of each manifests in accordance with the quality of the feeling heart.
74. Mastery can be obtained when fighting against things which one cannot overcome.
75. The mind, like a recorder, registers all that one experiences, and is also able to reproduce all impressions received, but it is the involvement of the feeling heart which lends value to those reproductions.
76. In concentration, one focuses on the form, size and colour of an image. In contemplation, one is overwhelmed by a concept of an abstract nature. In meditation, there is an introspective vision, which has no relationship with the idea of directed thinking, nor even with the realm of imagination, because one's thoughts are no more involved in any process when the consciousness is placed face to face with the light within.
77. Mastery over the illusion of the self is obtained when one no longer identifies oneself with the waves of thought awakened by the external stimulus of the senses; through this cessation of mental activity, the mind is purified, or in other words, freed of all distinctions and differences, retaining only those abstract concepts relevant to one's ideal.
78. Knowledge is indisputable when it proves itself in the face of apparent contradictions, unlike dogma, which denies the possibility of any comparative reasoning. Similarly, inspiration does not contradict reason; although it does not always appear reasonable, it is ultimately the fulfillment of reason.
79. Discrimination void of reason is distorted insight, often generated by emotions arising from illogical ideas and unsound interpretations.
80. Sleep is experienced as an escape into that which appears void of all reality, whereas the energy of memory has the power to reconstruct the past sceneries engraved in the mind, exposing them to the vision of one's own individual consciousness at the beck and call of thought.
81. The tumult of thought waves within the mind world is modified by such conditions as knowledge, discrimination, evaluation, emotion, sleep and memory. When the waves of thought have been pacified, abstract concepts or subtle impressions begin to shine in their own right.
82. All thoughts and actions throw the mind world into corresponding waves. When a thought or action no longer occupies our attention, one assumes that the thought waves have ceased, although they have only diminished in intensity, and may be stirred to stormy waters again and again each time that one ventures to release the storehouse of memory.
83. The 'seer from within' (Purusha) is All Intelligence, yet it is only through the ability of seeing (Prakriti) that the individual consciousness, or seer from within, sees.

84. The very nature of the seer from within (the real self) is to experience its own reality, which is only a reality inasmuch as the ability of seeing is there, although paradoxically this ability is at the same time the seer, the sight and the purpose of seeing.
85. When following a preconceived idea one develops more and more will-power, and when one outgrows it and breaks it, one finds oneself standing alone with the acquired will-power and free of the preconceived idea. It is then that one realizes that it was one's own growing will-power that held one enslaved by the preconception.
86. Whatever one concentrates upon becomes sooner or later a source of will-power, by which one can become intoxicated unless one is prepared to liberate oneself from the acquisition of that power, rising beyond self-indulgence in search of an awakening to Divine will.
87. Much in life depends upon the psychological effect of impressions received consciously or unconsciously from our contacts with others. Superstitions known all down the ages as well as preconceived ideas and un-psychological utterances and fancies can be the cause of serious troubles in our lives, as well as in the lives of those whom we cherish. On the other hand, improvements in our life's conditions can also be credited to impressions received from the example offered to us by others.
88. The laws of attraction and repulsion have as effect that we can either feel attracted or repelled when in the presence of others. Quality is attracted by quality, and mediocre behavior is attracted by a lack of respect, just as in music, pure tones are the result of some notes played in harmony with others, while other tones seem dissident when the structure of a chord is not harmoniously set.
89. Psychology is a science comprising numberless chapters related to the ability of thinking. Among these, there are ten principal subjects to consider, as follows:
- Consciousness: The wakeful condition of the mind.
 Knowledge: All that of which the consciousness is conscious.
 Intelligence: The grasping faculty of consciousness.
 Intellect: The knowledge of names and forms, and their relationship with facts.
 Wisdom: The knowledge which is illuminated by the light within.
 Impressions: Thoughts and feelings, which arise as a reaction to experiences perceived.
 Imagination: Controlled or uncontrolled creative thought.
 Intuition: An inner message.
 Dream: Uncontrolled imagination experienced during sleep.
 Vision: A spiritual dream.

Levels of Consciousness (Hindu Metaphysics)

I - KARANA SHARIRA, or Etheric Level of Consciousness,
 where unconditioned manifestations of the Real Self (Jivatman) are experienced.

The unconditioned envelope (Anandamaya Kosha) channels the etheric energy (Kundalini), which manifests itself in a drifting movement toward materialization, giving birth thereby to an organized network of consciousness. Its true nature, which is enlightenment itself, is masked by the veil of illusion (Maya). This etheric energy is active within specific fields (Chakras), situated in various areas corresponding to vital nerve-centers in the physical body. These centers are as follows:

Muladhara Chakra (base of the spinal column)
Swadisthana Chakra (lower abdomen)
Manipura Chakra (umbilical area)
Anahata Chakra (solar plexus)
Vishudha Chakra (throat area)
Ajna Chakra (centre of the forehead)
Sahasrara Chakra (top of the head)

Hindu mythology portrays the Chakras in various forms, such as the lotus (Padma), as an incandescent passage or tunnel, or as a luminous circle. All these depictions are used as objects of meditation, in accordance with the type of training involved.

The etheric consciousness is generally dormant within the centers, and as such could be pictured as a mass of mercury pooled at the bottom of a glass tube, which expands within that tube as the temperature rises. In the same way, etheric consciousness ultimately expands, rising along luminous channels (Nadis) or networks connecting all centers of consciousness. Upon activation, the etheric consciousness or Kundalini is awakened simultaneously in the luminosity of the etheric channels of consciousness (Nadis), as well as in the etheric centers of consciousness (Chakras).

The luminous cluster (Kundalini) is a combination of four concentric channels (Nadis):

Nadi Sushumna (exterior channel), the nature of which is self-abnegatory (Guna Tamas);

Nadi Vajra, the nature of which is progressive (Guna Rajas);

Nadi Chittrini, the nature of which is evolutive (Guna Sattva);

Nadi Brahmanadi, the Royal Channel circulating within the innermost centre of the three concentric Nadis mentioned above. It is along the Brahmanadi that the etheric consciousness reveals itself at a level of understanding which cannot be fitted into the limitations of thought or ego.

II - LINGA SHARIRA, or Level of Consciousness of the Mind World
where thoughts are conditioned by the false identifications of the Self (Jiva) experiencing
manifestation.

The mind world or 'psychic' area, where the 'I' is imprisoned within the boundaries of 'thought,' is a combination of various faculties:

Vijnanamaya Kosha (the intellectual abilities, such as understanding or thinking)

Manamaya Kosha (the mental co-ordinative abilities, such as reasoning)

Pranamaya Kosha (the ethereal breath-consciousness, or the vitality of thought)

a) The intellectual abilities (Vijnanamaya Kosha) radiate that energy which has been received from material as well as spiritual experiences, becoming thereby the originator of the faculties of reasoning (Manamaya Kosha), as well as the omnipresent spectator, the individual 'consciousness.'

The thinking energy (Vijnana) can, however, wander within the spheres of the 'thought-space' in the form of dispersed entities (Chittas) or 'thought-waves,' without being subordinated to a logical sequence of thought (Manamaya). But as soon as the mind is in a position to regroup all scattered thought-fragments into a co-ordinated thought plan, these can be induced to synchronize in a desired thought-pattern, at a level of logical reasoning (Linga Sharira).

b) Furthermore, the individual consciousness (Manamaya Kosha) obviously radiates the egocentric energy (Ahamkara), which excites the principle of self-consciousness and self-preservation (Indriyas) each time that the 'self' is endangered in the thought of losing its individuality as omnipresent spectator.

All impressions have an impact within the thinking framework (Vijnanamaya) of the self-awareness (Atman), which experiences them (Manamaya) in the light of individuality (Jiva). Whereas in the opposite direction, all impulses (Chittas) originating from self-awareness (Atman), are activated (Ahamkara) within selected areas of the intellect (Indriyas), after which they are transmitted first to the level of understanding (Vijnanamaya) and then to the level of reasoning (Manamaya), before being exteriorized by the thinking energy (Pranamaya) in the form of a co-ordinated expression of thought (Linga Sharira); reaching finally the etheric centres of consciousness (Chakras) and travelling all along the subtle network of the etheric channels (Nadis).

c) The etheric breath consciousness or vitality of thought (Pranamaya Kosha) is the stream of 'self-evidence' (Jiva) which is transmitted throughout the entire physical body all along the Nadis. These luminous clusters, which are woven like a spider's web inside, around and across the physical body, could be pictured as an etheric para-nervous system, with a characteristic pattern of its own. The intensity of the luminosity in this subtle channel network (Pranamaya) varies according to the degree of awakening of consciousness in each individual. The three most important luminous channels (Nadis) are the following:

NADI SUSHUMNA (Luminous bundle) is the principal channel through which the vital energy (Prana) flows. It spins itself right inside the cerebrospinal axis (Merudanda), starting from the base of the spinal column (Muladhara Chakra), crossing all the other subtle centres (Chakras) situated along the cerebrospinal axis, and ending its trajectory right in the centre of the forehead (Ajna Chakra), from where it radiates bright light in the direction of the top of the head (Sahasrara Chakra).

As to the other important luminous channels, NADI IDA and NADI PINGALA, these both rise together along the cerebrospinal axis, but counter-rotating in a serpentine pattern, resulting in a spinning movement about Nadi Sushumna while at the same time also curving around each one of the subtle centres (Chakras) without crossing them. Nadi Ida, starting from the left of the spinal column, is pale and lunar. It radiates negative influences. Nadi Pingala, starting from the right of the spinal column, is red and solar. It radiates positive influences.

The three Nadis, Sushumna, Ida and Pingala, all finally meet together at the centre of the forehead (Ajna Chakra) in the form of a triple knot (Mukta Triveti) from where they part again, following separate directions as follows:

Nadi Ida (negative energy) flows through the left nostril.

Nadi Pingala (positive energy) flows through the right nostril.

Nadi Sushumna (neutral energy) flows either through the right or the left nostril, or also through both simultaneously, according to environmental circumstances, individual conditionings, and spiritual awakening.

The secondary Nadi network (Vayu) is an infinitely more complex spider web of subtle prana channels, but the characteristics of these luminous streams are less dominant, in connection with mind-conditioning. Nevertheless, five of them have an activating, creative influence on the physical body: Vayu Prana, Vayu Udara, Vayu Apana, Vayu Samana and Vayu Vijana.

Five others have a peaceful influence on the physical body: Vayu Naga, Vayu Kurana, Vayu Deva Datta, Vayu Dhamanjaya and Vayu Krikara

III - STHULA SHARIRA, or Physical Level of Consciousness, where form and action are the result of individual impulses (Ahamkara) resulting from experiences acquired through the senses.

The materialized physical envelope (Annamaya Kosha) cradles the vital energy of the five senses (Tumatras), radiating throughout the various functions such as sight, hearing, taste, smell, and touch. In other words, the physical aspect of the 'Self' is identified within the limits of sensorial experiences (Indriyas); and the vital principle of the 'self' is the etheric breath (Prana) which is present throughout the entire sensorial network of Nadis and Chakras. The constant presence of the 'vital principle' which is continuously vibrant throughout all fields of consciousness (etheric, mental, physical) is the power which links all aspects of the 'self' in one and the same individual. In other words, the 'self' is a combination of the three following levels of consciousness:

- 1) The Etheric Level of Consciousness (Karana Sharira) where unconditioned manifestations of the real self (Jivatman) are experienced.
- 2) The Level of the Mind World (Linga Sharira) where thoughts are conditioned by the false identifications of the self (Jiva).
- 3) The Level of Physical Reality (Sthula Sharira) where form and action are the result of individual impulses, resulting from experiences acquired through the five senses of the physical body.

MYSTICISM

1. Mysticism may be likened to the perfume of a flower with a fragrance of its own. Like the flower, the appearance of which cannot explain its perfume, neither can mysticism be explained in words, although a mystical atmosphere can be perceived.
2. Outward forms and rituals are not really of first importance to a mystic, who interprets with wisdom the light hidden within the symbolism of all ceremonies.
3. The word mysticism has no meaning in itself because this topic is neither a theory nor a doctrine, nor can it be measured or categorized. It only refers to an inner experience on the spiritual path, which explains why mysticism appears to be such a vague concept, whereas in fact it represents a most valuable knowledge.

4. The mystic might have the same ideal as anyone else regarding the Rasul, yet the mystical view differs in seeing the Rasul as a living example of Godliness, whereas the crowd worships the Rasul according to traditional legends.
5. The mystic is tolerant of the opinion of others, and rises above distinctions and differences with respect and appreciation for all that is experienced in life.
6. Mystics in all ages have been known not for miraculous powers, but through their example of love and compassion, offered unconditionally to all, which illustrates the fulfillment of the journey on the spiritual path.
7. Persevering in a project is not so great a test as is renunciation of all that one really values. Renunciation is the nature of the mystic, the example given by the masters, and the sign of sainthood.
8. For the mystic, there is one universal scripture, the scripture of nature's unfoldment, which is the source of inspiration of all religious beliefs.
9. The mystic realizes Truth through experience, not by withdrawing from the outside world, and when meditating upon an ideal the mystic becomes, so to speak, the object of contemplation itself.
10. From a mystical point of view, the soul on its way to manifestation identifies itself with a smaller domain, that of the mind and the physical body. It is then confused between its spiritual origin and the appearance of itself in the illusionary mirror of the human condition, which appearance is known as 'nafs,' or false ego.
11. That which a mystic does not see in form is in any case seen in space, at another level of consciousness. Therefore, when a person says that something does not exist, the mystic replies that it does exist somewhere, if not on the physical plane then certainly in the sphere of mind.
12. The mystic need not consult a fortuneteller nor study a horoscope chart, because the answer to all questions is discovered in the power of silence, when consulting one's innermost being.
13. As gold and gilt represent two different qualities, so is the difference between a true mystical nature and false pretence. For the one, the purpose of life is to make God a reality, whereas the other makes of reality a mystery.
14. Some consult the sacred scriptures with the hope of finding an answer to their questions, while others turn to a set of cards or look at tea leaves in a cup, but the mystic finds answers to all questions in a keen observation of the *jelal*, *jemal* and *kemal* rhythms in the breath which playfully alternate all along the path through life's puzzling ways.
15. For a mystic, every condition in life is related to an overall condition, just as, in an engine, one wheel turns in co-ordination with other wheels, whereas all wheels together compose the entire machinery.

16. Every experience, good or bad, is a profound lesson for a mystic, for whom, once the purpose of life has been revealed, both love and indifference are experienced together in a balanced condition, while helping others out of their solitude as a service to God.
17. Although the mystic is the friend of all, yet it is difficult for the mystic to find a real friend, because the mystical point of view differs from that of the multitude in not showing special concern about the past, present or future, and in viewing a fall as a chance to rise and a rise as a possible fall.
18. The words of the mystic may appear simple yet they reveal the greatest depths, because Truth without subtlety cannot be Truth. This explains the real value of symbols, which veil the power of Truth from the sight of those who are not yet in a position to face its impact.
19. The great teachers and inspirers in all ages were mystics, whether known or unknown as such. The religious nature of the mystic has always reflected the spirit of all religions, without feeling compelled to follow any in form or doctrine.
20. The mystic sees the whole as a perfect whole, and every imperfection as just only a means of reaching perfection, and in this process there is a reason behind every reason, and a cause behind every cause.
21. Intelligence appears in all materials and beings in the form of radiance. From a mystical point of view one could say that the freshness of the leaf, the color of the flower, the brightness of the precious stone and the atmosphere felt from all beings are expressions of intelligence in various degrees of radiance.
22. Undoubtedly one can be attuned to pure intelligence with the help of concentration and meditation. When asked what benefit is thereby derived, the answer is that, since all that is inspiring comes from one source which is beyond our limited imagination, the more completely we shall be attuned to the radiance of that source, the closer we might come to the realization of the all-pervading life and light in space.
23. For the mystic, the concepts of 'I' and 'Thou' are comparable to a compass with which one traces a circle, the leg of the compass which draws the line representing 'I' and the other leg, 'Thou'. The portion of the circle which is being traced represents our free will, and the portion which remains to be traced represents the path of destiny. Notwithstanding our efforts in life, the circle could not be traced at all without the unseen influence of the unmoving leg of the compass, or in other words, the Divine Presence.

V - DIFFERENT TEACHINGS

1 - DEEPER STUDIES

1. When the love power is captive within the shell of the ego, the outlet of the stream of love is blocked, and one becomes a burden to oneself and others from the lack of understanding and sympathy.
2. It is when understanding the real spirit of religion that one is able to rise above the limitations of dogma and ceremony.
3. Some limit their belief to the name of the founder of a religion and to the scriptures, rather than attuning themselves to the pure spirit of that religion.
4. It is a certain pride that induces one to belong to a particular creed and to follow a given law without having any insight into its possibly arbitrary character.
5. In its origin, religion is an expression of love and beauty which inspires in the hearts of the follower such feelings as the need to worship and to offer gratitude.
6. Those who proclaim themselves to be the holders of the supreme Law, which in their limited minds should be followed by all mankind, have not understood the true spirit of their own religion.
7. The method used in worshipping is not really of significance if one is sincere in one's belief.
8. The mind is the thinking power, and the thought, its product, is its materialization. When the thought is forgotten, the mind — which is always behind the thought — is still there, ready to create a new thought. In the same way, God, as the power behind all creation, is the source of the materialization of that creative power, which goes on creating eternally.
9. The relationship between Divine will and human will can be compared to the rising and falling water of a fountain, in which the central stream of ascending water symbolizes Divine will, and the descending droplets illustrate the temporary individuality of human will.
10. It is the state of mind which creates heaven or hell, making one feel either important or insignificant, strong or weak, happy or discontent, protected or abandoned.
11. Day and night our mind reflects the condition of many other minds, as part of the continuous exchange of influences which ultimately condition our own mind-world.

12. All minds are connected in the same way as so many lamps are powered by one single stream of energy. When seen from a mystical point of view all minds are ultimately united with the Divine mind, which is the supreme energy behind all creation.
13. Divine will, which manifests throughout the entire universe, can also be traced within ourselves as that secret energy governing our physical, mental and emotional impulses which we think to be our own.
14. Will-power manifests on different levels of human consciousness, either in attuning our emotions, or directing our thinking abilities, or putting our physical actions in motion.
15. An intentional action is the result of a combination of will-power together with coordinated thoughts and feelings, whereas an unintentional action is an outlet of energy of that same will-power, motivating physical actions without the assistance of coordinated thoughts and feelings.
16. Strength, physical ability and in-born energy, when void of the light of intelligence, are not necessarily constructive powers, whereas Divine will, which is beyond the limitations of such human conceptions as quality and purpose, is intelligence itself, and is all-constructive.
17. Human will-power, which is the outlet of the Divine will, can be developed through various physical, mental and emotional disciplines³, with the purpose of ensuring that we act and think as we wish, and that our emotions are given the chance to unfold in an inspiring way.
18. Our experiences in life create within us a book of comparative concepts, from which we derive our insight into things of the past, present and future, and which we constantly consult when forming our opinions regarding right and wrong, truth and illusion. The gift of free will offers an opportunity to lead our actions, resulting either in negative turns in life, or in positive ones when will-power is used in accordance with the guiding hand of wisdom.
19. Magnetism, which is latent in us all, unfolds when we develop in ourselves those qualities which we admire in others. Jealousy is the handicap to developing magnetism, and the admiration of others is that which does awaken magnetism.
20. When offering without any expectation of return, a stream of magnetism runs between the giver and the receiver, whereupon the giver, having motivated an energy which awakened emotion in the heart of the receiver, becomes like a battery of love.
21. The secret of true love is that it radiates far beyond the vision of the beloved, because the stream of love is of Divine origin and therefore beyond limitation. As it has been said, “the sea could not fit in a bowl, although it can fill it, but a bowl can merge into the sea, although it cannot contain it.” In other words, when love is real, the lover becomes a living manifestation of that love which, although directed to an ideal, reaches higher dimensions, communicating the spirit of love, and inspiring others on the path of love.

³ As in Jnana Yoga, Hatha Yoga, Bhakti Yoga

22. Intuition is a more subtle form of our natural instinct, and comes as a response to a momentary stimulus interpreted according to stored impressions, manifesting either as an action taken, or in the form of imagination. But as soon as reason comes into the picture, both imagination and conscious actions are then challenged, thereby potentially destroying the contents of the message intuitively received.
23. If intuition could be understood as being an unconscious reaction to impressions received, inspiration could be understood as being a grouping of a multitude of intuitions, merging together in an intelligible range of thoughts, transcribed in various types of expressions, such as literature, music and numberless other forms of creative arts. The difference between intuition and inspiration lies in the fact that intuition comes like a message for no apparent reason, whereas inspiration is the result of a connection between the indescribable source and the ability of the gifted ones who are able to materialize it.
24. Faith, which is an inborn tendency, loses its power with the acquisition of knowledge, experiencing thereby challenges, disappointments and differences of opinion.
25. True faith is not to be mistaken for fanaticism, which is the result of lack of self-trust and envy of that faith which others have built with their strength of conviction.
26. We rise when choosing the path of faith, and the first step made on that path is one of prayer. It is when offering love to God that feelings of gratitude arise, strengthening thereby our faith, which then becomes victorious over tests and disappointments.
27. Gratitude awakens in one's heart with the sense of appreciation, and where there is no appreciation, there cannot be satisfaction. Where there is no satisfaction, there cannot be self-trust. Where there is a lack of self-trust, one only becomes a burden to oneself and to others.
28. There are many reasons why the heart feels the need to express itself in prayer to the unknown. Some prayers are offered in thankfulness; others are heartfelt appeals for consolation and forgiveness for one's shortcomings; others, again, are offered as expressions of admiration for all nature's wonders.
29. At a deeper level of consciousness, some prayers are expressions of devotion and submission to the will of God, whereas others convey a still closer relationship with God, when meditating upon and identifying ourselves with the numberless Divine qualities, which in turn have magic effects on one's own personality, transforming us thereby into living examples of those same Ideals.
30. What is it that keeps all of the physical functions coordinated, if it is not the Divine energy in breath?

What is it that keeps the mind constantly active with thoughts, imagination and dreams, besides the ability to retain the numberless impressions received through the five senses, if it is not the Divine energy working in the breath of all God's creatures?

What is it that regulates the rising and setting of the sun and the caprices of the moon, the

tides of the sea, the repetition of the seasons and the everlasting rotation of the planets, if it is not the Divine energy working in the breath of the entire cosmos?

31. Truthfulness shines out through every part of one's being as an open picture of one's state of mind. Truthfulness is a fortune, which cannot be lost, nor can it be taken away from one. It is the charm of the character and the secret power of attraction felt in the nobility of the personality.
32. Animals can do many things that human beings can, according to the degree of their evolution, which varies from species to species. However, human beings have something more insofar as we become conscious of our responsibilities to one another: we can ask forgiveness for our shortcomings; we can offer acts of gratitude out of appreciation for the kindness of others; we can mould our ego so as to avoid being a burden to ourselves and to others; we can express feelings of respect to sacred things and feel uplifted in spiritual environments; we can venture to acquire those great qualities which we worship when attuning our hearts to the Divine. But are we always conscious of those privileges?
33. We only appreciate the value of a gain once we have been able to ascertain that the sacrifice made for that accomplishment was not made in vain, and that still bigger sacrifices were not incurred in the process. Besides, that which appears today to be a gain might turn out tomorrow to have been a loss, whereas that which seemed to be a loss might prove in fact to be a gain.
34. A negative thought can be just as detrimental as a negative word or a negative action. When creating hideous images in the mind world with the help of such negative feelings as doubt and fear, jealousy and anger, revenge and hate, one builds up all the aspects known in legends as those of hell, where thought monsters work against one's inner peace, whereas when creating with courage and hope uplifting images of love and kindness, one produces thereby one's own heaven within.
35. If we only knew the effect which our thoughts have on our state of mind and on our relationship with others, as well as on our life's condition, we would understand why even a simple project that we might have had in mind several years ago suddenly becomes a reality, because with each thought the mind generates vibrations, which altogether, as the result of our own free will, makes a reality of the line of destiny.
36. The longing to reach a chosen goal provides one with great inner strength, regardless of the value of the purpose. Therefore it is so important to direct one's activities to creative and uplifting ideals.
37. The refinement or the coarseness of a person, or in other words the state of evolution, is revealed in the subtlety of the breath, which is rhythmic and silent with the one, and arrhythmic, dense and audible with the other.
38. Some believe in destiny, and some believe in free will, and both points of view are right inasmuch as some aspects of our life are predestined, some aspects are shaped directly by that which we perform during our lives, and some aspects are the consequence of our actions. As it has been said, as we sow, so we reap.

39. Even with the desire to learn and understand, the mind remains an akasha, only able to grasp thoughts insofar as the light within fills it. In other words, the light gives life to the thoughts which reside within the capacity of the mind.
40. Freedom is the soul's true nature, which explains its longing to be released from captivity within the mind and body. The aim of the soul for freedom explains the constant longing of the heart as well as all hopes for the improvement of one's life, with happiness being the ultimate ideal.
41. The ultimate aim of philosophy, mysticism and spirituality is to attain to the freedom of the soul. Whatever one's longing in life, and whatever the object of attainment, behind all this there is the unquenchable pursuit of the soul to become free from all bondage. As the flame is separate from the coal, and yet is united to it through the heat of burning, so the soul reaches upwards and yet remains attached to the body and the mind so long as there is interest in the activities and pursuits of life.
42. All things seem worthwhile as long as we seek to attain them, for while seeking something we anticipate acquiring the value that we ascribe to it, but as soon as we have attained something it diminishes in value in the face of new experiences which we look forward to. Therefore one could say the personality of a person is equal to the importance of that person's ideal, and this ideal loses in importance as soon as it is no more held high.
43. To the question, why was this all created, one might answer that the purpose was the development of the human mind, which took place gradually through the mineral, the vegetable, the animal and the human kingdom. As a result of this process the mind became accustomed to all things and all forms, thereby discovering their secrets and the appropriate methods of obtaining control over nearly all that nature has to offer.
44. The terms intellect and wisdom are often confused, although these are two different qualities of the mind world. Intellect is the knowledge of name and form in relation to the outside world and to all that is definable, whereas wisdom, which is another type of knowledge, is the result of one's own experiences illuminated by the light of intelligence, and when that light is cast upon one's consciousness, there is discovered a knowledge which becomes one's own, independent of learning and study. That which at a primitive level is known as instinct, and at a more mental level is known as intuition, culminates in the spiritual knowledge known as wisdom. One may call the brain the seat of the intellect, and the heart the throne of wisdom.
45. Spirit could be seen as fine matter, and matter as dense spirit; it is only a difference of point of view. Spirit may be likened to water and matter to snow. Water and snow are the same substance; the difference lies only in the characteristics when subjected to different temperatures. Likewise, the difference between matter and spirit is a difference of condition, one being the energy and the other the akasha within which that energy evolves. However, while water may become snow and snow may become water, changing from liquid to solid and back again, spirit and matter have a different relationship. At birth, spirit and body become united, apparently indistinguishable, although it is obvious that the energy of the body is the life of the spirit. Therefore, although the spirit and the body can be understood as being separate, both however are one and the same.

46. Renunciation can bring happiness to oneself and to others, providing it is offered with wisdom and without regret for the sake of an ideal.
47. All that awakens longing in the heart deprives it of freedom, and the loss of freedom is proportional to the degree of longing, but on the other hand life on earth is inevitably conditioned by the bond of desire and therefore one's horizon is just as small or as great as are one's wishes.
48. The flower can be seen as the outcome of the plant, and the plant is obviously the product of the seed. In the same way, our actions are the consequence of our will-power, and the will is the unfoldment of the wish, whereas the wish is the reflection of the impressions and characteristics comprising our being, which, as the seed, is at the origin of all actions.
49. The diverse names and forms of the world's religious tendencies are like veils covering the phenomenon of the spirit of guidance, revealed constantly in the depths of our hearts.
50. The spirit of guidance is constantly present in nature's mysteries, which reveal a never-ending message of love, perceptible in proportion to one's understanding of the relationship between matter and spirit.
51. What we think of as 'I' is just a limited perception of an individual entity functioning as part of an entire network. In the same way, a drop of water is an entity as long as it is seen as a drop, but when it has fallen back into the ocean it becomes ocean again.
52. Among the numberless purposes in our lives, which nevertheless could not be accomplished in a whole lifetime, one essential ideal could be understood as the search for a balanced condition, notwithstanding the desire to live fully, the urge for knowledge, the attunement to inner security, the longing for happiness, and the need for peace.
53. To the question whether or not a material goal could serve one's ideal, from the Divine point of view even a material pursuit could become the source of spiritual awakening. Therefore, every effort made toward the fulfillment of one's life, whether materially or spiritually, brings one nearer, step by step, to the ultimate goal, the Divine purpose, which is in a constant state of formation according to a central theme.
54. One values most that which one has made the greatest effort to obtain, although paradoxically it does happen that the most valuable achievements are obtained with the least effort. No experience in life is worthless, not one moment is wasted, providing one is wise enough to carefully assemble the bits and pieces of past memories and learn from those experiences. The difference, however, between a worldly and a spiritual experience is that the effect of the worldly one is confined to a certain period of time, whereas the spiritual experience represents a step forward in the lifelong journey toward the goal.
55. The fulfillment of one's obligations is not only expected from a human point of view, but it is also essential on the inner path. However, in attending to one's duties one might appear to be a mystery to those who cannot measure the countenance of a selfless person, whose nature is to generously and unconditionally offer thoughtful deeds and uplifting experiences.

56. Living an inner life means that one is never alone, having discovered the Divine Presence constantly within.
57. Compassion is the true origin of religion in its purest aspect, and is the living energy by which religion in all ages inspired an outburst of devotional creativity.
58. Throughout history, truth has been crystallized in various ancestral beliefs, which have formed the origin of cultural standards in all times. Although truth has been presented in different forms, it has always proven to be one and the same, but unfortunately conditions in the world are such that religious forms remain in the hands of those who confine wisdom to outer understanding, delimited by rules and dogmas.
59. Unless one drops the mask of the ego and avoids the dark trap of self indulgence, truth remains veiled behind dogmas, doctrines and dissipated cultural structures imposed on mankind in the name of God and religion.
60. Religion is an art; it is the art of sacredness. This sacred feeling comes from the profound depth of the heart, which may be called the Divine shrine when that feeling is awakened therein. Therefore, however beautiful or impressive a religious form may be, it is all of no avail if there is no sincerity in the worship.
61. The message which is to be found in all religions, at whatever period they were given, was not intended for only one section of humanity, just as rain does not fall only in one area, nor does the sun shine only in one land. It has been expressed to different civilizations in different words and forms appropriate to the evolution of mankind at a particular period of history, and if there is any difference, it is one of form, not of spirit.
62. Those who stick to old religious forms, closing their eyes to inner truth, paralyze their faith by holding on to ancestral concepts, refusing thereby to open up to that same waterfall of the Divine message which was, is and shall always be.
63. The coming world religion can only be one of the heart, the one which has always been and shall always be. This religion is a constant reminder of our responsibilities toward others, as understood by the Sanskrit term Dharma, which means 'duty.'
64. It is the nature of mankind to try to discover what is behind the veil of the universe, and this explains why there is the tendency to reach further and further in whatever be the aspiration, whether it be material or spiritual. Therefore, religious search could be either the conscious or unconscious outcome of our longing to experience spheres beyond those of which we are conscious.
65. Tact, which comes from the profound depth of the feeling heart, is the sign of the great in spirit, who find more faults in themselves even than in others. Tact cannot be learned, and a polished approach is not the same as gentleness. A tactful person shows wisdom, intelligence, subtlety and a poetic inclination.

66. What use is there in a blunt truth thrown like a stone, which breaks the heart? There is no virtue in truth which has no beauty.
67. The diamond illustrates the great ideal of wisdom with its many optic angles reflecting a multitude of colors. In the same way, there are many concepts of wisdom, possibly just as many of these as there are seekers of wisdom. Therefore, it is of little value to argue with others about one's own convictions, and it is useless to try to convert others to one's own limited point of view. Truth does not need to prove itself; it is only untruth which fights frantically for recognition.
68. Spiritual realization consists in experiencing reality as an infinite continuum from material to spiritual. It is in the light of this understanding, at those moments when one's false identification and illusory aspirations are no more the spectator, that one discovers that all that one might have wanted to obtain spiritually is in fact already there, hidden as a pearl in one's heart.
69. Wisdom is not limited to experiences in one field only. It is like a cascade of energies flowing forth and reaching out in all directions and at all levels of consciousness, whether physical, mental or emotional.
70. As one proceeds onwards on the inner path, one may encounter precious discoveries which one does not always remember to put away safely in the treasure house of one's heart, and as soon as one boasts about these spiritual acquisitions, they are then removed, and years of effort are blown away in the wind of self-assertion.
71. The conscience is the evaluation of one's experiences and actions, which one does not always take into consideration, although that living voice comes constantly from within. Hiding or covering our shortcomings is useless because to every action there is always a reaction. The finer the person, the finer the conscience, and it is therefore that one is more conscious of wrong-doing, and more repentant than another.
72. What constitutes the judgment of the conscience? Could it perhaps be the awakening of the feeling heart to the consequences of an action?
73. The formation of opinions is only one facet of our reasoning faculty, a facet which derives from an uncontrolled tendency to judge, which often brings one under the examination of others, particularly when one's opinion is formed without knowledge of facts.
74. Consideration is an attitude which contributes greatly to one's happiness. As one evolves spiritually, one develops self-confidence, and thereby rises above a natural tendency of intolerance.
75. It is obvious that every being is born with a tendency to absorb knowledge, given in whatever form, and therefore one cannot say that a person is born an unbeliever. Unbelief arises when a person is confronted with an abstract, indefinable concept and wishes to experience it concretely, whereas an intelligent person has the tendency to adjust the belief so as to accommodate experiences and a growing understanding, until finally achieving conviction. This explains why one person's belief can never be that of another.

76. Some believe that circumstances are the consequence of one's fate or one's luck, while others believe in such a thing as free will, but obviously both are right and wrong, inasmuch as the proportion of fate and free will can be modulated to the extent that one allows oneself to be influenced by the one or the other.
77. Just as there are railway tracks, there are also tracks of destiny, upon which the wheels of our life roll onward, powered by the energy of our free will. The unknown aspect of the destiny track is the line of fate, and the known aspect is the line of accomplishment. When the wheels of our thoughts and actions slip off these rails, the result can be regrettable, whereas when rolling steadily onwards, the result can be positive. The reason why the wheels might slip off the rails is neglect of consistency on the part of the driver.
78. Both destiny and free will are precious inherited opportunities, and the more we become conscious of these privileges, the greater becomes our feeling of responsibility to employ our free will in harmony with our destiny. Free will is not only a tool with which we can master our life's conditions, but with which we can also protect ourselves from outer influences, undesirable circumstances and unknown factors.
79. Will-power is a dormant energy within, with the appearance of being one's own, whereas it is in fact of Divine origin, and the more we recognize the nature of its source, the more powerful it becomes.
80. Mysticism is neither faith nor belief, but it is a Divine impulse shining from within, and can only be understood when discovering the reality of the unreal, seeing the reason behind the reason, the cause of all effects, and the Divine unity in all aspects of life, and therefore no one is a mystic who claims to be so, because obviously a mystic avoids erecting barriers based on name and form.
81. Life as we know it is that of our own experiences, viewed within the framework of our understanding, and all that we cannot comprehend we suspect of being illusion. Our comprehension could be seen as a bubble in the sea of life, which might appear non-existent compared to the vastness of the sea, although one cannot really say that the bubble is non-existent because it shares the reality of the sea. The difference between bubble and sea is that when merged into the sea, the bubble, which was a separate entity, is then no more so, while conversely, the sea cannot be contained within the bubble, although the bubble is made of nothing else than the sea itself.
82. Divine grace may be thought of as descending as a dove from above, in its own right and time and according to its own itinerary, to bestow unconditional blessings, although the one so blessed may show no appearance of deserving that privilege, and may even be unaware of the blessings bestowed.
83. When shaping an impression into a comprehensible concept, our will-power is working as a ray of light, tracing in the mind the impression made by the object. Without will-power, we do not necessarily observe nor remember impressions.

84. It is not the camera which fixes the photograph, but it is the exposure of the sensitive plate which results in the crystallization of an image. If the body is the camera, the mind is the sensitive plate upon which the impressions fall, thereby becoming thought. However, the exposure depends upon the illumination offered by the spark of light flashing forth from our will-power, like the light from a flash bulb, the luminosity of which conditions the quality of the picture.
85. In the thinking process, it is Divine will-power which generates as much energy as is required, radiating through the filter of the intelligence in proportion to the intensity of thought, as well as to the receptive capacity of the mind. When the energy is then projected as subtle impulses upon the screen of the mind, it is creative of thought waves, which become materialized within the complex network of the brain cells, whether one is awake or even during sleep, as dreams.
86. An automatic action, such as a reflex, occurs when, like electronic chips, the brain cells discharge upon the physical mechanism the required energy for the motivation of an action, independently of thought and will-power.
87. All that is stored in the mind has entered by the channels of the five senses which act as openings through which the perception of the outer world penetrates the depth of our being. The five elements together represent everything which is part of the outer world, and this explains why they have been worshipped from ages past in different cultures. It also explains why it is so important to awaken the inner consciousness of the five elements, the characteristics of which certainly have a great influence upon our own psychological disposition.
88. The more one feels exalted by the privilege of absorbing divine energy through the breath, the less of oneself is involved, and consequently the more intense is the flow of that energy, which may be directed at will to a chosen chakra, or to thought and feeling, with the object of either attuning oneself to the Divine Presence, or projecting that energy upon others in need.
89. Just as it is necessary to cleanse the body, it is just as important to purify the mind and the heart. Improper conditions disturb the normal working of the physical mechanism, and this also applies to the harmonious working of the mind world, and even so much more is the effect of stains obscuring the mirror of the feeling heart.
90. When coming to the subject of the feeling heart, words become very inadequate to portray the breadth and subtlety of one's emotions. There are deep feelings which flow outward toward an object of love, with no expectation of return, and others which are felt as an exaltation, with no definable object, and where there is no trace of self.
91. The subtle energy of the breath could be likened to waves upon which the thought is carried. If the breath is disorderly and incoherent it has a consequent effect upon the thought, and conversely, disorganized thoughts disturb the rhythm of the breath.
92. Will-power is already available, latent within, but develops automatically along with the mastery of the breath, whereupon all becomes coherent and harmonious.

93. The power of breath is a precious tool at our disposition, guiding our minds and regulating our life's conditions. The term breath refers not only to the air that we inhale and exhale, but it also refers to the cosmic energy traveling along that flow, enriching our physical, mental and emotional constitutions.
94. Breath is the very secret of our being and the tool with which we are able to master our lives and be helpful to others. It is also the link uniting the spiritual with the material, and when one is conscious of that link, it can be used to make of life on earth an experience of inner peace.
95. The micro- or macro-structural concept of the ever expanding and contracting universe, is in itself the evidence of a wisdom-working mechanism, which pervades all levels of nature's manifestation, securing the infinity of the creative circle of the past, present and future, as well as the *moto perpetuo* rotation of the planets in their orbits.
96. The consciousness radiating behind all manifestation is the source of inspiration which has motivated mankind to conceive the Creator as origin of all creation. In order to grasp these abstract concepts and to formulate them in concrete terms mankind has crystallized belief in symbols of shape and color and various objects of worship.
97. When one awakens to higher consciousness, the temporary importance of all values fades away, since one is no more possessed by them. At this stage of true awakening, one is invariably enchanted by the great wonders of creation, which triggers one's curiosity as to the whence and whither of a universe of light, sound, color, form and energy. One makes many assumptions and speculations to describe cosmic consciousness, within the limitation of one's own mind world.
98. One attempts to compensate for one's incapacity to define cosmic consciousness by means of numberless illustrations of the God ideal, in the hope of some day meeting with the sacred revelations of the truth symbolically indicated by all religions.
99. When drawing closer to spiritual awakening, one profoundly hopes to probe the depths of life, to discover the source and goal of all things, to unfold the mysteries of time and space, of matter and spirit. In time, all earnest attempts on the part of the seeker finally contribute towards the recognition of one's narrow limitations, and when once the doors of the heart open in humility, one finds oneself face to face with the Divine Presence, the living God within.
100. The value that we find in things is in proportion to their lasting quality; a gain or a loss is only such according to whether it is of a momentary or of a lasting nature. Nevertheless, both loss and gain are only transitory states.
101. When one's own initiative is working harmoniously with the power of the cosmos, all one undertakes proves successful, whereas when a harmonious attunement between one's own creative power and cosmic power is lacking, one finds oneself confronted with failure.
102. In preparation for meditation, although the physical and the mental activities are intermingled, the difference between stilling the mind and slowing the body is that by the help of willpower the physical activities can be trained, whereas mental activity is more resistant to discipline,

because the mind, which is highly strung and constantly creating either coherent or incoherent thoughts even in one's dreams, can only become truly peaceful in the absence of self-consciousness.

103. The first step in stilling the mind is to practice the power of concentration; the second step is to practice creative thinking; the third step is to create a blank state of mind by rejecting the useless thoughts which come and go like flies, and to leave no chance for new thoughts to enter the picture.
104. Indifference and independence are like two wings, which help one to rise above the captivity of a limited outlook and a negative condition. However, unless one acts as the captain of the flight, one merely floats in the sky, arriving nowhere.
105. The whole of life is conditioned by conventions and preconceived ideas, all of which, according to specific characteristics, create edifices known as cultures, and religious systems, which govern the mind of the multitude.
106. For a mystic, the meaning of life is solely a journey from love to love: the condition of the soul before the journey is one of love; love is all that is looked for during the journey, and on its return, the soul returns to love.
107. If we doubt that Divine justice works behind all those events which seem unjustifiable from our point of view, it is because we fail to recognize that our understanding of justice is limited to the extent of our own vision.
108. The ego energy could be illustrated as a board balancing on a fulcrum, one end of the board representing the awareness of individuality, the other end, the Divine Presence; and the balance point illustrates the human heart. When there is a disproportionate degree of the "I" consciousness, one end of the board is pulled downward, whereas when the awareness of the Divine Presence is increased, this transcends the ego at a higher level. When the board is perfectly balanced upon the fulcrum, however, this symbolizes the inner condition of the mystic.
109. The saint resigns to the will of God and calls it destiny. The mystic discovers the will of God manifested in the individual's own free will. The fatalist ignores the power of free will. The wise makes the best out of destiny, using the power of free will in all circumstances, even though these may seem to be hopeless.
110. If there is a secret to success and happiness, this might be found in harmonizing one's actions with one's conscience, with one's responsibilities and with one's convictions.
111. The soul could be seen as pure intelligence of Divine origin, becoming conscious when captive within an akasha or framework such as a mental or physical garb. The knowledge which we have of our consciousness is limited to all that of which we are conscious, but just like the observer remains apart from what is observed, in the same way we cannot see our soul since the soul is itself the spectator of all mental and physical experiences.

112. Every religious form strikes a particular note, answering the need of humanity at a certain epoch, and the music heard when all notes resound in harmony is that which is understood by the term 'religion,' because all notes derive from one and the same Divine origin.
113. Obviously our own attitude involves us in right or wrong deeds, which invariably attract either friends or enemies whose influences affect our life's conditions, and who thereby contribute to our own happiness or disappointment.
114. Struggling with oneself could be understood as follows:
- Making sure that one's thoughts, speech and actions answer the standards of one's own ideals, expressed in accord with one's natural impulses;
- Harmonizing with others whatever be their convictions, thereby making oneself either as narrow or as wide as the horizon of which both partake;
- Opening one's heart unconditionally, whatever be the resistance experienced in all contacts with others.
115. Every moment in life offers a particular blessing, but the greatest of all blessings is the discovery of one's life's purpose, with the consequent recognition that life is like an open field where one may grow whatever one wishes, if only one considers carefully what one sows.
- Just as flowers call for the elements which earth, sun and water provide for the secret of their color and fragrance, in the same way we also consciously or unconsciously attract those elements and those events which are fundamental to our identity. Therefore, each experience in life is the result of past and present inward calls, collected in the very depth of our being.
116. One's experience of reality in the wakened state is the consciousness of all around one, with the many implications resulting from one's feelings, thoughts, words and actions in all relationships with others, with nature and with life in general.
- Reality is also experienced in dreams, with the difference that there are no direct implications resulting from the scenarios about which one dreams, and consequently, there are no obligations in relationship to others or to life in general, although a hidden message offered by Divine Guidance can be symbolically revealed in dreams.
117. Selflessness expresses itself in a spirit of dignified humility when one's personality is freed from the storm clouds of self-assertion.
118. Character building is like shaping and coloring within oneself, and when the beauty of this art is reflected in one's heart, one's words and actions then display signs of spiritual awakening.
119. The purpose of life is like a lamp illuminating the path of destiny, and when one concentrates upon that purpose the light in the lamp shines brightly upon the path, but when disregarding one's destination the light fades away, and one misses one's life's vocation.
120. In the all-pervading space there is no up or down, no right or left, nor is there a beginning nor an end. These distinctions which correspond to the limitation of our human understanding are

the result of our confrontation with all those objects to which we relate, and by which we ultimately define such realities as shape and distance, time and speed within the horizon of our limited understanding.

121. The inner life is comparable to a journey, the preparation for which includes the accomplishment of one's moral obligations, and the freeing of oneself from such burdens as remorse, unrestful feelings and regrets, which would weigh too heavily to be carried all the way.
122. Progress on the path of life is liable to be handicapped by worldly ambitions and futile attachments, but wisdom will always seek a balance between the virtue of restraint and the temptation of power which motivates all actions
123. There is always a sacrifice to be expected when treading the path of inner life. Seen from a worldly point of view forgetting one's self consists of handling one's social obligations and settling one's private duties. Seen from a spiritual point of view, self-denial is practiced to discover the chamber of the heart, where lies the secret of all accomplishment on the path.
124. The thought is reflected upon the brain — like an image that is materialized on a photographic plate — whereupon it is coordinated in a process called intelligence, the light of which varies in brightness in accordance with the quality of one's intellectual abilities.
125. The fulfillment of the purpose of the seed is accomplished after it is placed underground and is nourished by water and sun, whereby the seedling springs forth to provide the flowers and fruit which were already planned within the seed.
126. The fulfillment of life on earth is accomplished when, after passing through all the various planes of materialization, one becomes conscious of one's unknown self, leading ultimately to the realization that the opposite concepts spirit and matter both derive from one and the same source where all was planned beforehand.

The fulfillment of consciousness, which is at the origin of the ability to think is when consciousness, confronted with the thoughts of which it is conscious, becomes intelligible to itself.

127. When, with closed eyes, one is not experiencing outwardly, the consciousness sees the image of the self, the akasha, but it cannot see its own ability of seeing, which is to say, itself; it has not the means. In this process the soul is ultimately the spectator of the consciousness upon which the image of the self is reflected, but the nature of the soul is not altered, just as an image reflected in a mirror does not leave any trace on its pure surface.
128. When, with closed eyes, one is not experiencing outwardly, the consciousness sees the image of the self, the akasha, but it cannot see its own ability of seeing, which is to say, itself; it has not the means. In this process the soul is ultimately the spectator of the consciousness upon which the image of the self is reflected, but the nature of the soul is not altered, just as an image reflected in a mirror does not leave any trace on its pure surface.

129. Although all religions have ventured to help the seeker to find happiness, happiness cannot be obtained; it can only be revealed, because it is none other than our own being, our own self, that which is the most precious of anything in life. What keeps happiness out of sight is the closing of the doors of the heart.
130. Just as the water of a fountain ascends in one stream and then falls in drops, so does the one truth reveal itself in various names and forms which are not always recognized by believers as being so many drops of one and the same stream of wisdom.
131. Where there is nothing, nothing can be effaced. Therefore the molding whereby the personality is developed creates a capacity through which consciousness unfolds, with the object of obtaining something which may then be willingly effaced.
132. Beauty, by nature, is unconscious of its value, just as virtue, which is the outcome of love, is only real in the absence of self-consciousness, and harmony is there when the thought of the self is lost in the enchantment of the beauty of the object of love.
133. Vibrations could be understood as being the principle of cause and effect expressed in such various impulses as movement, circulation, sound and light, showing in miniature the influences of the planets in the cosmos, because it is that same cosmic force which sets everything in the physical plane in motion. Whether things are visible or audible, perceptible or imperceptible, is dependent upon the fineness or crudity of the vibration, but also upon the limitations of our perceptual abilities.
134. The law of vibration can also be related to the state of mind and the delicate condition of the feeling heart. Since life is energy and energy is productive of vibration, the frequency of the vibration results in an effect upon one's state of mind. It is obvious that cheerfulness and enthusiasm are related to an acceleration in the vibration of one's attitude, whereas depression is consequent to a slowing of that same rhythm, and on the other hand it can be understood that both the slowing down and the acceleration of the frequency of vibration of another can affect one's conditions.

2 - THE MESSAGE

1. For some, the idea of God is an abstract concept, whereas for others, the idea of God is limited to a personal concept, and according to others, there is no God, whereas the mystics and thinkers who consider life from a spiritual point of view, are all attuned to a Divine Ideal.
2. Whether Yogis, Sufis, Buddhists, or Christians, all arrive at a certain stage of understanding, and come to the same realization, in spite of the differences of interpretation. The differences in the dogmas of the various religions are only in the form. It is only those who look at the surface who see differences. Those who look deeper, and who understand the real meaning of belief, see, one and the same truth hidden in all religions, given at all times.
3. Belief can certainly help one to go forward on the spiritual path, but paradoxically, one's belief can also keep one back from spiritual attainment, if it is a fanatical belief.

4. Belief is like a staircase, and each step taken brings one forward. But if one stays standing just on one step of the staircase, there is no progress.
5. As one progresses on the spiritual path, one's belief evolves, and one reaches to that stage, where one is no more restricted to only one belief, but one harmonizes with all beliefs.
6. The word 'God' comes from the Arabic term "Djod", which means "The Absolute omniscient spirit, the essence of Intelligence in its original condition". If God were to be explained, God would not be God. To explain God is to de-throne God.
7. In Sufi terms the absolute is called "Nur", which means light centralized at its original source. It is from this centralized point that the origin of manifestation can be seen.
8. "Centralization" is that which creates an entity. Therefore, when considering the "all-pervading Intelligence" according to a conceivable concept, that is what one could understand as being the energy of the thinking power of the mind.
9. The light of the sun is just as much the sun, as the sun which one sees before one. In the same way, the entire manifestation could be seen as the materialization of God, whereas God is, at the same time, the origin and source of all manifestation. This does not make God a being separate from the entire manifestation, just as the sun cannot be separated from the sun-light.
10. The purpose of practicing concentration is to develop control over the mind, centralizing one's thoughts in a coordinated way. Whereas with lack of concentration, the mind deviates as it wishes, instead of working according to one's will.
11. That which is called imagination is an automatic working of the mind, and that which is called thought is a coordinated action of both mind and will. Such states as being either imaginative or thoughtful distinguishes the condition of the mind.
12. The mind is a storehouse of all impressions gathered through the five senses, and everyone of those impressions can be highlighted as soon as the thought requires them to be present on the screen of the mind.
13. When one goes a little further on the path of concentration one finds that there is also such a thing as contemplation. The distinction between concentration and contemplation is that the former is the composition of a form, and the latter is the retaining of the impressions received from a thought-picture.
14. When rising above the thinking action of the mind, and experiencing thereby the inner side of life, one then begins to discover one's heritage granted by the divine Being. When this heritage is discovered it comes in the form of inner realization, like the lantern of Aladdin, which was found with great difficulty, but when it is was found, the secret of life was thereby revealed.
15. An act of kindness is often purposeless when not reacting at the right moment. A battle can be won with kindness if one takes into consideration the true intentions of the adversary. The heart of a proud person melts when confronted with kindness.

16. There is no wrong, which might have some right side to it, and there is no right without some wrong side to it. When one realizes this, one is reluctant to express one's opinion about anything or anybody; it is the unwise who are always ready to express their opinion.
17. There is a connection between the spoken word and its effect. When not realizing the power of the words, if one says something which one would not wish to happen it would have been better not to have said it, specially things that suggest serious troubles in one's life or in the lives of others.
18. One often adopts a belief, without even knowing why, thinking that there is a good reason for believing that which one believes, whereas that is not necessarily so. But, sooner or later one's own reason can also prove to be tricky, reasoning one out of one's previous belief. Therefore, it is only when one's belief is independent of reasoning that belief can then righteously be called faith.
19. When the mind is freed from the confusion of differences and distinctions, arising from comparisons and judgments, one then understands self-effacement.
20. The seer from within is all intelligence, nevertheless, it is only through one's ability of seeing that the seer from within sees.
21. When thoughts no longer occupy one's attention, one assumes that the waves in the mind have ceased to rise and fall, whereas in reality, there is only a decrease in the intensity of the thought impulses, which can be stirred up at any moment into turbulence, each time that the memory is activated.
22. It is when restraining from stimulating one's self-consciousness, that uncontrolled thoughts and feelings can then be brought under control.
23. There are illuminated souls in all parts of the world without any outward sign of inner awakening; therefore, it is difficult to recognize them unless one's heart is open.
24. There are two talking machines; one which is audible and another within, which reproduces inwardly the spoken word which has an effect upon one's inner self, influencing thereby one's thoughts and feelings.
25. In one's every day life, it is the "I" and "You" which divides, whereas love dissolves these opposite concept turning them into a current which unites.
26. When placing a statue of God in a sacred shrine one is holding an Idol that one treasures. When creating an imaginary God, one is creating an Ideal to worship. When feeling God within one's heart, one's Ideal is raised to a higher level of consciousness, looking on to a wider space, where there is no horizon dividing the outer and the inner world.
27. When weighing and measuring others and reacting unconsciously to impressions received, one partakes of those same impressions, and whether liked or disliked, one adopts them unconsciously in one's own behavior.

28. One is born as an individual, but an individual is not necessarily a person. It is the evolution of the individuality, which culminates in a personality, and then, when developing a true personality one progresses towards the fulfillment of the purpose of life.
29. The further one advances in life, the more one comes to understand that there are many opportunities, and the more one is able to view with repentance the lost opportunities of the past.
30. Magnetism is the power that works as a secret energy through the whole of manifestation, attracting vibrations to one another. When vibrations meet they clash, producing sound, and when they increase in intensity, there is light.
31. Learning certainly enriches the spectrum of one's knowledge, but that does not necessarily mean that one is wiser. Wisdom cannot be learned; it awakens through self-effacement.
32. Just as a reflection upon a mirror is not intelligible in itself, although it does trace a picture on the surface of the mirror, in the same way the consciousness cannot see itself; it does not have the means.
33. In the Vedanta the two forces of nature are called Purusha and Prakriti, the creator and the creation, the creative and the responsive forces by which the whole of manifestation was created. In the religious terms of the Hindus they are called Shiva and Parvati. In the Hindu imagery, Shiva is portrayed with two faces, a man's face and a woman's face, showing the symbology of creation, besides also the image of destruction that Shiva represents.
34. The best way to encounter disharmony is to harmonize with it; if one realizes that the source and goal of all things is the perfection of harmony one bears this idea in mind when meeting with disharmony. Disharmony in reality has no existence; it is like a shadow. When confronted with harmony, disharmony certainly disappears like shadow is dissolved by the light of the sun.
35. The mystical conception of 'above' does not always mean 'in the sky'; it means higher, greater, beyond. We call a plane higher or lower out of convention, but higher does not mean preferable. One might perhaps even say that the human plane is preferable to the other planes, for it is here that one can find the sum total of all fulfillment.
36. From a mystical point of view, all geometrical shapes originate from the dot. When moving the dot in which ever direction, a line is traced, which can shape forms such as the square, the rectangular, the triangular and numerous others. The dot can also be measured by crossing lines within its circle. The idea of crossed lines within a circle is found in an ancient mystical symbol indicating the cross point between that which is divine and that which is human, also understood as Spirit and matter.
37. In space, there are no directions such as above or below, right and left. Such distinctions come from being confronted with those objects which are part of one's every day life. However, within space, time is intelligible, and time also makes space intelligible. Both, time and space create the illusion of reality. In the absence of time and space rhythm cannot exist, nor can time and space exist without rhythm.

38. Useless speech offers an outlet to negative attributes such as pride, self-centeredness, revenge, and egoism; all being the source of most of the troubles which one causes to oneself and to others.
39. One level of consciousness is when the mind experiences life through the physical channels. The second level of consciousness is when the mind experiences life, either in imaginations or in dreams. The third level of consciousness is when the mind is at rest, and the consciousness awakens independently of the thinking power. This condition is what is understood by the terms Samadhi or ecstasy.
40. One only considers as real, that which is before one, regarding as imagination or dream, whatever comes on the screen of the mind, but the reality of the external world is not more real than is the reality in the mental world; besides, just as worldly things are subject to change, in the same way one's thoughts are also subject to change.
41. The inner self cannot be peaceful if the external self is not under control because the state of mind is always affected by the physical conditions. Therefore, in order to acquire discipline over the mind, the first step is to learn to control the body. The next step is the art of concentration, which is an act of will. When concentration has been mastered, the inner self becomes peaceful, the insight becomes keen and the thoughts become clear.
42. There are times when one wonders whether things are really good or bad; whether the Ideals of the crowds are worth following, and one's view of the world changes. This is when one is prepared to rise above preconceived ideas and that the mind willing to opens up to larger horizons.
43. The concept of the 'God Ideal' is comparable to compasses with which one draws circles. The one end of the compasses points to "Thou", and the other end points to "I", and both points join when the circle is traced. It is when rising beyond the differences made between "Thou" and "I", which brings one nearer to God, and it is in this consciousness that the worshiper and the object of worship become one.
44. Mankind, the ideal manifestation of the creation, possesses most attributes of past phases of evolution, besides also the ability of improving human qualities.
45. When letting a material project be unfulfilled for fear that such a desire might be contrary to spiritual awakening, this failure to proceed in the accomplishment of the material project shall also keep one back from spiritual progress
46. Life is precious, and it becomes even more precious when realizing the opportunities which are offered. One can play with anything, and one can profit by anything, either the right or wrong done to one by others, if one only is aware of the challenges which are constantly offered.
47. The vibrations of a spoken word have an effect upon one, besides also the meaning of the word which acts as a suggestive motivation. The mystics make use of the power of the spoken word, the science of which is called Mantra yoga, from which is derived the Sufi practice called Wazifa.

48. The ordinary meaning of being spiritual is to have spirit within one; no doubt one does have it. The other meaning of being spiritual is when forgetting one's own spiritual progress, and when offering all the services to others. There is no need to worry about becoming spiritual. To be spiritual is to be natural. It is unnatural not to be spiritual.
49. Even when indulging in solitude and meditations, without an Ideal one would become tired out with the idea of developing inwardly. There is only one way in which life is worth living, and that is to have something to look up to, something to hope for, something to attain, even beyond imagination.
50. Self-control can be achieved through developing discipline over two opposite powers, that of action and that of inaction, independently of each other. However, both opposite powers can also be mastered simultaneously when exerting subtle discipline over any one of the five senses.
51. The simultaneous working of action and inaction can be experienced when activating the thought in the direction of one or more of the five senses, and at the same time, being receptive of the impressions received. The idea is to practice the ability of focusing the inner sight, in thought, upon one or more of the five senses, which are directions to which the thought can be activated while being at the same time inactively conscious.
52. A stream of water sprays into countless drops, and if the same power which projected the initial jet of water were adopted to each separate drop, each drop would in turn become another stream of water. In the same way, each soul is like a particle of the all pervading life in space, and is also at the same time the totality of that from which its individuality originates.



Hidayat Inayat-Khan

is the third child of Hazrat Inayat Khan and Ora Ray Baker-Bernard, following the family musical tradition, of which his Great-Grandfather Maula Bakhsh and his Father Inayat Khan were the highlights. Musician by nature Hidayat was violinist in different orchestras and string quartets, and also conductor and composer. He composed the Message symphony, the Gandhi symphony, and many other works like the Suite Symphonique, which was written in commemoration of his sister Noorunissa who faced death in Dachau, this September 60 years ago.

In a time where people normally retire from work Hidayat Inayat-Khan accepted the leadership as Representative General and Pir-o-Murshid of the Sufi Movement, in complete dedication to its founder, his father.

One thing that one notices when reading this book is, that the author has let himself be molded by life. The reflections are reflections on the teachings of Hazrat Inayat Khan and practiced in daily life:

“Each time that we set aside our own ego, even for a moment, we offer a little bit of our heart to the Divine Presence, and in return the light of the Spirit of Guidance becomes brighter and brighter, so that there remains no shadow to hide the perfection of the all-pervading.”

May this book accompany you on your path.

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