

Gnostic Psychology – Notes 15

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Self-Observation, Recording and the Division of Functions

Without properly applied self-observation a person will never understand the connection between the various functions of their machine, and they will never understand how and why on each separate occasion everything in them 'happens'. To learn the methods of self-observation and of right self-study requires a certain understanding of the functions and the characteristics of the human machine. Therefore in observing the functions of the human machine it is necessary to understand the correct divisions of the functions observed and to be able to define them exactly; and the definition must not be a verbal but an inner definition; by taste or flavor, by sensation, in the same way as we define all inner experiences. There are two important methods of self-study:

1. registering or recording, simply '*recording*' in one's mind what is observed at the moment
2. and *analysis*, or attempts at analysis, that is, attempts to find the answers to the questions:
 - upon what does a certain thing depend?
 - and why does it happen?

Self-observation, especially in the beginning, must not become analysis or attempts at analysis. Before it is possible to analyze even the most elementary phenomena, a person must accumulate a sufficient quantity of material by means of 'recording'. Recording is **the result of a direct observation of what is taking place at a given moment**, and is the most important material in the work of self-study. In observing, or 'recording', the functions of the human machine it is necessary to **understand the correct divisions of the functions observed and to be able to define them** exactly and the definition must not be a verbal but an inner definition: by taste or flavor, by sensation, in the same way as we define all inner experiences. When a certain number of 'records' have been accumulated and then analysis becomes possible.

The Wrong Working of the Centers and Fantasy or Daydreaming

As we watch the work of the centers, we will observe (side by side with their right working) their wrong working, that is, the working of one center for another. Examples: the attempts of the thinking center to feel or to pretend that it feels, the attempts of the emotional center to think, the attempts of the moving center to think and feel, etc. The wrong working of a center often occurs when it does not use its own energy. Each center has its own particular type of energy that it normally works with, but when it runs out of energy, then the machine must either switch to another center or steal energy from another center. For us to switch to another center (a center which is not exhausted) would be ideal, but sometimes we cannot and other times we don't want to, either way, energy is stolen from another center to continue the work in the present center.

Typically, when the human machine steals energy, it does so from the sexual center. As a result, all the centers rob the sexual center of its energy and then produce (with this energy) quite wrong work, full of useless excitement and, in return, give to the sexual center useless energy with which it is unable to work. One center working for another is useful in certain cases, since it preserves the continuity of mental activity. But if this becomes habitual then it also becomes harmful, since it begins to interfere with right working by enabling each center to avoid its own direct duties and to do whatever it likes best at the moment instead of what it ought to be doing. In a normal healthy person each center does its own work, that is, the work for which it was specially destined and which it can best perform. There are situations in life which the thinking center alone can deal with and can find a way out of. If, at that moment, the emotional center begins to work instead, then it will make a mess of everything and the result of its interference will be very unbalanced. In an unbalanced kind of person the substitution of one center for another goes on almost continually and this is precisely what 'being unbalanced' or 'neurotic' means.

In an unbalanced person, each center strives to pass its work on to another, and, at the same time, it strives to do the work of another center for which it is not suited. The emotional center working for the thinking center brings unnecessary nervousness, feverishness, and hurry into situations where, on the contrary, calm judgment and deliberation are essential. The thinking center working for the emotional center brings deliberation into situations which require quick decisions and makes a person incapable of distinguishing the peculiarities and the fine points of the position. Thought is too slow. It works out a certain plan of action and continues to follow it even though the circumstances have changed and quite a different course of action is necessary. In some cases the interference of the thinking center gives rise to entirely wrong reactions, because the thinking center is simply incapable of understanding the shades and distinctions of many events. Events that are quite different for the moving center and for the emotional center appear to be alike to the thinking center. Its decisions are much too general and do not correspond to the decisions which the emotional center would have made.

The motor center working for thinking center produces, mechanical reading or mechanical listening, like when a person reads or listens to nothing but the words, but is utterly unconscious of what they are reading or hearing. This generally happens when attention of the thinking center is occupied with something else and when the moving center is trying to replace the absent attention of the thinking center; but this very easily becomes a habit, because the thinking center is generally distracted not by useful work, by thought, or by contemplation, but simply by daydreaming or by fantasy (imagination used by the "I").

'Fantasy' is one of the principal sources of the wrong work of centers. Each center has its own form of fantasy and daydreaming, but as a rule both the moving and the emotional centers make use of the thinking center which very readily places itself at their disposal for this purpose, because daydreaming corresponds to the thinking center's own inclinations. Daydreaming is absolutely the opposite of 'useful' mental activity. 'Useful' in this case means activity directed towards a definite aim and undertaken for the sake of obtaining a definite result. Daydreaming does not pursue any beneficial aim or result. The motive for daydreaming almost always lies in the emotional or in the motor-instinctive-sexual centers. But the actual process is carried out by the thinking center.

The Work with the Centers and their Harmonious Development

The question of the erroneous functioning of the centers is a topic that demands a lifetime of study by way of the observation of oneself in action and of the rigorous examination of dreams. It is not possible to achieve the comprehension of the centers, and their correct or incorrect function, in an instant. We need infinite patience. All of life unfolds as a function of the centers, and is controlled by them. Our thoughts, ideas, feelings, hopes, fears, love, hatred, deeds, sensations, pleasure, satisfactions, frustrations, etc., are found in the centers.

Part of becoming a balanced human being is working on the harmonious development of our machine. In a balanced human being we find perfect harmony and rhythmical concordance in the functions of the five centers of the human machine. In order to arrive at this level, we have to totally develop the five centers. The intellectual center can be developed with the study of botany, astrology, medicine; or just with the study of esotericism, etc. The emotional center can develop in its superlative form through the cultivation of the arts; we can listen to Beethoven, Mozart or Liszt; or learn how to paint. The motor center is educated by harmonious habits: by carefully reviewing all our habits of conduct; eliminating certain habits (those that are not convenient for us); selecting and learning new habits that are good for us; practicing certain exercises or simply sports (like long walks to take in fresh air, etc.); as well as with all the activities related to manual labor (like mechanics, driving cars, bicycles or horse riding or swimming, etc.). We do not need to develop the instinctive center because it already regulates all the activities of the organism and directs them wisely. If we wish to teach the instinctive center, we risk losing our life or catching any disease. We should remember that we could not have the heart, liver or kidneys functions if we did not possess the instinctive center. The sexual center works harmoniously and reaches its harmonious development through the transmutation of the creative energies.