

Gnostic Psychology – Notes 18

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The Struggle against Habits and the Results of Recording that Struggle

Every grown-up person consists of habits, although they are often unaware of it and may even deny having any habits at all (but this can never be the case). All 3 Brains are filled with habits and a person can never know themselves until they have studied all their habits. As long as a person is governed by a particular habit, they are not observing it, but at the very first attempt to struggle against it: they feel it and notice it. Therefore in order to observe and study habits one must try to struggle against them. **The purpose of struggling against habits is to show or expose what is there in the particular center.** This opens up a practical method of self-observation.

It is very difficult for a person to observe and 'record' anything if they do not try to struggle with themselves, that is, with their habits. **Without a struggle a person cannot see what they consist of...** To study the habits of the moving center is to struggle against and to observe: our normal way of walking, or standing, or sitting, how we hold our pen or pencil; we could try to use the left hand to do what we normally do with the right hand, etc. These types of changes will enable a person to observe themselves and to study the habits & associations of the moving center.

In the sphere of the emotions it is very useful to try to struggle with the habit of giving immediate expression to all one's unpleasant emotions. Many people find it very difficult to refrain from expressing their feelings about what they perceive to be bad weather. It is still more difficult for people not to express unpleasant emotions when they feel that something or someone is violating what they may conceive to be order or justice. Besides being a very good method for self-observation, the struggle against expressing unpleasant emotions has another important significance: It is one of the few directions in which a person can change themselves or their habits without creating other undesirable habits. Therefore self-observation and self-study must, from the beginning, be accompanied by the struggle against the expression of unpleasant emotions.

If a person observes this struggle within themselves, they will clearly record the fact that **their thoughts, feelings, actions, and words are the result of reacting to external influences and that nothing comes from themselves**. They will understand and see that they are simply acting under the influences of external stimuli, that everything 'happens' to them, and that they cannot 'do' anything on their own. They are a machine controlled by accidental shocks from the outside. Each shock calls to the surface one of their "I's". A new external shock, the previous "I" disappears, and then a different "I" takes its place. Another small change in the environment and again there is a new "I".

By observing this for themselves, a person will begin to understand that (in their present state) they have little or no control over themselves whatsoever, that they do not know what they may say or do in the next moment and, thus, they will begin to understand that they cannot answer for themselves (even for the shortest length of time). When a person has realized this through their own personal experience, then they will have the necessary *internal shock* to begin to dedicate themselves to the work of awakening the consciousness.

There are a variety of external influences that come to us from many different sources, including those coming from other people; from technology; from minerals, plants or animals (which can include the place we live or work, the food we eat, etc.); and from the cosmos. There are very subtle influences that come from planets and stars that affect us in ways most people are completely unaware of. But in reality, for some people, all their movements and actions are the result of planetary influences, and the moon plays a big part in this. The influence of the moon upon everything living manifests itself in all that happens on the earth. **If we really want to be successful in the Work, we need to counteract the mechanicity of Lunar materialism.** The Moon tends towards materialism and this is a serious problem for us since our whole terrestrial mechanism is influenced by it.

The Wrong Working of the Centers and Economizing our Energy

In the course of every 24 hours our organism produces a definite amount of energy for its existence. There is much more of this energy than should be needed for normal expenditure in that period, but since our life is so wrong: we spend the greater part of this energy unproductively. Every movement, every tension (whether big or small) is possible for a person only by spending their energy. We cannot get more energy: the machine will remain such as it is created. The amount of energy produced is constant and even if the machine is put right, this amount will increase very little.

A great deal of energy is spent on work which is completely unnecessary and harmful in every respect, such as on the activity of unpleasant emotions, on the expression of unpleasant sensations, on worry, on restlessness, on haste, and on a whole series of automatic actions which are completely useless. The only method and possibility of changing our present situation is **to economize the energy produced by our organism**, not to waste this energy on unnecessary functions, and to save it for that activity which will gradually connect the inferior centers with the superior ones. Therefore if we wish to have a lot of energy when we need it, then we must learn to practice economy wherever we can. But one thing is definitely known: one of the chief leakages of energy is due to our involuntary tension.

For a person to move to the next stage of their spiritual development, the complete and harmonious working of all centers is required. This implies, or is the expression of, having more and more control over their internal working. What is necessary to understand is the idea of the complete materiality of all the psychic, intellectual, emotional, volitional, and other inner processes (including the most exalted poetic inspirations, religious ecstasies, and mystical revelations). **The materiality of processes means their dependence upon the quality of the substance or fuel used by them.**

One process demands the expenditure or use of a certain type of fuel (for example 'hydrogen 48'), and another process cannot be obtained with this same fuel. Instead it requires a more refined type of fuel (or a more combustible substance, for example 'hydrogen 24'). For a third process an even finer type of fuel is necessary (for example 'hydrogen 24' is too weak, instead it requires 'hydrogen 12'). Thus we see that **our organism has the different kinds of fuel necessary for the different centers.** The centers can be compared to machines working with fuels of different qualities. One machine can work with oil residue or crude oil. Another requires kerosene; a third will not work with kerosene but requires gasoline, etc. The fine substances of our organism can be characterized as substances of different flashpoints, while the organism itself can be compared to a laboratory or factory in which the combustibles of different strengths (required for the different centers) are prepared from various kinds of raw material. Unfortunately, however, there is something wrong with the laboratory...

Understanding the Wrong Working of the Centers and Change (the Work)

The forces controlling the distribution of combustibles among the different centers often make mistakes and the centers receive fuel that is either too weak or too volatile. Moreover, a great quantity of all the combustibles produced is spent quite uselessly: it simply runs out or is lost. Additionally, **explosions often take place in the laboratory which at one stroke destroy all the fuel prepared for the next day** and possibly for even a longer period, and are able to cause irreparable damage to the whole factory. Remember that the organism usually produces in one day (24 hours) all the substances necessary for the following day. And it very often happens that all these substances are spent or consumed by some unnecessary and, as a rule, unpleasant emotion.

Bad moods, worry, the expectation of something unpleasant, doubt, fear, a feeling of injury, irritation, each of these emotions (in reaching a certain degree of intensity) may, in half an hour, or even half a minute, consume all the substances prepared for the next day. While a single flash of anger, or some other violent emotion, can at once explode all the substances prepared in the laboratory and leave a person quite empty inwardly for a long time or even forever. **All psychic processes are material.** There is not a single process that does not require the expenditure of a certain substance corresponding to it. If this substance is present, then the process goes on. When the substance is exhausted, then the process comes to a stop.