

“LA SCUOLA DEL SOLE” MEDITATION GROUP

LEVEL 2 Part 4a

INTRODUCTION

These lessons are largely drawn from the writings of the Tibetan – particularly *The Light of the Soul*, *Telepathy and Glamour: A World Problem* – and *The Soul and Its Mechanism* of Alice Bailey. Most of the blue books are telepathic transfers from the Tibetan to Alice Bailey, but four of the books were written by her alone.

The Light of the Soul is a treatise on Raja Yoga, being a paraphrase rather than a literal translation of the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali, and is designed to interpret the sutras for the Western mind.

In *The Light of the Soul* the question of “union” – the hindrances and obstacles and the means to overcome them – is discussed. The student should bear in mind that union is the term used in this Raja Yoga work to mean spiritual integration or fusion of soul-personality, while integration applies to the personality and the various stages of development within the triple personality and which must precede union. Both are essential if our goal of integration into the 5th Kingdom, the Spiritual Hierarchy, is to be achieved.

A careful study and practice of Raja Yoga and a sound knowledge of the part the etheric body plays can give us a thorough understanding of what is involved in the process of integration – and enable us to speed up that process so that we can consciously build that working tool of the true disciple, an integrated, soul-infused personality.

As many students working in languages other than English may not have editions of *The Light of the Soul* and the other books in their own language, we are incorporating in the Lesson papers those passages which are of fundamental importance.

The first lessons are intended to lay a groundwork of knowledge of the main systems of Yoga, with emphasis on Raja Yoga. Attention is given to the subject of glands and human behaviour and the nature and function of the etheric body.

From these bases we can go forward to gain a practical working knowledge of ourselves as personalities, which is essential to realization of the goal of soul-infusion.

THE PATH

By the Tibetan, Stanzas for Disciples

Seek not, O twice-blessed One, to attain the spiritual essence before the mind absorbs. Not thus is wisdom sought. Only he who has the mind in leash, and sees the world as in a mirror can be safely trusted with the inner sense. Only he who knows the five senses to be but illusion, and that naught remains save the two ahead, can be admitted into the secret of the Cruciform transposed.

The path that is trodden by the Server is the path of fire that passes through his heart and leads to the head. It is not on the path of pleasure, nor on the path of pain that liberation may be taken or that wisdom comes. It is by the transcendence of the two, by the blending of pain with pleasure, that the goal is reached, that goal that lies ahead, like a point of light seen in the darkness of a winter's night. That point of light may call to mind the tiny candle in some attic drear, but – as the path that leads to that light is trodden through the blending of the pair of opposites – that pin point cold and flickering grows with steady radiance till the warm light of some blazing lamp comes to the mind of the wanderer by the way.

Pass on, O Pilgrim, with steady perseverance. No candle light is there nor earth lamp fed with oil. Ever the radiance grows till the path ends within a blaze of glory, and the wanderer through the night becomes the child of the sun, and enters within the portals of that radiant orb.

(A Treatise on the Seven Rays, Vol. V, p. 761)

THE SYSTEMS OF YOGA

The systematic teaching of Yoga is a prominent part of Hindu Scriptures. Yoga is the union or identification of the lower self with the Higher, and the method used will largely depend upon the ideas held by the followers of the many different systems of Yoga about the higher nature.

Yoga is generally regarded as being of four kinds, and it is useful to understand and recognize the distinction between them. There are many different teachers at this time giving out the truth along many different lines, and it is helpful to know under what generic head their teaching might be assumed to fall.

HATHA YOGA

This has been defined by a Hindu teacher as the science of the control of the body and of the mind, and its aim is bodily perfection. It seeks to control the mind through the control of the body, and is very materialistic in its viewpoint. If persisted in, it brings under conscious control all those organs of the body (such as the heart,

stomach, lungs) which now perform their functions automatically, control of the physical expression having been developed in ancient Lemuria.

Hatha Yoga is defined by H.P. Blavatsky as the “lower form of yoga practice; one which uses physical means for purposes of spiritual self-development. It is the opposite of Raja Yoga.” The followers of Hatha Yoga claim to develop soul powers. By the adoption of certain postures, the regulation of the breath and other psycho-physical methods, the growth of the soul is sought. It should be remembered, however, that it is quite possible to develop certain of the soul powers, or siddhis, and be quite unspiritual.

The many kinds of physical exercises and postures are most difficult to acquire, especially when undertaken by an occidental student, and frequently lead to serious physical conditions.

Hatha Yoga is universally condemned by spiritual teachers in India and elsewhere. Scientific athletic training is the Western counterpart.

By comparison, in Raja Yoga the control of the body is gained through the lower sheaths or bodies being brought under the control of the higher. The body renders obedience to the Thinker, but its functions are not interfered with.

LAYA YOGA

This yoga is the psychic counterpart of Hatha Yoga, and concerns the body of vitality and the control of the energies and forces which circulate throughout it. A laya centre is a focal point for energy. This method seeks to bring under conscious control:

1. The breath.

2. The activities of the seven centres:

(a) The centre at the base of the spine.

(b) The sacral centre.

(c) The solar plexus centre.

(d) The heart centre.

(e) The throat centre.

(f) The centre between the eyebrows, the ajna centre.

(g) The head centre.

3. The kundalini fire at the base of the spine and the three spinal channels:

(a) Ida.

(b) Pingala.

(c) The sushumna.

Its methods are briefly:

(a) The control of the breath and the consequent slowing down of the action of the heart, and hence of the bodily processes.

(b) The hearing of the sounds of the vital airs within the head.

(c) Contact with the centres and the hearing of the sound of each centre.

(d) The arousing of the kundalini fire through breathing and formulas.

(e) The directed progression of the fire through the centres until the whole system has been covered.

(f) The conscious return of the fire to its home at the base of the spine, and thereafter facility in its utilization.

This yoga powerfully affects the nervous system, and its practice by those who are spiritually unready and unprepared and who are not directed by an adept is responsible for the insanity, neuroticism and the unbalanced condition of many of its devotees, particularly in the Occident.

In Raja Yoga, however, it is the *higher* sheaths which are nourished so that their activity may rule the lower self. The higher psychic faculties are aroused by the growth of this higher nature which, *working from above*, vivifies the lower vehicles of consciousness. But in the Hatha and Laya Yoga practices the three lower sheaths alone are affected. The two higher, the sheath of the higher mind and of the intuition, are only affected in so far as violent astral disturbances can reach the plane of intellect. Identification with the higher mind cannot be obtained by this method.

BHAKTI YOGA

The practice of Bhakti Yoga has as its basic characteristic devotion towards its objective. It partakes somewhat of the nature of Raja Yoga, but the latter goes beyond or adds to the intense aspiration of the emotional nature. In Bhakti Yoga aspiration directs the attention to the higher regions of the emotional plane and the energies of the higher sheaths are called into activity from the similarity of their nature to the underlying aspiration. In Raja Yoga there is a gradual building up of the higher sheaths by spiritual methods which combine mental and emotional faculties, and deliberately nourishing them, their activity begins to preponderate. Because of the gradual withdrawal of the life emphasis from the lower sheaths, a transference of the consciousness is effected and the Thinker at last dwells in the higher which has become a fit vehicle of consciousness.

MANTRA YOGA

This is a system of Yoga which primarily affects the matter of the lower vehicles of consciousness, and in its highest aspect is often a great assistance in Raja Yoga. Mantra Yoga depends on sound, the great system of vibration, by which all forms are built up in the universe. *A MANTRA is a sentence composed of syllables which produce a definite set of vibrations when uttered.* On the lowest planes the vibrations play on the subtler matter of the psychic body, making it vibrate in accordance with the Mantra. The greater the knowledge with which this is done, the more potent the result. By the continual repetition of these sounds the lower bodies are harmonised and, if the thought embodied in the Mantra is also repeated in the mind, the lower nature becomes quiet. The mind is thus enabled to concentrate itself on the higher planes of consciousness, and to receive vibrations from them which it builds into itself. The foundation of all Mantras is in the Sacred Word, the OM. The higher aspect of this form of Yoga is the quieting of the lower nature, to render more possible the activity of the higher. With the quieting of the lower mind, the lower sheaths are lighted up with true knowledge and their illusions are revealed to the view of the higher aspect, the true self.

RAJA YOGA

In the theory and practice of Raja Yoga we find that the nature of mental consciousness is studied, that the evolution of the intellect and of the higher mind

accompanies the moral training and control of the astral consciousness necessary in any form of true Yoga. Raja Yoga seeks to control the lower nature and the body through the mind, just as Hatha Yoga sought to control the mind through the body.

Consciousness is the awareness or mind aspect of the One Life working in, and with, matter. Its extent is measured by the ability of the matter which it ensouls to respond to impacts or vibrations. This faculty of consciousness is inseparable from matter, although in the lowest forms its manifestation may almost be hidden. The consciousness in the lowest forms of matter demonstrates as affinity. There can be no matter without spirit; the two are but aspects of the One Life and consciousness is inherent in every form. A thought-form possesses life and consciousness, which are inseparable from the materials of which it is made; it responds to impacts of similar nature. The sheaths of the spirit, which are formed from the matter of the astral and the mental planes, have an independent consciousness which functions in a semi-independent manner according to their nature. Thus the nature of astral and mental consciousness will be proportionate to the materials of which these vehicles are composed. Higher and higher types of matter are built into these sheaths, evolved by the deliberate selection of the higher self, who strives to use these vehicles for his purpose and to control their independent activity. By the method of Hatha Yoga control is sought directly over the life dwelling in the various forms of matter of which the sheaths are made.

Raja Yoga, while systematically building up these bodies with ever finer matter, does so through attention to the indwelling spirit, the "King over the lesser lives". The life in this matter is thus brought under the control of the higher self, with the independent sensations of the body and astral natures rendering obedience to the mind which controls them....

Some definitions of Raja Yoga

1. It is instruction on the Science of Union. (*Patanjali* I.1.)
2. Union is "achieved through the subjugation of the psychic nature and the restraint of the chitta or mind stuff". (*Ibid.*, I.2.)
3. This union is brought about in the following ways, both of them being expansions of the above statement:
 - (a) The peace of the chitta (or mind stuff) is brought about through the practice of sympathy, tenderness, steadiness of purpose, and dispassion in regard to pleasure or pain, or towards all forms of good and evil. (*Ibid.* I.33., Compare III.23.)
 - (b) The peace of the chitta is also brought about by the regulation of the prana or life breath.
(*Ibid.* I.34.)
4. It is the science which teaches us how to get direct experience of God, and to perceive.
5. The science of Raja Yoga proposes a practical and scientifically worked out method of teaching the truth of God.

6. The science of Raja Yoga proposes to give men the means of observing the internal states, and that means is the mind itself. It produces the needed introspection.

7. The method of attaining knowledge of the mind as an instrument of illumination is *concentration*, which is the mind studying mind.

8. The goal of all the Raja Yoga teachings is first of all concentration of the mind, next how to discover the facts in our own minds, then how to generalise from those facts and so form our own conclusions, plus the addition of new and more inclusive facts.

9. Raja Yoga says: Believe nothing until you find it out for yourself.

10. The science of Raja Yoga takes as one of its fundamentals that the external world is but the gross form of the internal or subtle world.

11. Raja Yoga proposes to start from the internal world, to study internal nature, and learn to control the external and internal worlds.

12. The science of Raja Yoga is based upon an ancient Indian philosophy called the Sankhya philosophy.

13. The Sankhya philosophy teaches that:

(a) Perception comes through instruments.

(b) The instruments convey that which is perceived to the mind.

(c) The mind carries it to the determinative faculty.

(d) The soul receives it.

In this way sensations are received.

14. With the exception of the soul, all these are material.

15. Mind is an instrument for the use of the soul.

16. Mind has the power of looking within.

17. The true yogi consciously follows each stage: the reception of sensation, its reception by the mind, the work of the determinative faculty, and its conveyance to the soul.

THE SCIENCE OF RAJA YOGA

The Science of Raja Yoga, or the “Kingly Science of the Soul”, as laid down by its main exponent, Patanjali, will eventually find its greatest demonstration in the West. This is owing to the fact that – under cyclic law – the fifth root race (in its fifth subrace) must inevitably touch its highest point. That point, in the economy of the races, is seen exemplified in the right use of the mind and its utilisation by the soul for the achievement of group objectives and the development of group consciousness upon the physical plane.

Hitherto the mind has either been prostituted to material ends or has been deified. Through the science of Raja Yoga, the mind will be known as the instrument of the soul and the means whereby the brain of the aspirant becomes illuminated and knowledge gained of those matters which concern the realm of the soul....

All the various Yogas have had their place in the unfoldment of the human being. In the first purely physical race, which is called the Lemurian, the Yoga at that time

imposed upon infant humanity was Hatha Yoga, the Yoga of the physical body, that Yoga which brings into conscious use and manipulation the various organs, muscles and parts of the physical frame. The problem before the adepts of that time was to teach human beings, who were then little more than animals, the purpose, significance and use of their various organs, so that they could consciously control them, and the meaning of the symbol of the human figure. Therefore, in those early days, through the practice of Hatha Yoga, the human being reached the portal of initiation. At that time the attainment of the third initiation, resulting in the transfiguration of the personality, was the highest initiation that man was capable of achieving.

In Atlantean days, the progress of the sons of men was procured through the imposition of two Yogas. First, the Yoga which is called by the name of Laya Yoga, the Yoga of the centres which produced a stabilising of the etheric body and of the centres in man and the development of the astral and psychic nature. Later on, Bhakti Yoga, growing out of the development of the emotional or astral body, was incorporated with Laya Yoga and the foundation of that mysticism and devotion, which has been the underlying incentive during our particular Aryan root race, was laid. The fourth initiation was at that time the objective. The subject of these great initiations has been discussed more at length in my previous volume *Initiation, Human and Solar*.

Now, in the Aryan race, the subjugation of the mental body and the control of the mind is brought about through the practice of Raja Yoga, and the fifth initiation, that of adept, is the goal for evolving humanity. Thus, all the Yogas have had their place and served a useful purpose and it will become apparent that any return to Hatha Yoga practices or those practices which deal specifically with the development of the centres, brought about through various types of meditation practices and breathing exercises, is, from a certain aspect, a retrogression. It will be found that through the practice of Raja Yoga, and through assuming that point of directional control which is to be found by the man who centres his consciousness in the soul, the other forms of Yoga are unnecessary, for the greater Yoga automatically includes all the lesser in its results, though not in its practices....

It should be noted that the translation [of the Sutras of Patanjali] is not literal, and is not an exact definition of each original Sanskrit term. It is an attempt to put into clear and understandable English the exact meaning, insofar as it is possible to do so through the medium of that non-elastic and unimagined tongue. The student may find it of use ... to compare the rendition here given, with the various other procurable translations.

(*The Light of the Soul*, pp. vii-xiv)

THE YOGA PHILOSOPHY OF PATANJALI

Patanjali did not originate yoga. It is known to have existed long before his time. What Patanjali did was to collect the experiences, the knowledge and the opinions of some other yogis and align them with his own. He then formulated definite principles and a precise teaching out of them and summarised them in a short text, which has become a classical authority in its homeland.

The word Yoga in its highest sense means union, the merging of mind and the Divine element within us. Yoga is therefore that realisation of our oneness with the Supreme that has been the aim of mystics of all ages and all creeds. To reach this highest possible point of spiritual development, it is obvious that the whole nature of the human being must be developed upon its various lines; that is, the physical, emotional, mental and spiritual elements must receive an appropriate and simultaneous training, or we lack that harmony which is a necessary concomitant of perfection. A chain can be no stronger than its weakest link, and if any link in the chain of our being be imperfect, the whole must suffer the consequences.

“Yoga” is used in two senses, as union with the Divine and as the employment of the means to that union. The one is the result, the other is the method leading towards that result.

The Yoga Aphorisms are divided into four books. The First Book explains what is practical Yoga, the obstacles to its acquirement and the way to overcome them.

The Second Book treats of the means of acquiring union through the purification of the body and the mind, and its results.

The Third Book analyses concentration in its higher metaphysical form, as the synthesis of attention, contemplation and meditation, and shows how this leads to direct cognition, and absolute independence of the influence of the body, and its obscurations of the intellect. The tools of the spirit having been made perfect, the mind becomes one with the soul, and liberation, or perfect union, follows.

The essential nature of “Liberation” forms the subject of the Fourth and last Book.

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The soul is defined as the Perceiver. We are to conceive of it as the holder or possessor of the mind. If the mind be not under control it is shaken by the winds of passion or impulse, or idle fancies, and the shadows of external things flit confusedly across its swaying surface, and we are unable to use it as an instrument of the soul.

The first thing to be done, then, that we may secure perfect impression on the mind by the higher self, is to eliminate all these adverse conditions, and this is the object of the Yoga Aphorisms.

Concentration is the control of the modifications of the thinking mechanism or mind. “If you will carefully consider what you have done most often during the day, you will find that you have really done nothing else from morning to night but change your mind.... Did you perform any deliberate action? There was the change of mind from indecision to decision, from desire to volition, from volition to act.... In a word, whatever you have done, or felt, or thought, you will find upon reflection that you

could not possibly be conscious of anything else than a change of mind.” (W.S. Clifford)

These modifications of the thinking principle, or as we more often say, this wandering of the mind, may be restrained in two ways – through “tireless endeavour” and “non-attachment”. The former is that mechanical fastening of the mind upon one point for a given length of time without intermission, called Attention, and is intended to strengthen the controlling power of the thinking principle. This is the preliminary sharpening of the tool. The second step is Dispassion. This is the attainment of freedom from all passions, desires and ambitions, which cloud and obscure the mind. Carried to the utmost, it becomes non-attachment – indifference to all else than the Soul. This purification of the mind accomplished through the practice of Benevolence (Goodwill), Serenity and Detachment towards the virtue or vice, the happiness or pain, of other human beings does not mean that we are to be indifferent to the circumstances of others, but simply that we are not to allow our sympathies to upset our mental and moral equilibrium, and it is an exact corollary to the first maxim of *Light on the Path* – “Before the eyes can see, they must be incapable of tears.”

The Second Book deals more particularly with the physical and moral aids to concentration, being directed to the establishment of meditation and the elimination of “afflictions”. These, as may be judged by the name, are of a more passive and involuntary character than the “obstacles” mentioned in the First Book, and are Ignorance, Egoism, Desire, Aversion, and Tenacity of Life, or what Schopenhauer calls “the will to live”. These “afflictions” are inherent parts of our nature, whereas the “obstacles” are faults that lie more upon the surface and can be more readily shaken off. They concern our mental attitude; the others lie at the very foundation of our being. Of these afflictions Ignorance is the origin and synthesis, being equivalent to Tamas (Inertia or Darkness), one of three qualities that characterize all things. It is mental or moral blindness, or the confounding of good and evil, eternal and transitory, pure and impure.

Egoism consists in identifying the ego, or soul, the power that sees, with the power of seeing; that is, in confounding the soul with the mind that is its tool, as ignorant persons confound the mind with the organs of sense, and imagine it is the eye that sees. For as the mind uses the eye, so the soul uses the mind. We realize this when we say “My mind is confused, I (that is, the soul or ego) cannot see the idea.”

Desire and Aversion mean, respectively, such dwelling upon pleasure or pain as perturbs the mind, and renders it incapable of the serene peace (described in the First Book) which is essential to union with the soul. Desire and Aversion necessarily include all inordinate affections and all forms of cowardice, whether moral or physical, the latter coming under the head of aversion to pain.

The tenacious desire for earthly existence, or “the will to live”, is the natural tendency of humanity, without which existence under ordinary conditions would be impossible. From the fact that in our present form of life we are so closely wedded to the mind, and the mind to the body, our vision is impeded, and we are constantly misled. The

past cannot be changed, the present cannot be shunned, but for the future we can prepare.

The Third Book begins with an analysis of Yoga in its higher form, arrived at through concentration, meditation and contemplation.

The result of such unified and sequential attention is called “Sanyama” – the synthesis of these processes. It is to be used in overcoming those subtler modifications of the mind suffered by the advanced student, who has overcome those described in the preceding books, and we are told that this “Sanyama” is especially efficacious for the attainment of “distant cognition”. The Victorine Mystics of the 12th century divided Contemplation into six stages, two belonging to Imagination, whose objects are Sensibly or sensible things; two belonging to Reason, Intelligibly or truths concerning what is invisible but accessible to reason; and two to Intuition, Intellectibilia or unseen truth above reason. In fact, the resemblances are very numerous between the teachings of Richard of St. Victor and those of Patanjali....

In this Book we see traced out the steps to the acquirement of perfect control of the physical and emotional nature by the mind and the exemplification of the manner in which all knowledge may be reflected in the mind, when made perfectly pure and held in perfect control. This is the highest stage of purely intellectual development, the ultimate point to which the human mind can attain, but there is a further step, for in the last maxim of the Third Book we are told that when the mind no longer conceives itself to be the knower or experiencer and has become one with the Soul (the real knower and experiencer) liberation takes place.

The Fourth Book proceeds to treat of this Liberation and its essential nature. It begins by defining the reasons for the variety of characters inherent in mankind, showing how each character is modified by the results of former lives, and how these characters may be still further modified by the proper use of the proper means.

Sutra No. 23 tells us that the mind, though assuming various forms by reason of these innumerable mental deposits, exists for the purpose of the soul's emancipation, and co-operates thereto. The mind, being the instrument of the soul, then exists as the perfected vehicle of the soul.

THE GLANDS AND HUMAN BEHAVIOUR

Before considering the glands, themselves, it is well to decide what we understand by "psychology". In the West at least, it has abandoned its derivative meaning, already given, of the logos or law, of the psyche or soul. A recent and clear definition is given by Dr. Leary:

"The science of human behaviour in the largest sense of the word behaviour, the sense which includes all that human beings do, all that human beings have. In this sense of behaviour it is the behaviour of the whole, integrated personality which is under investigation.

"Psychology deals with the organism as a whole, as an integrated and oriented individual in contact with other individuals in a complex external environment, partly physical and partly social, in short, as a personality...."

Psychology, therefore, is the science of the activity of man, as a living organism, in the environment in which he finds himself – the science of the interplay between man and that environment.... It is the science of human behaviour, of personality. But what is there behind this behaviour? Hocking says: "The self is indeed a system of behaviour. But it is a system of purposive behaviour emerging from a persistent hope. The kernel of the self is its hope."

In this field of human behaviour and personality, there are three main factors. There is, first, the environment. This is much more than a mere present fact, or set of facts, or a mere passive stage upon which the drama is played. It has been defined as "all that is not the organism, whether cultural, social, physical, or what-not, present in fact or in record".³ There is, secondly, the human apparatus, especially the response apparatus which we shall presently discuss in greater detail. There is, finally, conduct, or the result of the interrelation between the environment and the response apparatus, and, given a certain environment and a certain response apparatus, certain lines of conduct, it is claimed, are inevitable – the interplay of these three results in human behaviour.

Our concern here is naturally with the second main factor, the response apparatus.

In that apparatus, certain aspects of the mechanism warrant closer attention than others, namely the nervous system, and the system of ductless glands, which two systems are found functioning in close co-ordination in the human frame.

It is through the nervous system, perhaps the most intricate and wonderful part of the human structure, that we contact our environment, the external world, and are adapted to function in it. Through this system we become aware of the tangible, and through the network of nerves, plus the spinal cord and brain, we become aware of information ceaselessly conveyed to us. Messages are carried along the millions of telegraph lines of our nerves to the central power house of our brain, and are then transformed in some mysterious way into information. To that information we respond: a reverse activity is instituted and we are galvanized into action.

Along with this display of incoming and outgoing nervous energy there are parallel activities in the system of ductless glands (and the muscular system) and the interlocking of activity is so great that, unless the ductless glands are functioning normally, there will be no adequate response to the information telegraphed and no transformation of one type of energy into another....

The nervous system and muscles may be loosely described as the physical response apparatus, and the means by which physical response to the environment is made, but the nervous system and the ductless glands as the intelligent and emotional response apparatus, and the means by which actual response is made.

It is claimed that this latter inter-action between the apparatus and the environment produces conduct and behaviour, that feeling and thought activity have their seat in the endocrine systems, and that even the nature of man is thus accounted for! ...

The action of the glands in determining the bodily build is indisputable; and the mental outlook – the behaviour complexes – of the individual appears to depend on the physical well-being; and the physical well-being undoubtedly depends upon the successful action and interaction of the various glandular secretions....

Although we are as yet only on the fringe of the subject, we have advanced sufficiently to realize that, just as certain patterns are formed in the body by a particular arrangement of the ductless glands, so does the mind receive its quota from the same source.

In regard to this matter of temperament:

There is not the slightest reason to doubt the broad fact of the profound effect on temperament exercised by the glands of internal secretion, such as the thyroid or the interstitial glands or the adrenals. The stimulation of certain of these glands, or the injection of their products, or feeding therewith, may produce changes which would once have been thought miraculous. By administering thyroxin, a cretin may

be brought to something resembling normality; if the dosage is stopped he returns to his original condition. If the dosage is increased, unfortunately, neither he nor anyone is raised from normality to genius; we only produce another form of abnormality. And so far, no chemical discoveries justify any bright hopes of improving the human normal. There are, indeed, certain drugs which make an individual feel like a genius, but unless the results are judged under the same influence they are strangely disappointing. We must, therefore, not build at once too high hopes for the future of mankind on these discoveries. But there is a genuine sense in which the soul has its chemistry, and a deficiency of iodine will turn a clever man into an idiot.

Glands may be divided into two main groups, those which are concerned with the drainage system – the lymphatic glands – and those which secrete products for use in the bodily work. The lymphatic glands do not concern us here. The second group, whose duty is to contribute fluids which, acting in concert with each other, control and regulate the bodily processes, consist of two subdivisions.

“The first of these contain glands with ducts, down which they discharge their contents. The second possess no ducts, and their secretions are absorbed directly into the blood stream. These are known as the ductless glands, or endocrine organs and their products have been called internal secretions. The term endocrinology has been applied to the study of the glands of internal secretion.”

They form, in fact, a close interlocking system with functions and organisms clearly distinct from those of other systems within the mechanism of the human frame. The blood system and the nervous system pursue their own activities, but are closely linked to the endocrine system. The blood acts mysteriously as the carrier of the peculiar hormones of the different glands, and the nervous system seems more specifically related to the psychical development incident to the normal, or abnormal, functioning of the endocrine glands....

Beginning with the head, and working downwards, there are seven glands of special importance to be listed. These are:

NAME	LOCATION	SECRETION	ACTION
1. Pineal Gland	Head	Melatonin	Governs sensitivity to light. Regulates onset of puberty.
2. Pituitary	Head		
Anterior		Master gland elaborates hormones which stimulate all other glands of internal secretion of gonadotrophic hormones (FSH-LSH-ICSH). Hormones which stimulate Thyroid, Adrenal (ACTH), Pancreas Growth stimulating hormones.	
Intermediate part		Intermedin	Creates the hormone Melanophore.
Posterior		Oxytocin and ADH	Oxytocin causes contractions of uterus and promotes milk output of breast glands. Also stores Adinretin (ADH) = Vasopressin, which regulates water balance.
3. Thyroid	Throat	Thyroxin and associated Compounds Growth stimulating hormones	Metabolic stimulant.
Parathyroid	Throat	Parathormone	Calcium Metabolism.
4. Thymus	Upper Chest	Growth stimulating hormones	
5. Pancreas	Solar Plexus region	Insulin and Glucagon	Sugar Metabolism.
6. Adrenals	Above Kidney		
Cortex		Adrenocortical hormones (cortisone, steroid compounds)	Works on connective tissues.
Medulla		Adrenalin and allied compounds.	Works on nervous system.
7. Gonads	Lower Abdomen		
Male:		Testosterone	Both hormones (male & female) are present in all individuals. The sex characteristics are influenced by which hormone is dominant.
Female:		Oestrogen, Progesterone.	

Thus we have distributed over the head and torso a network of important glands, which, it is claimed, physiologically govern the structure, growth and chemical changes of the body, and, psychologically, are responsible for the emotional reactions and the thought processes of the human being. Hence, they would be the producers of his qualities, good and bad, of his behaviour and conduct of affairs, and of his very character.

We shall now consider the seven glands mentioned, but confining our discussion to their mental and psychic effects.

1. The pineal gland – location: head; secretion: melatonin.

The pineal gland is cone-shaped, about the size of a pea, and is in the centre of the brain in a tiny cave behind and above the pituitary gland, which lies a little behind the root of the nose. The pineal gland is attached to the third ventricle of the brain. It

contains a pigment similar to that in the retina of the eye, and also collections of what have been called “brain sand particles”

It has also been suggested that this gland regulates our susceptibility to light, that it has a definite effect upon the sex nature, that it is related to brain growth and that its active functioning causes intellectual precocity.... This gland has also been called the third eye, and the eye of the Cyclops. Beyond these facts or conjectures, investigators frankly say they know nothing, and experiments have produced little information. In the experiment of feeding pineal gland extract to children and to defectives the response was nothing when the subject was over fifteen years of age, and contradictory in all other cases, so deduction was impossible....

Most of the books note that the pineal gland is stated by ancient philosophers to be the seat of the soul, and Descartes is frequently quoted as saying, “In man, soul and body touch each other only at a single point, the pineal gland in the head.” ...

Oriental philosophy confirms this possible connection between the pineal gland and the soul.

2. Pituitary – location: head; secretion of anterior gland: growth stimulating hormones; secretion of posterior: Oxytocin and ADH.

... It is really two glands in one. It is about the size of a pea and lies at the base of the brain a short distance behind the root of the nose.

This gland has been called “nature’s darling treasure”, being cradled in a niche, like a “skull within a skull”. As most of the glands do, in some form or other, it has a close relation to sex, and is also related to such periodic phenomena as sleep and sex epochs. We are told that it is a gland of continued effort, of energy consumption, and is essential to life. It is believed to stimulate the brain cells and to have a “direct and important bearing upon the personality”. We are also informed that insufficient pituitary development causes, or at least accompanies conspicuous moral and intellectual inferiority, and lack of self-control; but that with a good pituitary development there will also be pronounced mental activity and endurance. It seems to have a very close connection with our emotional and mental qualities....

“The post-pituitary governs the maternal-sexual instincts and their sublimations, the social and creative instincts.... It might be said to energize deeply the tender emotions.... For all the basic sentiments (as opposed to the intellectualized self-protective sentimentalism), tender-heartedness, sympathy and suggestibility, are interlocked with its functions....

“The ante-pituitary has been depicted as the gland of intellectuality.... By intellectuality we mean the capacity of the mind to control its environment by concepts and abstract ideas.”⁷

Dr. Berman also adds, "Mental activity is accompanied by increased function of the ante-pituitary, if intellectual, or of the post-pituitary, if emotional."

From a study of these comments, it becomes apparent that the personality qualities – emotions, whether we mean maternal instincts shared with all animals, love of one's fellowmen, or love of God, – are regarded as largely dependent upon the condition of the pituitary gland, as is also the ability to intellectualize....

3. Thyroid – location: throat; secretion: thyroxin.

Of the thyroid gland, more is known than of the pineal gland or the pituitary body, and from the standpoint of Eastern wisdom, this was to be expected. This gland is found astride the neck, above the wind-pipe, close to the larynx, and is a very large gland. It was once a sex gland, is frequently called the "third ovary", and is always involved in ovarian cases. In the lower vertebrates it is clearly connected with the ducts of the sexual organs, but in the march of evolution upwards, "that relationship is lost, the thyroid migrates more and more to the head region, to become the great link between sex and brain." ...9

Above everything else, however, the thyroid gland is the controller of the metabolism of energy. It has been called the efficient lubricator of energy transformation, and is the great catalyst of energy in the body. It controls the speed of living and is the keystone of the endocrine system. It is indispensable to life.

The thyroid like the pituitary, has also close connection with the memory.

"... the pituitary seems to be related to preservation of the memory deposit.... The thyroid memory applies particularly to perception and precepts, the pituitary to conception (reading, studying, thinking) and concepts."

4. Thymus – location: upper chest; secretion: growth stimulating hormones.

Of the thymus gland, we know practically nothing, and it is one of the most mysterious of all. Like the pineal gland, it is regarded as a gland of childhood, but both as yet baffle investigation.

The thymus gland is situated in the chest, covers the upper portion of the heart, and, perhaps, has relation to nutrition and growth. It seems to be connected with the irresponsible nature of children, and, when over-functioning in adult years, produces the irresponsible man or woman, and the amoral people.

5. Pancreas – location: solar plexus region; secretion: insulin and glucagon.

Most of the information given in connection with the pancreas is strictly physiological, and, therefore, out of place here. Suffice it to say, however, that it lies in the abdomen and is closely concerned with the mobilization of energy for physical and mental purposes. It secretes insulin and glucagon. Insulin is manufactured in the B-cells of the pancreas and is responsible for the catabolism of sugar in the blood and also

manufactures glycogen. Glucagon is produced in the A-cells and carries out the catabolism of glycogen. Therefore it acts as the opposite of insulin, since it acts to augment the sugar in the blood. Both of these secretions (insulin and glucagon) are vital to the metabolism of sugar, and without sufficient sugar for the cells no muscles or nerves – essentials in the struggle for existence – could function.”

6. Adrenals – location: above the kidneys; secretion of the cortex adrenals: adrenocortical hormones; of the medulla adrenals: adrenalin.

The adrenal glands are each of them dual and are situated on both sides of the abdomen, astride and back of the kidneys. They are concerned with general growth, and the growth of the brain cells. The adrenal cortex secretion ... is one source of the internal secretions producing maturity.

The adrenal glands, however, are primarily the glands of combat. They produce that immediate and active response which men exhibit in times of danger or anger, and their secretion is stimulated in times of emergency. Pain, rage and fear have a definite effect upon the discharge, and we are told, “all the evidence points to its medulla as the secretor of the substance which makes for the phenomena of fear, and to its cortex as dominant in the reactions of anger.”

7. Gonads – location: lower abdomen; secretion: that of male testes and female ovaries.

The gonads or interstitial glands are the sex glands of external secretion, but are known to have an internal secretion also. Their gross secretion is the medium for reproduction. It is unnecessary to dwell at length upon the effects of the gonads on personality. The sex impulse and its various subsidiary effects, both physical and psychical, are well recognized and much studied, and this study, largely of perversions and inhibitions, has proved of paramount importance to the understanding of humanity. Some psychologists relate all human reactions – physical, emotional and mental – to sex and sex alone, and, back of every extreme position, we know there lies a substratum of truth. Others regard sex as playing an important part, but not as responsible for the entire story. The Eastern wisdom offers an interpretation which warrants consideration and which will appear when we consider the force centres and their relation to the glands.

Of all the foregoing, and of many books and articles on the subject, the following may be given as a brief summary.

The whole subject is in an experimental stage, and much remains to be done. Clearly, however, there is a close relationship between the glands and a similarity of function, and most of them have to do with the metabolism of the body and with growth, and all of them seem closely related to sex life. Finally, they determine, apparently, the type and temperament of the personality....

But are all these conclusions as to the endocrine glands, in fact correct? Has man, in outline, been classified and labelled, and does there remain only the filling of blanks in the general outline?...

As for the individual, are glands and glandular functions primary causes, or are they merely effects or instrumentalities? Is there not, in truth, something greater which lies beyond? Is there not in each of us a soul which functions through the whole physical and psychic mechanism? Was not St. Paul, in short, right in saying that man has a natural body and a spiritual body, and in implying that the glory of the natural is one, and the glory of the spiritual another?

And as for the second and broader question, is a mere mechanism the be-all and end-all of existence, and our only guiding star the perfecting of that mechanism? Then, indeed, "let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die". Is it not that there is not only a finer self in us – call it spirit, soul, or what you will, – but does it not itself form a part of a transcendent whole – call it God as religion does, or Oversoul as Emerson does, or by any other name – but in any case a transcendent whole, the glory and radiance of which surpass all understanding? Shall we never be at-one with That, and meanwhile the longing for that at-one-ment lead us onward? Shall this corruptible never put on incorruption, or this mortal never put on immortality? Shall death never be swallowed up in victory?

For answers to these questions, let us turn to the Wisdom of the East.

(The Soul and Its Mechanism, pp. 32-53; adapted)

INTRODUCTION TO THE TEACHING ON THE ETHERIC BODY

When the Biblical words are used: "In Him we live and move and have our being," we have the statement of a fundamental law in nature and the enunciated basis of the fact which we cover by the rather meaningless word: Omnipresence. Omnipresence has its basis in the substance of the universe, and in what the scientists call the ether; this word "ether" is a generic term covering the ocean of energies which are all inter-related and which constitute that one synthetic energy body of our planet.

... It must be carefully borne in mind that the etheric body of every form in nature is an integral part of the substantial form of God Himself – not the dense physical form, but what the esotericists regard as the form-making substance. We use the word God to signify the expression of the One Life which animates every form on the outer objective plane. The etheric or energy body, therefore, of every human being is an integral part of the etheric body of the planet itself and consequently of the solar system. Through this medium, every human being is basically related to every other expression of the Divine Life, minute or great. The function of the etheric body is to receive energy impulses and to be swept into activity by these impulses, or streams of force, emanating from some originating source or other. The etheric body is in

reality naught but energy. It is composed of myriads of threads of force or tiny streams of energy, held in relation to the emotional and mental bodies and to the soul by their co-ordinating effect. These streams of energy, in their turn, have an effect on the physical body and swing it into activity of some kind or another, according to the nature and power of whatever type of energy may be dominating the etheric body at any particular time.

Through the etheric body, therefore, circulates energy emanating from some mind. With humanity in the mass, response is made unconsciously to the rulings of the Universal Mind; this is complicated in our time and age by a growing responsiveness to the mass ideas – called sometimes public opinion – of the rapidly evolving human mentality. Within the human family are also found those who respond to that inner group of Thinkers Who, working in mental matter, control from the subjective side of life the emergence of the great plan and the manifestation of divine purpose.

(Telepathy and the Etheric Vehicle, pp. 2-3)

From one point of view the etheric body can be looked at in two ways: first, as it interpenetrates, underlies and occupies the entire physical organism and, secondly, as it extends beyond the physical form and surrounds it like an aura. According to the point in evolution will be the extent of the area which the etheric body covers beyond the outside of the physical body. It may extend for a few or many inches. It is only in this area that the vital body can be studied with relative ease, once the emanatory activity of the physical atoms is offset or allowed for.

Within the physical body, the network of the etheric body is to be found permeating every single part. It is peculiarly associated at this time with the nervous system, which is fed, nourished, controlled and galvanized by its etheric counterpart. This counterpart is present in millions of tiny streams or lines of energy, to which the Eastern occultist has given the name “nadis”. These nadis are the carriers of energy. They are in fact the energy itself and carry the quality of energy from some area of consciousness in which the “dweller in the body” may happen to be focused. This may be the astral plane or the planes of the Spiritual Triad, for none of the energies can control the physical body from any plane, no matter how high, except in this manner. According to the focus of the consciousness, the psychic state of awareness, the potency of aspiration or desire, and the point in evolution or the spiritual status, so will be the type of energy carried by the nadis, passing from them to the outer nervous system. This general proposition must be accepted, for the whole subject is as yet too intricate, and the mechanism of observation of the student too undeveloped, for me to enter into greater detail. This will suffice as an initial hypothesis upon which to work.

The amount of energy and the type of energy controlling any aspect of the nervous system is conditioned by the centre in its immediate area. A centre is a distributing agency, in the last analysis. Even though that energy will affect the entire body, the

centre most responsive to the quality and type will potently affect the nadis, and therefore the nerves, in its immediate environment.

It must always be remembered that the seven centres are not within the dense physical body. They exist only in etheric matter and in the etheric so-called aura, outside the physical body.

They are closely related to the dense physical body by the network of nadis. Five of the centres are to be found in the etheric counterpart of the spinal column, and the energy passes (through large and responsive nadis) through the vertebrae of the spine and circulates then throughout the etheric body as it is interiorly active within the physical vehicle. The three head centres exist, one just above the top of the head, another just in front of the eyes and forehead, and the third at the back of the head, just above where the spinal column ends. This makes eight centres but is in reality seven, as the centre at the back of the head is not counted in the initiation process, any more than is the spleen.

The powerful effect of the inflow of energy, via the energy body, has itself automatically created these centres or these reservoirs of force, these focal points of energy, which the spiritual man must learn to use and through the means of which he can direct energy where needed. Each of these seven centres has appeared in the course of human evolution in response to energy from one or other, or from several, of the seven rays. The impact of these rays upon the etheric body, emanating as they do periodically and ceaselessly from the seven rays, is so potent that the seven areas in the etheric body become more highly sensitised than the rest of the vehicle, and these in due time develop into responsive distributing centres. The effect of these seven centres upon the physical body in due time produces a condensation or a state of what is called "attracted response" from dense matter, and thus the seven major sets of endocrine glands slowly came into functioning activity. It must here be remembered that the whole development of the etheric body falls into two historical stages:

1. That in which the etheric energy, flowing through responsive centres and creating the endocrine glands as a consequence, gradually began to have a definite effect upon the blood stream; the energy worked through that medium solely for a very long time. This still remains true, for the life aspect of energy animates the blood, through the medium of the centres and their agents, the glands. Hence the words in the Bible that "the blood is the life".

2. As the race of men developed, and consciousness grew greater and certain great expansions took place, the centres began to extend their usefulness and to use the nadis, and thus to work upon and through the nervous system; this produced conscious and planned activity upon the physical plane, commensurate to the man's place in evolution.

Thus the incoming energy forming the etheric body created a needed etheric mechanism with its corresponding dense physical counterparts; it therefore, as will be noted from its relationship to the blood via the glands, and to the nervous system via the nadis (both through the medium of the seven centres), became the transmitter of two aspects of energy: one of which was kama-manasic (desire-lower mind) and the other atmic-buddhic (spiritual will-spiritual love) in the case of advanced humanity. Herein lies full opportunity for all, as the Law of Evolution proceeds to dominate all manifestation. What is true of the Macrocosm is true also of the microcosm.

(Ibid., pp. 145-47)

THE TECHNIQUE OF INDIFFERENCE

I have, in my other books, given much information anent the etheric body and the centres – major and minor – which are to be found within its radius. There is a tendency among students to identify the centres with the physical body in their thinking and not so clearly with the etheric body. This concerns location in the majority of cases and is a mistake. Aspirants would do well to avoid any concentration at all upon the physical body and learn gradually to shift their focus of attention into the etheric body. Necessarily the physical body is active and potent but increasingly it should be regarded as an automaton, influenced and directed by:

1. The vital body and the forces of maya; or by inspiration, emanating from points of spiritual tension.
2. The astral vehicle and the forces of glamour; or sentient, conscious love, emanating from the soul.
3. The mind and the forces of illusion; or by illumination, coming from higher sources than the life in the three worlds.
4. The soul as the vehicle of monadic impression, until such time as the antahkarana is built – that bridge in mental matter which will eventually link the Monad and the personality.

One of the problems which disciples have to solve is the source of the incentive, impulses, impressions or inspiration which – via the etheric body – sweep the physical vehicle into activity upon the physical plane, thus giving a demonstration of the quality, purpose and point of tension of the incarnating man, and manifesting the nature of the man as he is at any particular point upon the ladder of evolution.

According to the tensions and impulses indicated, will be the activity of the centres. You can see, therefore, how much that I teach reverses the usual occult procedures. I teach no mode of awakening the centres because right impulse, steady reaction to higher impulsions and the practical recognition of the sources of inspiration will

automatically and safely swing the centres into needed and appropriate activity. This is the sound method of development. It is slower, but leads to no premature development and produces a rounded out unfoldment; it enables the aspirant to become truly the Observer and to know with surety what he is doing; it brings the centres, one by one, to a point of spiritual responsiveness and then establishes the ordered and cyclic rhythm of a controlled lower nature.

(Glamour: A World Problem, pp. 260-62)