

Mysteries and Symbols of the Soul

Becoming a spirit-inspired person



Roze kruis Pers

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OF THE SOUL

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Becoming a spirit-inspired person

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preface

As human beings, we do not only live in an era of change but most notably also in a change of era. We find ourselves at the beginning of a 2160-year period that is known as the age of Aquarius or the Aquarius era. Consolidated structures are eroding, as new cosmic forces drive mankind towards consciousness and renewal. It concerns a development that is entirely in keeping with the divine plan. This development, this changing from a material to an etheric predominance, finds its purpose in building regeneration out of degeneration.

The profoundly changing circumstances force us to become aware of our soul and to start being inspired by it. How can we do this? We do not have a cut and dry answer to this question. We might search for inspiration in the classical holy texts of several traditions and in the writings of spiritual torchbearers. They may be able to alter our vision on the relationship between God, cosmos and man to ignite our soul flame and to illuminate the spiritual path for us.

Every person is ensouled, but it is so hard to explain what the soul is. The soul is invisible and immeasurable. Scientists of the past have tried to prove the existence of the soul by weighing a human body before and after its passing away. The average of 21 gram difference in weight that was discovered still has not made the soul any more tangible.

Originally, man was a spirit-soul being. The original soul medi-

ates like an instrument to connect body and spirit. The soul, this mediator between body and spirit, can be restored. The essence of this ether form resides in the top right heart chamber and is a spirit-spark, a divine atom. It is the primordial atom that will be the source of the birth of new mankind.

This primordial atom is a miracle in itself. It is a sevenfold atom of radiant beauty. When the birth of the inner Christ is unfolding in someone, the start of recreation in that person is enabled. In a sense, the gnostic fire causes an explosion of this sevenfold atom. In that process, one of the seven principles remains behind in the heart. A second principle forms the light-vesture in the shape of a pentagram. The other five principles lie within this light-vesture and correspond with the head, the hands and the feet.

Approximately five hundred years ago a renewing development called the Reformation was heralded in Europe. Then, Martin Luther attached a placard with 95 theorems on the door of the Castle Church in Wittenberg in order to address the deplorable state of affairs of the Church at that time. The Reformation has considerably contributed to the development of mankind but it was accompanied by much strife and rivalry. This caused an enormous fragmentation and crystallisation in the Christian world.

Roughly a hundred years after the start of the Reformation in 1517, a lot of people realised it had not amounted to what had been hoped for by many. Dogmatism and religious dissensions were paramount.

This explains the urgently necessary impulse of the Rosycross, expressed particularly by Tobias Hess and Johann Valentin Andreae at the beginning of the seventeenth century in southern Germany, by Jacob Boehme in eastern Germany, by John Dee and Francis Bacon in England and by Jan Amos Comenius in the Czech

Republic. Together with many others, they made an effort to come to universal world reformation based on the timeless mystery wisdom, science, religion and arts. They labored for the future by sowing seeds and it is only now that we are able to harvest the fruit of this labour on a large scale.

As mankind, we stand on the threshold of a complete world reformation based on universal spiritual principles that are increasingly recognised and understood by many. The internet has a key role in this process. Already in 1641, Comenius foresaw something that we now know as the world wide web. He referred to it as every-one-everything-everywhere.

This book, ‘Mysteries and Symbols of the Soul - becoming a spirit-inspired person’, has been created in the International School of the Golden Rosycross and was published in Dutch in 2016. It is part of the book series of Spiritual Texts Academy. The editions are intended to be a helping hand to 21st-century people who are looking to make the journey on a path of spiritual consciousness and renewal in daily life. The editions are based on carefully selected classical spiritual texts and insightful reflections on these texts. They draw on the more than four-century old living tradition of the Rosicrucians. Every book by the Spiritual Texts Academy is spiritually inspired, widely oriented and deeply rooted.

In ‘Mysteries and Symbols of the Soul’, the soul and the path of soul-spirit development are discussed based on observations about the nine holy texts originating from several traditions, Advaita Vedanta, Hermetism, Kabbalah, Gnostic Christianity, Raja Yoga, Judaism, Buddhism, Zoroastrianism and Pauline Christianity. This book is the first volume of a trilogy of gnostic mysteries intended for modern people. You will be able to recognise these three books by a sun on their covers, each one in a different colour.

The mysteries have an inherent universal character and therefore do not exclusively target specific religions, philosophies or spiritual movements. Universal wisdom is expressed by many and various religions but unfortunately, it often has been watered down, subject to crystallisation and degeneration, causing the spirit to recede from it.

In 2017 and 2018, the second and the third volumes of the said trilogy was published in Dutch. In the next few years, we intend to publish these books in English, entitled 'Mysteries and Challenges of birth, life and death – becoming a new man' and 'Mysteries and Hymns of God, cosmos, man - realising the divine plan'.

The last chapter, entitled 'The soul as a world worker' centres on the great importance of cooperation in the spiritual field. Ideally, this book would be used in a contemplative circle, for a group of like-minded people discussing and vivifying its contents would allow for a deeper understanding and realisation in their personal lives. After all, the purpose is to become a spirit-inspired person who will cooperate to heal the world and mankind and who will contribute in the realisation of the divine plan.

Rozekruis Pers,
Doride Zelle

introduction

THE WAY OF THE SOUL

*Midway upon the journey of our life
I found myself within a forest dark,
For the straightforward pathway had been lost.*

*Ah me! how hard a thing it is to say
What was this forest savage, rough, and stern,
Which in the very thought renews the fear.*

*So bitter is it, death is little more;
But of the good to treat, which there I found,
Speak will I of the other things I saw there.*

*I cannot well repeat how there I entered,
So full was I of slumber at the moment
In which I had abandoned the true way.*

*But after I had reached a mountain's foot,
At that point where the valley terminated,
Which had with consternation pierced my heart,*

*Upward I looked, and I beheld its shoulders,
Vested already with that planet's rays
Which leadeth others right by every road.*

ALIGHIERI DANTE,
Divina Commedia, Inferno, from Canto 1
(translated by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow)

How can a pen describe what is beyond words? How can a fragment attain unity? How is a person able to think thoughts that are beyond thinking, or create concepts out of thoughts? How is a person, mortal as to the body, able to have thoughts about that what supersedes mortality? Dante attempts to do so and it is said that the honour of being the world's greatest poet has been bestowed on him.

Every person has a soul like every person has life, but there is no one able to praise her to her full riches. Is the soul not an immortal being? But what then is immortal? Where do I end and where does the soul begin?

'The soul is one', so we are able to read in world literature. 'She is so elementary, that she continues to surprise us, to touch us, to move. We owe quite a number of valuable remarks to people who are not very astute or profound and who have yet been able to pinpoint effortlessly what we need and what we have been pursuing in vain for so long. Often, the soul acts on the basis of what is felt and what remains unsaid, rather than what is said during a conversation.'

The soul is the observer and revelator of truth. She feels, knows what is true in a second, and I owe her all that I am able to recognise in beauty, truth and goodness. Only simplicity, purity and courage are able to accept her. Thinking of Mozart's Magic Flute: *'Valiant of spirit, pure of heart, soon he will be worthy of us.'*

The spirit brave, the heart pure, Self-aware, that is how you engage with her. Alas, we human beings are not one, we are fragments. Like a kaleidoscope, our inner worlds are subjected to the flashing of colours and fragments of our interests and concerns, delights and doubts.

But she, the soul overarches every gathering and unconsciously, we look for her in friendship and love. And she is so much more generous! She does not exclude and as I am surrounded by her

glow, when she endows me with her radiance from time to time, I immerse everyone, I am one with everyone, I embrace everyone with love, also those who taunt me and wound me. Oh, not I, far be it from me, but she in me!

'We know better than we do', says Emerson. *'We do not yet possess ourselves and we know at the same time we are much more.'* We live in that state of tension and the electric energy is crackling inside me while this is slowly becoming clear. How often have I not experienced this as being true when I interact with colleagues, my loved ones, who often are my antipodes! Is there not always something higher or beyond the eternal interaction between people? Is the soul not the motive force behind each and every one of us looking for the soul? Soul to soul. Spirit to spirit. Unity to the One? Is that the soul, then? That what yet has to come into being, that what yet has to develop? But yet, I live, I speak and I reveal what stirs and speaks inside of me. That must be the soul, too. What else can it be?

'Water flood calls out to water flood, once your waters are effervescent,' how apt these ancient words bridge both extremes. Old, but definitely new to each and every one who will rediscover it.

Plato teaches us that the human soul can be compared to a charioteer in a horse-drawn chariot. Both horses in front of the cart are fiery and winged, they can take to the sky, yes even traverse the realms of the gods. One animal is noble and elegant, it knows passion and has a determined will and perseverance. The other animal is a rambunctious and obstinate horse, full of greed and passion. Lastly, the charioteer is the sage, the grandmaster, the spirit. When the horses traverse the realm of the gods, the wings of the soul are nourished particularly and will develop subsequently. However, they will languish and die as a result of the opposite, the ugly and the bad. In this beautiful image from *Phaedrus*, Socrates and Plato describe the earthly battle in order to reach the state of

full consciousness. Nourish yourself with the right ideas, live a dignified life, remember!

When the charioteer bridles his horses properly, the world of the soul, called the celestial spheres by Plato, will be unlocked for him. The forces of these spheres, the gods, will help the soul with each successive step. And thus, each development will spring the next one.

The following words by Plato reach us through Socrates.

'How numerous and delightful are the movements in the celestial spheres where the blissful gods dwell and each fulfils his own task. All those who wish it and are able will participate and follow because there is no envy in the line of gods. One is able to control the chariots of the gods without effort because the horses are in harmony. But the other chariots are in trouble. The bad horse, ill-trained by the charioteer, bucks and attempts to pull the latter down to the earth. Major difficulties and struggle await the soul down there. However, the souls that are called immortal, will come outside after they have reached the top and line themselves up at the border of the celestial spheres.'

Now, Socrates takes the listener to the outer edge of the celestial spheres, to the point where the soul has become entirely transparent and aglow, the moment where it will merge with the spirit.

He continues:

While the souls are standing on that border... 'the rotation of the celestial spheres carries them around and they behold what is outside the spheres. The realm that extends itself beyond heaven has never been praised for its true merits by an earthly poet, nor will it ever be. There, the colourless, formless and immaterial essence prevails, enveloped by knowledge.' – The Spirit!

Infinite, eternal development, where never-ending delight, invariably creative energies, brimming compassion and truth reign.

Truth that bears the knowledge of all causes, Gnosis, where souls are self-creating causes! Socrates continues, *'Since the divine spirit is nourished with understanding and pure knowledge, it is delighted to briefly see the great reality of the world of the spirit again. That divine spirit finds its nourishment in the face of the True and thrives on it until the rotation takes it back to the same place. During that rotation, the spirit can see justice, it sees self-containment and knowledge. This knowledge has no beginning, this knowledge does not separate the realities of what the spirit considers to be truths at some point. It is the knowledge that resides in Being.'*

Is there a better way of saying what Gnosis really is? This is the way of the aspiring soul.

'Now the other souls. One is following the gods very well and has become quite similar to them. She lifts the head of the charioteer upwards to the extra-celestial spheres and is carried by the rotation, although she is hampered by the horses and has trouble seeing reality. Another soul erects itself, falls back down and it is only able to see reality occasionally because of the unruly horses. All the other souls are persistently trying to ascend, but are not able to do so and are carried by the rotation of the lower atmospheres. There, they trample and displace each other, and try to surpass one another. Thus, confusion, competition and hard labour arise, causing many souls to be hurt by the inadequacy of the charioteer. Many also have their wings broken. After much effort, no one has something to show for their pains, they have never seen reality. And once they have left, they nourish themselves with false perceptions. The reason why the soul makes every effort to behold the Plain of Truth is because over there, it will be able to take the right kind of nourishment for the noblest part of the soul. The Plain of Truth, these lushest meadows, have the nourishment that allows the soul to grow its wings, to ascend.

There is a law of Justice that ensures that every soul that has seen but even a glimmer of the truth in the company of a god, remains un-

harmd until the next rotation. When the soul succeeds in persevering, she will remain unharmed forever.'

Seldom, a more beautiful and passionate plea has been written. Do not take this too literally, because the soul is not by any means a literal being. One should read it as a plea to regain that what seems to drown in the tempestuousness of external factors so unpleasantly quick, the soul. No human factors and alleged vices are keeping us from getting to know her better and more intimately. Those are part of being human, and it's the charioteer's job to manage these and keep them balanced.

What initially oppresses us the most, is the restlessness that forces us to stay away from contemplation and reflection. A restlessness that seems to be part of the atmosphere, keeping us from the unparalleled panoramas that are 'unveiled in the Light of the soul' as the Rosicrucians say.

The Mysteries of the Soul know no limitations, no death, no suffering. They are immortal and offer eternal deepening and immeasurable happiness, because those are, among numerous other ones, characteristics of the soul. This present book, that has been given the same aspiring title, attempts to be an aid to start this never-ending discovery.

Peter Huijs

*O Light Eterne, sole in thyself that dwellest,
sole knowest thyself, and, known unto thyself
and knowing, lovest and smilest on thyself!*

*That circulation, which being thus conceived
appeared in thee as a reflected light,
When somewhat contemplated by mine eyes,
within itself, of its own very colour
seemed to me painted with our effigy,
Wherefore my sight was all absorbed therein.*

*As the geometrician, who endeavours
to square the circle, and discovers not,
By taking thought, the principle he wants,
even such was I at that new apparition;
I wished to see how the image to the circle
conformed itself, and how it there finds place;
but my own wings were not enough for this,
had it not been that then my mind there smote
a flash of lightning, wherein came its wish.*

ALIGHIERI DANTE,
Divina Commedia, Paradiso, from Canto 33
(translated by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow)

Insight is the open gate
to our Liberation,
cleanses my entire blood-state,
give me aspiration.
From that Source springs the force:
Rose's power and endless grace
over all my pathways.

Craving for Salvation's might,
the Mount I am nearing,
and in Gnosis' sublime light
grief is disappearing.
I will strive, all my life,
in a great endeavour,
to be free forever.

The surrender of the self,
self-annihilation,
is the way to nullify
nature's machination.
From that doom we see bloom
Rose-tree with its Roses,
thriving in the Gnosis.

The new attitude-of-live
need wise contemplation.
He who walks the Path to Life
lives his true vocation.
Night and day, ban delay,
lived in I-declining,
with the Group aligning.

Onward go those on the Path
who are this world's strangers.
They all treasure the true Way,
they traverse all dangers.
Always light, Salvat's Height
conquers the dark earthly might
in the New Morn's daylight.

PART 1

MYSTERIES OF THE SOUL



*You do not consist of any of the elements –
earth, water, fire, air, or even ether.
To be liberated, know yourself
as consisting of consciousness,
the witness of these.*

Ashtavakra's song

CHAPTER 1

LIVING FROM A SENSE OF UNITY

SPIRITUAL TEXT:

ASHTAVAKRA'S SONG – CHAPTER 1¹

*J*anaka: 'O Master, tell me how to find detachment, wisdom, and freedom!'

Ashtavakra: 'O friend, if you wish to be free, shun the poison of the senses. Seek the nectar of truth, of love and forgiveness, simplicity and happiness.

Earth, fire and water, the wind and the sky - you are none of these.

If you wish to be free, know you are the Self, the witness of all these, the heart of awareness.

Set your body aside. Sit in your own awareness. You will at once be happy, forever still, forever free.

You have no caste. No duties bind you. Formless and free, beyond the reach of the senses, the witness of all things.

So be happy!

Right or wrong, joy and sorrow, these are of the mind only. They are not yours. It is not really you who acts or enjoys.

The heart of awareness, you are everywhere, forever free. Forever and truly free, the single witness of all things.

But if you see yourself as separate, then you are bound. "I do this. I do that." The big black snake of selfishness has bitten you!

"I do nothing." This is the nectar of faith. So drink and be happy!

Know you are one, pure awareness.

With the fire of this conviction, burn down the forest of ignorance. Free yourself from sorrow, and be happy. Be happy! For you are joy, unbounded joy.

You are awareness itself. Just as a coil of rope is mistaken for a snake, so you are mistaken for the world.

If you think you are free, you are free. If you think you are bound, you are bound. For the saying is true: You are what you think.

The Self looks like the world. But this is just an illusion. The Self is everywhere. One. Still.

The Heart of Awareness free. Perfect. The witness of all things, awareness without action, clinging or desire.

Meditate on the Self. One without two, exalted awareness. Give up the illusion of the separate self. Give up the feeling, within or without, That you are this or that.

My friend, because you think you are the body, for a long time you have been bound.

Know you are pure awareness. With this knowledge as your sword cut through your chains. And be happy!

For you are already free, without action or flaw, luminous and bright. You are bound only by the habit of meditation.

Your nature is pure awareness. You are flowing in all things, and all things are flowing in you.

But beware the narrowness of the mind! You are always the same, unfathomable awareness, limitless and free, serene and unperturbed. Desire only your own awareness.

The heart of awareness whatever takes form is false. Only the formless endures. When you understand the truth of this teaching, you will not be born again. For God is infinite, within the body and without, like a mirror, and the image in a mirror.

As the air is everywhere, flowing around a pot and filling it, so God is everywhere, filling all things and flowing through them forever.'



CHAPTER 1

LIVING FROM A SENSE OF UNITY

REFLECTION

As a human being you are so much more than simply a complex biological organism with intelligence. You are also much more than a psychological individual with personal thoughts, feelings and will power. Your very essence is pure consciousness. Your very essence is soul: a potential living connection between the unity and the multitude, between the eternal and the temporary, between the Holy and your personality. To experience this connection is a great joy, a supreme bliss. Every human being is invited to free himself from delusion, to sense this lasting peace and inner joy.

This possibility may seem very distant from how you experience yourself, your life and the world right now. That is because you are living in a self-created prison of delusion which has arisen because you have placed externalities above yourself, because you have identified with transient forms. These words are all but flattering. The author of 'Ashtavakra's song' certainly did not express them in order to make reproaches but to make an appeal to you to pay attention to who you really are, in essence: the witness of revelations of a magnificent reality, all-pervasive and perfect.

The founders of movements that grew to become world religions encouraged their followers to no longer identify with their mortal personality but to merge into a higher soul life in order to become and to be a new man, inspired by the spirit. The concepts 'consciousness' and 'soul' are essential to many religions and worldviews. There are enormous differences among world religions and there is also a wide range of teachings to be found within the separate world religions.

Numerous similarities

However, if we look at the more esoteric and contemplative traditions within religions, we find numerous similarities among them. That is logical, as esotericism and contemplation concern the living experience of a reality that is at odds with the world as perceived by our senses and observed with our psyche. Therefore it cannot be easily understood by everyone but only by the ones who are, in a sense, 'initiated' into the other reality.

The structure of the living experience of humanity is universal – just as the anatomy of the human body is the same in different people – but it requires a certain education to gain access to that living experience. In this book, *'Mysteries and symbols of the soul'*, we explore that aspect of ourselves known as soul, Self, inner man or consciousness. To our usual way of thinking, soul is a mystery. It is neither a subject nor an object, yet it can be experienced. It has no shape, it goes way beyond time and space and still it can grow within us.

When we connect the concepts 'consciousness' and 'soul' with one another, then we mean being aware of your consciousness as something that characterises humanity. It is good to realise this fact since, according to spiritual principles, consciousness is the basis of all manifestations. A well-known Sufi saying expresses this idea as: 'God sleeps in the rock, dreams in the plant, moves in the animal and awakens in man'.

We can define and understand the living experience of the soul only through the use of universal symbols, analogies and myths, all of which are part of the world of experience of the soul. Our rational thinking capacity is a great gift, one we very much need to be able to live in the sensory perceptible world. However it is not intended that we become stranded in it or further develop ourselves exclusively in that direction.

As human beings we must not go back to the mythical consciousness of our remote ancestors; we can no longer linger in

our intellectual brain consciousness, even though it could still be extended endlessly. We must advance to the gnostic soul consciousness – to the world of experience of the soul, to the domain of the archetypes – to which every human being is summoned internally.

The first part of this book is called ‘Mysteries of the soul’, and it consists of nine classical spiritual texts and nine reflections about them. The selected spiritual texts come from nine different traditions, successively:

Advaita Vedanta;
Hermeticism;
Kabbalah;
Gnostic Christianity;
Raja Yoga;
Judaism;
Buddhism;
Zoroastrianism; and
Pauline Christianity.

There are many symbols that refer to the human soul. We link the following symbols of the soul to the nine reflections of the first part. In the nine essays of the second part, named ‘Symbols of the soul’, these are further elaborated:

1. The soul as a centre;
2. the soul as tree;
3. the soul as flame;
4. the soul as traveller;
5. the soul as fortress;
6. the soul as creator;
7. the soul as sevenfold being;
8. the soul as mirror; and
9. the soul as world worker

To become receptive

The objective of this book is to make you conscious of the life of the soul and to increase your receptivity for its influences. As a consequence you will experience life differently. Not the life of *your* soul, because you do not have a soul. The soul has you, and it is barely able to express itself in you. You yourself form the barrier that makes it difficult or impossible for the soul to manifest itself. This remark is not intended to be personal, because this fact applies to nearly everyone on earth.

You have the right to be here, in this world. More than that: you must be here! And you can become transparent for the light of truth that glows imperishably. You can be renewed internally and experience great happiness. You can cooperate joyfully with the realisation of the divine plan of creation; however, for this purpose, you must first undergo a thorough transformation process.

Holy scriptures play an important role in many religious and esoteric traditions. Their origin is found in the world of the soul which manifests itself through an underlying numerical structure that has not been laid there on purpose. These scriptures are therefore often expressed in poetry – intended to be recited or sung – rather than prose. Among the holy scriptures that have been chosen for this programme are three songs: Ashtavakra's Song, the Hymn of the Pearl and a hymn by Zarathustra.

In translating the original holy scriptures into another language the particular numerical structure is most often lost, but they still enable you to connect with the high, shining level of consciousness that created them. The same applies, for instance, to visual arts and music. Artistic creations that are inspired by the world of experience of the soul possess the ability to temporarily raise the consciousness to the world of the soul. They therefore can be experienced as food for the soul.

In this programme we will not explain the chosen texts very extensively, not only because we have no room for it within the

chosen set-up but also and primarily because it would be of little use. If we would clarify phrase after phrase and verse after verse – assuming that we had the capability – you would process the information in a way that you are used to process other information. This raises your level of knowledge, but it does not make you a new you.

Holy scriptures can be seen as gifts that invite you to work with them. Only if you start your inner work with holy scriptures can they have a transforming influence. Certain holy texts are repeatedly spoken or sung as mantras in spiritual traditions, thus deeply engraving them in the subconsciousness of those involved. This conditioning not only creates new, powerful neural connections in the brain, but also allows forces to be absorbed from the domain of the soul, the world of experience of the archetypes.

These energies transform the living experience, purifying and renewing it down to the level of the physical body.

Kōans

The Zen tradition often works with so-called kōans. The Zen master gives a kōan – a kind of riddle – to the pupil. It is the task of the Zen pupil to ‘crack’ this kōan in order to find both understanding and also the right answer. Ultimately, the answer that the pupil produces is not the primary objective, but rather the efforts that he or she has made to come to a correct answer, as it is only the effort and not the answer that works in a transforming way. The efforts are needed to transcend the usual way of thinking.

Inner renewal is not a merit but a result of grace, of heavenly forces that are given. As a result of aspiration – that is your longing and efforts to be inwardly renewed and better equipped to serve – you can receive divine grace; the all-encompassing love can then manifest itself and new capacities will gradually develop. If you would consider yourself as the source or the cause of spiritual growth that you are experiencing within yourself, you would fall

prey to self-identification and you would not form a living connection between heaven and earth. Like many other holy texts, Ashtavakra's song can be seen as a large collection of kōans. Every verse contains wisdom that we can probe further. The scripture begins with a genuine and profound question that Janaka poses to the wise Ashtavakra. Janaka is a mighty and influential personality who has become conscious of the fact that he is bound and does not live in the truth. For this reason he is longing for liberation and detachment. Ashtavakra tells him, and us too:

'O friend, if you wish to be free, shun the poison of the senses. Seek the nectar of truth, of love and forgiveness, simplicity and happiness. Earth, fire and water, the wind and the sky - you are none of these. If you wish to be free, know you are the Self, the witness of all these, the heart of awareness. Set your body aside. Sit in your own awareness. You will at once be happy, forever still, forever free.'

Here Ashtavakra encourages Janaka to give up his fascination for the sensory perceptible world in order to allow the qualities of the soul – like selflessness, simplicity, compassion, peace of mind and sincerity – to manifest. He also advises Janaka not to identify with all the forms that appear in his consciousness but to be a witness to them, because only if he is a neutral witness will his very nature be happy, peaceful and free from bonds.

Mindfulness

In fact, Ashtavakra here advises practicing 'mindfulness', a phenomenon that has gained popularity during the past decades. Called 'self-observation' by the esoteric teacher George Gurdjieff, mindfulness is one of the aspects of the eightfold path that was described by Buddha as 'right mindfulness'.²

Someone who is mindful is attentively present in the here and now, observant without judgement and accepts what is. When there is no judgement and a situation is accepted entirely as it is, there results a certain unity, or non-duality. Living from this state

of unity (or non-duality) of the soul provides great advantages. Numerous scientific studies have proven the beneficial effects of correctly-practiced mindfulness.

In society, mindfulness is used mainly as a means to reduce stress and overcome and prevent physical and psychological complaints, thus improving the functioning of the personality. Within spiritual traditions it is not the body or the personality that is central, but the soul. Buddhists speak about 'loving friendliness', a quality of the soul that is nowadays referred to as tenderheartedness or compassion. Genuine spirituality aims at a new genesis, based on the soul, which Ashtavakra calls 'awareness'.

He says: *'Right or wrong, joy and sorrow, these are of the mind only. They are not yours. It is not really you who acts or enjoys. The heart of awareness, you are everywhere, forever free. Forever and truly free, the single witness of all things. But if you see yourself as separate, then you are bound.'*

According to Ashtavakra, the thinking capacity makes distinctions and gives meaning to events. That approach is recognised not only within spiritual traditions but also, to a certain extent, within psychology. For example people are taught during therapeutic sessions that they should be conscious of how the reality that they experience is determined by their thinking, due to a certain sequence in which something is expressed.

Thinking and reality

When you experience a certain event, it evokes a certain thought in your mind. This thought subsequently leads to a certain feeling and that feeling then results in a certain behaviour. Finally the behaviour leads to certain consequences. So if in your life you experience certain consequences that you do not want, then you should begin by changing the events (image 1). Naturally, that is not always possible because you cannot completely control your life. It is possible though to direct your thoughts about an event for a large

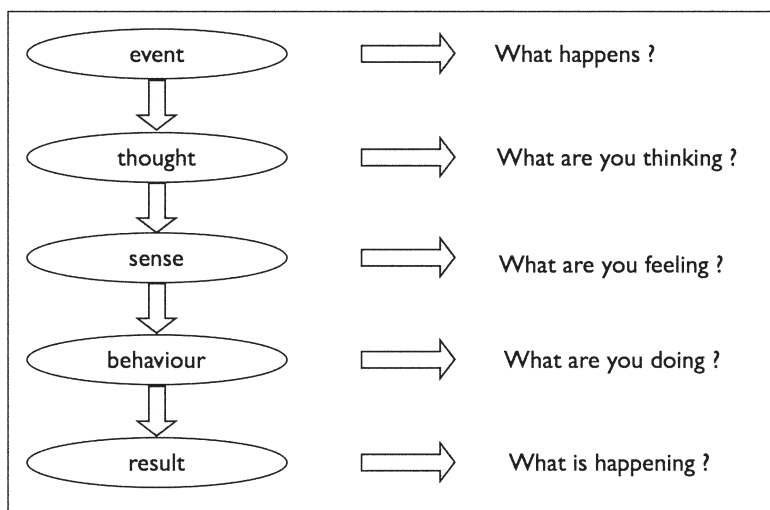


image 1: the influence of thinking, feeling and doing, and their mutual connections

part. If you begin to do this, your feelings and behaviour are influenced and thus also the consequences.

On a spiritual path people gradually free themselves from the prison of delusion through inner detachment, thus enabling them to dedicate themselves to their actual assignment: to give soulful significance to revelations of reality so that they are in accordance with the domain of the soul, with the world of experience of the archetypes. The essence of that is thinking, feeling and acting from the world of the soul. When earthly forms are connected with heavenly structures in this way, then actual liberation appears on the horizon both for the person concerned and, at the same time, for all humanity as well as other life-waves.

In the earthly dimension we primarily experience repetition, attachment and fear. When we gain access to the dimension of the soul there will be an experience of unity, freedom and love. Thus we can signify much more for humanity when we live from the soul rather than from our self-preserving personality, as the development of the soul benefits everything and everyone.

Ashtavakra's Song says: *'Your nature is pure awareness. You are flowing in all things, and all things are flowing in you. But beware the narrowness of the mind! You are always the same, unfathomable awareness, limitless and free, serene and unperturbed. Desire only your own awareness. The heart of awareness whatever takes form is false. Only the formless endures. When you understand the truth of this teaching, you will not be born again.'*



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The book, 'Mysteries and Symbols of the Soul', is developed within the School of the Golden Rosycross. We invite you to have a look at our Golden Rosycross Global Social Network, and maybe watch a video-lecture, listen to a podcast and scan some articles. If it appeals to you, we recommend you to register. As a subscriber you will receive regular e-mails with meaningful content. When you absorb the content attentively, you enroll in process of growing in spiritual awareness.

The Rosicrucians are devoted, symbolically speaking, to strengthen the connection between the cross and the rose, between the temporary and the eternal, between the natural and the divine. This work contributes to the regeneration of man and society. The teachings of the Golden Rosycross are universal and Christocentric at the same time. It is possible to come to inner knowing, to gnosis, by going a path of initiation within the School of the Golden Rosycross.

In all authentic wisdom traditions there is the idea that there is one source of life, wisdom and love. This source has many names: Tao, Brahma, the One, the Unknown, the Creator and the Father-Mother. The School of the Golden Rosycross consists of people who discover this source in themselves, allow themselves to be refreshed by it and want to share this joy with other people who resonate with it.

The School of the Golden Rosycross is a non-profit organisation for promoting spiritual awareness and renewal. It was founded in 1924 in Haarlem in the Netherlands and has now more than 200 locations in about 40 countries. This spiritual school has its roots in an ancient tradition of mystery schools, is connected with the impulse of the classical Rosicrucians from the seventeenth century and relies primarily on gnostic Christianity and Hermetism that is in tune with people of the 21st century.

We undertake many initiatives around the globe to offer seekers possibilities for becoming a spirit-inspired person: books, magazines, video-lectures, podcasts, online-programs, contemplative meetings, temple-services and live conferences. Would you like to follow us online? Then, register for free with our Golden Rosycross Global Social Network.



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