

STUDIES IN THE COSMO-CONCEPTION

Concentration

Q. How does one attain voluntary clairvoyance?

A. All that can be done here is to give an indication of the first steps which lead up to the acquirement of the faculty of voluntary clairvoyance.

Q. What is the first step?

A. The first exercise deals with concentration, and the most favorable time to begin is on first awakening in the morning before any of the worries and cares of daily life have entered the mind. At that time one is fresh from the Inner worlds and therefore more easily brought back into touch with them than at any other time of the day .

Q. What procedure is followed?

A. Do not wait to dress or sit up in bed but relax the body perfectly and let the exercises be the first waking thought. Relaxation means more than a comfortable position as it is possible to have every muscle tense with expectation. That of itself frustrates the object, for in that condition the desire body is gripping the muscles. It cannot do otherwise till we calm the mind.

Q. How does one concentrate?

A. The first thing to practice is fixing one's thoughts upon some ideal and holding them there without letting them swerve. It is an exceedingly hard task but to some extent at least it must be accomplished before it is possible to make any further progress.

Q. Why is this so important?

A. Thought is the power we use in making

images, pictures, and thought forms, according to ideas from within. It is our principal power and we must learn to have absolute control of it so that what we produce is not wild illusion induced by outside conditions, but true imagination generated by the Spirit from within.

Q. How will this lead to knowledge?

A. Thought force is the most powerful means of obtaining knowledge. If it is concentrated upon a subject, it will burn its way through any obstacle and solve the problem.

Q. How does this apply to spiritual comprehension?

A. If the requisite amount of thought force is brought to bear, there is nothing that is beyond the power of human comprehension. So long as we scatter it, thought force is of little use to us, but as soon as we are prepared to take the trouble necessary to harness it, all knowledge is ours.

Q. How important is this for the spiritual aspirant?

A. This is something the aspirant to the higher life must positively learn to do. There is no other way. At first he will find himself thinking of everything under the Sun instead of the ideal upon which he has decided to concentrate, but he must not let that discourage him. In time he will find it easier to still his senses and hold his thought steady.

Q. How may success be insured?

A. Persistence, persistence, and always persistence will win at last. Without that, however, no results can be expected. It is of no use to perform the exercises for two or three mornings or weeks and then neglect them for as long. To be effective they must be done faithfully every morning without fail

Q. What subject is best for concentration?

A. Any subject may be selected, according to the temperament and mental persuasion of the aspirant, so long as it is pure and mentally uplifting in its tendency. Christ will do for some; others, who love flowers particularly, are most easily helped by taking one as the subject of concentration.

Q. What is important regarding the subject?

A. The subject matters little, but whatever it is, we must imagine it true to life in all details. If it is Christ we must imagine a real Christ, with mobile features, life in His eyes, and an expression that is not stony and dead. We must build a living ideal, not a statue.

Q. How would this apply to a flower?

A. If we chose a flower, we must, in imagination, take the seed and, having buried it in the ground, fix our mind upon it steadily. Presently we shall see it burst, shooting forth its roots, which penetrate the Earth in a spiral manner. From the main branches of the roots we watch the myriads of minute rootlets as they branch out and ramify in all directions. Then the stem begins to shoot upward, bursting through the surface of the earth and coming forth as a tiny green stalk.

Q. Does this stage complete the concentration?

A. No, you then watch it grow; presently there is

an off-set, a tiny twig shoots out from the main stem. It grows; another off-set and a branch appears; from the branches little stalks with buds at the end shoot out; presently there are a number of leaves. Then comes a bud at the top; it grows larger until it begins to burst and the red leaves of the rose show beneath the green. It unfolds in the air, emitting an exquisite perfume which we sense perfectly as it is wafted to us on the balmy summer breeze which gently sways the beautiful creation before the mind's eye.

Q. Is such concentration a gradual process?

A. Yes. At first the pictures which the aspirant builds will be but shadowy and poor likenesses, but in the end he can, by concentration, conjure up an image more real and alive than things in the physical World.

Q. What is the next step?

A. When the aspirant has become able to form such pictures and has succeeded in holding his mind upon the pictures thus created, he may try to drop the picture suddenly and, holding his mind steady without any thought, wait to see what comes into the vacuum.

Q. If he succeeds, what occurs?

A. For a long time nothing may appear, and the aspirant must carefully guard against making visions for himself. But if he keeps on faithfully and patiently every morning, there will come a time when, the moment he has let the imaged picture drop, in a flash the surrounding Desire World will open up to his inner eye. At first it may be but a mere glimpse, but it is an earnest of what will later come at will. □

(Ref. *Cosmo*, pp. 485-489.)

