

# Cares That Infest

*Between Man  
And Happiness*



By CECIL A. POOLE

# CARES THAT INFEST

## BETWEEN MAN AND HAPPINESS



AMORC

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*“The night shall be filled with music,  
And the cares that infest the day,  
Shall fold their tents, like the Arabs,  
And as silently steal away.”*

—HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW

*Dedicated to my wife  
who has tolerated my  
cares for over  
fifty years*

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# INTRODUCTION

**D**URING RECENT YEARS there have been many so-called do-it-yourself books written. These books deal with all kinds of conditions and circumstances. Books are available to explain how you may make household repairs, or how to be your own psychiatrist. These books deal with the physical world in which we live. They also deal with speculations for those who do not have the aptitudes or training to use them. Their appeal to individuals who read them is that they will solve problems.

This book deals with problems but it makes no claim that it will solve them for you. I have tried to deal with the problems and worries that affect the life of every human being. The discussion is simply a statement of a point of view concerning our lives and the circumstances under which we live.

In dealing with problems in this manner, I have made the chapter subjects general. They cover the subject matter from primarily a personal point of view, and, as already stated, offer no ultimate solution. Even beyond that, it is extremely difficult to draw hard and fast lines of demarcation between the various subjects that constitute the cares of our day. For example: worry, fear, and uncertainty are complex subjects and are associated with so many of our cares and problems that they overlap each other, one becoming a factor in direct relationship to the other and impossible to separate completely. Therefore, throughout this book these subjects will recur in various chapters.

We all have problems. They demand a part of our mental activity from time to time. Someone has said that what you do not know never hurts you; it's what you suspect that causes trouble. That sentence expresses one of the central themes of this book. From my treatment of many of the cares that infest our days and nights, I hope some may find inspiration, direction, or guidance in the personal circumstances that occupy their attention in dealing with their problems. Regretfully, I cannot offer a cure or a magic key to the problems that are a phase of the lives of all of us who live today.

For much of his life, John Steinbeck was interested in the legends regarding King Arthur, who may have lived during the early post-Roman period of England. Steinbeck accumulated the traditions and stories of King Arthur and put them into a book which summarizes the myths and legends of this famous king, who may or may not have been an actual historical character. Steinbeck has selected some very wise statements that were associated with King Arthur and those about him. One particularly impressed me when Steinbeck quotes Merlin as saying, "Somewhere in the world there is defeat for everyone. Some are destroyed by defeat and some made small and mean by victory. Greatness lives in one who triumphs equally over defeat and victory."

In the life of every human being there are moments of elation and there are moments of depression. Those who understand only success and victory have not lived as deeply and thoroughly as those who have had to overcome some defeat. Actually, there is some defeat and there is some victory for all of us. To learn to live with both is to live a balanced life.

For almost forty years I have written articles having to do with the cares of the day and the problems we as human beings have. Most of these articles appeared in a special section of *The Rosicrucian Digest*, a monthly magazine published by the Rosicrucian Order, AMORC. I have drawn freely upon some of these. In fact, a few of the chapters in this book are almost word-for-word duplication of selected articles that I wrote over the years. Others are revised from previously written articles. Still others are new.

I give credit to *The Rosicrucian Digest*, copyrighted by the Supreme Grand Lodge of AMORC, for using some of my written material again. I also again acknowledge my debt to Mrs. Louise Vernon, who has transcribed, edited, and advised me concerning most of the writing that I have done in recent years, including the contents of this book.

CECIL A. POOLE

*Sunnyvale, California*

*September 15, 1977*



## Chapter I

# WORRY

**N**O DOUBT WORRY is one of the most common cares that infest the lives of human beings today. Worry is a condition difficult to define. It can be either voluntary or involuntary, or we might go so far as to conclude that it can be a mixture of the two. Voluntary worry is a condition produced by concentrating upon problems that we feel are absolutely necessary for us to direct our attention toward as a continuous process. Involuntary worry is the result of the same problems or even other problems becoming implanted in our consciousness in such a form that they manifest habitually and are constantly coming to the surface, demanding that we give them our whole attention and thinking at any particular time.

There is no record of any process ever having been developed that will completely eliminate worry from an individual's life. However, we might be able to alleviate this condition by understanding better just what our worries are, what causes them, and what our position is in the scheme of things. By analyzing our own lives we can then direct reason toward those activities of the mind that cause the worries to be uppermost in our consciousness.

A worrier directs a great deal of his energy to the process of worrying. Probably more important, when the mind is occupied by worry, a person is unable to direct attention to more constructive pursuits. Most worry is directed toward problems that concern us at the moment, or are more or less chronic and have been with us most of our life. These problems may be similar or they may be different. Usually they concern our present social situation, financial problems, trouble with other people, or general circumstances associated with the events in our environment.

Analysis will show that the problems and questions causing worry are based upon some of the fundamental human emotions. These problems are substantially similar for all individuals. The questions which produce the problems are frequently concerned with basic instincts, such as those of self-preservation and love. Nothing can interfere more with happiness or peace of mind than our emotional response to difficulties in our day-to-day economic circumstances or in our relationships with fellow human beings, whether these be our immediate families or our associates.

There is, as well, our concern with self-preservation and the hope of a future situation more stable than that of the present. Emotionally, all of us are at one time or another affected by problems that cause us some worry. It is natural that from time to time these questions should exist in our consciousness. The worrier needs consideration and sympathetic advice so that he or she may be better able to cope with problems. We must also realize that there is no specific and immediate remedy available for every individual personal problem. When we are concerned with basic emotional circumstances and reactions, no answer to questions arising from them will ever be completely satisfactory until this answer comes from within the individual. Guidance may be given toward this end, but the ultimate solution is the responsibility of the individual.

We must take into consideration that as long as we live as human beings there will be problems. No individual reaches a state or condition where the basic questions of life and their relationship to environment cease to raise some problems. It is natural for these problems to exist. Furthermore, it is natural for each human being to strive toward their solution.

Further consideration leads us to understand that man has a natural potentiality to deal with his problems, at least to a degree, as he lives out his normal span of life. This does not mean that final, ultimate, and satisfactory solutions to problems are always reached, but it does mean that the possibilities for the improvement of conditions are always present.

Concern over our problems is natural. However, the danger in connection with many problems arises when basic emotional conflicts become a dominating factor in our thinking process. When an individual reaches a point in his consideration of personal problems where he thinks of them to the exclusion of most other thoughts, particularly anything of a constructive nature, then still another problem arises in addition to the original one. This is the problem of using our attributes for no other purpose than to worry.

At this point a compounding effect takes place. Problems give rise to other problems, and life becomes more and more complicated. For this reason the attempt to reach a basic solution is increasingly involved. A constant dwelling upon any series of normal human problems will develop this condition. The individual should try to reason that the problems at hand are such as face many human beings and that he must deal with them as best he can. The individual who has gone beyond this point where the problems and questions have become confused must make a careful analysis, get down to basic issues, and work to separate problems into their component parts so as to deal with each separately.

Considering these problems, it might be well to ask ourselves if we might be placing too much emphasis upon the answers to the questions that caused the problems. Have not most of us lost positions in the past and may even do so again? Are life and death tied up with our occupations, professions, or jobs? Will we not be able to do something regardless of what may be our employment status? Will not family problems eventually be adjusted one way or another? Does it make any particular difference insofar as our life of this moment is concerned whether or not an atomic bomb will eventually destroy civilization? Need we worry to the point of desperation as to the future of our civilization?

When one series of problems is compounded by another series of problems, we call the resulting mental activity *worry*. Worry is a small stream of fear running through the mind. If there were no fear, there would be no worry. If the stream of thought constituting worry or a constant reiteration of problems going through the mind over

and over continues without relief, we are performing the same act as when we are in the process of forming a habit. That is, an impression is made upon the mind that becomes permanent. This small stream of fear that was the beginning of worry becomes larger. It creates a channel in the mind through which our thinking passes and into which more and more thoughts find a place.

A person who is a chronic worrier unconsciously relates every experience and most of his activities to his worries. It is easy to say, "Don't worry," but it is hard to put this injunction into practice. The reason is that worry is actually based upon fear of the consequences of our immediate economic, social, or family position, or fear of the eventual ending of life. If we want to terminate this tendency of a growing stream of worry, it is necessary to eliminate fear. Being afraid of consequences is again a process of compounding or elaborating our already existent problems.

To eliminate fear is, however, to go contrary to a basic human instinct. All animal life is equipped with the instinct of fear closely related to its glandular and physiological system so that it may protect itself in the event of danger. Therefore, fear is in a sense part of the mechanism of self-preservation. When a fear can be rationally explained or when the cause of fear is made clear, its hold or control over our thinking is relaxed. We can be startled by an unexpected happening and thereby exhibit a phase of fear, but when the happening is explainable in terms of our knowledge, we are immediately released from the fear.

This means that we must make a conscious effort to understand as best we can any situation in which we are placed. Understanding is the key to the elimination of fear, which in turn contributes to the elimination of worry. For example, we need not fear the end of life. It is inevitable; as it has come to everyone who ever lived, it will come to us. In the *Apology*, Socrates stressed that the hereafter could only be good or a state of nonexistence, and he emphasized that neither circumstance should trouble us now.

We do not need to fear the future. On the basis of the Law of Karma, the hereafter can be no more and no less than the tomorrow of life. What we make of life and the laws with which we work and

cause to manifest will result in a future which we have brought about by our own volition. Whether we still live in our physical bodies or out of them should make no difference. Any change will be a continuation and, we fervently hope, a condition that offers opportunity for the rectification of errors of the past. The important point is that the future, regardless of what it may be, is inevitable. Furthermore, insofar as eventual transition is concerned, those who are actually dying are the ones who fear death the least.

An ideal aim is to develop a philosophy of life through which we can make clear in our minds that there is to be no fear of the ultimate end of life. We shall not worry as to how or when it will come. If civilization can be destroyed through the stupidity of those who compose it, then our problem should not be to worry about civilization's ultimate destruction but to do our small part in attempting to give civilization an enduring value so that it will not come to a tragic ending, if it is at all possible to be avoided.

Insofar as our day-to-day problems are concerned, we cannot minimize those problems having to do with our economic, social, and private relationships, but we can remember that they do not contain the importance of living and dying. Men have lived after disappointments. They have lived in poverty after having lived in wealth. The adjustment may not be one of their choosing, but it can be done quite successfully, and if a proper outlook is created, it can be done without worry. Tomorrow need not be feared. We must live the best we can today, and the future, whatever and wherever it may be, will be better if we are not slaves to worry now.

## Chapter II

# POVERTY AND WEALTH

**O**F WORRY IN itself is one of the distressing cares of our days, then the average individual will probably agree that worry about being poor or suffering poverty is one of the most pressing of all problems that cause worry. Those who have experienced poverty worry about the possibility of its re-occurrence or the fear that they may be subject to its inconvenience and embarrassment in the future.

To worry about wealth is foreign to the thinking of many individuals, but actually it can take place. Money gives many people problems. Possessing money gives a person a feeling of importance. Doing without it gives one a sense of frustration. A person who lacks money believes that having more money will solve many problems and even bring about a state of complete happiness. Yet having a greater income or obtaining a larger amount of money actually does not always solve any problem other than providing an opportunity for the wise use of the money.

What usually happens is that an increase in one's possessions causes the individual to attain a higher standard of living to keep up with those who also have more funds, and therefore to have an increase in his desire for what he believes to be needs. These needs frequently exceed the additional funds at his disposal. The Greek philosopher Epicurus said, "If you wish to make Pythocles rich, do not add to his store of money, but subtract from his desires." This is very true, but it is not accepted literally by the average individual. Having his choice of more money or fewer desires, the average individual would usually choose to have more money.

Religion has frequently frowned upon the accumulation of money and other possessions. Probably everyone who reads these words has heard that there is a Biblical quotation saying, "Money is the root of all evil." This is a misquotation. St. Paul wrote, "The *love* of money is the root of all evil." The difference is very significant. The love of money causes the individual to devote his entire life and his entire effort to the acquisition of material possessions. The root of evil is in the process, not in the possession itself.

No one will deny that poverty leads to suffering and that an adequate supply of money certainly aids one to do things in a most enjoyable way. On the other hand, money is not evidence of an individual's being brilliant or having virtue, nor is it necessarily an evidence of industry. Money does not add to one's character, nor does it assist him in reaching a high degree of moral superiority. The fact is that, instead of making people generous or even good-natured, money causes many to become mean and not be good companions. Many of those who acquire a great deal of money may lose the good moral characteristics and kindness that they expressed when they were poor.

I do not mean to suggest that the wealthy are automatically always unhappy and that those suffering poverty are always pure and peaceful. Nevertheless, great amounts of money can create complications. Many rich people, instead of gaining values, lose completely their sense of value. Not only do they lose their sense of true value, but they may live in constant fear of losing the money they have gained and as a result of such loss be forced to be in poverty or to return to it.

Poverty actually has some advantages. For example, being poor may cause one to lose any suspicion that he might have about anyone being interested in him because of his worldly possessions. In other words, no one is trying to associate with him because of envy of his material status. An individual who seeks to be friends with one who is poor is seeking friendship with the person rather than the person's possessions. Being moderately poor also brings one face-to-face with many of the troubles and the joys that mankind shares. When one is affluent he is not as conscious of the needs of others as he is if he lacks money.

The average human beings in the so-called civilized world today are working frantically using energy to obtain material possessions that they believe will make them better off. These people actually work against each other rather than in the common interests of mankind. They seem to resemble an uncontrolled group of animals having no concern for each other's needs.

Furthermore, many individuals who live only for material possessions do not have definite ideals or aims in life beyond the mere possession of the material things. Therefore, life holds no real meaning. There is nothing really ahead for them until they readjust their sense of values. Many who have been successful financially do not have a deep-rooted sense of well-being. They are stimulated for the moment, as they might be if they had a bottle of excellent champagne, but they also learn that the effect will wear off rapidly. The possession of something they sought will only lead them to want to possess something else.

Gaining material things primarily in order to possess them is one of the most disappointing achievements that man can devote himself to in his lifetime. It has the same deceiving quality as the child's belief that because adults can eat what they want to and go to bed when they want to they are free of restrictions and have attained a great degree of happiness.

Money should be something to use rather than to simply possess. Poverty, on the other hand, should be a condition in which the individual fulfills a degree of his purpose for living. I am not claiming that poverty is a more desirable state for man than the possession of any degree of wealth or even moderate means. Poverty in its extreme circumstances is degrading. It is a state of affairs that should have the attention of all serious thinking individuals. There is much poverty in the world today. It leads to torment and suffering. It also leads to an exaggeration of the uncertainties of life, resulting in hopelessness and the impulse to live without a desire for self-improvement.

If wealth or the possession of material things could be used exclusively to relieve the extreme circumstances of poverty, then the wealthy would truly have a worthy aim for living. In the final analysis the cares of the human being cannot be produced by one extreme



or the other. The need of mankind is to live a balanced life and to be sufficiently industrious to try to ward off poverty as far as he can within his means and circumstances.

On the other hand, if his aim is to possess wealth, his ideals should go beyond the mere concept of possession. He should devote himself to the use of that wealth which will benefit himself and those who also live on this Earth. Poverty and wealth will always be with us, but we can learn, if we direct ourselves to do so, that each has its restrictions and its advantages. Wealth has its restrictions when it devotes itself solely to accumulation and not to use. Poverty has its restrictions when it causes individuals to suffer humiliation, ill health, and the lack of advantages which make it possible for the human being to evolve into the type of individual he should be.

The problems related to these circumstances must be dealt with both on a physical and a spiritual level. We can be rich in money and poor in spirit. We can suffer poverty of physical possessions and also poverty of spiritual knowledge. Both are needed. The great need that man must direct himself in trying to obtain while he lives on this Earth is balance. Those who can raise themselves above the level of poverty in which they find themselves should devote themselves to doing so. Those who have the means should devote themselves to constructive methods by which poverty can be eliminated so that everyone who has the ambition and the desire to do so can be able to make a living sufficient to maintain himself and devote his life to something more than suffering the lack of those needs which cause him to experience physical discomfort.

Poverty that exists involuntarily is a condition that is very sad when considered in relationship to human knowledge and intelligence. We should do all we can to assist those who by misfortune have arrived at such a state, but we should not forget that doling out money to those who do not seek to improve their physical or spiritual condition is not the final solution. We should give physical aid where needed, and we should educate the individuals to assume responsibility for themselves and to provide the spiritual background that will cause them, whether they be rich or poor, to realize the true values of the universe.

## Chapter III

# HEALTH AND SUFFERING

**T**HE PHYSICAL BODY is so made that it can be affected by circumstances both external and internal. Some of the effects upon the body are conducive to good feeling. Others cause suffering and pain, or at least inconvenience. Suffering is pain or anguish that comes about as a result of external stimulation through our sense faculties, or from internal changes, judgments, and perceptions. Whatever the cause of suffering, it is a state opposite that of contentment and pleasure. According to practically all religions and philosophies, suffering is considered a part of the lot of each human being.

We have been taught in many schools of experience and thought that life and suffering are synonymous. There can be no life without suffering, and conversely, it would be hard for us to appreciate how suffering could exist without there being a conscious entity to be aware of that state or condition.

Suffering which is the result of the impact of external forces upon the physical body is commonly interpreted as pain, and is experienced by every biological organism, insofar as we know. Even the very lowest forms of life, the minute, one-celled animals, respond to external stimulation such as pressure, an electric shock, or an acid coming in contact with it. The way in which the living organism responds to pain, or to the external stimuli causing it, changes considerably with life itself. The higher forms of life become more sensitive to pain in accordance with all the observable facts that we know.

Probably human beings and a few of the higher forms of mammals are the most sensitive to external stimulation, and for that reason experience both pain and pleasure more acutely than the lower forms of life. Because pain and suffering can be both external and internal, it usually comes as a result of conditions affecting the physical body, either through accident or illness. The individual who is able to maintain perfect health does not suffer pain from that cause. Any individual is subject to even a minor accident which can cause physical pain.

Anguish is a form of pain that is not always associated with physical pain. It is the type that comes from worry or concern. It rises within the consciousness, within man's own mind, as a result of his observations or conclusions. The anguish which a person can experience over the uncertain outcome of a condition or event which is taking place or which is imminent can be almost as extreme, and some would say more extreme, in producing suffering than actual physical pain. Tense situations, such as when life may be at stake or the future seriously affected or threatened, are means of producing anguish which can reach the point of being almost intolerable.

Suffering as experienced by the higher forms of life becomes more acute with man's ability to perceive his environment and reflect upon it. The naturalist philosopher John Burroughs observed that birds recovered rapidly after experiencing what human beings would consider a form of anguish. He wrote about nests of birds being destroyed, their young ones killed, and yet within a comparatively short time, sometimes only a matter of minutes, these birds would be behaving normally, even singing and giving the external appearance of being content. A parallel event occurring to a human being would result in a condition of pain and anguish over an extended period of time, possibly even a lifetime.

As man has become more sensitive and acute in his understanding and dealing with his environment, he has also become more sensitive to any condition that might interfere with his adjustment to environmental conditions. When man lived in small communities or dealt closely with only limited groups of people, suffering was primarily a personal concern, although it may have been observed by those about him.

There were evidently times of relatively little suffering on the part of small groups of individuals. In the complicated society of which we are now a part, we are never far removed from suffering. Not only is suffering in the news as a continuous result of world events, but it is also continually brought to our attention in all that we read and see.

Books, plays, motion pictures, and television tend to accentuate the existence of human suffering. This condition exists to the point where we have become somewhat hardened in our attitude toward those who suffer. Yet one of the outstanding marks that set civilized man apart from other living beings, including even other men, is his ability to show sympathy and compassion.

The problem of health is one which we cannot always voluntarily control. The suffering of pain which comes from illness, sickness, or other physical adjustments is one for which we must seek professional aid. Even then we do not always find the relief we seek. We cannot help but conclude that all must suffer, but we can be tolerant of those who are experiencing suffering. We should show sympathy and compassion by clearly indicating in our own behavior that we regret an individual's illness or his going through any experience that is uncomfortable. We should also make it known that if there is anything we can do to alleviate any of the conditions causing such problems, we will perform such acts in order to give some relief to the one who is suffering.

That man is his brother's keeper is a law of the Cosmic. No man stands alone. No individual is an island unto himself. Therefore that which causes another to suffer also leads to suffering and anguish in me. If I do not try to relieve the suffering of my fellow man, I shall be less able to relieve my own suffering. We need not show our compassion and sympathy by extreme, overt acts. Sometimes overt acts mean practically nothing. Today the sending of flowers or a card is sometimes no more than a substitute for what should be an indication of real concern. When we are struck by the hand of suffering we can readily understand those who sincerely sympathize and offer their help.

We are not going to solve another person's problems or relieve his suffering or give him perfect health even if we could assume his pain. But we are able to make the other person realize that there is unity

in all life. All mankind is encouraged and helped if each of us knows that the burden we bear is not ours alone. Therefore, while we cannot always ease the suffering of another, even though we may wish to take away the pain that is his burden, we can practice true compassion. By our attitude we can show the one who suffers that we too are mortal, that we have suffered accident, sickness, and pain. Each human being should develop awareness that we are trying to move toward a state of perfection in which pain and anguish will no longer be forces with which we must contend, but simply be the remnants of a physical experience that is no longer to be experienced when we fully reach a comprehension of the Infinite.

## Chapter IV

# FEAR

**N**O ONE KNOWS how many people live in constant fear. They fear so many circumstances of their lives that they develop a fear of living. Many actually live from day to day carrying this burden of fear. Surely, it is a burden, because once fear is established in the mind, temporarily or permanently, it takes over and dominates us. It has a physical effect. The physical process in response to fear is the release of a glandular activity which causes the individual to be poised to take care of any unusual circumstance that may develop in his environment.

An ancient manuscript, *Unto Thee I Grant*, says, "Fear is greater misery than the event itself." Everyone has experienced the sensation of fear as the result of an unexplainable noise or sight. A noise in the night with which we are not familiar causes as a first reaction the sensation of fear. The sight of something we do not understand, again particularly if this happens in the dark when we cannot see all the circumstances, produces fear. We are momentarily paralyzed. We may shake or chill, or have other disagreeable sensations, because fear, being such a deep-seated and profound emotion, affects the whole of our being, both physically and mentally.

No one has any way of determining the amount of energy expended by the human race or the individual human being in anticipation of those things that may cause fear. This is particularly true of the individual who creates a sensitivity, as it were, to fear, who becomes affected by almost every problem or circumstance that is not immediately understandable. Trouble seems to lie ahead in the lives of all of us, but it becomes a greater burden to some than to others.

There are those who chronically complain of the trouble that will be theirs tomorrow. They create imaginary fears of what might happen to them, their families, their community, or even the nation of which they are a part.

The advent of our present mechanical age has emphasized or exaggerated many of the circumstances that lead to fear. Some people have quaked in fear as each new scientific discovery seemed to hold over mankind the possibilities of a terrifying future. The perfection of explosives was believed to be the beginning of the end of the world. This same type of fear has been associated with many simpler inventions. The automobile, for example, was an item to be feared. I can remember many people who would not ride in an automobile and who claimed that it should be abolished because of their fear of it. The airplane, even more than the automobile, was believed by many to be the instrument that would bring final destruction to humanity.

Although there are problems that have been brought close to the thinking of each human being as the result of the advent of many modern mechanical inventions, still man has been able to adjust himself to a degree so that at no time to this date at least has humanity been subject to complete annihilation because of any one scientific achievement. It is hoped that the fears that, hang over the head of many people today will be gradually dissipated with time, because even as man has the knowledge and the power to achieve mechanical improvements, he has also the power and the knowledge to learn to control them.

With groups as well as with individuals, learning the usage of new things and new knowledge has its pain as well as its benefit. However, to worry whether or not the human race will be wiped out with the powerful weapons of today is to borrow trouble from the future and may be only wasted effort.

It is not my intention to state that man should never be concerned about himself and his future. The intelligence which has helped man's adaptation to the point of his present achievements in the world has also indicated the necessity of considering each new factor in relation

to the future of man's existence. The energy expended in anticipation of disaster might better be put to the means of controlling that which is feared as the possible cause of the disaster.

Worry is usually exaggerated by the anticipation of a disagreeable situation in the future, not of a circumstance of the present. If each one of us knew that the future would be free from pain and trouble, there would be no fear. However, we cannot know what the future will be except in terms of the present and the past. Therefore the best way to assure ourselves against fear is to so live in the present that the future will produce a minimum of trouble.

Probably we have all anticipated enjoyment in the future. We plan toward something which we can enjoy. It may be a long-awaited vacation, a trip, a special activity for our leisure, or even retirement in old age. How often have we all found that the realization of something anticipated with much hope and yearning was of even more importance than the attainment itself. No doubt we have all had the experience of feeling a letdown in the accomplishment of what we had looked forward to with much joy and anticipation. If the more enjoyable things of life are exaggerated in the process of anticipation, then even more exaggerated is fear which we develop in the expectation of future trouble. Our inclination is to dwell on fear more than on what promises or holds out hope for happiness.

There is a close relationship between the emotions, the mind, and the body. Emotional disturbances affect the functioning of the physical body and the clarity of the mind. Fear is one of the strongest emotions and has its useful purpose in that if man had no sense of fear he would be unable to protect himself in case of attack or surprise. Primitive man particularly depended upon fear in order to learn caution. Although fear may have a natural place, yet when it is exaggerated into an emotional disturbance, and our lives revolve about this emotional state in anxiety of what may happen tomorrow, we are expending useless energy. We are affecting our physical and mental well-being. Above all, we are not in any way detracting or trying to hinder the actual occurrence of the thing which we believe may bring trouble or discomfort.



It is simple to say that man should develop serenity, face the future, regardless of what that future may be, and that come good or evil he will face it calmly and do the best at the time to adjust himself to the needs of the occasion. It is much easier to make resolutions than to put them into practice. There are many ideals that are easier to put into words than into action, but knowing the ideals, even though we cannot live up to them every minute of the day, is at least a steadying force that will lessen the hold fear may have upon us.

The trouble that we anticipated today was the cause of yesterday's fear, but what was today is gone, and with it, whether handled to our satisfaction or not, have gone the anticipated troubles. The future quickly becomes the present and then the past, and as a help to make an adjustment to the present, man has been given the gift of memory and reason. He may draw upon his experience of the past as well as that of others and through the exercise of reason and experience develop a serenity that will make the day a less contributing factor toward a possible unfavorable tomorrow.

With this attitude, tomorrow will be built upon the strong realization that the present is the only time in which we are sure we live. Its problems are enough for the moment without our anticipating the troubles of tomorrow, which could be the cause of fear.

## Chapter V

# LONELINESS

**O**F ALL THE cares that infest our lives, possibly the ones most difficult to bear are those which are the most difficult to understand. There is, in fact, no satisfactory explanation to the pressures that exist in the minds of many people caused by various factors, either external or internal. Part of the reason for this circumstance is traceable, as are so many things, to the type of life we have lived up to the present moment.

We are born into a physical world, and today most people have lived to their present age immersed in the physical, so to speak. Material values, earning a living, dealing with other individuals on a physical or material basis, have made all of us to a degree materialistic minded. This being the case, we become isolated in a sense from our own mental activities. Therefore, the problems that beset our lives, and that are fundamentally mental in origin, are actually foreign to us. We are not educated nor do we have the experience to deal with the functions of life that are in the category of being mental or psychic.

To the degree that we become aware of the fact that the true values of the universe lie outside the physical, we are more apt to be able to adjust ourselves to changes in mental concepts and outlook. When we can isolate in our own thinking the things that are of mental origin from those that are of physical origin, we have taken one important step in the solving of our problems that beset our daily lives.

There are so many cares that affect various individuals that it is of course impossible to treat all of them, but the common ones which are being discussed here are those usually associated with the individual's

mental perspective. What is fundamental to all is that we need growth in our psychic and mental functions to parallel the growth we have attained in the material world and the material philosophy with which we deal.

Loneliness is a problem that has to do with the individual's mental concern. In our modern world where transportation and means of communication and new methods of contact with other individuals are constantly being devised and perfected, it would seem that the resultant contact between human beings would produce less and less loneliness for people. This conclusion is only a supposition. It seems to be without fact. Many have had the experience of being lonely when in the largest populated centers and when surrounded by many people. From the standpoint of general analysis, their environment would be the very opposite to that which would be conducive to a state of loneliness.

Through experience, almost everyone has learned that loneliness is not wholly dependent upon environment. Many other factors contribute to the existence of a state of loneliness. An individual can be alone in a crowd and on the other hand have no feeling of loneliness when miles away from other human beings.

It would be very difficult to define loneliness, because a person cannot confine an abstract feeling, a feeling partly based upon emotions, to the cold exactness of words. Loneliness is apparently a reaction that exists, as I have indicated, even though many other human beings may be near, even individuals with whom we are more or less acquainted. To a certain extent, loneliness is within the individual, yet I cannot agree that it is a function or a manifestation of the real inner self of the individual. Rather, it is a part of the objective mental activity of the human being, which because of the particular mind-set of a person, added to a set of circumstances or conditions which environment has produced, places that individual in an isolated position mentally.

Loneliness is accompanied by other sensations and emotions very frequently. These emotions could be sorrow, the feeling of a lack of something that goes to round out one's complete existence. Upon

occasion it could even manifest as extreme pessimism or dejection. We therefore see that loneliness itself is very complex, a state affecting all the emotional reactions of the human being and creating within the individual an inhibition that is difficult to tear down in direct proportion to the length of time it has existed. It is therefore a strictly negative condition, because it causes the individual to set himself apart from the usual contact and social activities of the environment in which he lives.

The environment itself, however, does not produce loneliness. It is produced to a certain extent by the viewpoint or mental attitude of the individual experiencing the sensation of loneliness. It may be the result of many contributing factors. Often it is the result of being out of the range of physical contact with those whom we know as friends and conditions with which we are usually familiar. The loss in one way or another of the immediate contact we have usually had with certain people and places is frequently the first step toward loneliness, but not necessarily the final analysis of the cause.

Although the opposite may seem to be true, loneliness is not always based upon the emotion of love or the lack of the object of love. It is possible for persons to be lonely when separated from places and individuals that they do not care for particularly, but with whom they are used to dealing or associating. Therefore, if you are lonely, you must first analyze yourself and your thinking before attributing the cause to your environment or lack of associates. If you are in a new environment, you must remember that it is you and not the environment who must take the initiative to find new interests and contacts. The environment will probably stay the same, but you can change. You must determine to step out of yourself, to refuse to let your mental attitude produce the sensation of dejection and any mental activity that would tend toward pessimism and sorrow.

If it is companionship you seek, contact organizations which offer that companionship. This will aid you to gain human contact. If it is a place or condition which you wish in your environment, try to find that place. Seek it out. Find where the situations exist that you like, and to the best of your ability enjoy the privileges which they offer.

Always bear in mind that loneliness need not be a physical condition in itself. There have been human beings who have lived most of their lives alone, insofar as physical contact is concerned, and who have seldom felt lonely. Their joy of living comes from what they are doing and from the ideals which they have developed. They are not lonely because they have a wealth of knowledge and a purpose with which to work. They realize that inside themselves there lies the soul, which is the real being, and which is not a segregated and independent point in the universe but a part of all other souls and a part of the Creator.

These individuals find satisfaction and happiness in the understanding of this force within themselves, in living in touch and communion with the higher forces of the universe and with all mankind. Loneliness is therefore a point of view, a mental creation, but it is deeply ingrained in consciousness. Like a habit that we find difficult to break, loneliness manifests in the same way nagging at us to try to upset our rational reasoning and our dependence upon the strength from our own inner selves.

It would appear from the previous comments that loneliness is entirely a negative condition that exists when an individual's mental and emotional activities are at their lowest ebb and when he really feels sorry for himself. Actually, loneliness is not always negative. It can also be productive. There are occasions when an individual's senses are sharpened, when his activities as far as mental alertness is concerned are stimulated by loneliness. Certain types of creative work are done best when one is entirely alone. Furthermore, the sharpening of the senses due to the individual's concern about his experience when he is unassociated with other individuals causes sharpened mental senses to be more sensitive to the activities and phenomena about him.

Henri Nouwen probably expressed this better than anyone else when he said, "The experience of great beauty always remains mysteriously linked with the experience of great loneliness." So it is that we should not always think of loneliness as a negative experience isolating us from the rest of the world. There are frequent occasions when solitude is a positive condition and has a definite constructive effect upon us physically, mentally, and spiritually.

It is important to separate in our thinking the difference between loneliness and solitude. In illustrating this point I would like to quote Samuel Terrien. “Loneliness is negation of the self, while solitude is the prerequisite to self-discovery. Loneliness is the symptom of atrophy, while solitude is necessary for growth. We should never shrink from being alone at times, for when we are alone, and only then, do we reflect upon existence and receive life. Loneliness is a defeat, but solitude is a triumph, for it opens the gate toward a mature character and social responsibility.”

Loneliness, then, is purely an emotional reaction, but solitude is an opportunity for growth of our awareness of the soul. Loneliness can develop into a negative condition because of circumstances already described. Solitude is a condition to be cultivated. However, if taken to the extreme, solitude could of course result in loneliness; but solitude alone, practiced with reason and moderation, is the key, as stated above, to self-discovery and as a step necessary for proper growth and evolvment.

We can be alone and lonely, or we can be alone in solitude and grow in the comprehension of ourselves. To develop awareness of the soul, of the real self within, is an important first step toward readjusting ourselves mentally so that we can in a degree overcome the feeling of hopelessness that often is associated with loneliness.

## Chapter VI

# INSOMNIA

**S**LEEP IS A natural process but not one under our voluntary control. Sometimes sleep does not come easily. Frequently, individuals who have trouble in falling asleep use the phrase that they “suffer from insomnia.” Most medical opinions today agree that more people literally suffer from insomnia than suffer from lack of sleep. People who do not sleep well and who state that they are victims of insomnia are victims of harm as the result of worrying about not sleeping to a greater extent than they are victims of harm from the actual lack of sleep.

Sleep has been analyzed by many authorities, both from a psychological and a physiological standpoint. Reference should be made to good physiological textbooks on these subjects if one wishes to study the nature of sleep as it is understood by authorities today. The fact remains, however, that no matter how much information or even instructions regarding sleep you may be able to accumulate, this is one subject concerning which it is possible to state that the more you learn, the less you may be able to apply that knowledge in order to fall asleep.

Someone who thoroughly understands the psychological and physiological mechanics of the sleeping process is no more exempt from insomnia than the one who does not know anything about the process. For example, observe the average child or people considered uncivilized or aborigines. They do not have to follow instructions to sleep. Nevertheless they usually sleep soundly and with no apparent concern for the process.

Sleep is primarily a re-constructive process. To be deprived of a reasonable amount of sleep sometimes leaves one depleted, rundown, and less resistant to external conditions, together with less mental resistance, because it not only affects the physical organism but upsets the emotional and other psychological attributes of man. One who has not had the proper amount of sleep is sometimes inefficient in work or has a tendency to be careless. It requires extreme application to carry out even the simplest process of his daily routine. He cannot think clearly and therefore his constructive and creative work is not at its best.

A certain amount of sleep is necessary in order that the physical and psychic phases of our lives can function at their maximum capacity. What this "certain amount" is remains an individual problem. Sleep is evasive. We cannot command it to come. We cannot always voluntarily bring ourselves out of its stage or grasp upon us. What we are most concerned about, particularly for the individual with insomnia, is how to attain sleep.

Like many other processes of man's psychological makeup, the least way is usually the best. To become involved in various means of attaining sleep, such as the proverbial counting of sheep, or any other process supposed to be conducive to sleep, is sometimes to interfere definitely with the process itself, because the objective mind becomes so involved in a maze of processes that the bringing about of sleep is delayed.

Each person should consider the amount of sleep he or she needs. Common sense clearly shows us that the amount of sleep diminishes with age. The newborn child sleeps most of the time, but as he grows and his body approaches adult development less sleep is needed. We find that a normal adult who is active in outdoor life needs more sleep than one who leads a less active life because there is less mental tension but more actual wear on the physical organism.

Recent developments indicate that older people need less sleep than they did during middle age when they were more active. This fact should be pointed out to the insomnia victim. Those who work



indoors and suffer from insomnia will find that more actual physical exercise out of doors will assist them to relax more quickly and enter the state of sleep.

We cannot determine the amount of sleep we need on a definite basis of a certain number of hours. Some people are completely relaxed and rested after a very few hours of sleep. Others need more. I know individuals who gain enough sleep in four hours out of twenty-four to take care of their needs adequately. Others need twice that much. Some need as much as ten hours, but the whole point is that since sleep is an involuntary process, if we bring ourselves to a proper state of relaxation, the amount of sleep will take care of itself.

Reverting to my original statement, more people suffer from worrying about lying awake than they do from the actual loss of sleep. However, there are a few points that may assist those who have insomnia. Not only are these psychologically and physiologically sound, but they are the result of actual experience which can be vouched for by individuals who have overcome the fear of insomnia, and this is the important step to achieve. Develop the ability to look insomnia in the face, figuratively speaking, and not to fear the lack of sleep.

In the first place, every attempt must be made to bring about a relaxed condition. Sleep usually follows complete relaxation. The more quickly and completely one can relax, the sooner a state of sleep will come. The two most frequent barriers to complete relaxation are extreme physical fatigue or mental tension. If an individual has serious worries, financial, social, or otherwise, then the mental tension makes relaxation more difficult to attain.

The gaining of the ability to relax from mental tension is a matter that can come only through self-control and practice. To say that it is necessary only to dismiss these things from one's mind is a simple statement for another person to make but a serious and difficult accomplishment for the one trying to go to sleep. Simply instructing a person to dismiss all concern from his thinking is in fact ridiculous. To be able to eliminate mental tension by mere auto-suggestion is impossible without previous preparation or practice. What is important is to begin immediately to build up the ability to relax.

I have personally known individuals under the most strenuous tension who could literally relax in an instant when they felt the need to relax. A true mystic should develop this quality, and it can be developed through continued practice. A number of times every day a period should be devoted to learn how to relax. Stop in the middle of your work, whatever it may be, and for thirty seconds completely *let down*, to use the popular phrase.

Allow your arms to hang down by the side of your chair. Relax the attention of holding yourself erect. Stop thinking, insofar as it is possible. A period of thirty seconds three times a day given to this exercise for a period varying from ninety days to six months will improve your ability to relax remarkably, but it must be done systematically. You cannot do it one day and stop for three days, or do it one time during the day. You should perform such an exercise at least three times every day and follow it up at night upon retiring with exercises that lead to relaxation, if you are familiar with any that help you.

Once you have built up this ability to relax, you have won most of the battle. Above all, be patient and persistent. Remember, you are establishing a new set of habit patterns that cannot be formed in a few hours or a few days.

If you have gained some degree of developing the ability to relax and still do not sleep, one more thing to do is stop worrying about the fact that you do not sleep. If sleep does not come, then accept the fact objectively that sleep is not needed at the moment. When you are fully relaxed, and your system needs sleep, and you are otherwise in good health, sleep will come. If not, there is nothing to worry about. You may continue to relax and rest. Rest is needed by the body.

The individual who suffers from insomnia starts his suffering at this point. He becomes objectively aware that he is still awake and he begins to be concerned about it. His concern begins to lead his thinking along the lines that tend to break up the effort he has made to relax and produces mental strain and tension. Consequently, the one thing *not* to do is be concerned about the fact that you are not sleeping.

It might be well to say to yourself that your body at this moment is not in need of sleep. You can then use the time to devote to constructive thoughts that will be restful. What these will be is dependent upon your personal likes and dislikes and your physical ability to do them. Reading is recommended for those whose eyes are in condition to permit it. However, reading may not be advisable for those who have an eye defect or who have to do intensive eye work all day. Reading is recommended for those who have good eyesight and whose occupational duties require reading only as part of their work and not for concentrated use of the eyes throughout the day.

Another suggestion, particularly for one who likes music, is to have at his bedside a small radio or phonograph. To the music-lover, nothing is more soothing than to have music available after complete relaxation and dismissal of the cares of the day. Mechanical arrangements can be made so that the radio or musical instrument will turn off at a certain time, which dismisses from the individual's consciousness the necessity of keeping awake to turn off the instrument.

Many people have resorted to this step, not so much from the standpoint of curing insomnia but simply because they enjoy music after retiring. They use a small radio or other form of musical reproduction instrument small enough not to disturb another person, insofar as its volume is concerned. They merely forget it, and if it happens to run all night there is no particular harm done.

We can hardly consider sleeping to be an art. It is a natural response of the human system to the fact of living. As already stated, the individual who has insomnia is seldom if ever harmed by it, but he can be harmed by worrying about the fact that he is not sleeping. One who dismisses from his mind the fact that he is lying awake is going a long way toward overcoming what has been referred to as "suffering from insomnia."

Sleep is restful. It is a time of peace, a time of recharging our batteries, so to speak, mentally and physically. If we are to gain the most benefit from it and if we are to come by it easily, we have to so live that our lives will be conducive to that particular state. The tense person will always be tense. Some people are even tense in sleeping.

They move about and they dream, but they sleep. No one has ever been known to be seriously injured from lack of sleep. We can be tired, we can be restless the next day, but sleep will come with the growth of the ability to look at life calmly and to minimize our tensions at all times.

Insomnia is not simply a problem of the night. It is the problem of living properly twenty-four hours a day. The individual who can meet the demands of his life and work, and who can break up his day into various segments so that he is not always pushing himself in his work, is developing a degree of relaxation made possible at any time of day or night. The one who learns to relax and gain release from tension at midmorning or mid-afternoon or at any other time of day will also be able to do so at night.

Above all, convince yourself that insomnia, particularly in a healthy person, is not a cause for alarm.

## Chapter VII

# UNCERTAINTIES

IT WOULD SEEM that there would be fewer cares in our daily lives and less stress if we could depend upon the development of any idea or plan that we might make. In other words, certainty would be the key to successful and happy living. In life this circumstance does not exist. In fact, life is a series of uncertainties. The process of living cannot be based entirely upon certainties that are planned within the human mind. There are circumstances over which we have little or no control. As a result, these develop into uncertainties with which we have to cope as a part of the process of living. Illness, accidents, the economic and social pressures that are brought upon us are all part of the relationships between individuals and their environment. The uncertainties that are caused by these circumstances contribute to the cares that infest our lives.

In practice most of us postpone what we want to do because of uncertainties that may interfere with the favorable culmination of a plan of action that we wish to put into effect. It is common practice to say that we will do certain things under certain conditions. The human race is subject to using the word *if* frequently, and possibly too much. We may say that we will perform a certain act if someone else also performs an act which we will use as a basis for our act. I may state that I plan to take a trip or carry out some other activity, *if* conditions are favorable at a certain time.

Many individuals apply this same basic philosophy in planning most of the events of their lives. Young people hope to raise a family, *if* they become economically independent. They plan to buy a home, *if* they are assured of the continuity of their income. Examples in this

category are so common that one could go on indefinitely illustrating the principle that many, in fact most, of us would act in certain ways if we knew what was going to happen at any predetermined future time.

From another point of view, we might feel that we would be content, happy, and satisfied with life *if* we knew that our present economic security would continue into the future. Or, we would make certain plans, *if* we were sure that there would not be another war. Everyone who thinks in this manner contributes a degree of tension to life. The constant process of being uncertain exaggerates the cares that infest our lives.

Oddly enough, in the entire history of the human race man has not learned that in the physical world as he understands it few things are absolutely certain. Man exists surrounded by and continuously affected by uncertainties. We do not know that we will live to draw another breath or even that the world with which we are familiar will exist through the next moment. The expression of nature as we interpret it is a continual process of uncertainty. The physical world is of a material composition and is subject to material laws, not all of which we are able to control or even understand.

We should have learned through geological and anthropological research that the material world does not endure forever in the form with which we are familiar at this moment. It is inevitable that the time will come when, if it does not cease to exist, it will at least change in some of its forms of manifestation. The chemistry of the physical world indicates that change is the only certainty of which we can be sure. Change takes place continuously. We can depend upon the manifestation of the results of change.

A philosopher in ancient times was probably the first to expound the theory that all is change and that man should live realizing that change is a function of the universe and a manifestation of the force that causes it to be. We should ever be aware of this change, and that as human entities we participate in it because as the environment is subject to change, so are we. Evolution is built upon the certainty of change. Without change there could be no evolution.

While change and the uncertainties resulting from it cause inconvenience and problems to all of us, from the standpoint of the idealist, change is not considered to be an evil. The idealist believes that all processes were put into effect for a purpose. If man interprets the manifestations of the universe that have to do with change as being evil, or that uncertainties are not good, it is due to his failure to understand all the manifestations that exist about him and to interpret them properly.

It is quite possible that there was a time when man was less concerned about the uncertainties of his life and environment, but because of man's emphasis upon the values of the material world in modern times and his general acceptance of the fact that material is synonymous with permanence, he is sometimes shocked by the realization that changes can be sudden and devastating. These facts should not cause us to give up, or to adopt a cynical attitude toward life and the environment in which we live.

We are given awareness of life as a manifestation of consciousness. We are aware of our abilities, our potentialities, and our limitations as they exist at the present time. We are also aware that now is the only time that we can be sure of our existence and the existence of our environment, and have the opportunity to participate in this great drama of existence.

Man's reaction to environment has caused him to develop as many erroneous theories as correct interpretations of himself and his environment. One such erroneous theory is that uncertainties detract from ultimate values of life. This belief is based upon the fact that the individuals who let uncertainties control them instead of trying to deal with the complex situation developed by uncertainties are unaware of true value in the first place. Uncertainties are sustained by a fine thread from the material or physical values. Real values are needed in order to strengthen this support—values that are eternal, values that come from the inner self. These values can still be found and cultivated, and they can be made to be useful and effective.

We must have a certain amount of assurance that there is a future regardless of the eventualities or the uncertainties related to the

present. This idea was well stated by the late Richard L. Evans when he said, "One of the greatest calamities of this world would be the calamity of sitting down and waiting for calamities. We must not let things we can't do keep us from doing the things we can do. We must not let remote possibilities or even imminent probabilities keep us from moving forward with all earnestness and all effort."

He goes on to state that every generation, every individual, in fact, has had to live facing uncertainty. If everyone who had faced uncertainty had refused to do anything to educate himself, to cultivate knowledge, to act in the face of uncertainties, to take a gamble as it were, then there would have been no progress, no inventions, no well-qualified individuals to fill the needs of yesterday, today, or tomorrow.

The concept of immortality takes into consideration a continuity of existence. As individual manifestations of a life force functioning in the universe, we should come to realize that this force is probably a certainty upon which we build our lives and character. It is a force that has not lent itself to complete material and physical analysis. Therefore, it can be believed to be a part of an enduring force that goes on regardless of alterations, either in human beings or their environment. The challenge for man is to become aware that he possesses something of value which can evolve and grow regardless of anything that may happen, rather than to create fears in the mind concerning the uncertainties of life and environment.

We should try to direct our effort toward using this gift of life to the advantage of ourselves and of our fellow human beings. In this way, in spite of uncertainty, life will take on meaning and value. We can be more optimistic in that we have at least based our beliefs upon a value which we believe enduring despite the uncertainties that are a part of our physical existence.



## Chapter VIII

# CURRENT AND FUTURE EVENTS

**T**HE MINDS OF many individuals cannot be separated from the events of the present and the future. Cares are created by those people who dwell upon current events, whether of the immediate past, the present, or the immediate future. Such people limit themselves by being unable to direct attention to something more practical and more advantageous than being concerned about what can no longer be corrected in the past or controlled in the future.

Through the study of many systems of thought we are continually reminded that the best way to take care of the future is to give attention and concern to the present. Both the past and the future lie beyond the control of man. He is given the privilege of looking backward, but rarely does he have the privilege of looking ahead. It is probably wise that he does not have this latter sense, because in actual practice he does not even take full advantage of his ability to look backward and benefit by experience. If he had the ability to look forward and see the future, he would probably not use that ability in any more useful form than he does his ability to look to the past.

The future is to a degree carved out of the present. Those who have anxieties concerning the future are those who fear the future. If we examine their anxieties we shall usually find them to be the same fears as those which affect these individuals in the present. Their concern for the future is not so much a projection in time as it is a fear of the fulfillment that they dread in the present.

Imagination can produce any type of concern in regard to the unknown, and surely that which is to come lies in the area of the unknown. Those who are concerned and really suffer because of their anticipation of destruction in the future are anxious for themselves, for their property, for those they love. Their anxiety exists now, and since nothing of a catastrophic nature is happening at the moment, such individuals conceive or concentrate upon the possibility that the next moment may hold an event leading to their final destruction. There are even those who argue on the basis of history that the ultimate destruction is inevitable, that civilizations have risen and fallen, and that in many cases the higher the development of the civilization, the greater has been its fall.

At the same time, however, history tells us that the fall of civilizations and cultures has not been due so much to the material achievements of a civilization as to the attitude evidenced by the individuals composing it. We cannot interpret all the events of the present in terms of what may happen. There have been periods in the life of each individual when it appeared that he was doomed, or at least subject to severe difficulties or restrictions, but history has shown us that the true meaning of events is seldom known within the lifetime of the one who experiences the event.

The interpretation of current events requires a certain perspective, a historical perspective making it possible for them to be analyzed in terms of their past from the point of view where cause and effect can be understood and more completely analyzed than we can do at the present. It is almost certain that no one living in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries could have grasped the fact that democracy was replacing the forms of autocratic government that then existed. The democratic tendencies were radical, and the monarchists were the conservatives, but change was actually taking place. From our point of view we can now look back and see how and when that change gradually produced new forms of government.

Generally speaking, the world has profited by the change. No doubt a change, possibly of a similar nature, is taking place today. We hope it will result in a better world, but what it will be, we can only glimpse. In the interpretation of current events we can only interpret in terms of

the present and our knowledge of the past. We cannot see the ultimate end.

The interpretation of current events may seem to make the situation more complicated rather than explaining it. There have always been people who were escapist, who tired of attempting to interpret the situation about them. One hundred or more years ago, they could simply migrate somewhere else and possibly leave the confusion that troubled them. Today, this is not easy. Man finds it extremely difficult to go to lands or places for release from responsibilities which have worldwide repercussions.

The technological progress of this century has made man find himself in an environment that has expanded even more than his scope of thought, and here, of course, is the fundamental problem. Man has advanced, technologically speaking. He has vastly increased his material horizon. He has new means of transportation and communication, but he has not realized that in achieving these ends he has expanded the material horizon and has not cultivated the growth of his mental horizon.

One hope exists in that man can still be a pioneer. He cannot find new lands. He cannot move physically to solve his problems, but the frontiers of the mind are relatively unexplored. Regardless of what may be the trend of events and the ultimate outcome resulting from these events, whether man reaches a more satisfactory life and a happier one depends upon how much he will use his innate qualities and abilities to fit himself into the situation of the present.

The frontiers of the mind have hardly been touched. Their potentialities have only within the past few years been seriously considered in academic circles. The fields of telepathy, clairvoyance, and intuition are still looked upon by some as only a degree removed from superstition. Since man has biologically and psychologically explored himself, the developments of hygiene, medicine, and other forms of therapeutics are beginning to show their effects in generally better health and longer span of life. Therefore, there is left only the development of those abilities which are not limited by the biologic organism, but which fall into the realms of thought, reason, and

emotion, and into the psychic qualities which are hitherto practically unexplored. These offer the chance for such realizations that have not yet been more than simple ideas occasionally toyed with in science fiction.

If the universe is purposeful, if man is ordained by a higher force to be the highest form of creation, as implied by all religions and by teleological and philosophical concepts, then man can grow. He can meet the problems of an ever-changing material, biological, and political environment by his own inner strength and potentialities. If we direct our consciousness and effort in that direction, we as individuals are taking some part in this process. We are raising hope for our own individual future as well as a hope for a better civilization for the human race.

The scope before us is unlimited. Only man, through his own limitations and when motivated by greed and selfishness, is limiting the frontiers of the future. Throughout our lives we have had the opportunity to develop potentialities which would permit us to meet the circumstances of the day and in that way to be as well prepared as it is humanly possible for intelligent beings to be for what may be in the future. We have grown from helpless infants to adults, and as such have developed certain potentialities that can be used to meet the cares of the day.

This is well illustrated in a statement by Mary Ellen Chase, who wrote, "Children possess an instinctive capacity for wonder, for quick surprise, even for a puzzling sense of mystery which redeems mere events in the beginning of our lives and which actually decides the wealth or the poverty of our later thoughts and therefore the nature of ourselves, and we weave by some secret, silent process strand by strand the spiritual pattern of our lives."

By weaving the spiritual pattern of our lives, by developing the abilities of the inner self, we will be placed in a position to gain strength to cope with the material facts of the universe and with the future, whatever it may offer. We need not carry the cares of the day or of the future with us as a constant burden impeding the progress of the present.

## Chapter IX

# POSSESSION AND CRISIS

**T**HE HUMAN BEING living in the world as he finds it today gives a great deal of his attention and effort toward the accumulation of possessions. We all like to have things, that is, physical objects. We like to have money in order to acquire the particular items we wish to possess. Some individuals are concerned about possessions merely insofar as quantity is concerned. The more things they have, the more things they want. Others are concerned only in regard to quality. They want material things of the finest quality and usually at considerable cost.

We have become accustomed to a world that judges an individual by the possessions that he has, sometimes by the quantity and many times by the quality. Whatever may be the basis, there is a great deal of effort expended on the part of many people today simply for the purpose of acquiring possessions of various kinds.

This desire obviously leads to tension and problems for each of us. We work, sometimes to our own detriment, to arrive at a point where we may gain the possession we seek. We believe that possessions will aid us to live in harmony with our environment because it indicates what we believe will be satisfaction. Satisfaction, in turn, indicates health, which is something we all strive to obtain. It indicates peace, in the sense that we are not in friction or conflict with the material world about us. It indicates a certain amount of happiness, because if we have peace, health, and happiness we are also in a position to add to our possessions. We feel that if we are in perfect harmony with our environment by owning parts of it, we have control over certain phases of our environment. For example, the farmer may find satisfaction in

the ownership of land. We may not want to own land, but we find satisfaction in having something that we do own or have acquired.

This concept deviates from the basic philosophy that is taught by the Rosicrucians. We are taught early in the study of this philosophy that possession is an objective illusion. We actually cannot possess anything. Possession amounts only to the use of those things to which we can adapt ourselves in our environment. Because we are either fortunate or intelligent enough to bring our wants into our environment for our own purposeful use, we feel a certain degree of power or control over our environment.

Where, we might ask, does this sense of possessing originate? Why does it produce a sense of security? It does not come from a cosmic source. It is not a part of our adjustment to the will of our Creator. It is, in a sense, actually forced upon us. Man probably did not prefer possessions in the sense of withholding goods of value from others in his original state. He gained the idea of wanting those possessions in order to compete with other individuals who also had possessions and whom he wanted to equal or exceed.

In possession we gain an outlook of superiority, confidence, and to a certain extent, happiness, that makes us feel more adjusted to our environment. This is contrary to many evidences of the fact that those possessing the least are sometimes the happiest. However, proof of that has come through happiness and experience rather than through theoretically judging our place in the universe as being unique, or being satisfactory without possession.

Possessions not only restrict us, but they also in a sense place us in a position where we are subject to any crisis that may enter our lives. At some time in our lives, probably many times, we have to meet a crisis, a time when a decision is forced upon us, when because of conditions over which we have no direct control we are faced with a serious decision, a financial loss, the loss of a loved one, a change in the economic or political status of the state in which we live, all of which bring about a demand for a new adjustment. In a sense it is our environment acting upon us, and our immediate need is to change

ourselves in some manner or other to fit the environment in which we may find ourselves placed.

This environment will be unique in that it is new to our experience. For the individual who has been financially independent all his life, who has had a good position, a good income, and who has conscientiously worked to keep such a position established, any economic change or any major change in his life style which may come about to take his property, his income, or his position from him will literally be the same as moving or changing such an individual from one environment to another. Such a person will find himself faced with an entirely different set of conditions. At the same time he finds himself, as an individual, equipped with certain potentialities, certain habits and reactions which absolutely do not fit into the new environment of which he has become a part. Consequently, he faces an adjustment just as if he were literally transferred from one place to another.

One might ask, "Should not this person have previously planned for such a possibility?" It is true that the most important thing in our existence is the now. It is also true that a reasonable attempt should be made to prepare ourselves for future contingencies, particularly when our whole life is more or less restricted to material conditions with which we are familiar. The one who is lost because of an economic failure has prepared himself for little else than continuing to live in the social and economic environment with which he is familiar. Should his business fail or other major crises occur, he has nothing to which to turn, nothing upon which he may lean.

This brings to mind the fact that one of the tenets of the Rosicrucian philosophy, as well as practically all religion and philosophy, is to teach man to gain early in life, or at least as soon as possible, a concept of value. That the individual cannot base his whole life on a concept of material values and expect to be able to make adjustments should those values be shattered is a common fact.

Unless we have in our lives a concept of values that is not material and to which we can turn in case of need, we are certainly literally stranded should our material possessions be swept away. Consequently,

the best insurance for a time of readjustment or crisis is to know that value cannot be measured in terms of money and to have built up a dependence upon the power of our inner being, upon the growth of our own soul. Not to worry about the matters of adjustment when a condition of crisis confronts us is a mark of wisdom.

Values abound outside the material world, but finding them and realizing their existence is a problem of human learning, a problem particularly important today when material values predominate. But there is more to life than the possession of any material value. Robert Louis Stevenson expressed this idea when he said, "To be rich in admiration and free from envy, to rejoice greatly in the good of others, to love, these are the gifts of fortune which money cannot buy, and without which money can buy nothing." No one can deny the values set forth here and the fact that they cannot be measured in terms of any material value, even that material value to which we give so much credence—money.

It is so easy for the human being to procrastinate. Most individuals who are faced by a sudden adjustment succeed or fail depending upon how well they have previously planned their lives. Some become hysterical. Some turn to extreme forms of religion or to peculiar practices and trends of thought, or to the teachings of a cult. These persons suddenly realize that those things to which they attributed value have failed to support them. Panic-stricken, they attempt to readjust their lives overnight to find hope, faith, confidence, and a foundation upon which to stand in an immaterial concept of a loving God or in the teachings of a philosophical system.

Finding such a foundation is possible, but it cannot be done in a short time. To turn suddenly from dependence upon the material world to the immaterial world is impossible. While changes in a man's or woman's existence can come about remarkably fast, for such a change to take place there must be a groundwork laid before the actual event occurs. There is no doubt that there is a crisis to be faced by us individually and collectively from time to time in the complex world in which we live. We should be thankful for the knowledge we are able to acquire and thankful that we are not limited in the advancement which



we may seek. Not only should we be thankful for these things, but we should determine to use them to the best of our ability. Knowing that there are changes in the world which are going to face us all directly or indirectly from time to time, we will prepare for that eventuality which may cause us literally to be placed in another environment.

Before it is necessary, we must learn to use a philosophy of life having a firm foundation in values which cannot be changed through any material circumstances that may be a part of our experience. We must learn to take advantage of the opportunity to apply, even in the most simple ways, the laws which a philosophy of life will contribute, and determine not to forsake this knowledge regardless of what pressure might be brought to bear upon us, since it has been our choice upon which to build a broader scope and comprehension of values in our own mind.

Such a sense of value, such a growth in the confidence in the eternal, of the infinite, and of the fact that there are values which derive their source from the infinite, can act as a support upon which we can lean in case other values which we use from day to day in the physical world should suddenly be swept away or taken from us.

## Chapter X

# SUPERSTITION

**T**HERE ARE VERY few people in this modern age who will frankly acknowledge that superstition is one of their serious problems. In fact these same individuals might question the advisability of classifying superstition as one of the cares of their lives. Superstition is considered something of the remote past and not a subject to be dealt with in modern times, nor a problem with which the average individual has to cope under modern circumstances.

Nevertheless, superstition is more prevalent than the average person might at first presume. Superstition is the application of limited or restricted knowledge to one's own interpretation of events and ideas. The individual who permits himself to create his own explanations of unknown manifestations of phenomena or to accept the explanations of others without analysis is binding himself to a type of existence in which he becomes a slave to ideas which do not necessarily have any basis in fact.

Those who are influenced by erroneous interpretations of events and phenomena that seem to have no explanation are actually building their lives and concepts upon a basis which is neither more nor less than superstition. There exist today groups or cults which have somewhat strange ideas not completely compatible with logical experience. These groups are no different insofar as their function is concerned from the witch doctors or superstitious leaders of tribes in man's most primitive era of existence.

Individuals so affected reflect an idea that these people are unaware of the fact that fear and superstition bind them to what we might call

a condition of mental slavery. These people might deny that they are superstitious, yet they may avoid acts with which tradition has related superstition. They might say, "Why take a chance?" In that admission they are in fact practicing a degree of superstition.

"Why is it," we ask, "that in an otherwise advanced form of civilization such as we live in today, superstition can have such a hold and power over many people?" Even intelligent individuals avoid actions that are traditionally related to superstitious practices. Almost anyone we would approach with a direct question today would deny that he or she is in any way affected by superstition. Such persons would claim that their thoughts and activities are based primarily upon reason.

Today all of us like to think we are sufficiently rational to be able to make decisions, to arrive at conclusions, and to base action and thoughts upon sound good sense. This is often referred to as common sense, as if there existed an underlying criterion upon which all judgment or thought is modeled. Actually, it may be true that most of us do not become too much concerned about Friday falling on the thirteenth of the month, or about a black cat crossing our path. Still, there are other superstitions more or less prevalent in the thinking of a larger number of people than one would ordinarily believe to be true. Although reason is upheld as an ideal guide and a worthwhile utilization of our own mental faculties, more than we realize, we fall back upon misconceptions and ideas which are not founded on facts, and as such actually fall into a category of superstition.

Today many people are seriously studying the universal laws and principles with a sincere desire for self-improvement and development, making them depend more on the results of their own thoughts, analyses, critical thinking, and constructive philosophy. We mean critical thinking not in the sense of trying to tear down someone else's conclusions, but rational analyzing so as to free mankind from the slavery of ideas and thought. Reasoning is one of the greatest tools with which to subordinate superstition.

The individual who attempts to formulate a philosophical viewpoint is motivated by the very thought process which he exercises to examine

his ideas and to dismiss those thoughts based on fallacies and developed through tradition rather than through the rational approach of man to the problems of life. Fallacies of thought are either superstitions in the making or superstitions well established. To say it in another way, a fallacy of thought is the seed of superstition.

If we examine these fallacies we see that they are usually errors created in man's thought, usually because of his being too gullible or too lazy to reason or listen to the voice within himself for the correct solution. For example, one fallacy of thought is the reaching of a conclusion merely because we may have observed two events follow each other in sequence. This process leads to the false conclusion that the event which follows is the effect of the first event.

This is illustrated by the superstition that the breaking of a mirror might cause bad luck. Someone at some time may have experienced a period of bad luck which had occurred after the breaking of a mirror. This type of shallow thinking did not permit the proper development of a reasonable analysis of a cause-and-effect relationship. There is no connection usually in the breaking of a mirror and bad luck, or a series of any kind of events to follow which would be unfavorable to the individual, unless the breaking of a mirror caused a person to cut himself, thereby resulting in pain.

Such errors in thinking are based on the belief that one event following another is proof that the first event is the cause of the second. If I heard a bell ring at the same time that I cut my finger or fell down, it would be ridiculous to conclude that every time a bell would ring, some disastrous event would occur!

Another error in thinking is the tendency on the part of unreasoning people to refuse to take into consideration what is known as negative instances, that is, to refuse to look for the final proof of what has seemed to develop as a cause-and-effect relationship. To use the same illustration that I used above, has anyone ever made a study of how many times mirrors have been broken without anyone having any bad luck? Most of us could think of illustrations of this kind in our own experience, but the person who would rather jump to conclusions or follow a fallacy in thinking would sooner accept an intangible

relationship of cause and effect than to make an effort to prove that the relationship actually did not exist.

Superstition grows out of erroneous thinking, out of old wives' tales, or plain gossip which seems to delight in bringing to the attention of certain gullible individuals the basic ideas upon which superstition is based. Consequently, we find that many people have their lives bound and restricted by superstition. Their existence is made miserable by their dependence upon even the smallest and most unimportant actions of day-to-day living to determine whether or not good luck will follow their actions.

Closely related to superstition, and practically inseparable from it, is *fear*. A person who permits superstition to enter his mind and control any of his actions reinforces superstitions in his consciousness by fear. A superstitious person who walks under a stepladder puts himself in a position of inviting trouble because of his fear. He is creating a mental attitude inviting conditions to take place which he might otherwise avoid.

Unfortunately, religion is removed from superstition only by a degree. Many of the religious practices followed by civilized men and women are based upon superstitions that have accumulated through the centuries. To teach man to think, to realize that the relationship of a divine force as propounded by the mystics is the final, most satisfactory relationship man can have in his life, with his environment, and with the universe, will enable him to fight superstition and fear based upon false and man-made premises. Some movements of a religious, philosophical, metaphysical, or mystical nature exist for the primary purpose of denying superstition. In declaring that man is a segment of a divine force and can develop his innate potentialities, these movements are frequently blamed as being ungodly or as heresy by those still enslaved by superstition. Those most affected by superstition strive for the acceptance of superstition by their fellow men in order to control activities that might release man from the bondage of fear and superstition.

Unnecessary fear and superstition cannot survive where individual human beings think for themselves and know their God-given rights

and individual relationship to their Creator. The clash of ideologies in the world today causes us to realize that there are still many people bound by unnecessary fear and false beliefs. It is necessary to realize that superstition is so ingrained in the consciousness of so many individuals that the conditions cannot be changed overnight. We are all to a degree guilty of this fact.

Possibly in future centuries there will be organizations consisting of thinking men and women who will continue to strive toward the utilization of the full potentialities of the individual. The time will come when man can stand free of unnecessary fear, unbound by superstition and at peace with God and man, conscious that he fully realizes and appreciates his position in relation to both.

## Chapter XI

# RELIGION AND DOGMA

**I**T IS MAN'S interpretation of religion rather than religion itself which gives cause for uncertainties, problems, or cares. Religion is so complex that it requires a very careful analysis of its nature to avoid the fields of theology and comparative religions, either of which could lead to controversy.

Religion has different meanings to different individuals. It is therefore necessary to try to arrive at a meaning free from sectarianism, so as to give the subject as a whole a reasonable definition and content. Religion is subject to controversy and difficult to isolate unless one constantly refers to the subject of religions or to the analysis of a religion.

To separate religion from its various interpretations is to debate some of its essence so far as those who are not interested primarily in theological discussion, a creed, or a dogma. In the following comments I have tried to refrain from reference to any particular religion and to consider the subject itself, free from opinion, prejudice, or point of view of any particular religion; that is, to consider religion as one phase of the complex phenomena of human knowledge and experience, and consider it in relation to human behavior.

It seems only proper to begin such a discussion with a definition. To confine the study here to certain limitations, I am going to give four definitions, three of which I will present at this point and the fourth at the conclusion of these comments. The first three definitions generally agree with what we might call the currently accepted concept of religion.

The first definition should be considered fundamental. *Religion is service to, and an adoration of, divinity, as expressed in forms of worship.* Almost every individual of any religious affiliation would probably accept this explanation with little qualification. It is, in a sense, what the average man might accept as a definition of religion. The practice through worship of showing a desire to adore and serve a divinity is nevertheless not a particularly heart-warming concept. Religion connected exclusively with forms of worship for the purpose of indicating service or adoration of a divinity seems to be incomplete, because it confines our religious responses to a more-or-less fixed pattern or procedure. This seems to take the personal interest and feeling away from the subject. We shall therefore proceed to a second definition.

*Religion is a system of faith and worship.* This definition also shows a tendency to classify. It limits the subject to a specific, established phenomenon by making it a system, in this case, a system of faith and worship. Most individuals today would agree that in modern concepts of religion, faith and worship are two important functions or practices. Nevertheless, to consider faith and worship as a system, or to incorporate these principles into a specific form, is to leave the resultant religious idea without some of the attributes which should make religion of value. This attempt to systematize tends also to limit and to cause religion in this sense to be a fixed or immovable concept.

The third definition concerns the individual more than it does the group of beliefs or a system. *Religion is an awareness or conviction of the existence of a Supreme Being which arouses awe, reverence, and love.* This definition approaches closer to a concept of religious experience. It makes religion more of an actual experience with man participating in it, rather than treating it as a system or pattern somewhat separated from his experience.

It is also the first of the definitions here considered to introduce the emotional response of the human being, for, as we shall see later, religion is not exclusively a matter of reason. It concerns a response or the total behavior of the individual. That behavior includes not only the exercise of man's reasoning faculties but also that of his feeling. An individual may prefer any one of these definitions by choosing the one



that best fits his ideas. Religion does not readily confine itself to any definition, nor does human interpretation of religion definitely apply to someone's analysis or definition in particular.

Religion may be fitted to any category that best meets one's individual needs and response to the subject. As a result, interpretations are as varied as the viewpoints of the individuals who choose to make their own conclusions and formulate their own opinions. It is probable that no two forms of religion in the entire world are identical. Each religion has many phases given to it by the ones who interpret its teachings. Each individual ultimately arrives at his own concept, regardless of the system or the pattern into which he tries to fit his religious behavior.

It is difficult to enter into a discussion of subjects of a religious nature without influencing the conclusions reached by one's own beliefs and prejudices. Prejudice is a very important consideration in the study of religion, since most religious ideas are based as much on prejudice as they are on opinion and conviction. Prejudice grows in our social structure and also influences individual opinion. So it is that most forms of religion today are more closely related to what we as individuals have made them in our thinking. To interpret religion without letting those opinions affect our conclusions is impossible.

This analysis is intended to be an objective presentation of the subject of religion. Anyone reading these words who happens to know what my particular religious beliefs and convictions are would be able to find my beliefs affecting my conclusions even in this discourse, where I am making every attempt to avoid reference to the particular religious concept in which I believe. It is foolish to try to express, argue, or elaborate upon religion or politics without showing, to a degree at least, that our prejudices will color what we say.

Religion begins with a body of teachings postulated by a personal founder. Without personality, religion would be lacking in its full meaning. It would have very little character and would not appeal to the average individual. The greatest religions in the world today are closely connected with their founders. The personality of the founder becomes important to the individuals who follow the teachings. These followers support the founder in his beliefs and in his behavior. They

look upon him as a teacher. Some actually accept the founder as a prophet. Others deify him, depending upon the doctrine which has grown about the establishment of a particular religion.

Regardless of the position in which a religious founder is held, the body of teachings evolved or built up from the sayings, writings, or traditions about the life and words of the founder is the basis upon which religious doctrine is established.

Various stories and traditions exist about these religious founders. Controversy exists regarding their authority, their inspiration, what they did, and by what authority. It would seem to one who studies the matter carefully that those religious founders who truly exemplify the principles which they taught belong among those whom we classify as avatars.

According to mystical philosophy, an *avatar* is an individual who has gained a high degree of cosmic evolvement. Such an individual is sometimes referred to as a Master, but actually an avatar is an individual who has advanced in evolution physically, mentally, and spiritually to a point where future incarnations are for a specific purpose, usually in the service of mankind. Through that service and through his life and teachings, there is established a system or a series of systems of thought which, if followed in organized form, becomes a religious group, body, or denomination.

To attempt to determine which of the religious leaders were truly avatars and which were not would be going beyond the scope of this discussion. Furthermore, we would end in hopeless confusion and controversy. As human beings we are not in a position to make this judgment. Frankly, we just do not know. We can understand only certain points of evidence and gain hints which will probably help us to arrive at a conclusion satisfactory to our own acceptance or rejection of the teachings of any religious founder.

Actually, no one religion has the exclusive possession of an avatar. Different religions view their founder in different ways, but none of them can say in full truth that one has exclusive control of the ways of God. There are a few religious bodies now active in the world

recognizing equally all those who have been considered to be avatars. Those who accept this premise realize that the revelation of God to man is in itself an evolutionary process based upon the ability of the human being to comprehend the revelation. Consequently they believe—and it seems reasonable to accept this premise—that one avatar after another has appeared at different times, at different places, under different circumstances. To point out one as greater than another is to enter into an unending argument, one for which no human being holds the absolute truth in his answer.

It is impossible to arrive at an analysis or estimate of the true background of all the personalities who were avatars. The avatars who came to bring a message to mankind, to devote their lives to that purpose, to assume vicariously the problems of humanity in order that these might be lived within the scope of the individual's experience, presented an idea or system of thinking that would be for the welfare of humanity as a whole. To try to isolate those individuals who come under this classification is purely a man-made effort, and actually a waste of time. Furthermore, we must remember that many of the established religions are far removed from both the time and the intent of the lives of those who were their followers.

Most religions today are based upon a system of thought within the limitations of the doctrines and dogma decided upon by individuals such as you and me. To assume that the founders of religions in which these doctrines are now established taught all the man-made doctrines existing for us at this time is ridiculous.

Did religious doctrines come into being with the personality and life of the religious founder as a new revelation, or did they exist prior to his existence? These questions are seldom answered in a religious doctrine except to the satisfaction of a limited group who have come to an agreement among themselves. Dogma and doctrine take the place of the answers, and certain forms and procedures are prescribed mainly through various interpretations of the words attributed to a religious founder. Religious doctrine established by the successors to a religious founder usually differs considerably from the original spiritual concept which was promulgated by the founder. How these concepts will be stated depends upon the *intent* of the interpreters.

Religious doctrine can free, or it can enslave. Religion has been used for both purposes. It has been used so that men's minds might be free to look toward God, that men might be able to lift their consciousness above the problems of daily living, and to see beyond their physical existence. On the other hand, religion has been used to bind people in fear and superstition in order that they might be exploited and controlled by other individuals. There have been institutions and organizations which have used religion purely as a superstition and as a tool to keep people in ignorance and to make them conform to patterns established by those who sought the spiritual revelation as a means of holding man in conformance to their own desires. We need only to look at history to find many illustrations of this fact.

Today the problem of religion, among those who are farsighted enough to see it, is to separate religious dogma and doctrine from superstition and bring religion into the lives of individuals as a dynamic force for good rather than as a controlling force. Religion in its purest form, that is, in the words and light of its founder, is a system that has emotional as well as intellectual appeal. No one has a right to either expound or criticize a religion who is not sympathetic to its basic principle. Otherwise, he would use it entirely from the standpoint of reason and not from the way those who participate in its principles feel about it.

Religion is actually based more upon feeling than upon reason. Consequently, reason seldom gives religion a fair hearing. To reason about religion is to consider the behavior and practices of its patterns and systems to the extent that we lose sight of the fact that reason is man-made. How man feels is more important insofar as his religious responses are concerned. To consider a religion fairly, we must therefore be tolerant not only of man's ability to reason, but also of his whole behavior, and how he feels about his life and his relationship to the Divine.

Whenever a group of individuals meets to decide upon certain tenets of religion, intolerance is an inseparable part of what they do. They cannot separate their own interpretations and opinions from their prejudices. They build their interpretations upon their meanings rather than upon the effect of the feeling of those whom their religion may influence.

Reason is to a certain extent predictable. It follows certain patterns, whereas feeling and emotion determine behavior based upon one's reaction at a particular moment. If you know me well, you will know that there are certain behavior patterns which will probably occur under certain circumstances. You know that I will follow a certain pattern as long as reason has dominance, but should an emotional pattern control my behavior, then something different from the normal pattern may take place.

So it is that if religion is analyzed, if it is subjected to analytical study, or if it is approached philosophically and psychologically, the true elements which make the religion lose their potency. Reason cannot select those phases of a religion that are of primary value. Reason can analyze only the things that are acceptable to reason, whereas that which has religious appeal to an individual and brings him some degree of comfort and help is based upon feeling rather than on reason.

Through reasoning, religion is sometimes made to fit into a circumstance for which it was not designed. There has always been an intimate connection between religion and its cultural background. The fact that avatars appeared at various times and places causes us to realize that they must have been prepared to fit into the complexities of the particular environment in which they lived. Consequently, every religious teacher has presented material within the pattern of the culture where he lived and taught. He taught in the terms of the understanding and knowledge of the individual of his time. Would it not be ridiculous to believe that avatars as super intelligent beings would incarnate in a certain society and circumstance and then present their teachings in terms not within the understanding of those to whom they addressed their message?

As a consequence, the words of every religious teacher need to be translated into the particular pattern under which he taught. The period, the social status, and the intelligence of the people at the time of the message must be considered in the light of the message, because it was presented in its particular content to suit the particular understanding and purpose of those who heard it. History shows that most religious founders do not propound many things that are completely new. That

is, each teacher gives a fresh setting to an older idea or a particular emphasis to some aspects in accordance with the needs of those to whom he speaks. The particular pattern of each religion fits into the lives of those with whom the founder dealt.

It is well to consider the status of religion in modern society as to its value and its future. Regardless of what may be our religious point of view, regardless of what may be our prejudice or our thoughts of its future, one thing very obvious, particularly in the Western world today, is that religion is thriving. At least we see physical evidence of its growth. New church buildings have been built. Congregations are increasing. We do not know how seriously these ideas may be taken, but we cannot deny that this indicates a need and a demand upon the part of individuals for a religious phase of life. If people look toward religion and believe they need it, it would seem that an analysis of what religion may give them is worthy of our consideration.

We should consider the criteria of a religion which will meet the needs of man today in this more or less skeptical world. The criteria of a religion, it seems to me, can be decided by the answer one is able to give to the following four questions. I am concerned with religion in terms of human experience, and I believe that the answers to these four questions should be the serious consideration of any individual seeking the help and solace of a religion, as well as of those who propose to teach a religion.

The first of these questions is: *Does the religion strengthen man's acuteness in regard to spiritual knowledge?* Religion is nothing unless it brings to consciousness a spiritual concept, unless it can link man with a source outside himself. Consequently, the first criterion in the analysis of any religion must be that it contains within itself an ability or an attribute to sharpen the individual's perception for spiritual knowledge. The comprehension and understanding of spiritual knowledge, in contrast to physical or material knowledge, is the first prerequisite in religion, so that it can be a potent force in the life of the individual.

The second question is: *Does the religion provide the philosophy that can prepare man to face the pain, sorrows, disappointments, and problems of life upon Earth?* Unless a religion can answer this question in the affirmative, it

is absolutely useless. As long as we live within the environment of the physical world in which we find ourselves, pain, sorrow, disappointment, tribulation, and problems will be a part of our experience. If we cannot find the strength and solace from religion to help us direct ourselves through life's problems and face them as they occur, religion will be of little advantage.

There is no use in trying to ignore our problems. We cannot deny the existence of the material world and at the same time expect to adjust ourselves, to it. Neither can we deny those things that are a part of the physical world, such as sorrow and pain. We may try to deny or ignore them, but they still exist, and we will fall short of our own accomplishments by not working with them.

The third question regarding a criterion of religion is: *Does the religion provide a proper concept of values?* Many of the questions of life revolve around value. Every individual is a reflection of the things he values most. The establishment of a sense of values, that is, the ability to place worth on those things which have continuous rather than transitory value, is an accomplishment toward which everyone should try to direct himself. A useful and worthwhile religious concept will assist the individual in selecting those values in which he can have confidence and which he can be assured will endure.

The fourth question in the analysis of religion is: *Does the religion create a sense of permanency in contrast to futility?* The greatest problem facing all people is the need for an assurance of the permanency of values, particularly when it seems as if much of living is futile. If one does not reason far enough, one might accept as fact the notion that the whole world is going to be blown apart, or that some catastrophe will occur. Such an idea leads to expediency of action upon the part of the average human.

We must learn to adapt ourselves to change, whether or not we like the pattern. It is part of our experience, or we would not be here. Regardless of what is going to happen tomorrow, the most important thing for us to face at the moment is how to fit ourselves into the circumstances that exist at this particular time.

A religion which will help us realize that there is a sense of permanency which can be developed and which underlies all apparent change will give us strength and will help us to realize that not all effort and worthwhile purpose must be futile. An acceptable religion must be vital. It must live and it must add to the ability of the human being to live. In contrast to dogmas and creeds, a vital religion must also include continuous revelation. That is, it must be ever renewed by the contact of its adherents through their association and realization of an actual, living presence of the Divine. The idea that religion can be like a package, which after being wrapped, tied, and sealed cannot be changed, has caused many religions to stagnate.

There are religions today which at the time of their founding were a departure in the thinking of the people, but over the course of time they have become orthodox. Inspiration does not cease with the personality of the religious founder. The founder points the way. Inspiration should be a continuing, manifesting continuity.

Revelation is the inner consciousness of a divine force which is continuous. Because a divine force provides a continuous revelation, it may be that some people comprehend revelation better than others or perceive it more acutely than others, but all can perceive it to a degree. This constant perception and realization cause religion to grow and become developed into its higher forms. It can then adapt a metaphysical, mystical, and philosophical interpretation that will fit into the needs and behavior of individuals who follow the particular ideal.

I now arrive at my fourth definition of religion, a definition which will be considered unorthodox. It may shock those who hold rigidly to certain orthodox patterns, and it will not be accepted by those who are so tied to their creed and dogma that they cannot see beyond the meaning of an established religious pattern, feeling that it cannot in any way be modified, yet I believe it incorporates the vitality that is necessary to maintain religious thinking in the modern world.

My definition is the simplest of the four which I have given. *Religion is the pleasure of the awareness of God.* The purpose of life, in spite of its trials and tribulations, is to exist as pleasurably as possible. Although



trials and tribulations must exist, they need not predominate. Man grows toward contentment and happiness, and in the process there is a degree of pleasure. If we become aware of God as an entity, as a divine and potent force in the universe, as something of which we are a segment, we will derive satisfaction and pleasure in the growth of that relationship. Religion is a complex phenomenon, primarily because man makes it that way. In its fundamentals it is simple. It can be reduced to a simple element in being the pleasure of the awareness of God.

## Chapter XII

# FACING TRANSITION

IT SHOULD BE apparent that most of the cares involving the life of the human being are based upon uncertainties. The problems which cause the most worry, concern, and take much of our time are basically due to the fact that the big factor is the unknown. This means that most anxieties are based upon an uncertainty. We worry about economic problems, for example, because we are uncertain of what our future economic situation will be. The same application can be applied to most problems that individuals find among the cares demanding a great deal of their time.

It is therefore one of the enigmas of human behavior and thinking that a certainty beyond any doubt or question should be a subject of worry or concern. This certainty to which I have referred is the certainty of death. Death will come. There is no need for us to worry because of any uncertainty concerning it. Death might well be called a fact of life. We begin to die as soon as we are born. It is neither a state nor an end, but rather a condition with which all living entities are faced. It is as much a part of our nature as is our wakeful consciousness when we are going about our affairs during the process of living.

Rosicrucian terminology recognizes the true nature and meaning of death. It does this by not using the word *death* but rather the word *transition*, a more descriptive term. *Transition* expresses the real meaning of the change which comes at the end of the physical span of existence here on Earth. According to many religions and philosophies, it is not a permanent end. The word *transition* implies a change, but it conveys a meaning more than just change. It implies a subtle change, a carry-over from one situation to another, like the way colors gradually fade one

into the other in a rainbow. There is no sudden line of demarcation between two parts of the rainbow, but a gradual change of all the colors through the width of the spectrum as they appear in nature.

Nature's processes are exemplified well by the word *transition*. We can find many examples of transition in nature. Twilight is a good one. Day changes to night as the degree of light changes. There are also subtle changes between seasons. The changes of the seasons are reminiscent of the fact that one season has passed and is gradually giving way to another. Transition is an example of the operation of nature. We might say that *transition* is a word that describes nature's laws, its manifestations and functions.

What we popularly refer to as nature's laws is neither more nor less than the manifestation of cosmic laws on a plane of which we are conscious. All transitions, whether they be of light or dark, between colors of the rainbow, between the seasons, or from one situation or condition to another, are inevitable. All are constantly occurring. We, as a part of the overall creation of the universe, and therefore as a part of the cosmic and natural laws, are subject to these changes which we call periods of transition.

We might also describe birth as a transition. I once described the period between birth and transition as "a pause in eternity." This pause in eternity is while we are restricted to a physical universe and to a physical manifestation and are therefore pausing from our full experience of eternity, which is the other phase of our existence when we are not physical entities. In this sense, transition is the change from the dwelling as a nonphysical entity in eternity to a physical entity, and again when the change is made from the physical state back into a nonphysical state. Both are transitions. Transition, then, represents change between states of being, states of growth.

Knowing that transition is a manifestation of nature's laws and cosmic law, and knowing that it is inevitable, an intelligent person stops to ask himself where all the traditions about transition originated.

We have probably all had the experience of being near an individual who was dying, who was approaching the end of his physical existence,

and therefore approaching transition. Undoubtedly many of us have seen a great deal of embarrassment on the part of people coming face-to-face with transition. There is a tendency for relatives, friends, and even doctors to keep from the individual the fact that transition is drawing near. If the individual who is experiencing the end of life on the physical plane begins to become aware of what is happening, he is actually discouraged from facing the fact or thinking that he is actually at the point of transition.

I have actually heard relatives and friends tell a person approaching transition that he would be better, that he would recover, and that he would be up and around soon. How can an individual prepare for transition unless he faces the fact that transition is going to occur?

We need to alter our whole outlook on this subject and teach individuals even when they are young that transition is a natural process and will eventually come about in their experience. It is not something that is to be looked upon with superstition, fear, or ignorance. We should prepare for transition throughout our lifetime. An individual should have the right to know when transition is imminent. He should have the right to adjust his mind and thinking to this inevitability that is so near and that will inevitably be his experience. There is no possible purpose being served by concealing the fact of transition, or worse than that, by denying to the individual the fact that it will occur. We need have no embarrassment in facing the facts of transition. We can comfort the one who is nearing transition by encouraging him to remember the good parts of life and to be aware of the greater experience that lies ahead.

This point of view is beginning to be more seriously considered. In comparatively recent years a science known as *thanatology* has been developed. In the popular sense, thanatology might be called the science of death and dying. It is the study of the means and procedure by which to face the inevitable fact of transition.

Some will criticize my point of view. They will claim that I am expressing ideas which are heartless and inconsiderate. I am not denying that, from the physical standpoint, transition is a difficult time, not only for the person facing that experience but probably even more

so for those who are close relatives, friends, and loved ones. There is no denying that any major transition causes new adjustments, new points of view to be taken into consideration by all who are intimately concerned. It is not pleasant to sever existing relationships, whatever they may be, and adjust ourselves to the resulting circumstances. Consequently, there will be periods of difficulty and expressions of grief.

Facing transition is not a denial of our emotions. It is not a denial of grief, the escape valve by which we can face the facts of a situation such as transition. All emotions are an outlet. For example, anything amusing will cause one to laugh. Laughing is an outlet, an escape, or we might say a release of energy, of emotional tension that builds up as a result of a humorous situation. Although a humorous situation or incident causes me great amusement, and I may laugh, this does not mean that I will go on the rest of my life laughing about the same event or story. Life has to be faced on other levels.

So it is that a situation as serious as the transition of a loved one will cause me to express sorrow and grief. That expression will be a means of releasing my own tensions and helping me adjust to the circumstances which must be faced because of the transition of a loved one, but it does not mean that I will express that grief experience, that profound sorrow, by shedding tears for the rest of my life. It means that grief will help me make an adjustment which will be worthwhile to me in the future. I will carry great respect and have periods of sorrow when I think of the relationship which no longer exists on the physical plane, but I will know that transition has occurred for the loved one and that I also will eventually face the same condition.

In summary, there is no need to hide the fact when manifestations of natural laws are evident. There is no reason for transition to embarrass either those who face it in themselves or those who face it for others about them. The human being deserves the right to live and go through all forms of transition with dignity.

To live with dignity means to meet all conditions of life, including birth and transition, with as much dignity as possible. Transition with

dignity should not be an experience that we seek out, but knowing when it does come we should be able to understand and experience it to the fullest realization that is possible. If reasonably possible to do so, an individual should be so prepared that he can be aware of his last hours. One who is conscious and free of severe pain can experience transition and meditate upon the great miracle that is taking place. The miracle of transition is no less than the miracle of birth. The individual is learning another phase of his total existence. He is carrying over into the inner consciousness of his soul a knowledge that will be with him in other lives and possibly make him a better individual, better able to understand cosmic and natural laws and to face their manifestations.

There is frequently associated with transition a breakdown of our physical structure. Unfortunately, because of this fact, it is not uncommon for severe pain to accompany a terminal illness and the actual event of transition. It should be emphasized, however, that transition itself is neither painful nor the cause of pain. It is a breakdown of the physical body through disease, accident, or aging that in some cases produces pain. Pain is physical and it is limited to the physical universe and to the physical body. Transition is a relief from such a condition when it exists.

When there is severe pain in terminal illness, I am in complete agreement with the school of thought that believes in the liberal administration of drugs. Drugs misused are a detriment to the individual and to society, but drugs do exist. They are a part of our environment, and they have a purpose and a practical application. To the individual whose terminal illness affects the nervous system in such a way that excruciating pain is a part of that process, drugs that will alleviate the pain should be available to give that individual a release from a tension that no individual should be expected to bear.

At St. Christopher's Hospice near London, some research and study is being done in the science of thanatology and in the use of drugs. They are very liberal with the administration of drugs where severe pain exists. They even use drugs that are outlawed in some countries, but in cases of extreme pain at the time of transition, these drugs have been found to be very useful. There must be a place for them in

the scheme of things, and this may be the place. The administration of drugs and alcohol makes it possible for individuals to go through transition with dignity even if they are experiencing a high degree of pain.

There is no philosophical, religious, or ethical reason why an individual should be denied relief from pain at transition. We should do all we can to put the person at rest mentally, physically, psychologically, and spiritually. This means facing the facts and giving what alleviation is possible to meet any physical discomfort or pain.

Transition, then, is part of life's experience. It cannot be denied. It cannot be avoided, but neither should it be invited. We should live because we are incarnated to live in a physical world. We should use life for its fundamental purpose, to gain experience, but when the time comes for the book of life to be closed, we should accept the fact that we have had this particular period of experience and now we prepare ourselves for another. We believe in an infinity greater and less limited than that which we have experienced in a physical body. In this way we will learn so that the future transitions may bring less difficulty and less concern. In learning to face transition honestly, we are learning a part of the lesson of living.

A Sufi mystic wrote:

*When death comes to you  
All ye whose life-sand through the hour glass slips,  
He lays two fingers on your ears, and two  
Upon your eyes he lays, one on your lips:  
Whispering—Silence!*

Have you ever experienced a continual noise such as the movement of traffic that seems to be incessant, or noise of a machine, or the noise of laughter and talk of other individuals which suddenly stops? Silence is truly golden. Senses that you did not previously realize existed now become acute. You become aware of existence that seemed shut out because noise had constantly forced itself on your attention.

To escape from the confusion and noise of this world of actuality is to place ourselves in the realm of silence. Silence does not necessarily deal with the physical sense of hearing, but is rather a realization or reality that exists outside this physical world. There we can be receptive to impressions that come from other sources.

Transition itself is silence—silence of the physical functions, of physical desire, of physical confusion, or physical uncertainty. Remember the injunction, “Be still; and know that I am God.”



## Chapter XIII

# COPING WITH THE UNKNOWN

**W**HILE THERE HAS been no ultimate solution to the cares and problems that infest the days of the average human being, the subject matter in the preceding pages contains at least some factors with which the individual is familiar. There are some conditions and some circumstances with which familiarity helps us in attempting to use our ability to understand situations that may cause us problems.

In addition to the known factors with which the average adult is familiar, there continues to exist in the world and in the universe many factors that are unknown. There is so much that man does not know, and yet many of these unknown conditions or circumstances are ones with which we must cope in our daily lives. We are necessarily forced to take into consideration unknown as well as known factors in all our behavior and in our plans.

The unknown has a certain appeal. It is the mystery of the unknown that attracts the attention of individuals to certain circumstances. This fact is well illustrated by the evidence we see before us every day in the press, on the radio, on television. The unknown is used as an appeal to individuals to watch a program, to go to a motion picture, or even to try a new product. The unknown, under these circumstances, has an appeal that seems to be innate, or we might go so far as to say actually instinctive, so that the unknown is an appealing factor in man's experience.

This has been true as far back as we have record of man's thought. The early cave man must have watched with fascination a thunder and lightning storm occurring in his environment. We can imagine him sitting at the mouth of his cave seeing the flashes of lightning and hearing the thunder that followed, and speculating in his mind as to the cause of the effect that he witnessed. Not only has man found that the unknown was appealing and sometimes frightening, but also he has always tried to explain the unknown. In the explanations that he produced or brought to his mind we see the beginning steps of superstition and tradition that built up concepts and ideas in man's mind as to the nature of many factors that he witnessed in his environment.

The unknown many times turns out to be a simple factor. Somewhere in the writings of Goethe he tells of an ancient village which lay at the foot of a mountain. On the side of the mountain was a cave. From time to time the villagers would see what they believed to be strange lights coming from the opening of the cave. After a time one individual became brave enough to enter the cave while the light was visible. He found back of the entrance another opening, which led to the top of the mountain. The light was due to the Sun shining through that opening into the cave. In other words, what the villagers saw coming through the opening of the cave was the light of day.

Many of the unknown factors with which man has dealt in his history have been solved in the light of day, which throws explanation upon the phenomena. For example, a man was walking home one night when he saw white objects moving in front of him. He was frightened and immediately thought of ghosts. On closer examination he saw that they were sheets hanging on an old-fashioned clothesline. Here again, emotional reaction instead of reason caused the individual's immediate perception to be in error. Analysis by the same individual showed the unknown to be simply everyday objects.

The unknown, then, can be real or imaginary. Much of the unknown is imaginary. Much is due to the fact that we simply have not yet been able to explain a factor which we have classified in the area of the unknown. We distinguish between the real and the imaginary. In this sense, we call the known *real*, and the imaginary simply an explanation, temporarily at least, for the unknown. Because the unknown is a part

of experience we try to explain what we do not understand, and in that experience we gain upon some occasions some knowledge of what seems to be unknown.

Throughout history, change has gradually taken place in a process which is simply the movement, as it were, or the change in conception on man's part, of the unknown being transferred to a new category of the known. Refer again to the ancient man sitting in a cave observing a thunderstorm. We now know that there is no longer an unknown cause that produces a thunderstorm. Modern meteorology has been able to explain this phenomenon to us. Here is a simple illustration of the unknown becoming the known.

If man continues to live on this Earth, and continues to use his intelligence to progress, gradually all that is in the category of the unknown will become the known. In most classifications the unknown is intangible. It is not something upon which we can use our scientific methods to determine in a short period what is actually the nature of that unknown. We deal with a factor that we cannot understand, and we have little that we lay hold of in the physical sense. Therefore, we usually go through a period of time before the process of changing the unknown to the known takes place.

What can we do about the unknown? We can ignore it and continue to live in ignorance, or by studying it, by observing it, by using our abilities and mental faculties, we can through the process of knowledge and experience replace the unknown with the known. If the unknown is primarily an intangible factor, then we should give more attention to the fact that the solution of unknown problems and the solace that can come by being relieved of any tension caused by not knowing the meaning of a circumstance can also be found in the area of the intangible.

As already stated, the physical achievements of man are not alone responsible for bringing about a change from the unknown to the known. While scientific methods and scientific investigations are an important factor in learning of the explanations of the known, we must also turn to the area of the mind and of the spirit to be able to find solutions and satisfactory emotional responses to the conditions caused by the unknown.

Here the intangible disciplines come to our aid. Philosophy, religion, and mysticism are means of coping with the unknown. Philosophy speculates upon those problems with which man must deal and which contain unknown factors. Religion bases much of its purpose upon explaining the intangibles that are presumed to exist in the universe. But the one and final means that will bring a solution to the mind of the individual is the modern concept of mysticism. I say the modern concept because it has nothing to do with mystery in the sense of merely trying to deceive or confuse the individual.

The one who truly seeks to understand the unknown that may be a problem for him, or may exist in his environment, approaches a force higher than himself. The Divine Essence of the universe is the cause that makes the whole universe, both known and unknown, exist. Mysticism is that process by which man relates himself to this fundamental source of all things. A formal definition of mysticism is that man has the ability and the right to deal directly with the ultimate and divine force existing in the universe, that he needs no intermediary, that he himself is the vehicle containing the soul, which is a part of this element that is the ultimate cause of all things and contains the explanation of all phenomena.

I believe in a teleological universe, that is, a universe that has a cause and an ultimate purpose. This means that all, both known and unknown, will eventually be a part of the total experience of all living creatures. As such, the unknown will cease to exist. In the meantime the unknown, as already indicated, will continue to be transferred gradually into the area of the known. The mystery of not being able to understand will cease. Man will realize consciously his relationship to a force greater than himself and be intimately united with it.

Man is a part of the divine force of the universe. He is, as a physical entity, temporarily separated from intimate knowledge of it, but he can return to an intimate relationship that will give him knowledge and thereby help him to gain the experience by which he can deal with all universal factors and thereby be a part of the universal force which contains all and leaves nothing to human imagination.

## Chapter XIV

# EPILOGUE

**I**F THERE IS a central theme in the diverse subjects included in the previous pages, it is the fact that man should search for true value. All the cares that infest the day of the individual human being are usually those that can be attributed to the individual's failure to be certain of some value that will endure regardless of what else may happen.

The uncertainties, fears, worries, superstitions, and other problems existing in the lives of individuals are mainly due to the fact that the individual is under the impression that what is of value to him may be taken away. Under such circumstances he feels frustrated and has the feeling that there is nothing to give him support in the time of need in order to adjust to a new or changed environment.

What the individual needs is a sense of values which will not be related to the cares that infest each day. These values will have to be values that are not of the material world. They are the values of the spirit, the values that come with the life force itself, which after all is the essence of man.

Any individual can be overly optimistic or overly pessimistic, but the individual who tends toward a true optimism has by experience learned to be familiar with that life force within him and to realize that it is a segment of the divine force which causes the whole universe to function, and that a minute segment is resident within each of us, whether we call it a life force, soul, spirit, or by any other name. This is the source and location of real value.

The individual who has gained serenity can meet the problems of the day with equanimity because he is sure of enduring values. He is aware of the fact that regardless of what may be taken from him or what may be the problems of living, the real values are within himself and will continue whether he experiences transition, ill-health, poverty, or any other problem of any nature which the human being is capable of experiencing.

Value is, after all, the most important object for which we all need to search and find within the experience of life, but value that is associated with the physical world is just as transient and just as sure of disappearing or ceasing to be as is the material world itself. True value lies in the nonphysical. True value carries us along instead of our carrying possessions to which we may temporarily assign value.

Many individuals feel that in addition to the transitory nature of physical values behavior is important insofar as dealing with our life's problems is concerned. This is true, but at the same time we should honestly face the fact that morals and behavior are not related in the sense that many of us have thought them to be. For example, children are taught to be good or else harm will come to them. They are taught goodness is a condition bringing a reward, while being bad causes repercussions in the nature of the cares of the day which we have been examining.

Actually, there is no connection. The good man may suffer economic disaster and serious illness. The evil man may be rich and live to a healthy old age. This is hard to accept by some individuals, but it is nevertheless a fact and a part of the nature of the physical world with which we deal. This is partly due to the fact that morals are man-made and behavior is man originated. These are not put into effect by a force outside of us. Moral behavior is not a divine edict. It is for man to learn to live and attain an intimation of this divine source and thereby adjust his behavior to the philosophy he evolves. This will bring to the individual a realization that the cares of the day are those which constitute a phase of the experience of living.

The cares of the day, it would seem, will be with us in all our days. We do not shed them. We live to learn about them and from them.

Only patience and perseverance will bring about this desired end. We hope to achieve a more balanced life through the process of living, through our knowledge and our experience. But do not be deceived by believing that some simple act or some simple formula will take care of this problem for us. We have to grow into a degree of perfection.

Evolution, whether it be of the mind or body, is a slow process. Biologically, man has been literally millions of years in evolving from the lowest form of life to the expression he is today. Evolution is so slow that a century means nothing. A century is like the tick of a clock in terms of geologic time.

So it is that our lives are geared to the tick of the clock of the universe. We are growing to the extent that we utilize the potentialities of life and to the extent that we overcome those cares which otherwise impede our growth and our progress. We will not accomplish it all at once, but we can grow in that direction.

R.V.C. Bodley wrote, "Objectives must be pursued in a straight line regardless of the obstacles in the way. By looking to the right and left, or listening to people who chatter by the wayside, the goal can easily be lost sight of. For instance, the only way to read a book is to have one available at a time. The only way to get what one wants is to have faith and confidence in oneself alone, disregarding criticism however well intended." To live in a straight line regardless of the obstacles in the way is one way of expressing our own individual evolvement.

Another expression of a similar idea was written by Joyce Hifler. "Power comes from the deep silence we sometimes must experience before we can gain enough momentum to move ahead in our living. Patience is never dormant but a very definite action that provides a blueprint for action, dimension, direction, and fortitude to go farther than we have ever dreamed possible."

This should be the aim of life, to go further than we have ever believed possible. We must not only direct ourselves toward growing but we must set aims and ideals that are far beyond our grasp at the moment yet toward which we can move, remembering that patience and perseverance are the keys. These goals will help mitigate the effect of the cares that infest our lives.

# THE ROSICRUCIAN ORDER, AMORC

## *Purpose and Work of the Order*

The Rosicrucian Order, AMORC, is a philosophical and initiatic tradition. As students progress in their studies, they are initiated into the next level or degree.

Rosicrucians are men and women around the world who study the laws of nature in order to live in harmony with them. Individuals study the Rosicrucian lessons in the privacy of their own homes on subjects such as the nature of the soul, developing intuition, classical Greek philosophy, energy centers in the body, and self-healing techniques.

The Rosicrucian tradition encourages each student to discover the wisdom, compassion, strength, and peace that already reside within each of us.

[www.rosicrucian.org](http://www.rosicrucian.org)