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PART 1

It is very important to *know* before trying to *do* anything to so complicated a machine, just as you wouldn't start pulling levers and pressing buttons in a great electrical power station without knowing. The way to get a good idea of the five functions is to get interested in *observing* them at different times and in different situations in oneself and other people. Like a keen photographer, one can be taking snapshots and sticking them into five albums. Start with good, clear examples, so that you get to know quickly what are the ordinary, normal functions of each centre.

In talking about one's observations though, one must be very careful to distinguish between practical and theoretical language. The words 'centres' or 'minds' belong to theoretical language because one cannot observe them; one can only directly observe what comes out of them, their functions. So when you speak in practical language about your observations, speak of *functions*, not centres.

There has to be some theory, just as builders have to work to the architect's plan, so first you have to know a little more about the centres, that is a little more theory.

PART 2. POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE DIVISIONS IN CENTRES

Three of the minds or centres are built on a dual plan. The *thinking mind*, for instance, thinks in terms of 'Yes' and 'No' – *affirmation and negation is an essential basis of thought*; and any disturbance of the balance leads to quite wrong results. When we were first married, my wife and I would be looking for a house; I would say 'yes' to every house and my wife would say 'no' to every house; so there was a dead stop. Before we actually got the right house there had to be a balance between the two. It is the same with the two parts of our thinking apparatus; there must be a right balance.

This is also true about the *instinctive mind* whose work depends upon distinguishing between pleasant and unpleasant sensations. Indeed all through the biosphere living creatures orientate themselves and survive by retreating from what is unpleasant, and therefore potentially dangerous, and seeking what is wholesome in the matter of food and air and impressions. Unfortunately civilisation, with its emphasis on the intellect, is apt to suppress this normal instinctive 'good taste', so that we actually go as far as drinking milk-shakes or weak coffee with skin on the top, we feel at home in stuffy, overcrowded rooms and we enjoy ghastly scenes on movies and TV just as much as pleasant ones. Like domestic animals, we are in danger of poisoning ourselves by losing our instincts.

The *moving mind* works on the same principle because for every movement, like raising one's arm, there is stimulation of the active muscles and inhibition of their opponents. But all this is co-ordinated for us by the cerebellum so there is no point in trying to observe it. We just observe ourselves in movement or at rest.

But the higher minds, *Higher Emotional* and the *Higher Intellectual*, have no negative parts; and the same is also true of the sex centre, and the ordinary emotional centre if it is working rightly. What does this mean? Take the sex centre. It is either set in motion by someone or it

remains completely unmoved and unconcerned. The apparently negative sides of it belong to other centres. The same is true of the *emotional* mind when working at its full speed and with its right energy. I remember in the course of some experiments with mescaline, (which at one stage wakes up the emotional mind to its fullest extent), looking at people or reproductions of great paintings, or listening to records of different kinds of music. While many of them produced no reaction at all – they seemed completely dead – the few that moved one emotionally moved one to the fullest extent, producing a kind of ecstasy. One just didn't bother about the others. This is very important to realise, because with *identification* all this can be upset, the emotional centre reacting negatively to heaps of things that, properly speaking, it just would not notice; and it is these useless negative emotions that fill up nearly the whole of human life which are man's chief bar to development. The thinking centre catches it very easily and spends most of its time being pre-occupied with worrying and unpleasant thoughts. It is lovely to think that the way of escape from the prison lies in giving all this up as soon as possible. But we have no control over our feelings which work far too quickly for any will that we possess, therefore we begin by doing two things. *We try not to identify with unpleasant feelings*, not to pay any attention to them or take them seriously or believe in them; and since *expressing* unpleasant feelings increases and prolongs identification with them, we try from the first *not to express our negative feelings outwardly*. If we feel afraid we should try to look the opposite and in this way the fear will often melt away!

PART 3

Now we come to the division of each centre into three parts, a mechanical part, an emotional part, and a higher part which has to be aroused and controlled by Will. Many people live all their lives only in the mechanical parts, and indeed manifestation of the emotional parts of the different minds is a rare and unforgettable experience, the basis of all artistic creation in whatever medium. Unfortunately, identification enters into and spoils very quickly the function of these emotional parts. Genius is the ability to enjoy the emotional part of one or other centre for sufficiently long by keeping identification out of it. All this can only be done by what we call *attention*. Mechanical parts proceed without any attention at all; in the emotional parts the attention is aroused, but it quickly becomes hypnotised or imprisoned by the object through identification. Only if attention is aroused and controlled by Will can creative work be maintained.

Now we must remember that the mechanical parts are necessary and right in their own place, and have a purpose there. Turning thoughts (rational or intellectual mind); pictures and images, (instinctive mind); and dreams, both day-dreams and night dreams, (moving mind) – these are all ways by which the machine gets rid of unwanted energy. They must never be blocked or stopped any more than you block up the drains of your house. It is necessary only to pay no attention to them and to do what you have to do without letting them interfere with it.

We have learned that it is necessary to spend two periods during the day of half-an-hour or more when, by a special method, we pull our attention away from all these mechanisms of the machine and retreat to a place of stillness. This gives us the energy for doing what we have to do the rest of the day with improved attention, quite naturally.

The mechanical part of the intellectual centre has a special name and is called the *formatory apparatus* – later you will see why. We must quickly learn its characteristics so as to recognise at once when it takes the place of real thinking. Thus it can only count up to two – ‘good and bad’, ‘spiritual and material’, ‘conscious and sub-conscious’, ‘capital and labour’, etc., etc. Only counting up to two, it can only think in opposites and is the apparatus which immediately sets up problems where none exist. Nearly all human problems actually belong to the formatory apparatus and, again, freeing oneself from identification is the way to escape from them.

Now for a very important function, the function of *speech* by which man is distinguished from all animals. This is very complex, occupying a very large part of the predominant hemisphere of the brain. It can belong just to the mechanical part of the rational function, strongly under the influence of the moving centre – talking for talking’s sake. Sensations and feelings can often enter into it, and it can be greatly affected through the instinctive centre under the influence of alcohol, as we notice at cocktail parties! But speech can come from the higher parts of the intellectual and emotional minds, and some of its formulations can have lasting effects on human life, as we see from many of the beautiful brief sentences and parables in the Gospels, for which the highest form of attention was needed: ‘Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they toil not, neither do they spin’.

It is pleasant that we do not have to tackle each of these centres separately; just get free of identification and the whole lot will begin to perform their proper functions. The intellect will begin to make discoveries; through the awakening of conscience the emotional mind will begin to realize the Truth; the instinctive mind will work normally and rightly and we will enjoy many sensations from which at present we are debarred; our movements will give us pleasure and produce the results we want with the minimum of effort and error. We might even find that we fall in love with the right person instead of the wrong one, but this may need time and a certain amount of experience!

Finally, the five different kinds of memory will be at our command.

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