

29 October 1975

FOR NEW GROUPS

The House of 3 Storeys

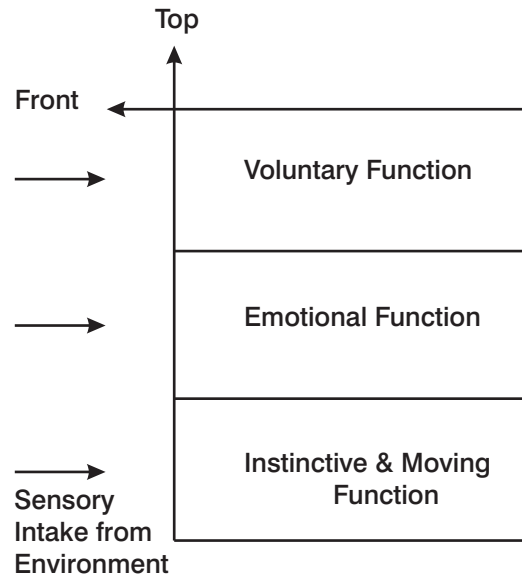


Figure 1

For systematic observation of the basic structure of a human being and of the laws underlying the individual: body, mind and soul, we need a general plan and this is provided by the '3-storeyed house' in both the Shankaracharya's system and our own Western system as developed by P. D. Ouspensky.

Figure 1 represents the facade of this house – all we ordinarily know by observation of ourselves and other people. If you only know *this*, you see men and women as machines driven by external influences; they are simply automata – bodies like any other physical bodies in the materialistic world studied by all the different branches of science. It is important to realise that in each of us the sensory intake is all the time driving receptor-mechanisms in all 3 storeys. We see a tree – that is purely sensory; sometimes we are touched by the beauty of this tree in its setting – that is emotional; but we can also know that this tree is an oak and know a lot about oaks as a species which breeds true for all oak trees everywhere in the world – that is voluntary (or intellectual). Differences lie only in emphasis – sometimes one is uppermost in a given individual, or habitually paramount in a given type of person – an average person, an artist or a botanist, say.

But you wouldn't be here searching for something if you hadn't already realised that there is more to a human being than just this empty facade – we are not only bodies, we are not only the thoughts and feelings set up by sensory impressions – we are something more, and more important than all that.

This leads us to Figure 2 – the description of human nature that lies concealed behind the facade. First it leads one to the all-important question: 'Who am I?' If you study only the physical aspect of a man, the machine, it's like studying the play *Hamlet* without the central figure – the Prince of Denmark.

One realises that one is not just a perishable body of flesh and bones (col. 1). Then one realises that one is not just a bundle of thoughts and feelings (personal psychology – col. 2). So by a process of exclusion one comes to something much more permanent in human nature, something that always has existed and always will exist – we call it a ‘Soul’ or vehicle of Divine Consciousness. The Shankaracharya’s system calls it the ‘Inner Organ’ or Antahkarana where all the possibilities of human nature are stored (only a tiny part of which is realised in any individual human being) – that which distinguishes ‘man as a self-creative being’ from all subhuman species. One knows and never forgets that one is a man and is not an animal.

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Next one must realise (a fact now well established in at least one School of current neuropsychology) that every major function such as thinking or feeling or moving involves the whole nervous system on all three levels – physical, subtle and causal. These are highly complicated circuits containing smaller and smaller circuits and closely intermeshed. All these are governed at source by that atom of the universal Consciousness that always exists in every individual – the Universal Self or Atman. Whatever our state of consciousness at any moment (whether in dreamless sleep, in the dream state, in the ordinary daytime state or in Samadhi) whether we know it or not we are always being guided by that Self – the Owner of the whole house. So what is important is to learn or experience all we can about that Self – that unchanging Consciousness. Our fluctuating consciousness is only an imperfect reflection – a face in a mirror. The whole purpose of human physical existence is to get to know the face.

As we gradually come to a fuller acquaintance with Figure 2, we learn that in addition to the 3 rooms which we know, there is a 4th room which we don’t know, and in this 4th room there is a hidden treasure, and human life is really a ‘Treasure Hunt’!

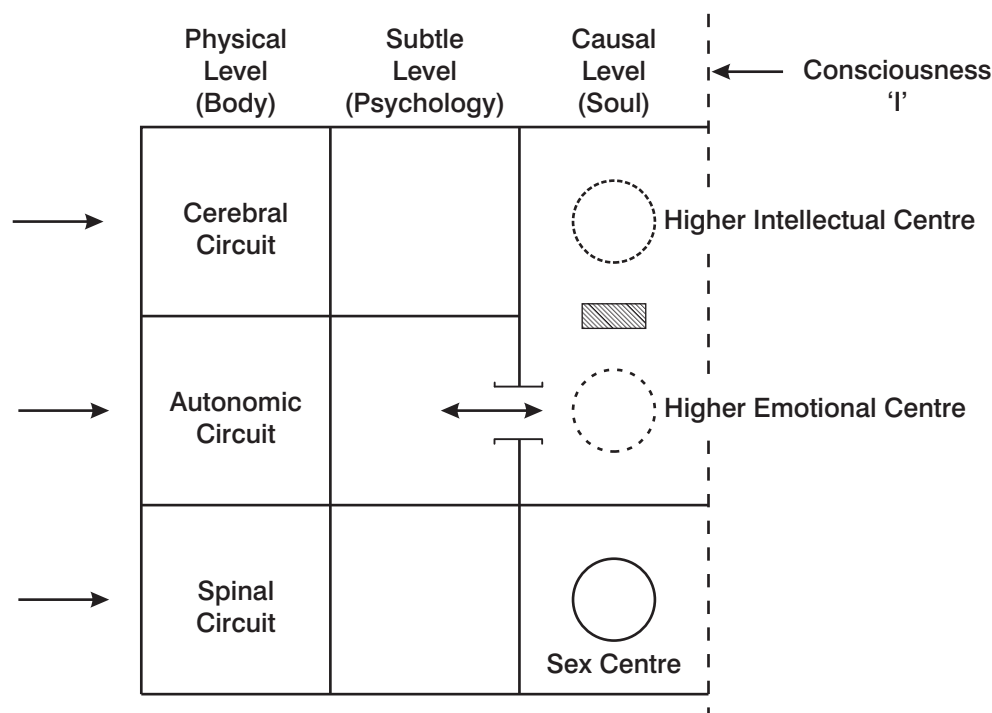


Figure 2. Possibilities (mostly unrealized) contained in human nature.

The way into this fourth room is only through the heart – the purified emotional function – we cannot get in there either through the intellect or through the sex centre, because attempts by either of those are highly dangerous or at best the dead end of a one-way street.

All three functions are necessary for human life and all can make their own contribution if they work normally; but it is true that ‘Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God’. All sincere practitioners of any true religion know this (Sufis and Dervishes, Christians, Hindus, etc) as well as many who don’t subscribe to any external ritual of any religion, so long as they are true to themselves.

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There are many methods but the only near-universal method we know that can be carried on by anyone in ordinary active life is the System of Meditation to which you have been introduced; and this can look after all 3 storeys and all 3 levels if you learn to take it the full distance.

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N.B. Take this slowly step by step according to their understanding and the questions being asked.

