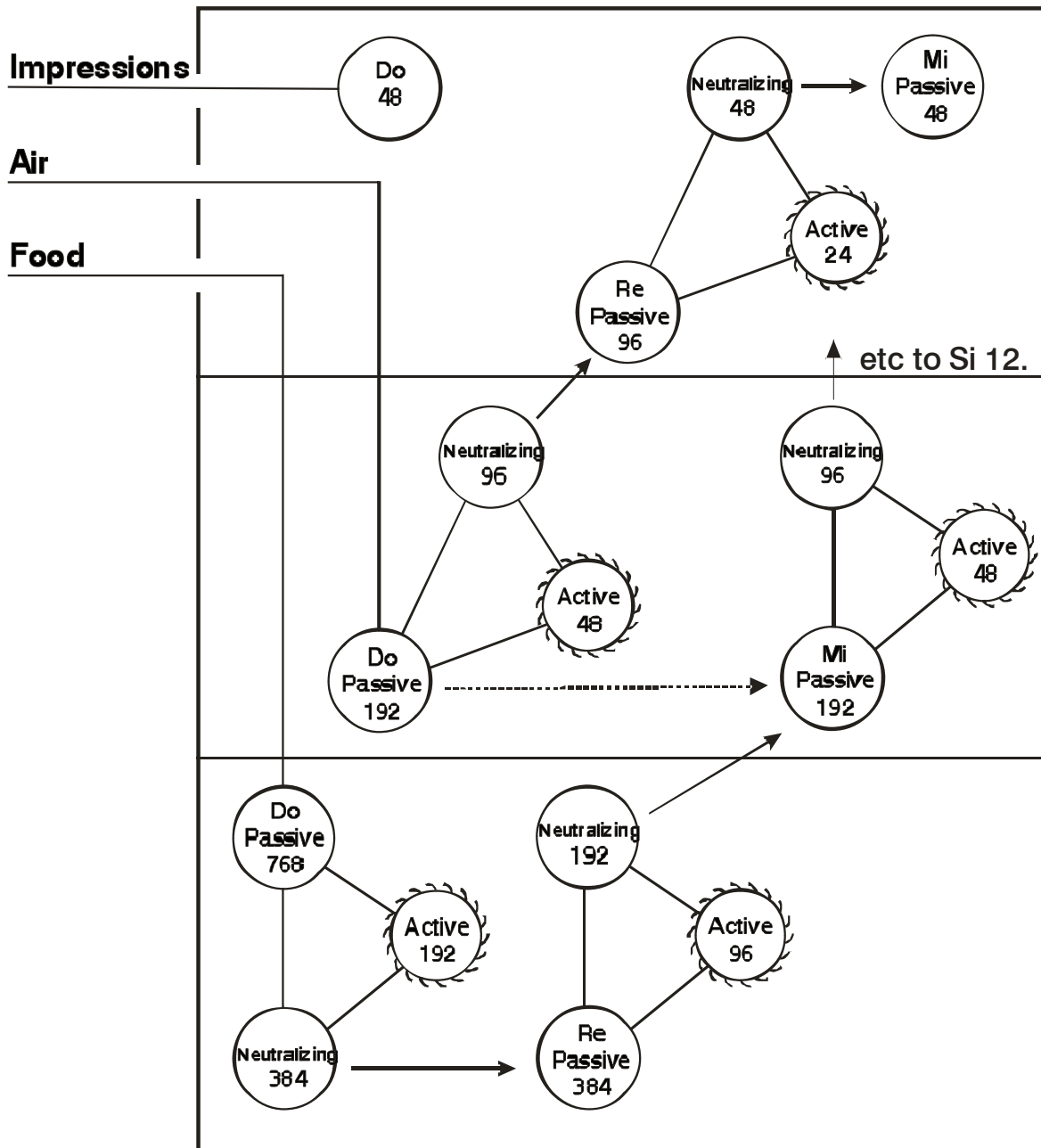


DIAGRAM OF THREE FOODS

The System tells us that human beings are incomplete; that nature has evolved us only to a certain level so we can function mechanically in the world, and any further advance must be achieved by our own efforts.

So far we have looked at the triad which produces growth and evolution but to study the possibilities of the further development of consciousness we must look more closely at the triad of refinement. One of the most obvious examples of this triad is the process of digestion—how the human organism produces its finer functions from food, water and air. The order of forces in this triad is passive, active, neutralizing. Food, passive matter, meets a substance from a higher, more energetic level within the body (active force) and is refined to a level somewhere in between the two (neutralizing force). This product becomes the passive force for the next stage of the process.



The continuing cycle of this triad forms the octaves of the digestion of food, air and impressions which continue in this way to create all the substances required for the mechanical existence of our three storeyed organism, head—heart and hand. The first interval in the food octave is filled by the intake of air and it then continues automatically up to the interval at Si 12 (for clarity the last three steps have been omitted from the diagram; Si 12 is in the lowest storey). The air octave continues automatically to Mi 48 where it stops, there being no force naturally available at level 12 to fill the interval. Impressions come in as Do 48 but develop no further as again there is insufficient available active force at level 12.

The System suggests that the energy at level 12 necessary to develop the impressions octave is in fact present within the organism, but it is not naturally available to us. Efforts at self-remembering, being still and present, are so short lived just because of this lack—because we do not know how to access the necessary energy even though it does in fact exist within us.

All the techniques and disciplines which the System prescribes or which are closely related, the movements, meditation, the Mevlevi turning etc., are aimed at making this connection.

Efforts can also be made to continue the air octave. By practising specialised breathing exercises the air octave can produce a greater supply of energy at level 12 and even 6, but the System does not recommend this without expert instruction. Rather, it focuses on methods to develop the impressions octave by accessing the energy already within us, and when this happens it causes the air octave to continue further quite naturally.

Bringing the necessary extra energy to the point of entry of impressions is referred to as the 'first conscious shock', and establishing a silent, impartial observer within oneself is the beginning of this process. If we learn to return regularly to this silent awareness it becomes possible to save some of the enormous amount of energy we habitually waste on negative emotions and identification.

In this way the triad of refinement starts again and the octave of impressions continues. The state of silent awareness (passive force), meets negative emotion (active force), and the state of self-consciousness (neutralizing force), begins to acquire longer duration.

Here again there is an interval in the development of the impressions octave and even finer energy is required for it to continue. This point is referred to as the 'second conscious shock' and it too requires negative emotions, this time not merely to be held unexpressed but somehow to be transformed from negative to positive.

An account by one of Mr. Ouspensky's first pupils may give the idea of the original approach:

"I remember a conversation about changing negative emotion into positive emotion of years ago. It was at a meeting at which Mr. Ouspensky said that by that time we had the right *not to have* negative emotion. He said that up to then all we could hope to do was not to express it, but from then on we must learn not to *have* it. He gave a method which was very practical.

As soon as one was threatened with negativeness, we must summon to our minds everything we had heard about negativeness which kept us as we were; that we would never change so long as we kept on having it; that it wasted the precious energy of emotion which we needed above all for growth and understanding; that it was an enormous price to pay for a few moments indulgence in it; that it made the shape of our lives and prevented even ordinary good things happening and ruined relationships, etc., etc. And to add to the catalogue anything real and useful we found in our experience.

The reason I am writing about this is because it works in the most amazing way. I had an extraordinary experience of this soon after he spoke of it. I felt mounting up in me a

wave of very intense negative emotion—quite justifiably, from the ordinary point of view. I remembered what he had said, and I made real and active in me all I knew of negativeness, its effects and the System teaching about it. (Mr. O. had said: 'Do it quick, quick...')

I can still remember the extraordinary change in me. It was physical as well as emotional and mental. The physical feeling was like the feeling of warmth creeping up quickly over one when one has been very cold and gets into a hot bath; exactly like this, all over me. And then the marvellous relief of being rid of this really violent (and reasonable and justifiable) indignation and anger, and at the same time a sort of joyful understanding of the person who had caused it and no particle of resentment. It was absolutely wonderful."

The two triads we have been looking at this term—one responsible for creation, the development of finer matter into coarser forms, and the other triad responsible for the refinement of coarse matter into finer energy—show the full cycle of the development of unity into diversity and then the return of diversity to unity.

A third, different, triad is required to bridge the intervals in these processes, and this will become clearer when we begin to examine the development of the three food octaves in the context of the enneagram.

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