

HEAD & HEART

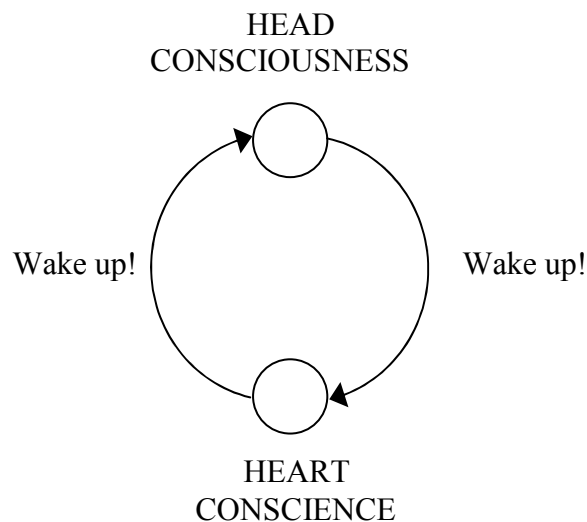
For some of us it was a shock to rediscover the importance of the idea of Conscience to both Ouspensky and Dr Roles. Ouspensky said that ‘The aim of the system is to bring man to conscience’, and Dr Roles said that ‘the chief reason for meditation was to arouse Conscience.’

This paper starts by accepting Dr Roles’ view that Conscience is or can be the positive emotion that tell us as individuals what is right or wrong in a particular situation, and especially that it can prompt us to make efforts to wake up. Waking up is more of an intellectual activity, something to do with consciousness, so can we now go further in understanding the relation between Conscience and Consciousness?

A hint about the area to explore comes from Dr Roles’ statement that

Conscience and the mind should work hand in hand. The mind should check at every point whether what this strong emotion is telling it is fit and apt to the situation and is true with everything else that they know.

This sounds like a process of deliberation, but it is probably more of an ‘instinctive’ activity. In general there is a cycle as shown in the diagram.



The idea in the diagram¹ is that the heart, Conscience, can remind the head to wake up and be more conscious, and equally if the head wakes up, it can awaken the heart. This could all happen on a long time scale: for example working on buffers over a period of time might help to awaken Conscience, and so might efforts at self-remembering. Another example is the ‘good impulse’, coming from Conscience and noticed as a thought that one should wake up and turn inwards, leading to meditation which in turn produces the right energy for the heart to operate.

¹ A fuller explanation in terms of the Enneagram is appended.

Or it can be seen on a very short time scale. A call to pay attention from the heart to the head results in a state of attention which leads to further energy in the heart and very rapidly indeed there can be a burst of energy which leads to a higher state of consciousness.

This is very practical, and simple observations can be very helpful and instructive. Try to wake up as many times as possible during the day and see how long the state lasts. At the same time notice if your heart is light and full of energy or empty or heavy.

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Although the Advaita teaching has apparently nothing about Conscience that is comparable to the System view, the two teachings meet up again when it comes to one of the endpoints of conscience – sincerity. Here are two quotations from the Shankaracharya:

The direction is through one's nature to the Will of the Absolute, by which a pattern is established for the nature of all beings. So far as one does not over-ride this pattern, one lives by Nature or lives in the Will of the Absolute. Usually people set aside this pattern and fabricate new inventions, which only create trouble. Being with Nature, means doing all works with a depth of sincerity, without excitement and consequent loss of energy.

Whenever the swan flies, he flies with dignity, and a natural rhythm which transcends the ocean and returns quite fresh. This swan is the Self. According to the Mantra tradition there is a phrase which means: "I am That", and another "I am the swan" — 'I', the individual, is that which is the Absolute. It is said that the swan ultimately goes to a lake in the Himalayas where he eats the white pearls symbolic of Bliss. In the individual also the pearls of bliss lie hidden in the turbulent water of mind; only a disciplined and Realized man makes use of them, and this only means living a natural life. [cited in FCR 73/33]

A good man who wants to go on the spiritual path, speaks what he feels and does what he speaks. That is he speaks from pure feeling. When he has impure feelings he tries not to speak or rush into action or express them. A bad man does the reverse, he feels something but says something else and he says something but he does something else. If one really did speak what one feels and do exactly what one says this would build up the inner strength of the man and because of this clarity and unity of his mind and the sincerity of his heart the way would be clear for him. This is the sort of purity one gets if one follows pure feelings and expresses them in true words and does exactly as one says. If one learned this system and kept this consistency, one would grow. One would become more serious and have more strength of character. This brings unity into a man and creates a sort of depth, and through this unity and depth of the individual the glory of the Absolute descends and then manifests all around all that one knows of the glories of the Absolute. [*Record* 18.1.74]

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Further quotation from Dr Roles

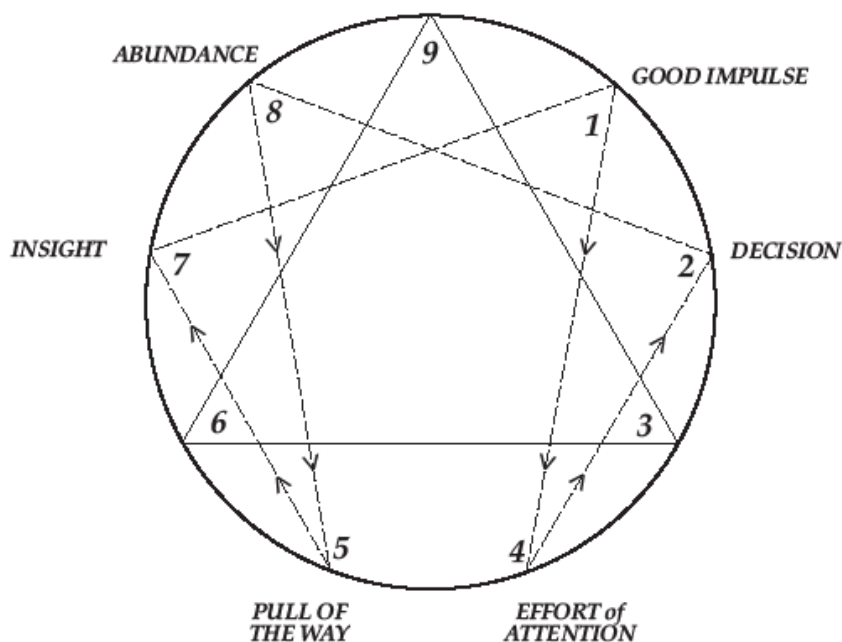
Here is the full text referred to last week of a passage from a Meditation Meeting. Note that the original quotation from an audience on 25.9.1975 referred to prayer.

FCR. One habit which is deeply ingrained in a lot of us who began in the sad days of our old System – we spent so much time and energy confessing our sins to ourselves, dwelling on: "We have done those things we ought not have done, and we have left undone those things we ought to have done" and so on. This is all really increasing the ego. You are turning your attention away from the Divine Spirit (who is always benevolent) to this miserable sinner, and that doesn't interest Him at all. (laughter). We must stop doing that and use the other approach to divinity which H.H. recommends:–

Lord Allan (reading). There are two types of approach [to prayer]. One only describes the glorious aspects of the Absolute, and the poet does it in a beautiful form, speaking of everything which the Absolute has manifested in different ways in this world. The other way is the way intended to remove the extension of the Ahankar, and in that sort of approach one does not speak about the glory of God, but about one's own short-comings, so one says that one is not capable of doing this, one has done this wrong and that wrong, and asks the Absolute to be merciful and to save one from all these vices. Although there are these two ways, the better way is the first where one speaks about the glory of the Absolute. Although by the other the Ahankar is reduced (Dr R: that is it is made to be less pleased with itself) nothing much positive is put in its place so one always lags behind, not that one is inferior but the glory does not immediately descend on one. By the first sort of approach, one says that the Absolute, God, is all-knowing, all-pervading, has all knowledge, has all the forces in the Universe, has created a beautiful world in all forms; and because one is his son, one would also like to enjoy everything that he has created, and also partake in the creative act, just as the cub of a lion in course of time acts like a grown-up lion. But by the other way one keeps saying to the Absolute, as is said in one of the Sanskrit prayers: "I am a sinner, and I have been indulging myself in sinful activities, and I am very lowly, would you please be kind enough to deliver me from these things, will you please forgive me for being like that?" Ultimately you see that an approach which goes towards the glory aspect is much more positive, much more rewarding. [78/31]

Head and Heart in the Enneagram – for experts

The relationship and cooperation between head and heart is seen in exquisite precision in the Enneagram relating to the ladder of self-realisation. Those of us who studied with Dick Guyatt will remember that he constantly returned to the two ‘preparatory triads’ of the inner circulation of the Enneagram. There is no need here to deal with the details, just to remember that the inner circulation is in the order 142857 and the triads in question are 142 (head) and 857 (heart).



The triad 142 refers to self-remembering, ‘waking up’, ‘becoming present’, and belongs to the intellectual centre, the head. The triad 857 refers here to awakening of Conscience and belongs to the emotional centre, the heart.

If there is an effort to remember oneself (142), often it may not proceed very far and the remembrance dies away in a minute or two. In part this is because the circulation does not proceed automatically – it needs other efforts: perhaps the energy needed to take the circulation further in the left hand side of the diagram (857) is not present. If energy *is* present – from meditation or other kinds of devotional effort or by virtue of sustained attention – the inner circulation continues through the triad 857. With energy at point 7, Conscience operates and the inner circulation starts the cycle again at point 1, prompting the ‘good impulse’. That is, one cycle 142857 has been completed and the next begins. With continued attention (142), the circulation can become continuous and the energy round the Enneagram can build up very quickly – in seconds – so that self-remembering is maintained for longer and the experience is much deeper.

Another reason why the circulation may not proceed very far is because of a drain of energy. Some part of this is inevitable – ienergy gets used up in necessary activities, and indeed with access to higher energy, extraordinary things can be accomplished. But much of the drain is not necessary and usually the inner circulation dries up far too soon. Destructive inner thoughts and emotions are often to blame, associated with one’s many ‘I’s’.