

FCR 1976-82

Self-remembering (continued)

We start from where last week's introduction to 'self-remembering' left off, and follow the course of Dr Roles's understanding of self-remembering in both HH's teaching and the System. 'Self-remembering' was not the term that HH used as a rule; rather, he laid stress on remembering the Param-Atman, and Dr Roles preferred to keep the term for the System usage (77/29, 79/32). Nevertheless the two teachings have much in common. For example, Dr Roles relates that PDO even had a simile for the observation that 'we do not remember ourselves' that precisely corresponds to HH's story of ten men in a boat:

Mr. O. Now try to formulate what you noticed when you tried to observe yourself. You should have noticed . . . that you do not *remember yourself*; that is, you are not present in the field of observation. (He once said to me, 'It's like sitting at a dinner table where all the chairs are occupied by people you know – except your own.') [77/20]

Both teachings point to 'self-remembering' being a half-way stage. In HH's example, it was remembering the big house but not entering it, half-way between the little house and the big house. In the System, Ouspensky talked of a partial awakening:

Very soon you will realize that all your work on yourself is connected with Self-remembering and that it cannot proceed successfully without this. And Self-remembering is a partial awakening or the beginning of awakening. [*Psychological Lectures*, quoted in 79/30]

There were a couple of cautions last week of what self-remembering *isn't* – and Dr Roles's last words on the subject were also cautionary:

I've realised myself in being put through the hoop, as I am at the present moment, that what we used to call remembering oneSelf is in fact forgetting the Param-Atman. We misunderstood the old system. It's not that all of it was inherently wrong. But it was misunderstood. Mr Ouspensky used to say, 'You have first of all to forget yourself completely, all that you call I; and only then will the real consciousness come in.' All the exercises we used to do – I mean when I first learnt the system somebody was put on to teach me and he said if you are going to shake hands with somebody, you have to stop and say, 'I am shaking hands,' and that will be Self-remembering. . . . There was a great deal of self-deception about this. [81/16]

Self-remembering is said to supply the first conscious shock in the Food Table, filling an interval to allow the impressions and the air octaves to proceed, so that higher energy is created right up to the next interval. Dr Roles drew two intriguing diagrams to show the relation between the System and HH's teaching in this respect, and we may deal with them in detail in a subsequent paper. But briefly for now, one of them (Fig. 1) shows the eightfold path of yoga as an enneagram: self-remembering is required at the left apex of the triangle, the same point as where meditation enters, for progress to continue towards Samahdi.

As becomes clear in his papers and the audiences in our period of study, it was the focus on remembering the Param-Atman that became of paramount importance to Dr Roles. There are

literally hundreds of exhortations to remember and serve the Param-Atman. This was HH's way, the way of bhakti, devotion, and it is the path that Dr Roles followed.

The journey is not always easy but sometimes it goes right. To return to the question 'Does one have to think, have in mind, "I am doing this for the Param-Atman" in order to be doing it for Him?', here is one reply:

In practice it doesn't seem to be quite like the way the question was put; more that after a period of trying to merge with the Real Self - Meditation, Fourth Selam (of the Mukabeleh) the Dervish Prayer (in the 'Movements') then for a short time afterwards a lovely state of connectedness can exist - there is this Energy of Delight! While this lasts one can take action, drive a car, converse on the telephone, and somehow (still) be in a state of acknowledging the Source - there is happiness, effortless, and yet control, certainty. Then the personal viewpoint returns and strengthens, the delight fades, vaguely one is aware of something lost." [76/2]

It would seem from an individual point of view that meditation and self-remembering are there to create the energy for a state of higher consciousness, by whose light the individual may find the big house. But we are told that the Param-Atman feeds on happiness (and the System idea that we are food for archangels may be stating the same proposition).

Mrs. H. Caiger-Smith. Dr. Roles has helped very much tonight by saying what the meditation is for. That it's not for oneself, but for a moment of happiness for the Atman.

Dr. R. That is really the ultimate secret. Just as one's life is not for oneself, one's ego. It's the Jiva (the individual) Atman that comes into the world to find happiness in spite of conditions, and one's life is to enable the individual Atman to achieve that. Everything one does in one's life should be for that purpose. (to Lady A) This prayer that the Shankaracharya gave at Bobby's last audience, for instance, and which he carried with him:

"Oh my Lord, my whole being is Yourself, and this
Mind which has been given to me is your consort.
The life-force, breath and energy which You have given me are your
attendants.
My body is the temple in which I worship You.
Whatever I eat, or wear, or do is part of the worship
which I keep on performing at this temple.
Even when this body goes to sleep I feel I am in union with You.
Whenever I walk, I feel I am going on pilgrimage to You.
Whatever I speak is all in praise of You.
So, whatever I do in this world in any way is all aimed at You.
In fact, there is no duality in this life of unity with Yourself." [80/7]

Exercise

Perhaps we could each keep a diary this week, a record of when we have remembered the Param-Atman (or however we may put it).

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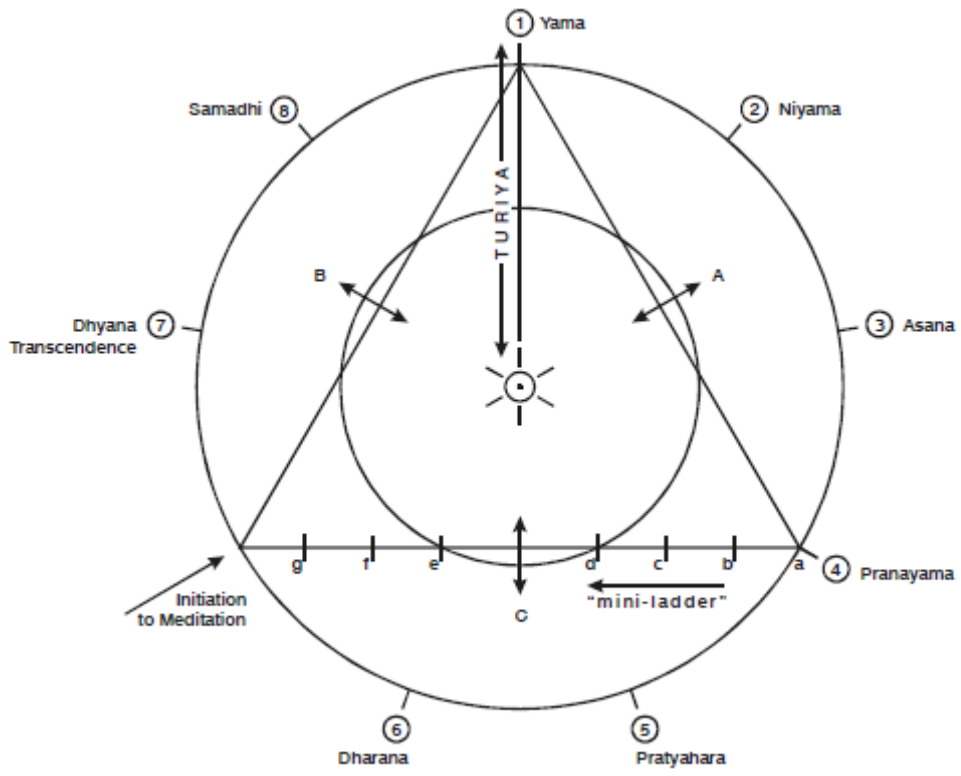


Fig. 1 Enneagram of 8-fold path [80/11]