



The Upper Triad Material

Topical Issue 4.22

The Human Being 2

The Personality or Lower Self



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The Human Being 2

Fourth Edition, October 2006

Published by

The Upper Triad Association

P.O. Box 40

Willow Spring, North Carolina 27592

The Upper Triad Association is a 501 (c) 3 non-profit educational organization established in 1974 and devoted to the study and practice of various principles leading to personal and spiritual growth.

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Chapter 4.22

The Human Being 2



The Personality or Lower Self

- The personality is the aspect of appearance, of the soul-in-manifestation as the reflection and descension of consciousness into the objective realm of physical, emotional, and intellectual experience and expression. The soul thus incarnates through a succession of personalities, male and female, of various races, cultures, etc. The role of the personality is to experience, objectively, while the role of the soul is to assimilate that experience, subjectively. The personality consists of four bodies, a physical body, an etheric double, an astral or emotional body or aura, and a concrete mind. Within the personality are the elements of intellect, feeling, ego, etc. The personality is naturally self-centered, while the soul is naturally not-self-centered. Through countless incarnations of experience and expression, and through earned consequences, the personality gradually matures. As the personality matures, its lesser, materialistic and egoistic nature is gradually tempered and ultimately transcended. Thus included in consideration of personality are the nature of personality and personality types.

The Waking-Consciousness

The waking-consciousness is the focus or attention in consciousness. The normal (human) state for the waking-consciousness is the conscious (concrete) mind which lives through sense-impressions and thought-forms. But the waking-consciousness can vary widely in scope and quality, from enchantment by (absorption in) the lower phenomenal world, through various stages of mental (manasic) activity, to buddhic (intuitional) experience far beyond the mind.

The conscious mind (waking-consciousness) is the lens (link) through which experience is obtained and expression is achieved. That lens may be relatively focused or unfocused. Purely instinctual experience and expression implies the working of a mind that cannot really be focused; and in that case the waking-consciousness is rather vague. The next higher stage of experience is somewhere between the instinctual and the intellectual, where the waking-consciousness is absorbed (preoccupied) through kama-manas (the desire mind). The desire-mind involves glamour and distortion, so that the waking-consciousness (at that stage) remains somewhat out of focus. Much of the activity and experience of the desire-mind is governed and conditioned unconsciously, especially by the external forces present in the immediate emotional and mental atmosphere which resonate with the tendencies (vulnerabilities) of the personality.

As the conscious mind gradually frees itself from the binding forces and limitations of kama-manas, the intellectual realm of focus is entered. The waking-consciousness may pass freely between the lower and higher states (depending on experience and development), but once the mind is reasonably developed (clarified), experience on any level becomes a matter of consciously or unconsciously directing (focusing) the attention of the intellect or mind. A great deal of coupling (interaction) then exists between the various states of emotional and intellectual experience. Patterns (habits) of thinking and feeling then tend to replace the purely external forces as the dominating influence for the waking-consciousness.

As the mind becomes more and more developed (disciplined) it becomes possible to pass the waking-consciousness into the abstract (higher) mind. Meditation (holding the purified mind steady in the light of the soul) is the method leading to such contemplation (abstract mental activity). When the waking-consciousness functions with form (thought-forms), the focus remains in the concrete mental region. When the waking-consciousness functions without form (in the higher sense) the focus is within the abstract mental region (or beyond) (of the soul). Beyond purely mental activity is the intuitional realm (buddhi) and the interaction between the mind and the intuition (buddhi-manas).

The intuitional realm should not be confused with the instinctual or astral. On intuitional levels, the waking-consciousness experiences awareness and realization, without thought. There may be awareness of consciousness itself, or awareness of thought (as in looking within the subconscious mind from the standpoint of the soul), but there is no direct expression in form, except consequentially as the lower mechanism (personality) attempts to interpret or respond to the higher impressions and subjective experience. The soul (and even the mind) can function practically independently of the waking-consciousness (the temporary focus for consciousness). A great deal of activity occurs on more subtle levels (subconscious and super-conscious). One of the goals of the spiritual student is to so expand the focus of the waking-consciousness that the subtle activities can be consciously programmed, thus increasing the utilization and usefulness of the entire human mechanism.

† Commentary No. 166

The Human Aura

The human aura is the energy field associated with the mind and personality. It has several aspects, including the etheric or energy body, the astral or desire body, and the mental aura. All of the sensations, feelings, experiences, thoughts, actions, and characteristics of the personality find their existence or counterpart within the human aura. Each of the several aspects may be considered an aura in itself, on its own level or dimension. Thus, in referring to an aura, one might be referring to any one or more of the several aspects.

The aura is a field of influence and a means of interacting consciously and unconsciously with the immediate environment. As a field, the aura may be large or small, potent or impotent, active or passive, transmissive or reactive, bright or dull, controlled or uncontrolled, dynamic or (relatively) static, stable or unstable, strong or weak, offensive or defensive, impersonal or personal. The aura may be constituted as any combination of the preceding variables or dimensions, and in varying degrees. The aura may be ever-changing or varying in one or more of these characteristics.

As the aura interacts with the external world, it serves as an instrument of experience. Through the aura the personality is influenced (to a certain extent, depending on the character of the aura) by the environment, and through the aura is the environment (and other lives) influenced to a certain extent by the individual. The bulk of information (experience) obtained by an individual comes through the human aura (and is perceived and interpreted) (consciously or unconsciously) by the personality. The aura is the primary element of sense-perception, because it colors or influences perception according to its character. A person is influenced more by the environment through the aura than through the (apparent) faculties of the ordinary senses. And how a person influences the environment is mostly a matter of the aura and its interaction with the external world.

As the individual progresses spiritually, the aura becomes more and more purified and disciplined and responsive to the inner self. The distortions of mundane emotional and mental life are minimized (if not altogether eliminated), and the influence of the spiritually-centered student is then enhanced as the aura transmits the quality (potency) of the spiritual character. It is not so much what is performed in the outer world by the qualified spiritual student as much as the presence of such a spiritualized and influential personality. Such processes are mainly unconscious, a result of being, rather than a consequence of doing or trying.

The various aspects of the human aura (body) relate in various ways between the personality and its environment. The etheric or vital aura is concerned with etheric (physical) energies. The stability (balance) of the etheric body is essential to physical well-being and vitality. The astral or emotional aura is larger, more subtle than the etheric body, and inherently more interactive with

the environment. All of the emotional characteristics, feelings, desires, tendencies, and vulnerabilities are contained within the astral body or aura. The astral body of the well-disciplined spiritual student is quite stable, clear, serene, and mature, being relatively undistracted by emotional currents. Similarly, the mental aura is larger and even more subtle than the astral body. If the aura is relatively pure and responsive to the inner spiritual potency, then the energies of the soul can flow easily into and through the clarified mental aura and its subordinate elements (astral and etheric counterparts) which together constitute a singular and effective spiritual instrument.

† Commentary No. 215

The Personality

As the third aspect of the human lifeform, the personality is formed of several vehicles for manifestation on objective levels. Each vehicle is attuned to a different rate of vibration of matter and functions on some level of consciousness, though the rate of vibration can be raised or lowered within each respective plane. The three aspects of the lower self (personality) are the concrete mind, the astral body, and the etheric body.

The concrete mind is actually the reflection of the abstract mind into the world of form. The astral (emotional) (desire) body is the instrument of feeling, and the etheric (energy) (vital) body (the etheric double) constitutes a matrix of energy which vitalizes the dense physical body. This lower triad of mental, emotional, and physical aspects excludes the dense physical body; but if that physical form were included in the personality, the lower triad would become a quaternary or four-fold instrument.

As the third aspect of the human lifeform, the personality is governed by the third ray, more so as it is integrated, less so as it functions as several uncoordinated elements, each qualified by its own rays. The physical body, for example, is naturally qualified by the seventh ray since it functions on the seventh or lowest plane of consciousness, and by the third ray since it is the third aspect of the personality. The astral body is qualified primarily by the sixth ray since it corresponds to the sixth plane of consciousness; but as the

second aspect of the personality, the astral body is further qualified by the second ray. The concrete mind is qualified by the first ray as the first aspect of the personality, and by the fifth ray by virtue of correspondence with the fifth plane of consciousness. As the personality is integrated, the concrete mind becomes the dominant force or factor, and finally the mind is associated with the personality ray itself.

As the soul continues to reincarnate, it qualifies each personality, in turn, by a particular personality ray. Each of the rays is chosen, according to some pattern or need, until the experience that each has to offer has been fulfilled. Each personality ray qualifies the experience of the personality during incarnation. That relative qualification depends on the degree of development and maturity of the personality ray being manifested. The personality matrix is further qualified by all of preceding experience, by degrees, along each of the seven rays. The personality exists throughout each incarnation as energized or organized matter with a rather primitive consciousness which provides the deep-seated (subjective) motivation of the personality form, while external forces, karma, and various personal energies provide the superficial motivation.

The respective rates of vibration for each of the aspects of the human personality can be adjusted, more or less independently, provided the mind is strong enough and the personality is reasonably well-integrated. As the quality of consciousness is raised, each of the three vehicles is naturally raised in vibration, since each vehicle is made of matter and consciousness moderates vibration. But the vibration of each vehicle is also subject to external forces in the three worlds of human endeavor, depending on the degree of integration and self-composure. Each vehicle may be quite vulnerable to external or karmic forces, so that a deliberate adjustment on the part of consciousness is required for proper resolution. That normal, waking-consciousness is (essentially) the concrete mind, hopefully inspired and qualified by an alignment with the soul, and hopefully not absorbed by mundane consideration.

Section 4.221



Personality Nature

- The nature of personality begins with the constituent atoms and the form of personality. Also considered are various external and internal forces and conditioning factors (heredity and environment).

The Elemental Nature 1

The Earth planetary scheme consists in part of a succession of lifewaves at various stages of involution or evolution. Following the human lifewave in this succession are the animal, plant, mineral, physical elemental, astral elemental, and concrete mental elemental lifewaves, inhabiting the animal, plant, mineral, physical elemental, astral elemental, and concrete mental elemental kingdoms, respectively. The elemental lifewaves inhabit the basic material (matter) (vibration) at their level and provide the basic building blocks for the composite forms of various (higher) lives. This allows the more complex lives to be active on the lower levels of manifestation. This (lower) activity embraces experiences and expression on the (material) levels (physical, emotional, and concrete mental) subject at best only to those limitations of material existence that cannot be overcome by qualification.

The timeframe for experience at the elemental levels is extremely long compared with that of the higher lives (suggesting a principle of acceleration) (except that the greater (logoc) lives are of a higher (logarithmic (exponential)) order and timeframe). Although the elemental lives contribute directly to the higher lives (by providing for forms), so do the higher lives by virtue of (lower) activity contribute to the experience of the elemental lives (by induction). Thus the elemental lives enjoy aeons of elementary experience (elemental existence) with aeons of associated (ancestral) consciousness (memory on a subconscious, instinctive, elemental level) (enhanced by association with higher lifeforms). Their progress is very slow (relatively) (if one believes in temporal linearity (or attributing significance to the perspective of time)), and their experience is therefore intensive because it is reinforced over some considerable duration (with the talent for adaptation and ability to grow (and interact with surroundings) developing gradually).

Having passed through the elemental kingdoms (in a manner analogous to the current elemental lifewaves), higher (composite) lives necessarily draw upon their own elemental experience (dim and distant though it may be) as well as the elemental experience of their present (transient) forms. The mineral (composite) life is heavily dependent on the dense physical forms provided by

the physical elemental lifewave. The plant (composite life) is dependent on both dense physical matter and etheric matter (and to some small extent on astral material). Animal lives are dependent on dense physical, etheric, and astral matter (and to some small extent on concrete mental material). Human forms consist of dense physical, etheric, astral, and concrete mental matter, which constitute (respectively) the dense physical body, the etheric double or vital body, the astral (emotional) body or aura, and the concrete mind.

The higher organisms (forms) are relatively more complex, yet provide for relatively more potent experience and potential for evolution. Every experience and every aspect of (lower) (incarnated) (manifested) existence is a mixed blessing, on the one hand an opportunity for growth or progress in consciousness, on the other hand an opportunity for (mundane) absorption (stagnation) or reversion to more primitive forces. The stress or tension that exists between the two (positive and negative) poles provides considerably greater opportunity for progress than would otherwise be possible.

Thus the challenge of the human being is the unification and reconciliation of all the opposing forces into a coherent and cooperative whole, responsive to the higher will (of the soul or higher consciousness) and therefore well-placed upon the spiritual path (for further evolution).

† Commentary No. 502

The Elemental Nature 2

The three greatest (basic) problems (blessings) (challenges) of the human personality are the elemental nature, the animal nature, and the human ego. The ego is a problem (once it is developed) to the extent that it is potent and independent. With self-mastery (alignment), the ego is effectively destroyed (as an ego) (being effectively transformed and reformed) (and no longer at the mercy of the animal and elemental natures). The animal nature is a problem too in its independence, its relative coarseness, and its relative (considerable) vulnerability to the elemental urges. With self-mastery (integration) the animal nature is effectively qualified. Similarly for the elemental nature, with self-mastery (refinement) the elemental nature is no longer wholly reactive to external forces, no longer a forceful distraction. Thus the three problems have

three solutions, for the elemental nature, animal nature, and ego, it is refinement, integration, and alignment, respectively.

But the solutions must be effected progressively. One cannot achieve alignment (of soul and personality) without first having a properly integrated and qualified personality. And one cannot achieve that proper integration without first having refined and qualified the elemental nature. Having achieved any of these things one cannot then abandon the discipline and continued qualification necessary for proper maintenance, or else the elemental (animal) (egoic) nature will quickly revert. Having achieved these things (through considerable effort), it is relatively easy to maintain the proper state of the personality (i.e., refined, integrated, and aligned).

In order to fully conquer the elemental nature one must fully understand its character and motivation. Each unqualified elemental reacts to external forces on its level. The physical elemental naturally seeks physical activity. The astral elemental seeks intense, diverse, and dynamic emotional activity. The (concrete) mental elemental seeks stimulating mental activity. The unqualified elemental nature is naturally restless, potent, and forever seeking coarse experience on its level. One aspect will naturally cooperate with another to achieve mutually stimulating activity. The unqualified elemental nature will naturally seek to stimulate the animal nature and deceive the human nature in order to achieve its objective, even where detrimental to the existence of the whole (complex) organism (e.g., suicide is the victory of the elemental nature over the preserving instincts of the animal nature).

The cooperation of elemental aspects is possible due to ancestral memories (e.g., the physical elemental lifewave previously inhabited the astral elemental kingdom and retains much of its astral experience as ancestral memory). The animal nature is the collective, partially integrated body consciousness, the sum of three elemental levels. There is at the elemental level an instinctive intelligence (limited awareness and consciousness at the subconscious level) born of experience. That intelligence is naturally protective (defensive).

Constructively, that means that a healthy body (physical, emotional, or mental) has the ability for healing (on its level) (e.g., the natural organization of cells and vital forces for healing is a natural function of the elemental nature), but

that ability can be overwhelmed by intense, external forces or forces induced from some other level (i.e., karmic balance or carelessness). Similarly, the elemental (cooperative) intelligence can organize considerable resistance to the intended refinement, integration, and alignment, at least until properly qualified, whereupon the elemental nature almost glories in the induced refinement.

† Commentary No. 503

The Elemental Nature 3

The three elementals of the human form (physical, astral (emotional), and (concrete) mental) form the collective (human) subconsciousness and are largely responsible for dreams and other subconscious activity, subject of course to the relative qualification (refinement, integration, and alignment). The conscious and subconscious restlessness of the astral and mental elementals are the principal impediments to effective meditation, but where properly qualified, the subconscious nature can be an effective and constructive force for good.

On each of the three levels, the human personality (and respective elementals) can be viewed according to whether the elemental dominates (unqualified or primitive subconsciousness), or a balance is achieved (normal subconsciousness), or the personality is indeed properly and fully integrated (properly qualified subconsciousness). On the physical level, where the elemental dominates there is a reversion to crude (coarse) physical habits. Where a balance is achieved there is the maintenance of basic physical functions (health). Where the personality is fully integrated, the physical elemental is responsive to self-control, purification, etc. On the astral or emotional level, where the elemental dominates there are cravings, intense desires, obsessions, attachments, oscillations and vacillations of emotion (moodiness), unrestrained self-indulgence, etc. Where a balance is achieved there are normal (moderate) (sensible) desires and aspirations. Where the personality is fully integrated (and reasonably purified) there are the higher, less personal affections and aspirations (compassion).

On the concrete mental level, where the elemental dominates there is bias, prejudice, etc., and a lack of objectivity (presumptions based upon feelings).

Where a balance is achieved there is normal (objective, logical, rational) thinking, consideration of ideas, and sensible conclusions. Where the personality is refined and integrated there is more consideration of ideas and concepts, less bias in thinking, and the potential for (proper) intuitive insight. Occasional insight is possible at both the balanced and integrated levels, but the soul's presence can only be sensed directly where the personality is properly refined and integrated and aligned with the soul.

Although much of the human coarseness (self-indulgence) (self-centeredness) (unresponsiveness to higher forces) can be attributed to the elemental nature and the animal nature (normally but improperly referred to as human nature), the human being is still directly responsible for what he or she is as a personality, previous experience, conditioning, and karma notwithstanding. It is also one's direct responsibility to overcome the elemental nature (and the animal nature) and develop the human form (at all levels) to its proper conclusion (a spiritually responsive organism (physically pure, emotionally pure and still, mentally pure and clear) wholly integrated and aligned with the overshadowing soul and therefore an effective instrument of the soul (and not merely the instrument of the ego or personality)).

The refinement and subordination of the elemental nature also contributes directly to the evolution of those elemental lives. Although they quickly revert to coarseness when set free, they retain the subjective memory of the refined experience and are therefore better able to adapt to the changing conditions of the evolutionary field. Without that experience the elemental lives would be far less responsive. In the greater perspective of one life, all is interrelated, the elemental lives being as much a part of that greater life as are the more complex human and deva lives.

Personality Modes 1

Personality modes are the various patterns or states of personality consciousness (manners of expression) [more properly, the states that correspond respectively to some patterns or manners of experience and expression]. Personality expression is mainly a matter of extent of absorption in mundane and personal consciousness (i.e., the relative absence of awareness or realization), but people vary considerably in the number, style, frequency, etc. of personality modes.

In the context of evolution in consciousness (and the spiritual path), wrong personality modes are those that inhibit the Way, while right personality modes are those that support or facilitate the Way (of progress in higher consciousness). What is right or wrong, in this sense, depends on the relative stage in evolution of consciousness, i.e., what is actually needed by the particular student in order to progress in consciousness. Karma provides merited learning opportunities, opportunities for experience and expression, but the evolutionary context of the average (non-committed) student is relatively broad (i.e., the attitude (e.g., open-ness) of the student makes a great deal of difference in any karmic context). The committed student evokes more stringent karmic experience, is expected to be more responsive to evoked opportunities, is expected to embrace the values necessary to progress to whatever the next stage may be (while for the non-committed student there is no such expectation). Wrong personality modes inhibit that opportunity for progress. Right personality modes facilitate that opportunity.

The key to “rightness” in personality modes, for the serious student, is to value (and thereby encourage) the personality modes that facilitate progress in consciousness (service and self-development) (awareness and realization). Thus it becomes largely a matter of personal discipline and commitment to sustaining the most effective demeanor (attitudes, character, temperament, values). The self-indulgent “mode” clearly represents absorption in mundane and personal (even experiential) matters which do not directly contribute to progress, while a non-self-indulgent mode offers more freedom to be responsive to higher qualification, to be more awake, more aware, and more realizable (capable of

realization). Anything that contributes to non-absorption in mundane and personal matters is of greater value to the (serious) student (and the Path) than that which sustains absorption (in personality-centeredness).

Any personality mode that involves desire, attachments, beliefs, ego, pride, likes and dislikes, etc., (self-indulgence, sensational experience, etc.) inhibits the Way. Any personality mode that allows or facilitates the personality being more responsive to higher impression (less absorbed in the personality itself) facilitates the Way. Through experience, the spiritual student learns which personality modes are inhibitive and which are facilitative, even though the (naturally self-centered) personality would prefer to indulge the contrary. Of course, the absorbed (personality-centered) student is far less able to discriminate these modes and their relative values or to sustain the “right” modes, but eventually the personality becomes sufficiently qualified that the student can effectively realize which modes are which and actually begin to consciously temper the personality in the direction of cultivating and sustaining the right modes.

Personality modes tend to be inertial (in the sense that one is absorbed at the personality level (in personality-centeredness) (not necessarily in the sense of lacking dynamic response)).

† Commentary No. 966

Personality Modes 2

Being personality-centered means not being aware that one is (being) personality-centered. Virtually everyone is personality-centered virtually all the time. Freedom can only be achieved as the student realizes the truth of his or her personality-centeredness (absorption in mundane and personal experience and expression). Then it becomes possible to be aware of one’s personality-centeredness (and associated personality mode(s)) and gradually to rise above that personality-centeredness into a state of freedom in consciousness (i.e., non-absorption in mundane and personal “life” (conscious awareness of higher consciousness) (being awake rather than being asleep in personality)).

People are normally and naturally (inertially) self-indulgent, without realizing that they are so (and without realizing that that very self-indulgence is inhibitive of self-realization (awareness) (freedom from the state of conditioned (personality-centered) consciousness)). “Man” has an amazing ability to rationalize and sustain his or her own delusions, particularly where the ego (personality) (lower self) is concerned. In “doing” whatever feels good (or whatever is rationalized as appropriate) (entertaining the mundane or personal (personality) interests), one is effectively preventing realization (sustaining the inhibitive personality modes). One must therefore (eventually) (if one is to progress beyond personality-centeredness (conditioned, limited, partial existence)) acknowledge self-indulgence for what it is (and for what it lacks in real value), and make a commitment to rise above the petty interests (and rationalized “importance” of personality endeavors), and in the course of this realization-transformation one encourages the cultivation and momentum (and eventual predominance) of the more appropriate (evolutionary) (facilitative) personality modes.

The inertial aspect of personality is rooted in its material nature. As the personality grows in strength (as it must in the early stages of human evolution in which the personality is actually cultivated) it develops momentum in its delusion of separateness (and self-importance). One is, in this process (at that stage), very much conditioned and lacking in real freedom (i.e., the freedom of the conditioned personality is limited to “operating” within one’s conditioning). The weak personality in the lower sense is passive and very much open to external conditioning (external personality-level influence). The strong personality is relatively insensitive to anything other than what it wants, having momentum as a personality and being inertial relative to progress. The weak personality in the higher sense is tempered by and responsive to higher qualification (the soul), and builds momentum in its commitment to the path.

With knowledge and understanding of these processes (personality conditioning, relative absorption in mundane and personal matters) and realization of one’s personality-centeredness (self-centeredness) (self-indulgence) [however sincere], the spiritual student gradually cultivates freedom from personality-centeredness. The student learns to be aware of his or her personality mode(s), learns to avoid those modes that are inhibitive, and learns

to cultivate and sustain those modes that are facilitative of progress in consciousness.

The keys to this process are humility, self-honesty, and growing self-realization. It is not enough for the spiritual student to be absorbed in good works, service in humanitarian endeavors, etc., if that absorption is personality-centered. The student must rise above desire, attachments, mundane and personal absorption, etc., if he or she is to advance human consciousness.

† Commentary No. 1429

Strength of Personality

Most people in incarnation are embarked upon a non-conscious path of development at the personality level. Through the course of experience and expression and circumstances (the dance of karma) the personality is developed and strengthened, in order to relate effectively with the pressures and challenges of life in the world. Actions and behaviors (including thinking and feeling) invite consequences. This is a world of harmony through contrast (conflict), and the (artificial) strength of personality is a natural consequence.

But life in this world is also a dance of ebb and flow. Development is multi-faceted, but current experience tends to foster development in particular aspects or facets before moving on to other aspects. People develop in certain ways, then need to achieve some measure of balance, before extension or expansion to the next level is possible. And in many instances people are necessarily over-developed in some way or another, and the relative strength of development in some regard becomes a barrier to subsequent development. Evolution is a matter of cycles within cycles, a spiral of progression, a relatively complex succession of experiences and advances and overcoming of barriers.

The personality is an artificial aspect of consciousness. It is not the real person. It is both a reflection of consciousness and the means of that reflection. It is simply an instrument for experience and expression. It should be developed and maintained in a healthy state, fit for proper experience and expression, but not over-developed. The problem is that most people identify with their

personalities and this gives additional strength to the personality (as an artificial entity). Even where there is intellectual understanding that it is just a personality, there is still (usually) tacit identification. So even (nominally) spiritual students are limited by this instinctive (conscious or unconscious) identification and the relative strength of personality.

Strength of personality is compounded by ego, which is necessarily self-serving and defensive, and by the inertia of matter, since the personality consists fundamentally of several bodies of matter. Indeed, for most people the mind and personality and ego are all the same energy and distinctions between these things are not really significant. But the mind is simply a component, like the astral or emotional body, the etheric body, and the dense physical body. All contribute to strength of personality. And the ego is simply the most artificial part of the personality as a whole, induced through (improper) identification in consciousness with the personality. Experience at the personality level, development at the personality level, all contributes toward increased strength of personality.

It is perhaps the greatest challenge of incarnated life, to recognize the distinction between soul and personality, between the higher self (the real self) and the lower self (the artificial self), to temper that lower self and to transcend that distinction. But in the meantime, for most people and most instances, it is the (strength of) personality that dominates life (experience and expression) in the lower world. So the spiritual student comes to this realization (distinction and significance) and gradually tempers the personality, through personal discipline and other, more subtle methods. And eventually the purified (qualified) (refined) (tempered) personality becomes a more effective instrument and less of a barrier in consciousness.

Section 4.222



Personality Types

- There are a number of different personality types and a number of different ways of perceiving or typing the various personalities. Some systems are natural, e.g., drawing from the underlying nature and influence of the seven rays, and some systems are more artificial, based upon observation and conclusion. Most systems offer some insight into the nature of the personality and how personalities relate to each other based on their conditioning. The spiritual student should keep in mind, however, that one of the goals of the spiritual path is transcending the limitations of personality. As the soul is embraced, the personality and its world are transcended.

The Extroverted Personality

Most human personalities can be generally categorized as being either introverted or extroverted, according to the extent of apparent interest in and interaction with the objective, outer world of ordinary human experience. The extroverted personality is usually quite easily absorbed by (in) the outer world and is therefore rather interactive with mundane conditions (with a tendency toward being reactionary). The extroverted personality tends toward unreserve, communicativeness, talkativeness, sociability, outspokenness, and unrestraint. The extroverted personality lends itself to personal expression, to activity, involvement, accomplishment, and the exaggeration of the personal self (ego).

The primary advantages of the extroverted expression (as the spiritual student is concerned) are accomplishment, acceptability, active experience, and expression (the development of needed abilities and the expression of appropriate energies). But the disadvantages of extroversion, though quite insubstantial to those who are not upon the path, are considerable for those who are on the spiritual path, for the extroverted personality is so easily absorbed (deceived) (distracted) (corrupted) by mundane experience. While the extroverted experience accomplishes a great deal in the basic development of the human personality, it is usually at the expense of the inner life and quality.

The extroverted personality may be viewed as a stage through which each person must pass, to develop the needed abilities (and to learn how to express those abilities) and strengths, as a prerequisite for further development and refinement along more introspective lines. Extroversion is defined as the habit (process) (pattern) of directing the attention (the waking-consciousness) toward and obtaining gratification from the external world (of things and objective experience) (from what is outside the self). Extroversion, as a necessary stage of experience, is implied in the obligatory pilgrimage into matter. Through that pilgrimage, self-consciousness is achieved and development along personality lines is completed. But continued extroversion (without moderation) is merely the exaggeration of self-consciousness (and the personality) and the denial of the inner life (reality) in the illusion of objective experience.

But this is not to say that there is no place for extroverted experience or expression in the life of the relatively mature spiritual student. There may be times and circumstances which appropriately call forth the spiritual student into particular and deliberate involvement in the external world, but always (hopefully) with inner guidance and outer restraint, as the external involvement is properly tempered by the inner rapport and wisdom. The spiritual student is (relatively) welcome to play whatever useful role is called for in the external world, provided that such a role can be played honestly, without compromising the spiritual integrity, and without leading the student to any substantial absorption in mundane or personality matters.

The spiritual student who finds himself blessed with a well-developed extroverted personality would do well to channel his energies more through creative meditation than external involvement and to abstain from idle speech (even from sociable but petty conversation) in order to place his abilities in perspective. Absorption by personality-centered conversation leads frequently to the demise of the extroverted personality (the rendering of the personality virtually useless with respect to spiritual awareness and higher consciousness). Such is the danger of involvement in matters of personal (personality) interest, a danger that encourages the student toward self-mastery and freedom from the concentration upon the worldly values and objective experience.



Commentary No. 235

The Introverted Personality

Though the extroverted personality constitutes a broad stage of experience and development (from the undeveloped and unevolved person to one who stands at the threshold of the spiritual path proper), the introverted personality is usually found in two relatively narrow stages: at the threshold of externalized experience and at the relative conclusion of externalized experience.

The first type of introverted personality is relatively undeveloped (at least with respect to the immediate experience, though it may unfold rapidly) and is often unaccustomed to life in the outer, objective world. It is characterized (generally) as relatively shy, withdrawn, (almost) childlike, oblivious to external experience.

Such an introverted person usually lives in his own self-centered, almost dream-like world, full of imagination, but with no real interest or involvement with the world of ordinary experience.

This first kind of introverted personality can come about through several very different ways. A soul unaccustomed to incarnation may find life in the lower worlds to be quite alien, and will therefore protect or mask the personality until it has time to develop and adjust to its new experience. Some personality patterns may have psychological problems (from previous experience) (or defective equipment) that result in an introverted personality, at least until the problem or deficiency is overcome. Also (in contrast), very highly evolved souls often prefer the introverted personality (of the first type), for awhile at least, to keep it from being easily absorbed by mundane experience, and until the soul can establish the needed rapport with its instrument. Thus, the first type may or may not have an inherent, developed consciousness, but if it has, that consciousness is not being fully expressed or exercised.

The second type of introverted personality characterizes the relatively advanced soul who has already experienced and mastered the extroverted experience. Such a personality has most of the advantages of the extroverted personality with virtually none of the disadvantages, plus considerable advantages inherent in the (well-developed) introverted personality itself. Where the extroverted personality is an exercise in objective, outgoing concrete mental and emotional experience, the mature somewhat introverted personality is an exercise in greater consciousness and the refinement of a highly poised and effective instrument. Such a person is usually quite aware of both external and internal experience; being a highly trained observer with full faculties of assessment and understanding (and creative interaction). Among the important characteristics usually present in addition to spiritual poise, are moderation, a contemplative (introspective) nature, self-sufficiency, detachment (freedom and potency), impersonality, humility, modesty, self-control, respect for others, peacefulness (gentleness), wisdom (discretion), and (inner) strength.

In general, it is this (second type) somewhat introverted personality that is used to bridge between the two worlds (between the external world of ordinary experience and the internal, subjective world of the soul). The self-contained (self-fulfilled) individual turns naturally inward to the soul (through meditation

and contemplation). The reserved, contemplative disposition and temperament are well-suited to the discreet expression of the higher (spiritual) energies to benefit the various evolving lives. The reticence of the spiritual student is vital to the maintenance of freedom from absorption, yet that same reticence need not impair the quiet and meaningful expression of both love and light. The student may be interested in the outer world of (meaningful) human experience, but that interest is demonstrated qualitatively, without drama.

† Commentary No. 515

The Demanding Personality

One of the problems of a strong, relatively coarse personality is that of a certain self-centeredness demonstrated by that personality making demands of others or of life (God) (the path) (soul). A strong, disciplined, qualified (refined), and subordinated personality is an effective (and necessary) means of progress (and meaningful service) upon the spiritual path (for one who is still upon the wheel of life and death (rebirth)). Such a personality must be strong enough to be relatively free from external forces (at least in the sense of being non-reactive and being relatively free from external glammers and distractions), yet not separatively so or of an independent nature. But the demanding personality is another creature altogether, lacking the spiritual strength and proper humility that are so necessary upon the path.

Making demands upon others is simply not warranted. No one has the inherent right to demand of another (even proper leadership is not a demanding exercise); any demands (or expectations) one may make upon another constitute an imposition, and any imposition (without compelling responsibility) constitutes a violation of the other's aura (karma notwithstanding, since karma invariably takes all factors into consideration). One should respect all others, and in respect, avoid imposition, depending on consideration to achieve one's (reasonable) objectives. In the face of lack of consideration (presumed or apparent unreasonableness) on the part of another, one should, if possible (practicable), simply withdraw from that interaction (relationship) or bring about an appropriate change in one's perspective. One should not, in general, persist in a demanding manner.

Making demands of life (God) (the spiritual path) (the soul) is similarly not warranted. The world (God) (life) owes nothing to the individual (or group) that is not already accommodated in that individual's (group's) existence (karma). To make demands of life (to have expectations inconsistent with one's willingness to work (apply effort (energy)) toward that objective) is to evoke an appropriate force of preclusive tendency. To make demands of God (the spiritual path) (the soul) is to achieve further separation in character and quality of consciousness, for the coarseness of any demand is necessarily separative (all demands are coarse). One cannot even (rightfully) demand of the soul, for the soul is never compelled by its inferior (the personality). One can only approach the soul with humility and qualified aspiration (devotion to duty), and thereby evoke the richness of the love and light of the soul. Without such (humility and qualified aspiration) one simply cannot approach the soul or achieve any response on the part of the soul (the soul is simply not of a nature to be responsive to the self-centered or demanding personality).

Being demanding "implies peremptoriness and insistence" and the delusion of exigency (situational or otherwise). Such self-centeredness is a form of arrogance and presumption that must invariably and necessarily be overcome and transformed into something more appropriate to spiritual undertaking if the individual is to succeed in any spiritual (real) sense. In humility is the preservation of reality, of spiritual momentum, and proper spiritual expression. The demanding personality is merely foolish and naive, even sincerely so, yet nonetheless unable to achieve any rapport in consciousness.

The laws of karma prevail and persist in spite of the follies and delusions of separate (separative) existence. All that is due is present. All that is just is. Nothing is (ever) urgent in any higher or spiritual sense. Therefore demands need never to be made.

The Aberrant Personality

A crucial endeavor in each cycle of mundane life (death) is developing (reconstituting) (reestablishing) the personality, which is comprised of the concrete mind, emotional (astral) body, and physical (etheric) body. The endeavor is crucial, for the properly aligned and integrated personality is the gateway to the soul, and without its (at least) relative development, progress in any higher (spiritual) (or even mundane) sense is not possible. However, during an (any) incarnation (seeming) psychological (personality) problems may exist (can occur) which hinder and/or obviate this development, and thus, from the mundane perspective, an aberrant (abnormal) (atypical) (deviant) (non-conforming) personality is the consequence.

The types of abnormalities possible are numerous and include (but are not limited to), manic-depression, schizophrenia (split personality), obsession-compulsion, etc. These are the more severe psychological (from the lower perspective), psychotic aberrations. However, there are (also) less severe, neurotic, behavioral symptomology, or phobias (exaggerated or pathological dread of a stimulus or some situation, e.g., heights, confined areas, going outside, etc.), tics (spasmodic facial twitches or body movements), etc., which are classified as less severe, but can still be extremely debilitating to those afflicted and thus can still have very serious consequences.

Superficially, it appears that psychological aberration (deviancy) is becoming more and more commonplace (from the lower perspective). However, as with any (seemingly) new (from the lower perspective) area of awareness, it is not that psychological aberration is manifesting more now than before, but rather that humanity is willing (able) to incorporate these (seeming) problems into their reference frame (consciousness) (i.e., the conditions existed before but were either erroneously classified or simply ignored).

From the perspective of the (exoteric) psychologist, these aberrations for the majority of mankind are due to (created and/or caused by) chemical imbalance or behavioral deviation (probably the primary cause of psychological disorder for most of mankind). However, in the case of the spiritual student (or from the

perspective of the esoteric psychologist), the deviancy may also be due to ill-advised personality manipulation in order to achieve spiritual growth before achieving proper personality integration. In addition, while all (inappropriate) personality manipulation for premature spiritual ends is dangerous, the danger increases as the student is further along the spiritual path, i.e., advanced students are afforded less room for error. However, in all cases such manipulation should not be attempted without proper knowledge and guidance (due consideration of the proper alignment of the higher soul and lower personality) (for one is dealing with considerable (unknown) power and if done inappropriately, it can easily lead to a mental and/emotional breakdown (or total destruction) for at least part of the current lifetime, if not longer).

However, one way or another, all (seeming) aberration is karmically warranted (if not appreciated from a mundane perspective) (if not actually sought?), to provide the opportunity to work out consequences (achieve learning) (aid in development and progress) not possible or practicable any other way. So while such deviation may seem to be wasted effort from the perspective of the (inconsequential) lower self (personality), it may in fact be an accelerated path and/or the only option available to achieve the desired end from the perspective of the soul (i.e., no experience is wasted from the higher perspective).

† Commentary No. 722

The Multiple Personality 1

Once the spiritual student begins to (consciously) traverse the spiritual path to (of) the higher self (soul), the personality should (ideally) be a single, (relatively) focused unit (uni-dimensional) (non-compartmentalized) (unsegmented). However, this is not usually the case at first, for while the student may dimly recognize a higher calling, the personality is still quite independent (i.e., lacking control). Thus, the personality is quite rebellious (separative, self-centered, etc.), desiring mainly to indulge its lower-nature excesses, which is natural for the personality is still young (inexperienced) (most likely just achieving power over its components, the physical, emotional, and lower mental bodies).

During this time of seemingly unending excess (normal evolutionary progress), personality development usually involves divisions, or the personality is split into two or multiple (equally important?) segments. Normally less severe examples of the division are deceit, hypocrisy, or simply maintaining a (designed) separation (split) between the work, home (social) and spiritual milieu, i.e., the multiple personality. In the case of a personality with a severe psychological aberration, the individual is unaware of the split, and the person is (exoterically) called a schizophrenic. However, with a student further along the path some awareness of the division (multi-faceted makeup) exists (or at least the potential for awareness exists). At this time, since personality existence normally involves duality, having a multiple personality may be all that can be expected. However, as the student progresses on the path (before any real progress is possible), any schisms in the personality must be resolved, i.e., the personality must achieve at-one-ment (unity) (the integrated state) (which, with refinement, allows for alignment).

At first, achieving unity in the personality is difficult (or impossible) (even if appropriate), for the individual lives in the chaotic (and possibly psychologically diverse) world of the newly formed (multiple) personality. However, as the student progresses, the ability to recognize the compartmentalization becomes (gradually) easier and soul awareness (control) becomes the norm. In addition, as spiritual progress occurs, while compartmentalization may exist, possibly it is done knowingly, e.g., to retain stability (balance), for the consequences of living life as the whole (at-one) unit of the spiritual self are difficult (if not completely overwhelming) for the lower self to resolve (i.e., the personality may not willingly (easily) subjugate itself to the soul).

Attempts to achieve the higher self without unity of the personality will be only partially successful (at best). Forcing the situation (the way of a personality that outwardly professes subservience but inwardly is more self-centered) before unity is naturally achieved is the reason that some students on the path go psychologically astray (permanently with regard to a lifetime but temporarily with regard to the path). However, as progress is made, the necessary unity is achieved (seemingly) easily or not, as the student strives and progresses.

Until relatively recently, psychological aberration and multiple personalities were mainly handled as exoteric psychological exercises (considerations)

without any real appreciation of the greater whole. However, orthodox psychology is progressing and gradually incorporating a more integrated (broader) (more inclusive) view of the human personality as more psychologists become more responsive to higher impression.

† Commentary No. 1029

Having, Doing, and Being

There is a relatively ancient (timeless) notion of three stages of personality emphasis (focus) (orientation), with a somewhat loose correlation to polarization in consciousness, characterized by having, doing, and being.

In the “having” stage, a person is predominantly materialistic and/or possessive, being concerned primarily with having things, and/or having people under one’s influence (e.g., personal power, financial resources, material and people possessions). This is an “early” emphasis in personality development and corresponds loosely with physical and emotional polarization. There is in this stage not much appreciation for the transient nature of material life or the need to develop character to carry forth into the next life. Nonetheless, character is slowly developed through rather lengthy experience and expression at this level.

In the “doing” stage, a person is predominantly experiential, being concerned primarily with doing things, experiencing “sensations,” and/or achieving something (i.e., egoistic satisfaction). This is an “intermediate” emphasis in personality development and corresponds loosely with emotional and mental polarization. This stage has three major sub-stages or categories of “doing,” one that is primarily self-centered in the sense of self-centered (physical and emotional) experience (excitement, enjoyment, etc.), one that is self-centered in the sense of ambitious (egoistic) undertakings (in physical, emotional, and/or intellectual terms), however noble they may or may not be, but primarily motivated by ego (the need for recognition of accomplishment), and one that is primarily self-centered in the somewhat more noble sense of learning and growing, with or without a motive beyond one’s own interests. In this stage one still “has” things, but without so much of the sense of attachment characterized by the first stage. In this stage character is developed relatively more quickly

than in the first stage, depending on which of the three sub-stages is actually embraced.

In the "being" stage, a person is predominantly focused in consciousness and being, being concerned about matters non-material and non-egoistic. This is an "advanced" emphasis of personality development and corresponds loosely with mental and intuitional polarization. In this stage one may still "have" things, but primarily in the sense of the utility of living in this world and in facilitating one's being. In this stage one may also still "do" things, but without ambition or any sense of achievement or need for self-fulfillment, as these things have been accomplished previously and are no longer needed or valued. In the being stage one may still "learn" from experience and expression, but the focus remains on being, on sharing one's energy rather than more directly facilitating "activity" in experience or expression.

In practice, each person in incarnation exhibits all three stages or foci, to some extent and/or for some periods of time, in various ways, but as the personality experience stabilizes, one or another of these three foci will tend to dominate. Except in the case of recapitulation, the first (having) stage lasts the longest, the second (doing) is relatively shorter, and the third (being) may be relatively short in the case of those who pass on to the next lifewave (kingdom) but may be relatively long for those who choose to remain in this world. The having stage gradually yields to the doing stage, and the doing stage gradually yields to the being stage, over the course of many lives and/or in the course of each lifetime (in the sense of recapitulation for those who have previously reached the second or third stage).

Human Taxonomy

Humanity is a lifewave within a stream of interrelated lifewaves, and within that lifewave exists a complicated taxonomy (organization) (classification) of human groups. The first taxonomic distinction is the contrast between the relatively obvious relationships (karma) of the form (personality) (body) and the relatively masked relationships of the life or consciousness (soul) (mind) within the form. The history (heritage) (karma) of the soul (consciousness) does not normally correspond to that of the form in any particular way.

The taxonomy of the human form is relatively simple in terms of structure (design), but complicated in practice due to the interaction of the various structural groups. The basic design (pattern) (with regard to form (not consciousness)) is racial, as humanity (the human lifewave) incarnates en masse through a series of root-races and their subordinate groups. These root-races do overlap somewhat (depending on the needs of humanity) (as each root-race provides a distinct racial opportunity), and are subdivided into various sub-races, branch races, tribes, and family groups.

Historically, the various root-races and their major subordinate elements (groups) were relatively isolated or separated one from another, so that each major subordinate group constituted a distinct and relatively sovereign entity having its own political, economic, cultural, and religious character. As civilization progressed (in general) some of the major elements experienced increased interaction (communication) (exchange) (mixing) and the constitution of major elements changed accordingly. Consequently, human forms (people) are now organized more significantly in terms of three or four characteristics (racial, political, economic, and religious) rather than original (purely racial) qualification. Sovereign entities (nation-states) are now primarily political entities, though some remain relatively uniform in racial and religious terms.

These changes have had a relatively dramatic effect on the way people respond to higher impressions and karmic relationships as groups. In the relatively early days of human civilization, the various racial groups (tribes, families) were guided (influenced) by a relatively strong group-spirit (analogous to the group-

soul) according to their racial heritage. As the groups dispersed and interacted with each other, the inner continuity diminished and the new groups were far less responsive to the group impressions. Instead, the karmic heritage of the new groups (nations) began to dominate the evolutionary experience of the group and the members (people) within each group were able to exercise a great deal more freedom (individuality) leading to greater individual experience (growth). However, for many people, many of the physical (racial) and emotional (religious) ties are still relatively strong (limiting).

The taxonomy of human consciousness is more significant than that of the human form, and is quite simple structurally. The organization (matrix) of human consciousness corresponds essentially to the seven planes of consciousness (and to the seven ray types). A person is considered physically-polarized, emotionally-polarized, or mentally-polarized when the bulk of the experience (identification) concerns or involves the physical body, the emotional body, or the mind, respectively. Many gradations exist between the major levels, and the consciousness normally flows more or less passively from one level to another, depending on the situation. In those who are relatively advanced in consciousness, the waking-consciousness remains mentally-polarized (stable), flows actively, and remains relatively detached from physical and emotional (mundane) experience. The taxonomy of the human soul is a matter of ray type.



Section 4.223



Psychological Typing

- There are a number of approaches to psychological typing, some are relatively natural and based upon potentially easily (psychically) determined qualifications (energies or patterns), e.g., astrological types and seven ray types, while some are less natural and more a matter of observation, deduction, and conclusion (i.e, rationalization and inference).

Psychological Typing 1

Character and temperament are an indication of the overall responsiveness of the personality to the soul and the various forces of the external environment. A qualitatively (spiritually) strong personality indicates relative spiritual (evolutionary) maturity and responsiveness to the soul, while a qualitatively weak personality (i.e., a strong (relatively coarse) personality) indicates a relative lack of spiritual (evolutionary) maturity (development) and a lack of responsiveness to the soul (i.e., being responsive (or reactive) more to external and personal forces). The character and temperament depend on the nature of the soul (if the person is responsive), the nature of the personality, and the nature of the surroundings for a given incarnation. Character and temperament are the result of evolutionary experience on personality levels. More basically, a person's character and temperament are the consequence and expression of the ray nature present in the personality.

Throughout the ages people have attempted to categorize people into various psychological types (or types of personality character and temperament). The value of proper psychological typing (1) increased self-understanding and therefore an improved ability or potential for improvement and progress, and (2) potentially increased understanding of human nature, value, and character differences (leading (potentially) to improved human relations and rapport). The problem though, is that conventional (and astrological) approaches to psychological typing have numerous weaknesses and limitations, due in part to the complexity of the human personality (being a composite of a large number of interdependent forces) and in part to the grave incompleteness and misconceptions (assumptions) of orthodox science and psychology.

The conventional approach (of orthodox psychology) is to use empirical evidence (based on (naturally biased) observation, experience, and assumptions) to develop and "substantiate" a simple (theoretical) model (construct) (or to propose such a model and then acquire empirical support). In either case the conventional approach to psychological typing (and resulting models) is quite limited in its usefulness and applicability (credibility), due mainly to the arbitrary nature of the models and processes utilized and the limitations

inherent in the over-simplification and over-generalization needed to fit data and people to the presumed (necessarily arbitrary) model.

One of the biggest limitations of conventional psychological typing is the number of dimensions or characteristics utilized. A large number of characteristics is rather difficult to measure and correlate by conventional approaches and models (and would complicate the “substantiation” process). Therefore, most conventional models incorporate only a few dimensions.

One approach (model), for example, considers only one scored (presumably measured) dimension (characteristic), categorizing all people (subjects) scored as being either extroverted or introverted (or some intermediate measure), and, based upon a subject’s score, then generalizes or assigns other (presumed and unmeasured) characteristics to that person (temperament) (which may or may not be relevant or reasonable for that (or any) person). Another model utilizes four scored dimensions (extroversion vs. introversion, sensation vs. intuition, thinking vs. feeling, and judging vs. perceiving) (yielding sixteen basic combinations or psychological types). The problem with such a simple approach is that the choices (extremes) are not mutually exclusive (one can be situationally or temporally introverted or extroverted, one can simultaneously respond in a situation in a “thinking” and a “feeling” manner, etc.).

† Commentary No. 534

Psychological Typing 2

Due to assumptions (values) (perceptions) made in conventional approaches to psychological typing, conventional approaches rarely effectively measure the intended characteristics or even effectively interpret the intended characteristics. Since almost all personalities have so many characteristics, a psychological typing model of only a few dimensions (characteristics) cannot possibly adequately describe the majority of people (i.e., such a model is (statistically) significant only for those people who actually fit the model and its assumptions (but even so, rarely its generalizations)).

Even without assigning (presuming) (generalized) additional (unscored) characteristics, there are limitations in the measurement or scoring process (e.g., situational factors, binary over-simplifications, etc.) and the results (if scored or measured and interpreted properly) are applicable only to the central portion of the statistical distribution of scores (subjects (people) scored), and not to the wings or edges of the distribution where the non-typical subjects appear (e.g., spiritual students). Consequently, conventional typing is useful only to some limited extent and for a limited set of subjects (people) (and only to the extent that the limitations are recognized and properly weighed and considered).

Conventional typing can be dangerous in the sense that it lends itself to mis-typing or to misleading (or uncorrelated) generalizations (one conventional model of sixteen dimensions, for example, assumes that imaginative people are necessarily absent-minded and impractical (which is not true), that humble people are necessarily submissive (which is also not true), and that people who score well as abstract thinkers are necessarily more intelligent (which may or may not be true)). Conventional typing is also potentially dangerous in practice due to the tendency of people to stereotype other people, drawing (presumptive) conclusions based on unrelated or uncorrelated features.

Astrological typing has significant advantages over conventional approaches to psychological typing, in the sense that astrological types are relatively easily measured for a large number of subjects (i.e., those who are personality-centered and therefore not responsive to the nature of the soul) and in the sense that astrological typing is considerably more natural than conventional typing (which is almost entirely arbitrary or based on empirical data rather than correlated with the natural organization of manifestation). But astrological typing suffers nonetheless from some of the same limitations as does conventional typing (e.g., the tendency to fail to recognize the significant distinctions of polarization of consciousness, stereotyping, etc.). The two principal (inherent) limitations of astrological typing are its inapplicability to spiritual students (who are to some extent responsive to the soul and therefore less subject to astrological qualification) and its composite naturalness.

The relative naturalness of astrological characteristics derives from the ray forces and energies that make up the astrological qualification, so that an astrological type can be related to a composite of ray forces (while conventional

models are not so correlatable unless fortuitously so). But the astrological composite is not easily resolvable into individual or discrete characteristics which are directly correlatable to the seven rays (which constitute the natural organization and categorization of all forces and energies). Consequently, it is the ray approach to psychological typing that is (potentially) the most effective, being the most natural system available.

† Commentary No. 535

Psychological Typing 3

The basis of the seven rays approach to psychological typing is that every major and minor aspect or attribute of the human being is qualified by and is a manifestation of one or another (or some composite) of the seven ray energies which constitute and qualify all that is. Each of the seven levels (planes) of consciousness is qualified categorically by one or another of the seven rays and through the various ray relationships (e.g., the mental plane is qualified by the third ray and its reflection, the fifth ray). The human monad, soul, and personality are qualified categorically by the first ray, the second ray, and the third ray, respectively, and particularly according to the ray nature of the particular human being.

In evaluating a person's (seven rays) temperament, there are a number of qualifications or considerations: (1) The presence and consequences (effects) of the soul (the soul ray) are only felt (noticeable) when the personality is aligned to some extent with that soul (i.e., when the personality is responsive to the soul) (which is rarely the case beyond the framework of the spiritual path). (2) The presence and consequences of the personality ray are only felt (noticeable) when the personality is integrated (i.e., where the elements or constituent forces of the personality are integrated into a single basic aspect. (3) Prior to integration, the categorical rays of the several elements of the personality will dominate (i.e., the seventh (sixth) (fifth) ray of the physical (astral) (mental) body (respectively). Prior to integration, those categorical rays are manifested relatively coarsely in the personality. After integration, it is possible (indeed an objective) to refine those ray manifestations within the personality (ray) and eventually achieve alignment. (4) The polarization of consciousness is normally a dominating ray influence on the personality.

A physically-polarized (and therefore not integrated) personality is dominated by the seventh ray of the physical body (and physical plane). An emotionally-polarized (and therefore not integrated) personality is dominated by the sixth ray of the astral body (and astral plane). A mentally-polarized (and integrated) personality is directly qualified by both the fifth ray of the concrete mind and the particular ray of the integrated personality (an intuitively-polarized (and therefore necessarily integrated) personality is directly qualified by the fourth ray of the buddhic sheath and the particular ray of the soul). (5) Cyclical rays and the rays of humanity (and other situational rays) are influential but not normally in a dominating manner.

Another (very important) consideration is the strength and quality of a ray manifestation within a given personality. As a person (soul) evolves, the personality (personality matrix) gradually develops from having no particular ray character (of the personality per se) to having all seven rays well-developed and properly qualified (refined and balanced). Initially the (undeveloped) personality simply reflects the relatively coarse ray nature of the environment and the composite atoms of the three (four) personality vehicles (physical (etheric), astral, mental); for each incarnation the soul invokes a particular ray qualification for the personality which (in the early stages of personality (matrix) development (i.e., in the early incarnations)) gives the (relatively coarse) strength of presence of that ray within the personality.

Eventually, the ray nature (as incorporated in and expressed through the personality) is qualified, refined, and balanced so that the (relatively perfect) personality not only reflects the higher quality (of the soul) but is itself a reasonable and qualified synthesis of all seven rays (on that level).

Psychological Typing 4

Given the various qualifications and considerations of the seven rays approach to psychological typing and given the complexity of the human nature, it is still relatively easy to evaluate a given personality in seven ray terms. One must first determine the level of polarization (and degree of integration and alignment if pertinent). Then, provided that the analyst (observer) understands the various ray characteristics and the various ray relationships (and is relatively unbiased (being objective, intuitive, and impersonal)), the subject personality can be tested for the presence (strength) and (if present) quality of each of the seven rays in turn.

Although each personality attribute or characteristic is ray-related, it is not such an easy task to correlate each attribute with its ray. Some (non-fundamental) characteristics are composites and therefore only directly related to some combination of rays. Even the fundamental characteristics may be (observationally) masked by other (more apparent) factors. Consequently, only a properly qualified analyst is likely to effectively assess the ray nature of a given personality, but at least the system is natural and all of the elements are ultimately correlatable. A basically honest person familiar with the seven rays can therefore perform a preliminary (tentative) self-assessment in a relatively straight-forward manner. The student (analyst) must necessarily discern the relative strength of each characteristic as well as the relative quality of that characteristic, and be able to distinguish between strength (magnitude of presence) and quality (measure of refinement).

One must also properly discern and distinguish between the various attributes and characteristics without generalization or presumption and (hopefully) with minimal bias of perception and interpretation (in this sense all approaches to psychological typing are limited). A successful (personality) assessment is generally possible only with honest observation over some not inconsiderable period of time and over the course of various situations. Otherwise, as in the case of the conventional approach, the results or conclusions will be misleading or only partially applicable.

The individual (spiritual student) who has acquired a basic (comprehensive) understanding of the seven rays on the level of and in the context of the human nature, and who has achieved a fair and reasonably complete self-assessment, should be able to then discern the particular weaknesses of the personality to be transformed (or at least moderated) in the current opportunity (incarnation) (and in such discernment find the encouragement and power to bring about the indicated moderation or transformation), and should be able to discern the particular (qualified) strengths of the personality appropriate for expression and utilization (for appropriate application) in that current opportunity (lifetime). Of course the same realizations might be achieved through methods other than the seven rays approach, but the advantage of correlation within the seven rays understanding yields appreciation for the ray relationships and the ability to (relatively easily) evoke the appropriate ray force(s) and energy. Dealing with forces not consciously correlated with the (nature of the) seven rays means that such dealing (working) is relatively weak.

The evocation of ray forces within and through the personality (in cooperation with and subordination to the soul) is a potent means of self-development but is more importantly a significant avenue of service (in wielding and sharing such energy appropriately) (or a significant enhancement of any service endeavor), the more consciously (and intelligently) the better.

† Commentary No. 1197

Myers-Briggs Typology

The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator is a test based “on the assumption that individuals differ in their preferences in perception and judgment.” It purports to measure “the four sets of traits postulated by C.G. Jung, namely extraversion-introversion, sensing-intuiting, thinking-feeling, and judgment-perception.” A person’s type “is designated by the letters of his or her predominant mode in each of the categories.” The sixteen “types” are ENFJ, ENFP, ENTJ, ENTP, ESFJ, ESFP, ESTJ, ESTP, INFJ, INFP, INTJ, INTP, ISFJ, ISFP, ISTJ, and ISTP.

The Myers-Briggs typology is an artificial system of character and temperament “types” based upon observation, rationalization, deduction, inference, and conclusion. Although artificial, it still has some (inferred) naturalness and therefore has some (modest) validity. The value of Myers-Briggs lies in the extent to which relationships between the various (artificial) types are understood. A “good” artificial system is one that has some underlying naturalness, even if the authors remain unaware of the underlying reality. Thus, as long as the student is aware of its limitations, the student can learn a fair amount about human nature, character, temperament, behavior, etc., through this system.

Individuals do differ in their preferences, conscious and otherwise, in perception and judgment. The four sets of traits considered by C.G. Jung, properly measured, to the extent that that is possible, are reasonable indications of preferences. The question is to what extent a person “is” one or another of these types. In a natural system, like the seven rays, once a person achieves personality integration the “type” is definite, and based on the personality matrix, i.e., predetermined. While each of the seven ray energies are present to some extent, one will dominate. This is not a matter of circumstances, but a matter of predetermination. As circumstances vary, the balance of seven ray energies being manifested will also vary, but the core personality ray will continue to qualify the overall personality.

In the Myers-Briggs system, as in all good-but-artificial systems, a person has varying degrees of “preference” in each of the four sets of traits. Indeed, in some cases there is balance between a set of traits, so that a person can be equally one and the other. As circumstances vary, so do one’s preferences, although there are some general tendencies and preferences that may tend to predominate. In application, Myers-Briggs typology can be useful in understanding these preferences and how various “types” tend to relate to one another, but the student should not become a victim of the system and act in accordance with the type. And the student should realize that each of the sets of traits are defined in a particular context, e.g., judgment and perception are defined particularly in the context of the author(s) of the system and may not “mean” what these words generally convey. Thus the student is urged to study the system and understand its various limitations and constraints before applying results.

One of the fundamental limitations of any artificial system is that it pertains to personality-level observables. As long as a person is living predominantly at the personality level, and as long as the system has some underlying merit, then the results may have some value. But a person who is living between the personality level and the soul level will not be properly categorized in an artificial system, nor even in a natural system like astrology, that is personality-centered.

