

DISCUSSION BETWEEN: DR ROBERTO ASSAGIOLI (R.A.)
DR GRAHAM C. TAYLOR (G.C.T.)
MARTHA LAZURE (M.L.)
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Assagioli

Progressive
and
Regressive

R.A. I do not think that the problem raised at the Bucke Society about progressive and regressive experiences is a very difficult one. I think the difference is generally so clear that confusion or mistaking one for the other is not likely to happen to those who have had a true spiritual experience. In my opinion it is rather a theoretical or artificial problem, with those who have had no direct experience of an illuminative nature. In genuine, progressive spiritual experiences there remains always a sense of self-awareness - even with the expansion of consciousness which has been called "cosmic consciousness" in Bucke's terminology (an expression which is perhaps not quite appropriate). In genuine expansion of consciousness, there is no complete loss of self-awareness of the spiritual Self as center. It can be compared to a sphere which can expand indefinitely; but the center of the sphere remains. There is the paradoxical impression of not losing oneself, but being more oneself, while losing the empirical limitations of the ego. It is a synthesis of individuality and universality. The individual feels identified with the universe, but there remains some awareness that he is identified with the universe.

Individual
and
Universal

G.C.T. There's no complete loss of awareness of the self.

R.A. No. No loss of self-awareness . . . Or in the reverse experience, when one feels that the universe, so to speak, invades us, there is a joyous sense of acceptance without any fear of losing oneself.

M.L. What would be the difference, if any, Dr A., between your definition of the spiritual Self and Jung's definition of the Self

The Self

R.A. There is a ~~very~~ marked difference. I gave three lectures in Italian on Jung and Psychosynthesis, in which I have dealt with this. But I can give you some points. For Jung the Self is a "psychological function", a "point between the conscious and the unconscious", and he doesn't attribute to it any transcendent reality. He sticks to ~~what we call~~ the empirical standpoint - the agnostic standpoint - and this shows that he has not had the genuine spiritual experience of the Self. If he had had, he'd speak in a different way. He considers the Self to be the result of a psychological process, of "individuation". It is not for him a living Reality which is latent but of which we can become directly, experientially aware. Thus there is a great difference between the two definitions: according to one the Self is a psychological concept; according to the other it is a living reality - even more, a living Entity. The Self is the Subject par excellence. Jung's Self is merely "psychological"; the spiritual Self is a transcendent, glorious reality, and one can have direct, immediate proof of it, that is, one can experience it. You know the happy expression of Bergson - "les donnees immediates de la conscience". The awareness of red or green or blue are "donnees immediates de la conscience". You cannot demonstrate scientifically the existence of blue or convey it to someone born blind. But there is no problem in the experience of blue. There is no problem in experiences of ethical awareness or aesthetic awareness or in heroic awareness. And there is no problem, and no need of proof, in experience of the Self.

M.L. What would you say Jung experienced?

Symbols

R.A. In his book, Dreams, Memories and Reflections, Jung reports some interesting inner experiences, but they appear to have been mixed: psychic and spiritual. I think that he, like many others, didn't grasp the real significance of his own experiences. Also he became more and more immersed in symbolism. But symbols can either lead to reality or be a screen between consciousness and reality. I think that with Jung they were more and more a screen.

M.L. What reading would you suggest to us on symbolism, by the way?

R.A. In my opinion it is better not to become too interested in symbolism in itself, but to stick to the use of symbols. Symbols are "tools", are means to an end. And there is always the danger of becoming too interested in the means, the tools, in the machinery and techniques! That is the great mistake of our present civilisation - over-emphasis on technique, on technology. It has also invaded psychology and psychotherapy. So let us beware; let us use symbols and other means, but let us always remain their masters.

sonal and M.L. You said in your book that many people are not ready for
ritual Psycho the experience of the spiritual Self, that most people need
athesis first a personal psychosynthesis and not a spiritual psycho-
 synthesis.

R.A. Yes, it is an important point. We have to see their level, their immediate problem. Later, when they have achieved a certain measure of personal psychosynthesis, spiritual interests and problems may come up. But while they are obsessed by personal problems and complexes of a purely personal character, we have to help them on that level.

M.L. Do you feel that if a person has had a successful personal psychosynthesis he would then be ready to move on to the spiritual level?

R.A. Not always. We must take into account the uniqueness of each case and not follow any general rule. This is actually the creative aspect of psychotherapy. One must invent, so to speak, a new method for each patient, that is, a new combination and succession of techniques adapted to the uniqueness of the special existential situation of each patient. This requires pliability and refraining from any set theory or standard procedure.

Another rather revolutionary point is the giving of little or no importance to diagnosis. First I question the diagnostic framework existing. When we have attached a label, we have achieved nothing. Instead, after the treatment, in retrospection, one might say something; therefore let us not start with diagnosis, but eventually end with it.

G.C.F. Yes, in the end as a summary . . .

R.A. This clears the way greatly. All the artificial problems of diagnosis are swept away in the immediate contact with the existential situation of the patient. In this sense, psycho-synthesis is more revolutionary than it appears to be! I have not stressed this in my book, but if you read between the lines, you'll find it. It's not a collection of techniques or something eclectic - it goes much deeper: synthesis is a creative process.

M.L. How is it possible that a person obtain synthesis around the personal self? You say that someone who is not ready for spiritual psychosynthesis must have as a center the personal self, but couldn't this be harmful eventually to the person to have him identified with the personal self?

R.A. There is one thing that is hard enough to realise: the ego has, or rather is, a center of pure consciousness, of pure self-awareness, at the personal level, devoid of all empirical and historical contents. This is often the first step - to discover the I, the ego, as distinct from the various constituents of the personality. At present, in psychology, this distinction is ^{generally} ignored.

Now the new Freudians are giving increasing attention to the ego, but they have a very hazy conception of it. As I have said in my book, the ego or I or personal self is devoid of any content; it is pure self-awareness, persisting throughout the stream of experiences and changes. The exercise of disidentification helps in the realisation of this.

M.L. and how would you distinguish the ego from the Spiritual Self?

R.A. There is a great difference: the personal self or I is "self-centred", it is the awareness of oneself without any expansion of consciousness, without the joy, the love and all the other qualities of the spiritual Self. The personal self could be called "neutral", but the awareness of it gives a certain sense of freedom from the ordinary attachments and identifications.

M.L. Can it really be a synthesising center if it is so neutral?

R.A. It is a center of synthesis, as it connects and correlates all psychological elements and functions. The difference is also one of level, as is clearly shown in my diagram of the psychological constitution of the human being. But difference ~~does~~ not mean separation. The personal self can be considered a reflection of projection of the Spiritual Self. Between them communication is possible and the personal self can ascend towards the Self, get near to It and at moments identify itself with It. This relationship has various stages. The first is that of disidentification and objective observation of the flow of psychological elements which come and go within the field of consciousness, just as a scientist observes natural phenomena. The second stage is more active and dynamic; the personal self realises that it can interfere, intervene, regulate, modify and master that flow through the use of active psychological techniques. This means the Will the personal self discovers that it has a will. The simplest exercise of visualisation proves this: one tries to visualise something, but it soon disappears or the image changes. Then we can bring it back and there is a fight between the imagination, which works independently, and the ego, which tries to control it, until through practice we succeed in mastering it.

M.L. What would be the difference between the will when it is a function of the personal self and the will when it is a function of the spiritual Self?

R.A. The difference lies in motivation and aims. The aims of

the personal self are egocentric. To use Maslow's terminology, they are directed to the satisfaction of needs or wants. The spiritual Self is outgoing, radiant, and needs and asks nothing from outside. There is no difficulty in seeing the difference.

Psychological Functions

Now I ^{may} ~~can~~ say something else about the psychological functions. As you know, Jung speaks of four functions: sensation, feeling, thought and intuition. I accepted this classification in the past, but I realised more and more that it is incomplete. Imagination, in my opinion, is an independent psychological function. It is often associated with feeling, but it has a distinctive quality of its own. ^{also desire-drive and will are} ~~The will also is a~~ specific psychological functions.

Synthesis

Another point is the following: the analogy between the human body and the psyche. It is marvellous how all biological functions are co-ordinated and balanced for the keeping-up of the healthy functioning of the body. All the organs and all the systems (nervous, digestive, circulatory, etc.) co-operate with each other; and then there is the wonderful interplay between the glands and the nervous system. This regulates the influential action of the glands and hormones ~~in~~ the nervous system. The psyche is far from having achieved such co-ordination; it is still full of conflicts. Therefore I think that biosynthesis is a pattern, an ideal model of psychosynthesis. But a complete synthesis must include the body thus its real name should be bio-psychosynthesis.

Personalities

A further point. We don't realise how much we all are dissociated normally; that is, to what extent we all have several sub-personalities, which are much more independent of each other than we are aware of. As husband or wife, son or daughter, as parent, we play different roles and are very different in each role. But we generally pass from one role to another haphazardly and without realising how differently we behave and feel in each. One of the advantages of achieving the personal self-awareness, the consciousness of the spectator or observer previously mentioned, is to

⊕ Secreted by the glands influence

realise these differences as a first step towards the synthesis of the various sub-personalities.

Personal Self

Another point about the personal self: it persists from childhood to old age, while the contents change completely; just as the body is an organic unity which persists while the material of which it is composed changes all the time. Thus each of us remains ^{essentially} the same individual he was as a child, but practically very little of it remains, and much is added. There is the story about "le couteau de Maitre Jacques". Maitre Jacques had a knife and he used it much, so every year he changed either the blade or the handle. Was it always the same "couteau de Maitre Jacques" or not? The same thing happens to our personality. The personal self is always the same: the contents of the personality change all the time.

We often don't draw all the revolutionary inferences from what we accept theoretically. We should be consistent and courageous and accept all the practical consequences of what we admit in principle.

R.A. I have mentioned the fourteen groups of symbols of the super-normal or of spiritual realisation. I shall now deal with one of them, the Path - a much used symbol. It offers a clear instance of the different meanings which can be given to the symbol, or rather of the different reactions to it and therefore to the different, even opposite, effects it may have. The path implies a starting-point and a point of eventual arrival - a way. Three attitudes can be taken in this connection. The first is the painful realisation of the distance - the distance as an obstacle, and the doubt about being able to reach the goal, which is seen to be ~~difficult to attain~~, too far away. This awareness of distance gives a sense of anxiety which might become a sense of desperation, of despair of ever reaching the goal. The second attitude is the opposite one! We feel the goal as something beautiful, attractive, and which will certainly, sooner or later be attained. The vision of the goal is inspiring; it is like a strong magnet attracting us to itself and helping to overcome the difficulties of the way. The third attitude, which is less noticed but very common, is not seeing further than the tip of one's boots, that is, being wholly engrossed with the present situation. Sometimes there is a sense of pain and anxiety, which, however, remains within the small area of the present situation. At other times, instead, there is a sense of satisfaction, particularly satisfaction with oneself more than with circumstances. And this is a deadly thing; it is a static attitude, neither progressive nor regressive - just a standstill. That was often the attitude of the "moral" people of the past, satisfied with their own morality and the bourgeois attitude of complacency with one's social standing and possessions, etc. I have a further comment to make on the second attitude, that of seeing the goal as something attainable. Let us take up the analogy with mountain-climbing. After having seen the goal - the summit of the mountain - after having planned the ascent and studied the map, one has to pay attention to each successive step of the ascent. Fixing one's eyes ^{only} on the top of the mountain would cause one to stumble and fall. ¹ Therefore the vision should be vividly impressed on the mind as an incentive, a motive power, and recalled whenever needed; but the conscious attention should be mostly directed to the successive steps and phases of the ascent and to the

the Goal

Pp

means to be used - ^{proceeding along} ~~climbing~~ the steep path, ^{climbing} ~~negotiating~~ the rocks or cutting steps in the glacier. We can use this analogy with our patients according to their immediate situation, to call their attention either to the mountain-top or to the immediate steps, and to the recognition that a balance of the two attitudes has to be achieved.

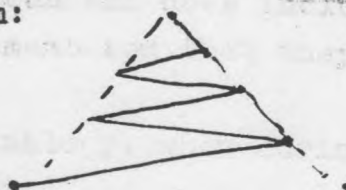
About Symbols in General

In psychoanalysis the whole emphasis is put on interpreting symbols. Jung, instead, recognises the synthetic role of the symbol: according to him, symbols stir up energies in the unconscious which are constructive; he speaks of constructive dreams, of constructive symbols, but he leaves it at that. He makes no active, deliberate use of symbols, but lets them emerge and work spontaneously. In psychosynthesis, however, symbols are used as an active technique. Helpful "anagogic" symbols, either emerging spontaneously or selected from among the many existing, are observed or visualised, contemplated at some length and repeatedly, in order that they may impress and activate the unconscious. (It is a technique similar to that used by advertisers!)

The Spiral The spiral is a universal symbol. Before being a psychological symbol, it is a fact in nature. The result of the combination of the rotary motion of the planets around the sun and ^{the} forward movement of the sun is that each planet is spiralling in space. Something similar often occurs with psychological processes and inner progress. The advance is frequently not made in a direct line but in a spiral ^{fast} way. This happens in two ways: one is the combination I have just mentioned, of ascending and widening. As we ascend we widen our view we see things from a higher point and get a wider picture. This combination of ascent and expansion is represented by an ascending and widening spiral. One of the fundamental points of psychosynthesis is the equilibrising of the opposites. Its symbol, which you will find in my paper The Balancing of the Opposites, is the triangle: from the two opposite poles rise two converging lines which meet at a higher point of synthesis, of fusion.

Equilibrium of opposites

But in reality, that is, in actual life both individual and collective, the process is more complicated; the ascent is made in a zig-zag way. The movement starts from one of the poles and - through the attraction of the other and as a reaction to the realised oneness of the original extreme position - one goes to the other extreme. Then, realising the oneness of this too, one rebounds towards the first point, but often one stops before reaching it, and also on a slightly higher level. Thus begins a series of oscillations of decreasing amplitude and at increasingly higher levels, pointing towards the highest middle point of unification. This process can be represented by the following diagram:



If these oscillations were represented three-dimensionally, we would have a spiral. Various instances of this process could be given. One is occurring at present on a large scale in the field of education: the reaction against the old authoritative and oppressive methods induced a number of educators to introduce an almost complete abolition of discipline and give an uncontrolled freedom to the pupils in certain "progressive" schools. But the frequent, unhappy results produced a counter-reaction and the search for more balanced methods, for a "middle way". At present there is a state of confusion and conflict between the various standpoints; but the trend is towards an integration or synthesis of the two opposite attitudes, aiming at a directed and regulated development of the personality of children and young people. Another instance can be found in the therapy of cyclothymia, in which we cannot suppress the cyclic alternations between excitement and depression, but we can endeavour to attenuate them and develop in the patient a "middle and higher point" of insight and control, to which he can anchor himself. Thus the right procedure and method of progression is not to try to suppress the oscillations violently, but to regulate them, to contr

them and to reduce them gradually. We are apt to be so fascinated by the goal that we try to reach it directly; *but* we do not succeed or, at best, we do only momentarily in an upward flight. Let us clearly recognise the difference between a flight and mountain-climbing. One can fly to the top in a plane, but one cannot remain there always; one has to come down. The flight can be very useful for proving the reality of the mountain top, even when there are clouds and mists that prevent it being visible from the plain. The flight can also show us the road, the way up the mountain from the starting-point at the foot. ^{But after that} ~~we~~ we must go through the laborious, gradual and often painful process of organic growth through psychosynthesis. It can and does include temporary flights, but it must always be remembered that they can be only temporary.

Then, pursuing the analogy, when during the climb a storm is raging, one has to stop climbing and take shelter under some rock. The storms correspond to the periods of crisis, of inner darkness, of aridity and emotional depression.

The Jewel

The jewel is also one of the most meaningful spiritual symbols. It corresponds in my diagram to the star symbolising the spiritual Self. It is drawn as a star because the diagram is two-dimensional but it is better to regard it as a jewel. It can be used in an active technique in which a real jewel, a diamond or sapphire, is taken, observed closely, contemplated and its meaning reflected on

M.L. What is the real relationship between the intuition and the imagination?

Imagination and Intuition

R.A. One might say that the intuition is the higher octave of the imagination; they have a certain quality in common, but they are two clearly distinct functions. Most people have imagination but not intuition, and the highest kind of spiritual intuition is imageless, independent of any image or symbol. But they are often related. Imagination, as a symbol-creating function, leads the way to intuition and may build or evoke a significant symbol which can be intuitively interpreted. On the other hand, pure, imageless

intuition, in "descending", so to speak, into the field of consciousness, must clothe itself with some kind of image, either a verbal image or a geometrical or other symbol.

superconsci-
ous and the
spiritual
self

There is an important point that needs clarification because there is great confusion among psychologists about it. A basic difference exists between superconscious activities and functions, even of the highest order, and the Self. In the superconscious intense activities are going on, it is creative. The Self instead is a pure center of spiritual awareness, not active in itself; it projects dynamic influences but remains motionless, we might say. (Aristotle called God the "Unmoved Mover".) Another image is the sun, which projects rays and streams of energies without "descending" from its position, without coming nearer the earth. Many have had high spiritual experiences, either by raising the center of consciousness, the Ego, up to superconscious levels, or by opening the field of personal consciousness to the inflow of superconscious contents (inspiration). But that is not the realization of the spiritual Self. The ~~latter~~^{former} is typical of poets, writers and artists. Some of them have given expression to high contents of the superconscious, but with no Self awareness, like channels, almost like mediums in some cases. This explains the baffling psychology of the artist; how an artist can express at different times the highest and the lowest. It occurs even in the case of very great artists, like Wagner, who wrote the mystical music of Parsifal and Lohengrin, as well as the sensual, erotic Venusberg music in Tannhauser. On the other hand, there have been some high mystics, people who have achieved realization of the Self without giving It any creative expression, either through lack of the means of expression or lack of interest in doing so, being so absorbed in the Self and the spiritual Realities with which it is in contact that their superconscious was not stirred into expressive activity. But if the pure contemplative does not create, he can and does radiate, and his radiation can be creative, but this is something else.

Radiation M.L. Can you tell us more about radiation?

R.A. It is a difficult subject, because radiation does not act through the normal means of communication. Yet it is an ascertained fact, confirmed by the recent scientific investigation on telepathy and telekinesis. Let us take up first unconscious radiation. We should realise that all human beings are radiating unconsciously at all levels, and they could not prevent it even if they wanted to.

But radiation can be increased and directed consciously. One could draw an analogy between a transmitting station sending waves in all directions and one which directs waves only in one direction. The more radiation is concentrated, the more powerful it becomes. An extreme case is the laser. Psycho-spiritual radiation can be most helpful. There are many reliable reports on the powerful healing and enlightening effects of the radiation emanated by highly developed spiritual beings. But just because of its efficacy, it has to be used with great caution. First and foremost it should be employed only for good purposes. Moreover, its intensity, its "voltage", so to speak, has to be carefully regulated because it can have harmful and even destructive effects, if the receiver is not in a condition to stand it and absorb it. An obvious analogy is provided by the rays of the sun: they are life-giving, beneficial, but if too fierce can burn and even cause sunstroke. To use the colloquial phrase, "There can be too much of a good thing". This is easy to understand but difficult to apply in an appropriate way. ^{It} ~~This~~ is a constant problem of all therapists and educators: the regulation of the intensity of their influence. It requires much wisdom, and it is better to keep on the safe side. Let us always remember that the ultimate aim is to teach and train others to help themselves. Therefore radiation should aim chiefly at stimulating and evoking what is in the patient and not at overwhelming him with our influence, even with the best of intentions.

Helping

When a patient first comes, generally his request is: "Give me, tell me, 'feed' me." He wants to get; but after a certain time he might have indigestion and be "fed up". This creates a reaction,

and it is a healthy reaction. Thus it is best to help through guidance, enlightenment, encouragement and a regulated, stimulating radiation rather than by exercising too strong an influence.

A noble temptation of the therapist and the educator is to give too much or too soon. One should always keep in view the goal of independence, of training and educating to independence. Moreover, let us watch our motives in giving help; they might not be completely pure. There can be in them the satisfaction of feeling superior, of being appreciated and admired; therefore let us beware! Much could be said about radiation used as a therapeutic and educational means. But the first thing is to be aware that one radiates, unwittingly, spontaneously, unavoidably, and then to watch carefully the effects of the radiation.

M.L. Do you feel that the radiation of light to another person can be harmful potentially?

R.A. Yes. Some can't stand too much light; either it may prove harmful or it creates a resistance. Let us remember Plato's analog of the men in the cave, and also the blinding light which struck Saul. Let us take this into consideration in all human relations, for instance, in marriage, and in those between parents and children.

Intuition

M.L. Could you speak to us about the intuition - the different forms of the intuition?

R.A. I should say that, rather than different forms, we might speak of different fields of application. I think that as a function it is basically the same; only it takes different aspects according to the field in which it operates. There is mathematical intuition; scientific intuition; the intuition of the inventor or the technician; the aesthetic intuition; the philosophical intuition; the mystical intuition. Intuition as a function is beyond or above any typological difference, but it operates differently according to the psychological types.

... intuition is mind awareness;

Intuition
and
Inspiration

M.L. Could you speak about the difference between the intuition and inspiration - or the relationship between them?

R.A. They are related insofar as both establish a communication between the "normal" and the higher psychological levels, one might say-somewhat inaccurately-between consciousness and the superconscious. But they are different; they operate in opposite directions. Intuition means "seeing into", looking and perceiving with an "inner eye", generally directed "upwards". Inspiration, instead, ~~as the word suggests~~, is something which "descends" from the superconscious into the conscious area; it is an inrush.

In inspiration the ego and the personality have a passive role. The artist is at the mercy of inspiration; he can try to elicit it, either with prayer and invocation, or with various psychological or physical stimulants. A well-known instance is the poet's invocation to the muse; the muse is a symbol of the superconscious. But the inspiration itself is active, dynamic and creative; it impels to some kind of expression, which (as in the case of intuition) is different according to the gifts of the individual and the field to which it is directed.

individual and Coming back to the subject of the Self, a point which I dealt
iversal with in my lectures on Jung and Psychosynthesis is the varying proportions, in the awareness of the Self, between the individual aspect and the universal aspect. For those who have experienced the universality of the spirit and insist on self-forgetfulness and the "destruction" of the ego, the "Star" (in my diagram) is almost all outside or above the oval of the personality; yet they could not even speak of their experience, if there were not at least a point of the star remaining within. Instead, those who emphasise the solitude, the uniqueness of the self have experienced keenly the sense of persistent, stable "Self-identity", not realising the universal aspect of the Self. It is advisable to try to produce alternately the experience of both aspects. There is a beautiful Sanskrit composite word: sat-chit-ananda, which could be translated: "the blissful awareness of the universal, of the Real". Sat is the universal Reality; chit is mind awareness,

and awareness of the universal is blissful.

There is also a fine mantram which says: "More radiant than the sun, purer than the snow, subtler than the ether, is the Self, the Spirit within me. I am that Self; that Self am I." This poetic imagery clearly expresses the relationship between the individual and the universal: the Self is the universal, but I am aware that I am that Self and that ^{the} Self is the essence of myself. It is well to emphasise this point, because there are many who assert that the undoing, the destruction, the elimination of the ego is necessary in order to have spiritual realisation. Others state instead that it can be a gradual inner conquest, reaching ever higher and wider expansions of awareness. One might say that both processes occur, but that the term "destruction" is misleading, because what is destroyed are the limitations and involvements of the Ego, not its central core, which is a reflection of the Spiritual Self.

soul and
personality

M.L. What is the relationship of the soul and the personality

R.A. The difficulty in answering this question is first of all a semantic one, due to the very different meanings in which the two words have been and are being used. The American psychologist Allport has quoted about fifty definitions of the personality; I don't know how many one could give of the soul! Therefore one should always define clearly the meaning in which one uses these words. Let us consider the word soul. Keyserling and other modern writers use it to indicate the emotional nature or aspect of the personality. Jung's definition of soul is "a definitely demarcated function-complex that is best characterized as a 'personality'"/ (Psychological Types, p.508). In the Christian usage, the word soul is used in a rather loose way. In some cases it connotes the immortal soul, made "in the image and likeness of God", but in others it corresponds more to the emotional nature, for instance, in the phrases "My soul is sad", "My soul invokes God for help", etc. Evidently this is not the immortal soul but the emotional part of the personality.

I think your question refers to the relationship between the personality and the soul in the spiritual sense, that is, the spiritual Self (the Atman which is one with Brahman, both individual and universal).

This brings us back to the Ego and the Self, because the human personality is characterised by the possession of self-consciousness, or, in other words, the I or Ego is the core of the personality. Now the Ego should be regarded as a projection or a reflection of the spiritual Self. Therefore essentially it partakes of the nature of the spiritual Self, but it is so much veiled by "the 70,000 veils of maya", that is, by its multiple identification with all kinds of psychic contents (sensations, drives, emotions, thoughts, etc.) that it has lost all remembrance of its origin. Thus we have the paradoxical situation of the personal self denying its "father", its origin and source. It can also be called the paradox of duality and unity. This is the deep meaning of the old injunction: "Become what you are". It could be expressed in modern terms as "Recognise your source, your origin, the spiritual Self, and unite in consciousness as much as possible with It until you achieve an increasing realisation of this identity, until it becomes permanent." This is the drama of man's existential situation, the meaning and purpose of human evolution.