



second a10

Focus on
Spirituality

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second a10

Focus on **Spirituality**

Guidelines for working through modules

We recommend that you work through one section of this module per day. Read through the section and allow yourself to re-experience feelings that need to find an updated expression and decide on an attitude that could be considered more constructive to holistic practice than the one you have had up until now.

As you work through each section of this module, it can be helpful to write down your impressions in a journal or tape or illustrate your experiences as you progress through your journey of inner transformation.

Complete any exercises and answer any questions. A suggestion is to read a question and to write your immediate reactions to it. Go for a walk, then have a cup of tea/coffee or do something else. Then come back at a later time and write more as you surrender and decide if you are ready to forgive yourself, others, circumstances, environments, personal habits and so on. Then spend a few moments in contemplation prior to proceeding. At this time just to decide to begin to let go of resentment and to forgive begins a process of healing.

At the end of each day, note in your journal what your attitudes were, how you were feeling and how your body responded over the day as well as anything else of importance.

Working with the text and the diagrams

The text in this module will give you guidelines for how you might wish to proceed in deciding your next step in life towards fulfilling your potential. For this to happen, your mind will need to gradually incorporate these guidelines as you work with allowing old attitudes to release from your body memory. This will take time. Your intuition is the most important factor in facilitating this process. The diagrams in the module are to help you free up your intuition by triggering a helpful energetic response in your mind to support your study of the text. You do not need to 'understand' them. Just look at them and let them speak to you intuitively. Over time, your study of the text and contemplation of the diagrams will form an association with each other.



Section I

Back to beginnings – overcoming the shock

Key to colour codes



Purple = Discipline and willingness



Violet = Cleansing and disinfecting



Indigo = Capacity to hold vision; time management



Blue = Expression; revision; review; update of truth



Green = Rhythm; expanding some boundaries; working within others



Yellow = Self-worth; self-respect; trust in adequacy to cope



Orange = Balance of independence and interdependence



Red = Creation and recreation from raw materials available



Brown = Right use of entrusted power; stamina, persistence and endurance to steward and guard a project and to see it through to its logical conclusion



I Back to beginnings – overcoming the shock

When you really think about it, the innocent bliss of childhood is not all that what it is said to be. Though precious and unique, never is a person so vulnerable as when they are a baby. We are helpless and dependent on others for the fulfilment of our every need. We are also in a state of recovery, as it were, from the traumatic experience of our birth and no one can alleviate the confusion and disorientation we experience. Thus, what is often thought of as the most comfortable and agreeable time of our lives is actually a highly stressful period, a time when we need constant attention, care, skill and much nurturing – to recover from birth and little by little, relax into life.

As we mature into adulthood, many of us decide that we do not wish to rely on others for our sustenance; we want to be independent. What we have forgotten is that without the initial period of reliance we would not have reached our present state. No one can ignore the goodwill and assistance given to us by others, even if it was only in our childhood. In some way, we are interdependent – no human is an island. This interdependence exists at all levels of life. It is a reminder of some greater force at work in this creation we call the world, and when we honour the fact that all beings are interdependent, we begin to see things in a new way.

As our inner being matures through adulthood, we come to periods where we recognise the need to let go of what was relevant in the past because we can see it is no longer important to us in the present. We might especially feel this way when reflecting on our childhood. Childhood is a time of experimentation for both our parents (or whoever takes care of us) and ourselves, a time of ‘learning by doing’ as it were. Parents do their best to have the endless patience, endurance and tolerance a child needs. Nonetheless, while we receive their loving care and good intentions, we also experience the ‘rubbing off’ effect of their negative vibrations. Perhaps we can now better understand, as adults, and some of us as parents ourselves that our stewards may well have laboured, as we are now, under their own pressures and stress and may not have been able to give us as much care and attention as we wanted.

Where we may, perhaps, have harboured resentment towards our parents, we can now transform that into sympathy, understanding and love. We can work with the fact that though we benefited from their love and care, we also absorbed much of their tension, stress and negativity. The temptation here is to blame our parents for our present problems, to resent their inadequacies rather than look at ourselves and seeing how we might improve our lot. Blaming means living in the past; it is not a positive action of the present and certainly creates no promise for the future. As children we had the wisdom of innocence; as adults and/or parents, we are still children, in that we are still learning and growing, still open, still changing. There is really no superior or inferior role; it is just a question of watching the changing of the seasons, and dealing with what life brings to each one

Some people advocate putting your childhood behind you; we think it more helpful to return to childhood, not to be childish, but to be as open, loving and trusting as we can – of course without making ourselves too vulnerable! And if we have children, we would do well to meet them at the point where they are now and where we once were.

By approaching our lives in relation to the family with the thought that we are learning from them, we can reflect on what they teach us rather than resent them for intruding on our space. We can monitor, assess, evaluate and become free from negativity, instead of remaining crystallised in negative emotions or memories.

Long before we can speak, we identify with colour and shape and we appear to understand its language very well. But what does it mean within the internal language that it represents? Watch a toddler play and colour is important, watch a baby follow a mobile, ask a sight impaired person to identify clothing colour by touch and they can. Undoubtedly, colour symbolises certain significant conversions that need to be examined.

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Purple will be liked or disliked when we are at odds with authority figures within life events. The same thing applies with violet when we are trying to ethnically cleanse our own space and make it safe enough to experiment within. Indigo is the colour of a clear night sky and will be relevant when we are trying to see our way within our life direction yet appear to see only fog. Blue is relevant when we are trying to heal old confusion, where the truth of others appears to differ vastly from our own, and we cannot overcome the discrepancy between the two yet must negotiate a compromise that suits all. Green is important when we are pushing past old boundaries that have limited us as we are being prompted to live within other boundaries that may not be to the liking of the ego. Yellow will appear when we are disappointed or disillusioned regards the tolerance, care and concern of others in relation to ourselves. Orange will play a role when we have lost our balance due to life changes beyond our control, which may phase us, and we wonder if we have the courage to keep on keeping on in spite of not feeling in control nor understanding what is happening. Red will challenge us when we are given a new set of circumstances that push us beyond inertia and we have to act, to release old ways of doing things and to find a new way again and again until the way we work works for all. And brown will push us to our boundaries and beyond them as we act to administrate and reorganise according to need to arrive at a conclusion.

Self-reflection exercise on identifying which colours are most relevant to you now.

i). Study the transformed states in the previous table – ‘Key to colour codes’.

ii). What colours appeal most and least to you at this time?

iii). What might the significance be of this within your life right now?



Section 2

Expansion: up the spiral staircase

Release of misunderstanding

Stages of development in the acquisition of language

<i>Average age</i>	<i>Language milestones</i>	<i>Motor milestones</i>
6 months	Cooing, changes to distinct babbling by introduction of consonants	Sits using hands for support; unilateral reaching
1 year	Beginning of language understanding; one word utterances	Stands; walks when held by one hand
12 - 18 months	Words used singularly; repertory of 30-50 words (simple nouns, adjectives, and action words), which cannot as yet be joined in phrases but are used one at a time; does not use functors (the, and, can, be) necessary for syntax, but makes good progress in understanding	Grasping and realising fully developed; walking; creeps downstairs backwards
18 - 24 months	Two-word (telegraphic) phrases are ordered according to syntactic rules; vocabulary of 50 to several hundred words; understands propositional rules	Runs (and falls); walks stairs with one foot forward
2 - 5 years	New words every day; three or more words in many combinations; functors begin to appear; many grammatical errors and idiosyncratic expressions; good understanding of language	Jumps with both feet; builds tower of six cubes
3 years	Full sentences; few errors; vocabulary of around 1,000 words	Tiptoes; walks stairs with alternating feet
4 years	Close to adult speech competence	Jumps over rope; hops on one foot; walks on a line



2 Expansion: up the spiral staircase

Expansion and education are, unfortunately, not always in keeping with the thinking of school authorities. For many of us, formal education was often more of an endurance test than a process of expansion and training in real self-awareness. When we remember our salad days, we think of a (mild?) form of dictatorship; we were forced to study subjects in which we did not have the slightest interest and to apply theories and principles which seemed to have nothing to do with real life. Only a small part of our education, it seems, truly helped us 'grow up'.

This attitude held by educators denies natural laws. Obviously, children need encouragement, advice and guidance but they must also be allowed and encouraged to follow their natural inclinations. It seems that even modern schooling has a long way to go in this regard. As adults, we are often freer to pursue interests we were not encouraged to follow as children. We can choose to harmonise our interests and skills, our work and our play, with our evolution as human beings. In other words, we are free, in many regards, to exercise a little more of our free will, simply because we realise we are free to choose. Where hope was lost, it may be rekindled. A new talent or interest can be discovered; a lost one can be revived. We recognise the importance for our overall health and well being to integrate rather than separate the various aspects of our lives. We are never too old or too rigid in our outlook to drink the elixir of eternal youth.

Before, we fought and rebelled against the force and limitations imposed on us by authorities; now we are prepared to actively participate, to work with and implement the efforts others have made on our behalf. Now we can once again enjoy the promise of freshness and anticipation because each moment is new. Thoughts, ideas and events do change because life, as energy, continually moves forward. But we can learn to look forward even to the uncertainty of what tomorrow may bring, rather than fear it.

When we see our lives as a reflection of universal law, when we pursue and persevere with the attitude of self-awareness, we find that we gain rather than lose control. This approach to life, which many people call fatalistic, actually allows us to act from a standpoint of calmness and freedom which no amount of striving or

emotional actions and reactions can. Suddenly life, which seemed to be an endless series of disappointments, frustrations and compromises, a never-ending endurance test – a struggle – seems manageable! The tide has turned. At this point, we recognise that all of us are part of a greater pattern or cycle. This is demonstrated at every level of nature, and at every stage of our evolution, if we can perceive it. As the years pass, we keep ascending the spiral staircase, passing through familiar (and these can be loved or despised) spaces and places – but always on the way up. It is important to recognise that we are moving forward! If we don't acknowledge that we are progressing, we may expect present situations to conform to old patterns and to have the same negative results or cause the same old difficulties.

This shows the strength and power of our minds to create either negative or positive thinking. If we project negativity, the self-fulfilling prophecy is bound to occur, and we will ourselves have created the negative situation. Or, perhaps we withdraw from the situation because we think it will be too difficult to cope with. Then we have wasted a precious opportunity for growth.

Why limit ourselves? If we are able to release the past and recognise the freshness and unique opportunity which the present has to offer, we can make the most of each moment of our lives. That does not mean to say that we should naively run headlong into trouble, or that the risks are over and we can expect no difficulties; it is just that we are better equipped to deal with difficulties when they do arise.

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At this stage, it becomes useful to seek others, to share experiences, to communicate with like minds. Having experienced something of that unique, mind-boggling and often confusing glimpse of something deeper, many people become avid readers to further their explorations. It becomes a further exercise in awareness to listen intelligently, sensitively and perceptively. We find, perhaps, that we are drawn to people and places which before held no interest. And because we are more open-minded, we receive more encouragement and direction, often in unexpected places and from unexpected sources. It is as if we are being invisibly guided. We cannot rest complacently; we must keep going forward, even while sometimes looking over our shoulders. And because we discover that there are others on the same path, we can help as well as be helped along the way.

For most of us, this is one of, if not the greatest transition period we have experienced, and it is neither smooth nor easy. Sometimes we wonder if we are in control of ourselves; it may seem that we are being mysteriously guided by an unknown force! Again, we must remember that we always have the choice of how to look at things. If we have rejected parts of our past, the present and certainly the future will be an improvement. If we choose self-awareness, education, open-mindedness, we are choosing expansion. If we choose not to make efforts, we have chosen to fragment rather than unite, to punish rather than help ourselves.

We are all familiar (perhaps from personal experience) with the child whose inner light has faded because he/she was unable to receive helpful information, encouragement and guidance when it was needed. We are, perhaps, those children who ran amok. And we value those very special elders whose light still burns brightly, like a child's, whose interest in and energy for life seems insatiable. The lesson is that those who would be helped must also help themselves. A sense of inner harmony is the result of trust and surrender, and acting in trust and surrender means acting for our evolution.

To do this effectively, it helps to have support and encouragement from others who experience life in a similar way. Sometimes we think we have to be too independent. Why not help ourselves by actively seeking and accepting the guidance others can offer? Every step of the way can be consolidated and experienced in

fullness. Every pressure, every exertion, is necessary and helpful, for it creates strength and increases our capacity to live happily.

Self-reflection exercise on your and others' perceptions of your childhood and youth.

- i). How would you describe yourself as a young child?
- ii). How did others describe you as a young child?
- iii). How would you describe yourself as a teenager?
- iv). How have others described your teenage years?
- v). When you face changes that you have not actively sought, what would you describe as your instinctive reaction and how willing are you to adapt your plans to accommodate others' needs?

In the light of your answers to the above study the previous diagram – 'Release of Misunderstanding'.

Now try to remember or find out from others whether you or they faced a time of distress early on in your life. Did it limit you and has that pattern been repeated each time you met a stressful change? Or do you react instinctively in a manner that created a pattern which formed a chain that binds? For example when you are ill or you have an accident, do you cry, shout, rant or rage? A pattern is a little like a negative, you print the same photograph from it each time. Now sit quietly and work on changing the negative as you re-pattern events in your mind. When you have a picture you would like to print consistently in your mind you will have overwritten the old negative and laid a new one in its place.

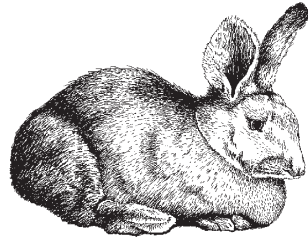


Section 3

Wisdom

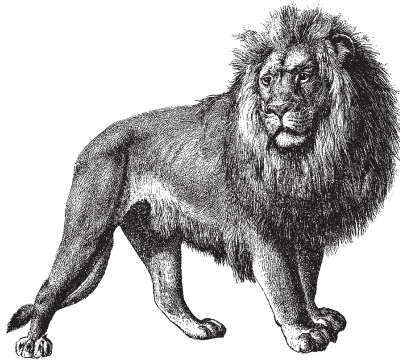
From nerve cells to cognition

We move backwards to gather energy to move forward



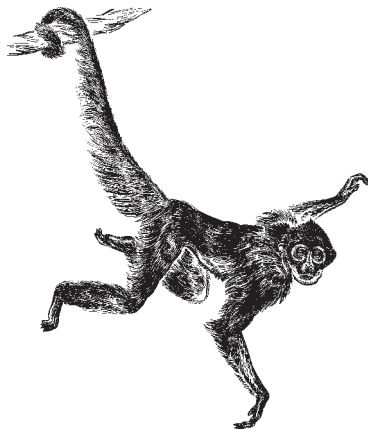
Rabbit

Fear
Negative expectation
Curses magic
Security



Cat

Leadership
Courage
Balance
Truth
Responsibility
Secret magic



Monkey

Invisibility
Transformation
Obedience
Service
Conditional surrender



Human

Collective fairness
Boundaries
Love
Acceptance
Communication
Mediation



3 Wisdom

Some may be blessed by being born with wisdom and these fortunate people are thus innately wise, but for most of us wisdom is learned and acquired and life is the only teacher. To become wise we must commit ourselves to growth and that means turning away from our own crystallised state in order to create a new approach to ourselves, to others and to life itself. We must constantly examine our inner structure which is made incredibly complicated by the fact that much of what we think of as 'us' is the conglomeration of our having learned and adopted the concepts of our parents, friends, schools, society, and so on. Our very thoughts and belief systems, the principles upon which we base our lives, are built largely on the foundation that we have imbibed from others. No doubt we have interpreted and assimilated much and have our own personal views and opinions. We are not simply carbon copies of the prevailing status quo! However, there remain no areas in our present selves which do not require review, which do not need to be understood and verified. We must face our own areas of sluggishness, stagnation and strength, see who we are, what we wish to become and where it all fits together.

Thus, the accumulation of knowledge, facts and worldly experience alone is not wisdom. So far, our wisdom is mostly the composite of all our experiences, insights, perceptions and beliefs. While 'becoming wise', we are not in a state of inertia. Attaining wisdom is an active, dynamic process which begins before we are born and does not end with our last breath. Wisdom is a state of being or 'beingness'. It is a process of updating, incorporating a larger scope, adding more tolerance, more understanding, more depth. Compassion is born out of the experience of wisdom.

Some of us might be inclined to expend so much effort in this direction that we exhaust ourselves. Here again, we should remember the element of deep relaxation. Over-extending ourselves can be very healthy and is one of the ways through which we stretch and expand. But, like our lungs, which suspend movement between the in-going and out-going breath, we must use that built-in pause – which is natural to all our bodily functions – for reflection. Reflection is one of the most valuable activities we can engage in. Ask any inventor, artist, writer or problem solver and he or she

will tell you that times of reflection have often been the birthplace of wisdom and intuition.

As wisdom arises from reflection, so it is also a mirror reflection of our experience to date. When we can comfortably amble along and there is no great contradiction between our internal body of knowledge and our day-to-day experience, we feel reasonably secure and content and think of ourselves as being sufficiently wise. When we encounter discrepancies, blockages, questions, we become stressed. If we visualise the two extremes of mental ease and stress on a continuum we can see that between the two are anger and frustration. When we reconcile these emotions, we have entered (until the next upheaval anyway) into the wisdom sphere.

These processes are the basis of our forward impetus. Clearing the past helps us to continue the journey. When we stop and rest in contemplation and reflection we can look with compassion upon our experience and, though we may feel vulnerable, we can move with self-assurance to greet the next of life's challenges.

In theory we understand that within a collective there is a need to be fair and to work within boundaries that suit all comers. We desire to love and be loved; to accept and be accepted; to communicate when there is a need for mediation but how do we put this into practical application when others do not appear to work to the same ethic, standard or order of priorities as we do? If we are all equal even when we are evolving at different rates, with a different permutation of skills and personalities that may meld or clash, do we tend to dictate, dominate, flatly refuse to discuss or ignore the plight of others altogether? Perhaps we must learn to overcome our resistances through controlled exposure to that which we find hard to deal with ourselves and then to demonstrate that state to all others.

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We must be willing to surrender to life's lessons without resentment until we are unconditional in our willingness to trust and experience and are free of an expectation of bondage and suffering. We serve others best by being in service ourselves and allowing our souls to instil wisdom to the depths of our being. This requires an obedience to the invisible instructions and the overcoming of instincts and habits that make us resist. Reactions such as insolence or dumbness will have to be addressed until coexistence, co-operation and courtesy are the hallmark of the respect we have for ourselves and for others. We transform our emotions until we can trust ourselves to know that all is well, will be well and has been well even in the direst of circumstances. Personal transformation is in progress and we are being invisibly pulled forward and upwards by seemingly re-experiencing the dark places of past misdoing which takes us to a deeper level of compassion, forgiveness and care.

So while we follow our soul guidance we lead others hoping that we are not harming anyone within the process. We walk forward blind in faith and have the courage to act as a waymarker for others even when we have no idea what is required. We balance the needs of all and act as a facilitator for all we try to honour and understand the truth of the moment for all as best we can, taking responsibility to keep all together. It is difficult to keep a watching brief when some rush in where angels fear to tread with no thought of what it might do to others. Others stumble and have trouble keeping up. Some feel persecuted and condemned when others criticise; some try to sacrifice themselves beyond their capacities to tolerate. With some, magic is abroad so they are secretive and will not reveal their needs for fear of challenge or ridicule.

So to take this to a logical conclusion we have to choose a time to face our fear within the invisible and the visible and to bring these two opposing forces together. This is difficult enough within one person. Within a collective, this can be a challenge indeed, particularly if some members of the collective insist, and persist, within old negativity which becomes a drain on already overstretched resources. The more selfish members of society expect all the attention and all the resources to be made exclusively available to them with little thought to the needs of others. When thinking of others they are certain within their perception

that they know what is required and insist on their way being the only way without learning the etiquette or having the courtesy to ask.

Anything that does not bless is a curse and if enough people support the curse which is interference into someone else's affairs without invitation, then our vulnerabilities begin to surface and we feel insecure and inadequate to cope. We are hurled into chaos and must reshape a new world but how, with whom, when, where and why is not yet known. We begin to trust and accept that life as we have known it is no longer an option. Life as we are to know it is not clear as yet and we live within the confusion as life shows us, minute by minute, hour by hour, day by day. We must learn not to pretend to be anything other than an innocent child being led by our Mother the Earth who is showing us the extraordinary within the ordinary at a practical level, whereas our Father in Heaven, our spiritual maker, is encouraging us to allow the spiritual requisites of our soul path to manifest within life.

We will feel anxious, stressed and nervous at this time as led by desire we inch our way forward baby step by baby step. We train to focus on the most practical and ordinary as we move through darkness and out into light once again.

continued overleaf . . .



Self-reflection exercise on resetting standards.

i). What do you know you no longer wish to do/be anymore?

ii). What is the next logical step to administer the practical details required to clear up the past chapter?

iii). Where are the way pointers to show you how to move onto the next step of the journey?

iv). When will the timing be right to make a practical move and what needs organising to open all options?

v). How can you focus on your own needs and the needs of others you care for while you wait as courteously as you can?

vi). Who do you need to keep informed and communicate with?

vii). Summarise your answers to all of the above questions as a single and simple statement to yourself.

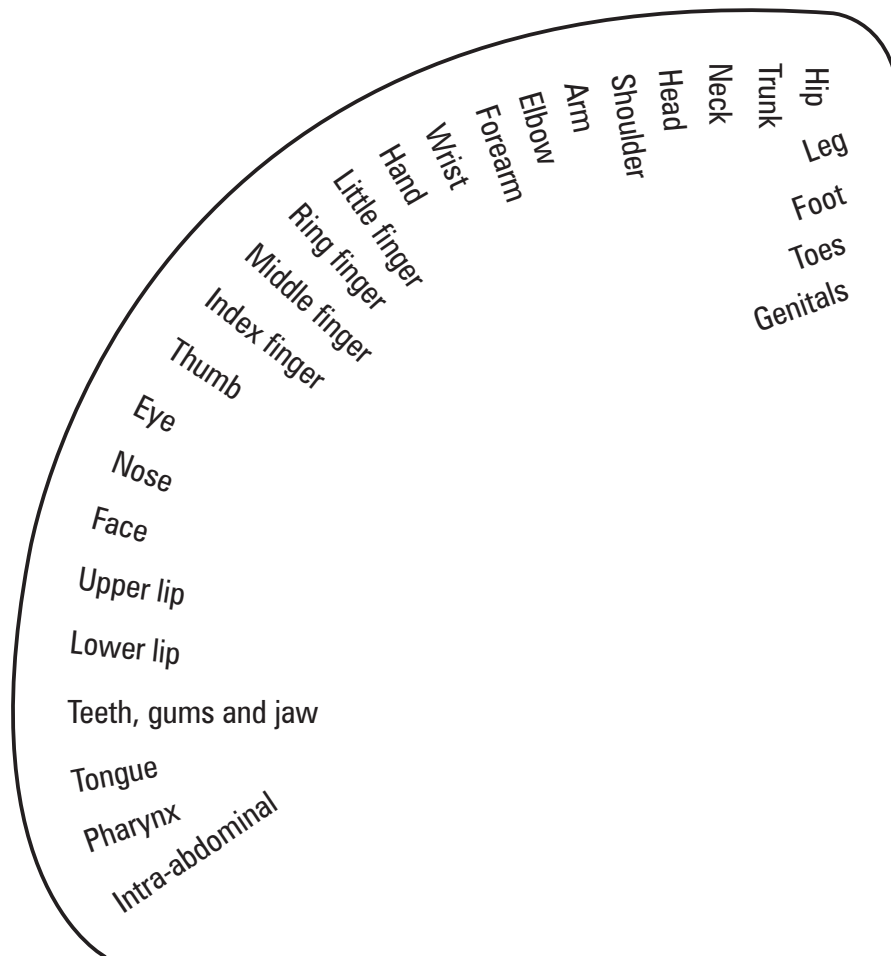


Section 4

Intuition

Sensory evolvment

World evolvment reflected by the skull



Lateral

Medial



4 Intuition

Training ourselves in self-awareness will automatically make us more sensitive to vibrations. It is as if we can hear with our mind rather than with our ears, see with our heart rather than with our eyes. We will be more aware of the signals and messages given to our brain by our five senses, and we will not be able to ignore the warnings of our body. We may also notice qualities of vibrations in the atmosphere of a place; for example, we may feel fine walking into a room and once inside, suddenly feel strangely depressed or sad as if for no reason. These are all ways of saying that our intuition has become more acute.

It seems that as we become more sensitive we also become more vulnerable to the effects of people, places, pressures and stresses around us because we realise we are part of, not separate from, the whole picture. However, there is no point in offering ourselves for the sacrifice. We must learn when it is healthy to withdraw a bit and filter our experience. It is not that we should become protective of ourselves and our new state of being, paranoid or otherwise inclined towards a mild 'spiritual superiority complex'. Rather, as our development and awareness is heightened, we can intelligently and compassionately apply common sense in terms of our own survival. Basically, all we are trying to do is maintain stability in dealing with any situation.

Recognition of this may cause us to withdraw from familiar habits and patterns and our families and friends may become alarmed at our seeming lack of interest in many of the pastimes we used to enjoy. Here is the perfect place to practise compassion with those who show love and concern for us. Though they may not understand us, we can still offer them our love and understanding.

We must learn to become comfortable within the process of our own expansion. We will find ourselves constantly investigating, comparing our past thoughts with our current ones, refining, fine-tuning. We are not changing so much as we are evolving and life can become a beautiful, continuous meditation, a time of monitoring, in which we can perceive so much of what we overlooked before. Our experience of life becomes very rich and we feel as if we are privileged guests invited to watch life reveal her secrets to us in all their many colours.

We are not the directors. We are, along with everybody else, the participants in life's drama. We are merely undertaking to discipline ourselves a little, within this new found state of harmony we are experiencing. We must include and embrace rather than separate. Realising that not everyone has yet discovered the same treasures as we have, we must allow them the right to their point of view. This may well be the most important time of transition and adjustment we have yet experienced and so we should be patient with ourselves.

During this time of metamorphosis and always hereafter, it is a good idea to take the time to sit quietly, to review our experiences and experiments, and see how we can offer ourselves in service to all. In so doing, we may need to withdraw for a while from those whom we wish to help, while we sort ourselves out and gain a sense of our inner ease and comfort, a sense of certainty of the inner, deeper reality. In this stillness, we can, if we so desire, consciously rid ourselves of old patterns to gain a fuller perspective.

Always in a constant state of motion, as part of the universal energy, we are, like the river, flowing into the sea, leaving behind that which is no longer essential and taking with us – in fact, becoming – the purity of energy itself.

continued overleaf . . .



Before this can happen we have to allow time to pass as the heart and mind inform the brain that the old programmes are requiring update within the head. We may feel as if we have a taugt stomach as we try to digest that which we now know but cannot understand. We cannot find our voice and may clear our throat constantly coughing, spluttering and croaking as we try to find the courage to express the unexpressible as we do not yet know what to say or how to say it. We grind our teeth, get sore lips and a frozen face as we cautiously sniff the atmosphere to find out if we are safe. Our eyes ache from looking but as yet we cannot see. Our fingers feel arthritic our hands sore, our wrists and arms ache and our shoulders are tensed and locked in our lack of belief. Our head aches and our neck is tense, our spine feels like a rod of iron and our hips and legs like lead. Our feet and toes are heavy on the floor and we feel as if we are about to reproduce whatever our sex. All this is our brain catching onto and up with the updated scenario and sending messages to our body what to retain and what to release and when. At this time we need to cut some slack and do the day, taking reasonable care of ourselves but also giving leeway to have a little fun time as well.

The invisible is becoming visible and slowly we are beginning to hear the updated vibration, we need to create a safe space in which to explore, we need time to discuss as simply as possible until we no longer wonder, we know. Our senses will begin to get the same message as our mind and union is achieved, at which time the body which will have felt like a war zone becomes peace-filled but, very very, tired. For once the battle is won battle fatigue sets in and the cells will need rest to regenerate so they can support the new form. We hang out and give permission to the process. As Winston Churchill once said, 'We have won the war, so our next task is to win the peace'.



Section 5

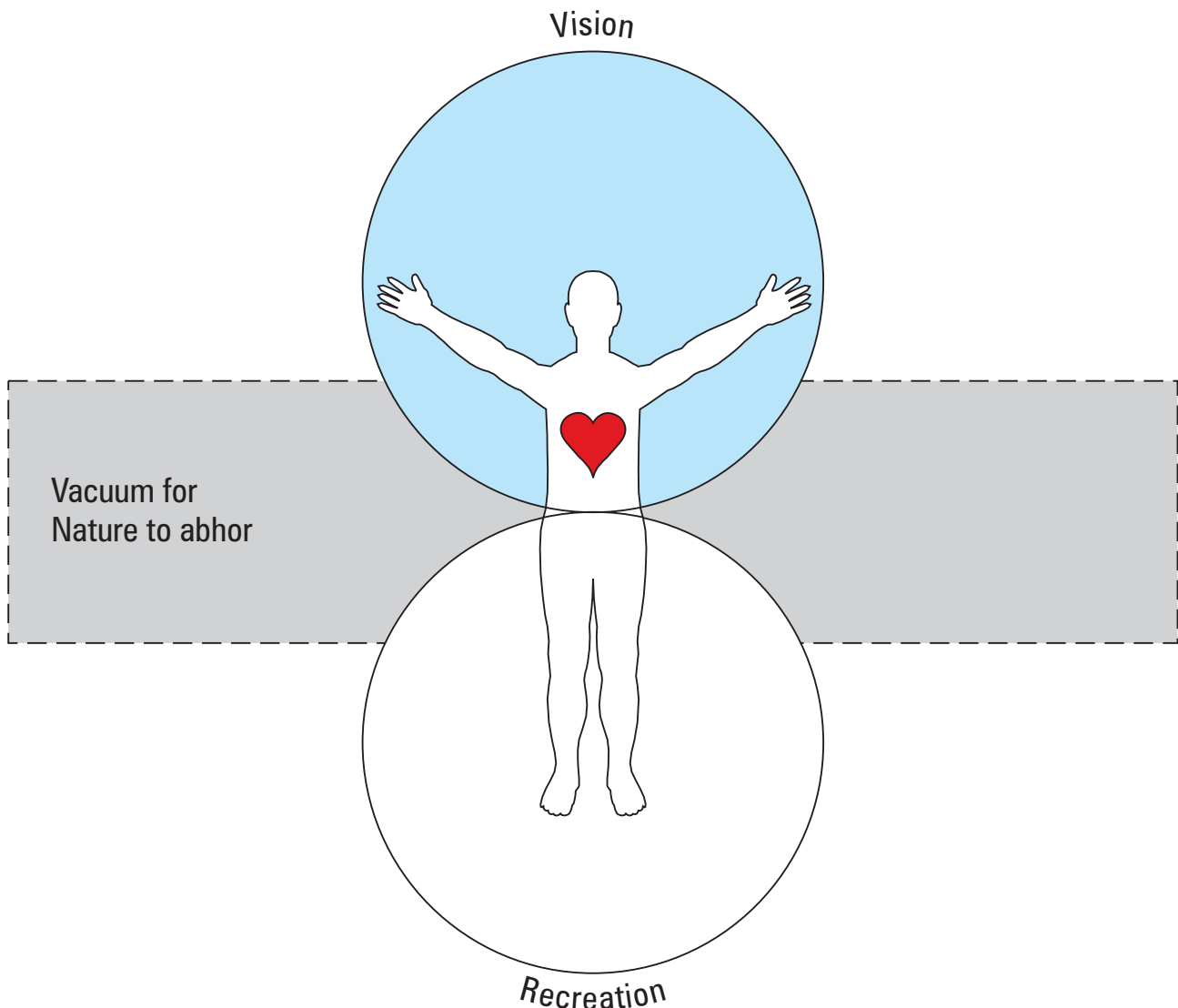
Spiritual responsibility

A dark night of the Soul

Affected area – Head and back

Issues: Depression; release of suppressed expression; negative expectation

Tasks: Raise standard; pray for wholeness; meditate and listen to new vibration; contemplate balance of old and new; rest in natural simplicity



Affected area – Excretion centre and front

Issues: Insecurity; abandonment; rejection

Tasks: Reclaim past and administer it as correctly as you can – honouring all; connect to future and organise it as best you can; do the day and let go of anxiety as you surrender the need to help; trusting total care systems



5 Spiritual responsibility

If we have developed ourselves to the extent that we can see with clarity it follows that we will have to take responsibility for what we see. This may not be easily reconciled with our ideals and will probably require a compromise (hopefully a win-win one) between our ideal and our reaction to what is actually taking place. Romantic images of the way we would wish things may fall by the wayside. This is not a negative thing! To play the roles is absolutely essential to our growth, whereas to become the role is confusion. We are massaging our brains, as it were, clearing away the tensions and clutter, the crystallisation, and making room for more space within our heads and hearts.

Many of us have reached a stage in our lives where we think about helping others in some way. We do not necessarily have to choose a helping profession to help others. Every day we are given opportunities in which we can extend in love and friendship to our fellow human beings. When we have examined our own motives and our own foibles, we are more compassionate towards those who have little understanding of themselves and whose behaviour belies that lack. We must remember that our commitment to growth is not for ourselves alone, but for the good of everyone.

Many of us shy away from responsibility, but realistically there is no way to avoid it. And why should we want to? It is only when we feel trapped that we want to run away, but when we approach situations with confidence, believing that we can make them workable, or at least tolerable, then we can face life straight on. Thus we must take responsibility for our own behaviour, working on areas of resistance rather than ignoring or merely thinking about them.

Life is an investment; the more you invest the more interest you earn and the more you have to work with and enlarge upon. If we choose to relate – to people, to experiences – it becomes vital that we communicate to others. We must be able to tell our story in a way that is not threatening as well as it being interesting and inspiring. Acting with others in mind we may even find ourselves willing to do things we would never dream of doing for ourselves!

In short, we are now ready to take responsibility for our own destiny and by extension, for the destiny and well being of our friends, family, institutions, city, coun-

try and the world! Hardly a small task – in fact it's a lifetime's work and commitment – but what else is life for? Prior to moving forward we move seemingly backwards and physically may feel under the weather. Perhaps we will have an aching head or back, as that which we have not been able to express as yet is suppressed but looking for an avenue of outlet. We, of course, expect that things will be as difficult as they have been in times gone by so do not want to upset the status quo even though we may be determined to raise the standards. We pray for wholeness but are reluctant to listen to the answers to our prayers. We meditate and listen and hear the new vibration yet do not know what that means as yet. We endlessly contemplate on what we think is the old going out and speculate on the new gaining entry. We wonder but do not know.

This is an uncomfortable space to be in – it is a dark night where rest appears difficult to attain. If we are or have been insecure we may anticipate being abandoned and feel a little like a lost sheep that has strayed from the flock and we wonder at the shepherd's skills or interest in finding us. We wonder if we have done well enough or whether we are to be rejected even while we know that all things are cared for within the Heaven and the Earth, even when we know we cannot understand how always.

We reclaim areas of the past that are relevant to the everyday situation and we administer the present as correctly as we are able, honouring all as best we can. We investigate what is working and what is not; whom we want to re-associate with and who we release. We research what may be possible as a next step, as we connect to the future and organise it as best we can, when we do not fully know what we are doing. We trust that our soul does and will get the appropriate help that we need. Then we get on with the day and see what it brings, we find to our surprise that the anxiety that we felt is not necessary and the more we let go, the better things work out. We surrender the need to cry for help, for rescue, for protection as we see overall that nothing needs fixing, it is as it is – a total care system.

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Nature abhors a vacuum but one has to be created for nature to abhor it. We may feel a little uncomfortable in the front of our bodies. At the excretory centre we may experience itching also in the reproductive outlets. We should seek the advice of a doctor, but if nothing is found then the past is being let go of and the future is on its way and all is well.

Visualisation exercise on letting go of the past.

i). Imagine yourself letting go of all that you do not need, letting the past release gently and naturally and feeling only relief as it is laid to rest.

ii). Imagine yourself walking gently up to a door, opening it and walking through it. Very slowly and in no hurry, you close the door having taken a last look back. Feel the peace, the calm and the stillness as you rest against the far side of the door. Look around, hear the sounds, smell the atmosphere and know that you will see hear and know what to do when the time is right.



Section 6

The soul journey



6 The soul journey

There are fewer words more misunderstood than the word 'soul'. Yet to ponder its meaning evokes a mixture of sadness, joy and wonder, for our acknowledgement of the existence of soul is a commendation, a recognition of indivisible eternal consciousness.

It seems we have struggled for so long, staggered from one crisis to another, woven our way through confusion and doubt. In our more inspired moments, we feel our lives are not without some purpose but more often we have no clear idea of what that purpose might be, particularly as there is so much pain to be endured throughout. The vibrant colours of childhood seem to have faded away and become dull before the picture was completed. When we look back we see the natural harmony and innocence of our childhood buried in our mistakes. Have we sold out, have we compromised too much? Where are we heading now? What have we to show for all our efforts, misguided though they may have been? The efforts may often have appeared misguided but the experiences have always served a purpose.

If we alter our vantage-point, just a fraction, we will recognise that our soul has always been there, the force and existence behind all the costumes we have worn and all the roles we have played. Often we become so locked into the drama that we forget the central figure – us – whom we are seeking to rediscover in the first place! We get so involved in performing for others that we forget that we too are meant to derive some joy and satisfaction from all the hard work we have put in. Recognising this, we can smile and tolerate not only our own foibles but also the confusion of those around us, those who may still be inextricably tied to their roles, those who are still seeking, still searching for they know not what.

This experience is akin to feeling the warmth and comfort of the sun after weeks of relentless rain and cloud. We almost forgot that though we could not see it, the sun still shone above the clouds. To bask in the light of this sun is to know that a greater power is at work. We can easily refocus our thinking and watch confusion fade, drift away and dissolve, just like the clouds in the heat of the sun. Again, we have actively learned how to transform nonsense into sense.

A word of caution here, in order to avoid the trap

of becoming too complacent: it is not that, having reached this stage in our growth, we have attained all there is to achieve on this Earth – far from it! What we have learned is how to create space and how to use it, how to take responsibility for our own lives. We are continually on the path of return and must never become complacent or patronising because of our new ability and knowledge.

As we feel it is now safe to look back over the events in our lives, we begin to understand the necessity of undergoing some of the experiences that have frightened, disappointed and imprisoned us. If we now experience self-confidence, self-acceptance and self-understanding, we need not censor the past or the truth; rather we are given the strength to unburden ourselves and carry on. We needn't avoid any part of life and we find we have the ability to cope – and to hope. With our sense of reality now deeper and more all encompassing, we relocate ourselves within a richer, more nurturing environment – the environment that lies within our heads.

We are more confident of our self-worth because we know our understanding of love and compassion have expanded and are continuing to expand and that we can be of help to others on their path. Although much of the past may have been unpleasant, it is part of a bigger, more comprehensive picture. The lost art of truly seeing has been revived.

And finally, the ability to acknowledge the changes that evolution brings, to recognise new areas of work, new opportunities for growth, to meet new companions (or re-discover old ones), to explore new ideas, new ways of living – enables us to live each moment as the eternal present. And to share with others the sense of wonder and joy at the increasing of awareness is perhaps the greatest reward of all.

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Self-reflection questions on the way forward.

i). Do you feel that the past is a done deal or do you anticipate a compounding of unprocessed resentment and pain?

ii). Do you feel able to look towards the future without a feeling of dread?

iii). Are you able to carry hope on behalf of others when they are feeling a little under the weather?

iv). Are you able to maintain a committed degree of faith as you gift love to all who surround you, yourself included?

v). Will you be led by your Higher Self/Mind or do you get in your own way with wanting what you want when you want it?

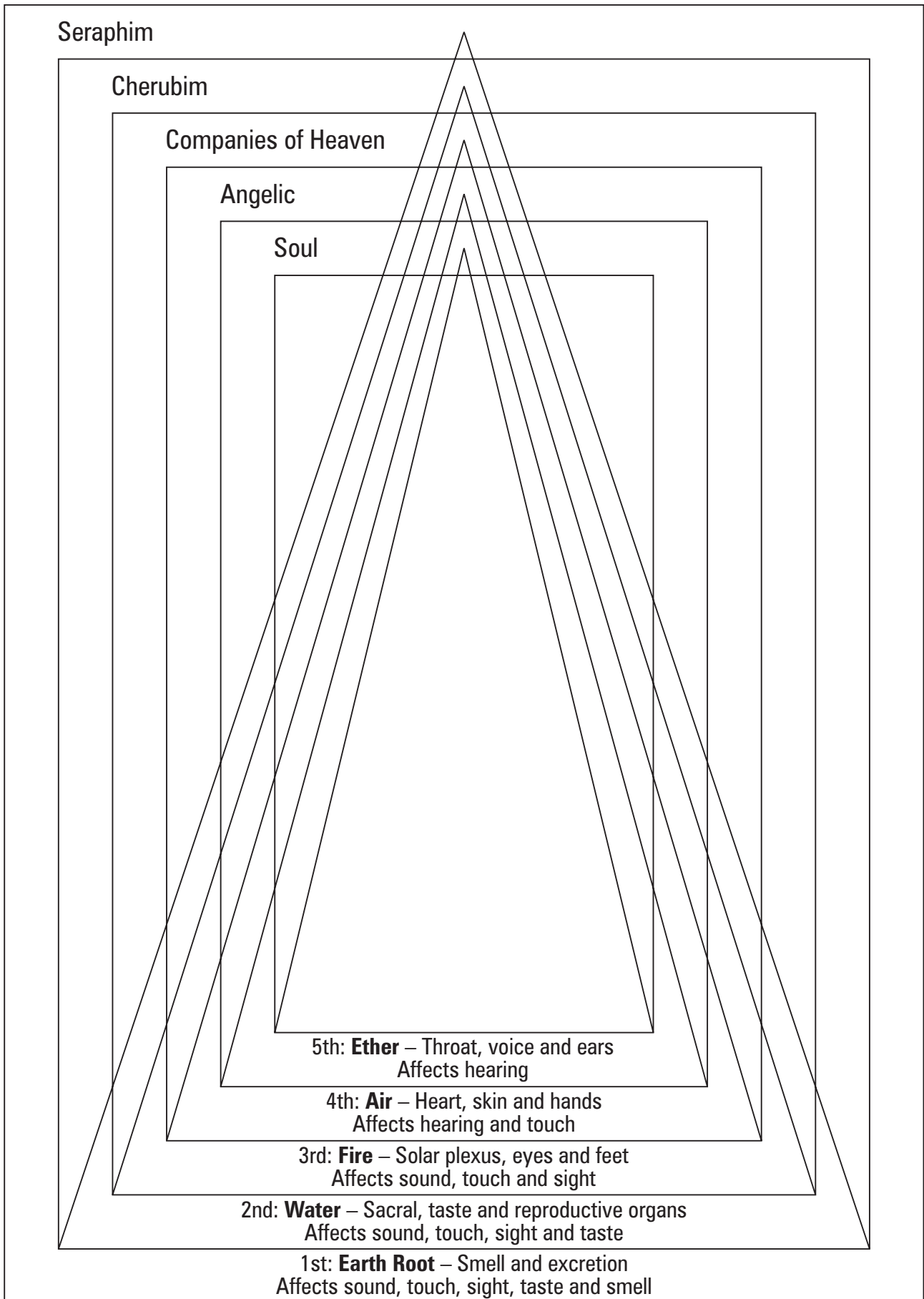
vi). Ask to be shown the path towards Greater Light.



Section 7

Rhythms of the Spirit

Spiritual evolution





7 Rhythms of the Spirit

The circles within the spiral carry us ever upwards. The order and organisation of our planet, our galaxy, the universe, is breathtaking to behold. Everything is perfect unto itself, and perfect also as part of the whole creation. Nonetheless, unlike other species on Earth, we humans spend a considerable amount of time trying to get the world to respond to us according to our desires and when it does not, we find the discrepancies difficult to reconcile. We imagine that we are forlorn, unworthy uncared for, small, insignificant.

To evolve as a human being – not merely to grow up, but to evolve – means opening ourselves to the flow of life, allowing life to flow around, in and through us. We needn't drown while learning to ride the waves; we learn by experience to maintain harmony with the rhythm and flow of nature. We can make room for subtler guests to enter into our consciousness; we can nurture and cherish them, and be instructed by them.

It follows naturally that we become givers more than takers, as we are able to offer more. Our emotional battle scars and medals of merit prove we have learned to cope with the wars, and now we wish to serve others who are finding the experience of change, movement and the call to real bravery as difficult as we did. We offer our support not as great heroes, but as living demonstrations of survival, a reminder that – yes – we can make it through!

Offering our love and support to others often calls for a 'no nonsense' approach which when on the receiving end we know could seem harsh. Now, however, a whole new circle in the spiral is revealed. We learn to be caring yet firm, to open ourselves to the subtle energies at play within the universe. We may be apprehensive, as if we've started all over again and yet we know that this is what we've been waiting and working for: our own inner awareness, and to help and guide others in that direction too. Everything else pales by comparison; as if we'd been looking in the wrong place all these years, the wonder and love we now feel at this new lease of life brings great joy – and a real commitment to humanity.

Although we probably would not wish to repeat some of the circumstances of our lives, we realise that if they were necessary for us to reach this point, we would not have missed them. And we can use our life

experiences to help motivate others. The more we study and absorb the subtler energies, the more we learn to trust in the cosmic consciousness. At first, we experiment with caution, but as we find we are truly more loving and giving, we can communicate more effectively from our place of newfound freedom. Each interaction, each attempt becomes easier and boosts our confidence further. Our reserves of courage increase and we become more familiar with the invisible workings, the invisible worlds within.

We begin to give love with no expectation of return; we find the courage and energy to do what we think is right in spite of the reactions or disapproval of others. The self-censorship we exercised out of fear of being different or misunderstood is no longer necessary, as our trust in the greater consciousness and in ourselves becomes deeper. We know that to speak only that which others think acceptable limits not only our responses to life, but theirs as well.

We now care enough to tell our truth, for we know that we are an integral part of the vastness of space. The cohesive power is all loving, and as we trust this more and more, there is little room in our lives for doubt, fear or guilt. Cohesion and unity come from love and as we put our trust into this principle, there is less energy that can go into the negative areas and more into the positive ones. We are representatives of that greatness of being and we reflect that strength, power and love.

Having renewed and regenerated ourselves by withdrawing somewhat and playing a more outwardly passive role, we are now able to return to a more active state. We may not always be in the position to express ourselves verbally, but we can radiate our knowledge and our state of being and transmit our underlying strength to anchor and reinforce the efforts of others.

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Teaching ourselves to be better people is a simple philosophy. We don't practise this Second Aid on anyone other than ourselves. By working on ourselves, we become a pure reflection, an untainted mirror able to reflect the essence and truth of circumstances, situations and life itself – without becoming marred by the reflection.

As this occurs, as it will do with friends, family and associates, we recognise that we have become a walking catalyst. Wherever we are, things seem to happen. This can be quite disturbing, for we do not intentionally wish to stir things up, as it were. If events become too unsettling, we will need the support of someone who has been through this stage of development, someone with whom we can discuss our thoughts and who can guide us to better understand these happenings and how they affect us. In these circumstances, it is particularly helpful to share our experiences with a counsellor or spiritual friend. With this support, we will feel less uncertain; the unknown, threatening element becomes neutralised and we can freely embrace the greater perspective rather than be defensive towards it.

Almost without effort or exertion, we can respond lovingly, effectively and in freedom to situations we found distressing, if not downright impossible to deal with before. We can safely and confidently return to the mainstream of life, after our short journey within, with renewed interest and energy. Seeing where we are now, recognising how far we have come, allows us to settle into life knowing that we are guided, guarded and supported, that we are intrinsic, colourful threads in the tapestry of life.

To follow the dictates of our own self is not selfish – if we reflect daily on our actions and ensure that we have acted for the good of others as well as for ourselves. In this way, we can take care not to inflict our personal ideas onto others. We reflect and radiate our well being to them but we do not presume to preach or teach. We merely create an opportunity for them to learn for themselves, just as we have. If they are not ready, we are there as a reference, a guide, a resource, always available if needed.

For we have earned our success and we can now hold our head high, knowing we have acquired that inner strength which is born of faith, knowledge and our own efforts. It is not merely that we have come, through our perseverance and understanding, to the

end of a stage of life. Rather, we know that we are on the brink of a new horizon, an infinite, promising, unknown but not unfriendly place. A heretofore unseen panorama of life lies before us . . . the vastness of which resides, after all, within our own being. Growing inside can hurt if we are restricting the flow.

Self-reflection questions on harmony.

Cast your mind back for a moment to ask yourself:

- i). Do you hear your own needs and are you aware of the needs of others behind the words that are spoken?
- ii). Have you sent a message of comradeship to your human relations be they family, friends, work colleagues or complete strangers? If you have proved unselfishness in action then your soul will be collecting the very best deal for you from the spiritual realms.
- iii). Have you stood firm in your belief that all will be well in spite of presenting circumstances that have held great fear or even terror? Have you thereby given yourself and others a waymarker during the confusion of crisis? If you have, you can safely ask for the patronage of the angelic kingdoms for you have earned the right to be touched as well as heard.

Even though our body may be painful as we are fired into a new direction, those in the invisible realm recognise our strengths and talents and will wish to assist us to maximise our potential on the Earth. Long-term this will benefit us although short-term we may feel depressed that things have not gone the way we anticipated they should. We may be disillusioned and disappointed or despairing about our ability to go into the next round when the last one has pained us so greatly.

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At this time we need to ask for the blessings from the gardeners of the Earth who will come to our aid or into our mind if we have shined our light brightly enough on behalf of all. We can describe this as an Angel, or in whatever language we wish. All language is inadequate yet we have to try to explain the unexplainable in a manner that we are familiar with for it is the only currency available to us at this time when life is tasting a little sour.

And so we go to the deepest level of our being for to evolve further we must face the darkest moment. We are tired and dispirited and too tired to fight, resent or even feel frustration and we know we are vulnerable and feel impotent. Yet at this moment we are closer to the Light Beings for we have got out of our own way and are able to attract the most powerful Light that we are capable of exposure to. We have the saying 'it is always darkest before the dawn; my darkest hour'. Plants climb up through soil in darkness, babies are in womb in darkness and so on.

All seems rigid within its nothingness and yet something comes out of it.

As the framework of all levels of being find a revised alignment, then the individual's life starts to turn within the eternal circle of evolution and all find their new place. The struggle is over we are soul activated and all is well. We may have no idea what this means at this stage but we have plenty of time to find out so we move gently so that all who surround us can accommodate the changed state. We choose to promote goodwill towards all and wait to be shown gently by life the significance of what has happened.



Relaxation technique

This basic relaxation technique can be useful. Imagine yourself to be safe, healthy and protected. Imagine a white cloak around you and imagine that it gives you gentle comfort, safety, warmth and love.

- Sit in a comfortable chair or on the floor if you prefer, but make sure that you are in a relaxed position. If you are on a chair, place your feet flat on the floor, straighten your spine, neck and head, and close your eyes. If you are on the floor, you may cross your legs (Indian style) or stretch them out before you, providing your knees are bent and your feet are flat on the floor. Try not to slouch, but don't become stiff either.

- If you are feeling tense, worried or distracted, you can use this simple process to help you relax. Take in three deep breaths – pushing your tummy out as you inhale slowly – pulling your tummy in as you exhale slowly – saying to yourself the word 'relax'. Consciously concentrate on the muscles in your body, starting from your feet, calves and thighs, moving up to your stomach, chest, arms, neck, head and face. Tense each set of muscles first, and then release the tension consciously and slowly, feeling the gentle warmth, comfort and relaxation each time you release. Become aware of your body as a pleasant part of the natural surroundings.

- Create a clear picture in your mind of the situation about which you feel worried, angry or resentful. Be aware that you are feeling uncomfortable. Then again say the word 'relax' to yourself three times and become conscious of your breathing. Try to breathe in deeply and slowly, pushing your tummy out, and breathe out, pulling your tummy in. Do this several times.

- Picture good things happening within the situation, a happy ending, a reconciliation, a change for the better, a rest. See the situation – yourself and all those involved – surrounded by love or whatever you think would be a good antidote to the problem. Picture a beautiful setting where you are truly contented.

- Be aware of your reactions. It is natural to have difficulty seeing a loving picture. The feelings of tension, anger, frustration and all the other emotions are also natural. Dissolving them into relaxation will become easier with practice.

- Think about the role you may have played in creating the stressful scene, and try to re-interpret the event, your own and other people's behaviour. Imagine how the situation might look from another person's point of view.

- Be gentle with yourself and your thoughts. Try simply to watch rather than judge them, no matter how negative they seem. Become aware of how much less frustration, anger and resentment you feel. Tell yourself that you carry this new understanding with you.

- Move your head, hands and feet slowly. Open your eyes, look around; know that all is well with you and that you are in harmony with all that is.

There are many different sorts of impressions that we carry with us, consciously or unconsciously, which at some point we must look at, review and revise. Without doing so, it is difficult to allow our own subsequent levels of growth to emerge fully and freely. And, since personal growth and expansion is the goal of Second Aid, it is never too early or too late to reflect on our beginnings, on the past that has led us to this point, and thereby to rewrite history.



Consolidating your study experiences

Having completed each section of this module, try to write and/or illustrate and/or tape a holistic, understandable story about yourself. You will find clues to do this from within yourself contained in the sections you completed during this module, as well as external clues, in anything that you may have gleaned from other people or circumstances. Put each clue together as they can mirror a symbolic message for you about an aspect of your life that you may have been confused about. We have many mysterious aspects within our lives. By

going through this process, areas of our life can be transformed, clarified, solved or resolved as the internal and external aspects unite to enable transformation.

Once you have written your report or your journal, if you wish, you can send it to us and we will read it and give you some feedback to encourage you in your process of changing and being changed, as you discover and deepen your inner journey. If you are interested in this service, or in receiving e-mail support, (for which a charge is made), please see details of this in the SUPPORT section on the Second Aid web site – www.secondaid.net.

Focus on
Spirituality

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