

MORTEN TOLBOLL



A PORTRAIT  
OF A  
LIFEARTIST

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Contact information:

[www.MortenTolboll.blogspot.com](http://www.MortenTolboll.blogspot.com)

Dedication:

Soli Deo Gloria

## Table of Contents

<b>Foreword.....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Introduction.....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>I. Philosophy as an Art of Life.....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>1. Six fundamental steps in the art of life.....</b>	<b>9</b>
A. The separation of the observer and the observed.....	10
B. Religion and supporting exercises.....	11
C. Passive listening presence.....	14
D. Discrimination.....	14
E. Creative emptiness.....	15
F. The wholeness of the observer and the observed.....	16
<b>2. The ability to wonder.....</b>	<b>17</b>
A. To become like a child again.....	17
B. To be critical.....	19
C. To ask questions.....	20
<b>3. Meditation.....</b>	<b>21</b>
A. The complete perception.....	22
B. The nature of experience.....	22
C. The unknown.....	25
<b>4. Human problems.....</b>	<b>25</b>
A. The answers are in the problems.....	25
B. The philosophical revolution.....	27
C. The difference between having some images of life, and having a philosophical life-practice.....	29
D. The possible end of democracy.....	32
E. Civil disobedience.....	37
F. James Cameron's movie Avatar.....	40
<b>5. The philosophical diary.....</b>	<b>43</b>

<b>II. The lifeartist as a rational being.....</b>	<b>49</b>
1. The mind.....	49
A. What is consciousness?.....	49
B. The activity of the mind.....	54
C. The peace of the mind.....	56
D. On emptying out the mind.....	57
2. Thinking.....	58
A. What is the thought?.....	58
B. The thought can't understand the unknown.....	60
C. The thinker and the thought.....	63
D. The necessity of the thought.....	65
E. Self-forgetful thinking.....	69
3. On analysis.....	72
4. Dualism.....	76
A. Opposites.....	76
B. Conflict.....	78
C. On choosing.....	80
D. Idea and action.....	85
E. Contradictions.....	87
<b>III. The lifeartist as a desirous being.....</b>	<b>89</b>
1. The will to power.....	89
A. What is desire?.....	89
B. Striving.....	94
C. The will.....	96
B. Becoming.....	101
2. Conscious and unconscious.....	105
A. The difference between psychological counseling and philosophical counseling.....	106
B. The division between the conscious and the subconscious.....	112
C. Dreams.....	114
D. Hints from the subconscious.....	119
E. On examining the subconscious.....	126
3. Passion.....	127
A. Self-assertion.....	127
B. Why I am an apostle of loafing.....	129
C. Will to power is not passion.....	134
D. Existential guilt.....	135
E. The need of philosophical counseling.....	138
F. Reason and feeling.....	140
<b>IV. The lifeartist as a natural being.....</b>	<b>142</b>
1. Needs.....	145
A. Sensitivity language.....	145

B. Coaching.....	148
C. The insulting use of sensitivity language and coaching.....	149
D. New Age.....	151
E. NLP.....	152
F. Large Group Awareness Training (LGAT).....	153
G. Conclusion to NLP and LGAT.....	155
H. The Law of Attraction.....	160
I. The philosopher Niels Bohr.....	163
J. How the ideology of needs distorts human nature.....	167
K. Love of lust.....	171
L. The right relationship with the things.....	172
<b>2. The brain.....</b>	<b>173</b>
A. Evolution.....	173
B. The function of the brain.....	176
C. The Matrix Conspiracy.....	177
D. The 666 Conspiracy.....	181
E. Conclusion to The Matrix Conspiracy.....	190
F. The brain and the mind.....	191
<b>3. The language.....</b>	<b>194</b>
A. Sense stimulation and symbolizing.....	195
B. The image-creating activity of absence.....	197
C. On communicating.....	203
D. The map is not the landscape.....	204
E. The task for the lifeartist.....	210
F. Non-linguistic presence.....	213
<b>4. Identity.....</b>	<b>215</b>
A. On seeking the permanent.....	216
B. Identification with the greater.....	220
C. Mortal fear.....	223
D. About having your identity in a presence.....	225
<b>5. The body.....</b>	<b>227</b>
A. Euthanasia.....	227
B. Mind and body.....	230
C. Body exercises.....	232
<b>V. The lifeartist as a communicative being.....</b>	<b>233</b>
<b>1. Challenge and reaction.....</b>	<b>237</b>
A. The mirror.....	238
B. The new.....	241
C. Life itself.....	243
D. The insufficient meeting.....	246
E. The experience of the meeting.....	247
F. The sufficient meeting.....	251
<b>2. The dialogue in philosophical counseling.....</b>	<b>252</b>
A. The voyage of discovery.....	254
B. The question of the possibility or impossibility of freedom.....	256
C. The guest and the counselor must be equal.....	263

D. The counselor is a philosophical sparring partner.....	268
E. Linguistic and non-linguistic communication.....	270
<b>3. Being.....</b>	<b>275</b>
A. What you are.....	275
B. The absent and the present.....	278
C. Alonebeing.....	283

## Foreword

This book is the last in a series of three on my teaching **Meditation as an Art of life**. The first book was named *Meditation as an art of life – a basic reader*. The second was named *Dream Yoga*. The three books can be read independently of each other, but you will only get the complete image by reading them in connection with each other. There will, on your spiritual journey, turn up questions, which best are made clear by seeing them in the light of, either one or two, or all three books. The books can also be seen (as I described it in Dream yoga) as belonging to each of the three conditions the wholeness can be in: sleep, dream, awake.

The first book is the basic reader on asking philosophical questions in a meditative-existential way, and on the connected supporting exercises. The second book is about how you, through critical thinking, navigate through the dream-labyrinth of life and death.

Even though **A Portrait of a Lifeartist** contains some last critical texts on the zeitgeist of New Age and coaching, then it is much more existential experimenting than logical analyzing, it is more observing than thinking, more listening than arguing. This has to do with, that it mainly is concerned with the question about how you practise art of life. It can be seen as a directly instruction in this. This also means, that the choice of words and concepts is a bit changed.

In the beginning of the book I set up six fundamental steps on the lifeartist's journey towards the source of life. All six steps are reflected in an investigation of the lifeartist as respectively a historical being, a rational being, a desirous being, a natural being, and a communicative being. In that way the six steps, in each aspect of the lifeartist's being, come to appear in a new light, though the core is changeless. In this way the teaching, which originates from them, can be seen as a kind of diamond with different facets, though the same things often are repeated. And in that way the book, in connection with the two first books, ends up giving a nuanced portrait of the lifeartist's spiritual development.

What it is about is to see problems from all kinds of different viewpoints, as if they were seen through a diamond with many facets. All my three books can be seen as such a diamond, which therefore shall be used as a whole. In addition these facets must not be seen as absolute answers and conclusions. They are only frames of reference.

Finally I place the abstract problems, which are standing in the centre of the classical philosophical questions - for instance the question of soul and body, freedom, etc. – not only in more concrete connections, but directly in a transformational life-practice.

In this connection it has to be mentioned, that the investigation of the lifeartist as a historical being doesn't has its own chapter. This is due to, that this is the absolute central problem of the lifeartist. Man as history is that, which formerly were discussed as Man as spirit, and it is indeed also about spiritual processes such as understanding, action, intention, creativity, formation, development, time. Man as history will repeatedly be treated in the other chapters.

## **Introduction**

What is a human being? What is the nature of human beings? Is it the Ego? The Ego and the other human being's ego, what is all this, philosophical seen?

The other human being may have a bigger bank account, is perhaps more clever than one self, or whatever it might be; but what is the Ego philosophical seen? In Buddhist philosophy they say, that the Ego is nothing else than a couple of reactions to a couple of challenges. These reactions they call Skandhas. Both our body, feelings, conceptions, desires and consciousness are such Skandhas, or reactions, and together they constitute the Ego.

According to Buddhist philosophy there exists no higher ego or higher self, which is lying behind. The Ego is just a lot of words, memories, experiences, which constitute a perspective on oneself and the world, perhaps some personal images, which are in conflict with other people's personal images, nothing else. Therefore we attribute the Ego far too much importance. We want to let the Ego, the stories of our lives, our personal images, pass on to a son or a daughter, we want to write them down in a book or paint them on a painting. The Ego as opposed to society, or the Ego, which want to identify itself with society; the Ego, which wants to let all its abilities unfold, to become something great – and so forth.

When you observe this ego you observe, that it is a bunch of memories, empty words, and that it is this we cling so desperately to. The Ego is the innermost core in the division between the observer and the observed, between us, and them.

The so-called individual person is in this sense not existing at all, because his mind makes extensive use of the common stock of the images in time, which he shares with everybody else, and therefore it is false, this division between society on the one hand, and the individual person on the other: there is only the limitation in the images of time. On the basis of this limitation we act in any relationship with the surrounding world – to things, human beings and ideas. And then we are standing outside.

So what am I, as a human being? Is there nothing else but this ego, which most of us consider as the most important in Man? If you look philosophical at it, there is a difference between the individual person and Man himself. The individual person is a located being, who lives in a particular country, belongs to a particular culture, a particular religion. Man on the other hand, is not a located being. Man is everywhere.

If the individual person only acts in a special corner of the extensive area of life, then he acts without any connection with the wholeness. You must therefore remember, that philosophy always talks about the wholeness, not a part of it. The smaller is in the larger, but the larger is not in the smaller. The individual person is the tiny image-limited, stagnated and despairing being, who is satisfied with his tiny gods and his tiny traditions, whereas the welfare and weal of all, the sum of the world's necessity, misery and confusion, are lying Man on mind.

The division of human beings, in for instance Westerners and Orientals, is only geographical determined and entirely random. It has no essential importance. Whether we live east or west for a certain border, whether we are brown, dark, white or yellow, then we all still are human beings who are suffering and hoping, fearing and believing: there is unhappiness and happiness here as well as there. There is not a special Western or Eastern way of thinking when it comes to Man, but the individual person creates these divisions on the basis of his background, which is limited by the images of time.

Love is not geographical determined, it is not hold in honour on one continent, while it is denied on the other. When individual persons in this way divide mankind, it is often because of economical reasons or ideological beliefs, and it happens with the purpose of exploitation.

This does not mean, that human beings not are different in temperament etc. There are similarities, and nevertheless there are differences. It means that the

understanding of the individual person not is philosophy. The understanding of the individual person belongs to science. In philosophical respect we are the same.

Philosophy asks after that, which makes a human being into a human being, the common or universal, which all of us are part of, in spite of the fact, that we can behave so differently and be studied in so many different ways. Here it is about what we can term the human nature, and the question is not solved by seeking concluded answers in religion, ideology or New Age spirituality, and nor is it solved scientificall by experimenting, collecting systematical observations, and from them create theories. It is solved by thinking and meditating over everything, we already know about Man, and by seeking unity and coherency in it.

Man is in this way not only a result of a single influence. Man is much more complex, and to emphasize one influence, and at the same time understating others, is to cause a lack of balance, which will lead to even bigger lack of meaning and coherency, and therefore to even bigger chaos, much more confusion. Man is a complete process. There must be an understanding of the wholeness, and not only a part of it, regardless how important this sometimes may be.

Only the specialized is fixated in a determined cause, and in this way also in a determined effect. Where there is specialization there is stagnation. Man is not a specialized being. He can break through his limitation, which is created by the images of time – and this he will have to do if he wants to experience reality.

Human nature is the whole of mankind, and do not belong to a certain category. But with the individual person's mind follows the complicated problems of split, contradiction and war.

So in order to understand yourself you must understand that Man is an inviolable whole, not only a determined being, as for instance a society being with his particular assigned job: a worker, a citizen, a consumer, or a political being, right wing or leftist, or a religious being, Christian, Moslem, Jew, - but a complete whole in which an interaction and a reciprocity takes place.

You must realize, that suffering and split origin from ignorance about your own human nature. As long as you don't understand yourself, your perspective on yourself and on the world, your personal history, you must, whatever you do, and in whatever area, unavoidably create separation, despair and suffering.

In order to understand yourself you must go out on a voyage of discovery. A voyage of discovery, that goes into your ego and your personal history, and therefore into



time as a whole. You must travel up The River of Heraclitus, you must travel up the river of time, which not only is your own personal history, but also the collective and universal history. You must become a lifeartist.

## I

### **Philosophy as an Art of Life**

#### **1. Six fundamental steps in the art of life**

The most important difference between traditional philosophy and philosophy as an art of life, is, that where the philosopher in traditional philosophy constructs philosophies, then the philosophical practice in philosophy as an art of life, has as intention to change the philosopher, to bring him in harmony with life itself, and give him insight in life.

In traditional philosophy they only work with two forms of cognition: sensation and reason. Truth and reality are something you theorize and argue about, and to philosophize is an intellectual training, namely thinking. In philosophy as an art of life you also work with a third cognition-form, namely revelation or being-cognition; that is to say: the direct discovery and experience of truth or reality.

To philosophize consists here in an existential training of the mind and the heart, namely meditation. To philosophize is therefore in art of life more existential experimenting than logical analyzing, more seeing than thinking, more listening than arguing.

In my own life-philosophical terminology, I will, in the following, present six fundamental steps, or phases, in the art of life, which are recurring in all the various wisdomtraditions, both in Gnosticism and Mysticism, which arised in the early and medieval Christianity, Sufism in Islam, Hasidism and Kabbala in Judaism, Advaita Vedanta in Hinduism, Zen and Dzogchen in Buddhism, as well as Greek and Roman philosophy. These steps indicate a common core, which in remarkable equal form occurs in all the directions. That is: some existential conditions, and some, common to all mankind, growing conditions, and growth levels, in the lifeartist's voyage of discovery into himself, and thereby into life itself. The steps are:

- A) The separation of the observer and the observed
- B) Religion and supporting exercises
- C) Passive listening presence
- D) Discrimination
- E) Creative emptiness
- F) The wholeness of the observer and the observed

### *A. The separation of the observer and the observed*

A life, which is without any kind of philosophical teaching and practice, means that you don't have your thinking with you in your way of life. Such a life is characterized by an existential fall. This fall consists in the experience of anxiety, a lack of ability to hold truth, wholeness and reality.

The thinking is philosophical in the sense, that it is seeking happiness, truth, release, or liberation. In order to create meaning and coherence the thinking therefore linguistical produces the reality of the self-image and the world-image, the known, which originates from the images in the movement of time, which both are lying on the personal, collective and universal plane, and which flow through both humans, society, nature, and the whole of the universe. This production is an ongoing attempt to become something else than what you are; a movement in time, from past towards future, and from future back to past, and so on, in a lot of different life-cycles.

It is the eternal recurrence of the same, which manifests as symbols, memories, conceptions, ideas, images. In these the thinking has its norms and values, ideals and experiences.

And in order to understand, the thinking tends towards division of these images: logical analyzing in the one as different from the other, emotional evaluating in likes and dislikes, esthetical separating in beautiful and ugly, ethical in good and evil, religious in holy and profane, sexually in gender. Finally it cognitional separates reality in the observer and the observed, whereby there is created a discrepancy where emptiness and loss slide in between, creating reflections, displacement and darkness. Therewith is created unreality and absence, a condition where there is an inner spectator, calculator or doubter (the Ego), which places itself outside, either the individual, or the surroundings.

It is a condition where you experience yourself as locked inside, or locked off from, and where you feel homeless and without belongings. It is an activity of the will to power. The illusion and the self-deception in this activity are, that it is a kind of intellectual secureness or safety, which is created on the background of an escape

from the anxiety, or from what you are, and this is precisely the cause of the separation between the observer and the observed, which increases the anxiety. It is a vicious circle.

The French philosopher Albert Camus' small novel *The Stranger* is a description of this existential emptiness, or unreality. In Algeria lives a young man, Meursault, who only is a spectator to his own life, and to the world. The whole "coherence" in his life breaks together, when his mother dies: the conventions, norms and moral. Until then he had lived a quite ordinary life. But after his mother's death he one day, after a moment's impulse, kills a human being he doesn't know at all. Everything, which is happening around him, he experiences in a strange somnabulistic way without really understanding the meaning with it – or with himself – or with the world.

Is he a psychological case? Or do we all know the feeling of being strangers in existence? Had he, until his mother's death, just been subject to the same automation as most people? He doesn't ask any philosophical questions, he is just a spectator, therefore he only lives in two dimensions: a superficial dominated by conventions, norms and moral – but beneath this automatic life existence shows its cruel face in form of the meaningless and absurd. And it is this cruel face he experiences after his mother's death. A condition he in the end is accepting, because he hasn't got any philosophical life-practice. It is a nihilistic moment that reminds about the moment in spiritual practice, where all images and ideas are leaving the mind, the creative emptiness. And in this accept he therefore experiences some kind of happiness, but it is not the spiritual happiness, it is without realization and compassion. It reminds about it, but it is not the same. In spiritual respect it is still unhappiness, illusion, the separation of the observer and the observed.

In Dante's Divine Comedy this is the same as Hell. In Indian and Buddhist philosophy it is called Samsara, the circulation of rebirth, which is characterized by pain, unhappiness, longing etc.

### ***B. Religion and supporting exercises***

But there is a way out, namely the spiritual practice, or the art of life.

Religion and supporting exercises are a valuable early stage in the actual art of life (spirituality, meditation, or passive listening presence). Religion and supporting exercises have to do with, partly the pious attitude and way of thinking, which stands for the observance of religious virtues, duties and rituals – partly relaxation and concentration.

They are about creating flexibility in the body, focusing the mind, bringing order and tranquillity in the thinking, consistency between thought and conduct of life, and becoming aware of your relationship with persons, things and ideas.

In my book **Meditation as an art of life – a basic reader**, I have described five supporting exercises. They are as follows:

1. The Relaxation meditation
2. The Hara meditation
3. The Heart meditation
4. The Change of suffering into Enlightenment
5. The philosophical Diary.

That spiritual practice is a philosophical art of life, and that religion and supporting exercises lead towards such a philosophical life, means that they affect the human existence as a whole; that is to say: both your thoughts and your conduct of life.

In order to lead towards a philosophical life, it is, as far as I can see, a great help, if you find a religion, which suits you, and practise the supporting exercises in connection with asking philosophical questions in a meditative-existential way.

It is however likewise valuable to remember, that the spiritual practice - asking philosophical questions in a meditative-existential way - gradually will lead beyond the relative and limited concepts of the religion. It is necessary that you, just like the masters within the spiritual practices of the religions, only use the religion and the supporting exercises as a frame of reference, partly to describe the non-conceptual truth of the Source, partly to direct the thoughts towards this Source. You shall in other words not identify yourself with any religion. Avoid making it into an ideology, avoid making yourself dependent of it. The best way to avoid this, is probably to avoid being a member of a religion, and just keep it as something private and personal.

In his *Yogasutras* Patanjali mentions religion and supporting exercises as the first six limbs of the eight limbs of Raja-yoga:

1. *Yama*: outer and inner cleanness. Outer cleanness is first of all based on a meticulous body-hygiene. Inner cleanness is based on the moral standards, you find in all systems of religion.
2. *Niyama*: self-denying life and devotion to God. This does not necessarily imply a life as a monk or nun, but it requires that you simplify your life, so that there is room for tranquillity and reflection.

3. *Pranayama*: mastery of breathing and through that: mastery of the vital energies and intellectual powers.
4. *Asana*: the, from Hatha-yoga, known positions and relaxation exercises.
5. *Pratyahara*: mastery of senses and sense impression. The ability not to be distracted.
6. *Dharana*: the ability to lead all thought-energy towards a single point and keep it fixed there. Correspond to concentration exercises and awareness-training.
7. *Dhyana*: the ability to letting the thought flow into an object, or a conception, and getting to the bottom of it. Corresponding to asking philosophical questions in a meditative-existential way, or purely and simply silence.
8. *Samadhi*: oneness-consciousness. The complete unification of the consciousness (the self, Atman) with its source (The Good, the True and the Beautiful – or God, Brahman).

In Christian Mysticism the supporting exercises is called *Recollectio* and is described by Francis of Assisi, Meister Eckhart and Teresa of Avila. Moreover supporting exercises is seen in Ignatius of Loyola's *Spiritual exercises*, which perhaps is the practice within Christian Mysticism that reminds the most about the Greek (Socrates, Epicureans, the Stoics) understanding of philosophy as an art of life.

Concentration consists in the action, the exercise, in which the soul constantly is aimed at, and is remembering, God. When you walk and stand, speak and work, eat and rest: constantly remembering God. The Christian heart prayer (Jesus prayer), which consists in, to each heartbeat, to say a prayer – Kyrie Eleison ("Lord Jesus Christ, have mercy on me.") – is also a technique of concentrative kind, which purpose is to create unity and direction in the mind. Something similar you will also find in Jewish and Islamic mysticism, and in the philosophies of the East.

Also the Stoics used supporting exercises, either awareness exercises, meditation exercises, intellectual exercises and practical exercises. For instance the Stoics used the so-called Philosophical Diary.

In *Pierre Hadot: Philosophy as a way of Life. Spiritual exercises from Socrates to Foucault. 1995 Blackwell* - you can read about Socrates', the Epicureans', the Stoics', the Christian philosophy's, and other Western philosophers' supporting exercises.

The steps in a spiritual practice can of course be described in many different ways. Another way to describe it is by saying that it contains three important concepts:

- 1) Critical thinking (spotting thought-distortions, created by dualistic unbalance)

2) Investigating the shadow (ignorance, the unconscious, the painbody, the cause of suffering, your own dark side, the Ego)

3) The spiritual practice (going beyond all ideas and images)

If you include these three concepts in step 2, religion and supporting exercises, then you can say, that the critical articles in my book Dream Yoga, also can be seen as frames of reference and supporting exercises. As you continue up the steps, then these references also must fall away, until you are completely naked in a state of alonebeing.

### ***C. Passive listening presence***

So religion and supporting exercises will with time by themselves develop into a passive listening presence. Passive listening presence is meditation, but it is also purely and simply called silence. To be present in passive listening means that you observe completely with the heart and the mind; that is to say: with the whole of your being. It is a unity of awareness and passion, or reason and feeling.

Awareness consists in, that you observe neutral as in a mirror, without saying yes and no. Passion consists in feeling deeply and incisively, without seeking to achieve anything with it. In the passive listening presence you are letting the thinking be in calmness in longer periods, you are letting the space between the thoughts expand more and more. Only in this silence you can begin to discover deeper layers of yourself, layers which have to do with the images of time - your perspective on yourself and the world – and which, through this voyage of discovery, open themselves from the personal, to the more collective and universal, and finally, to reality and truth.

Patanjali calls the passive listening presence Dhyana: the ability to let your thoughts flow into an object, or a conception, and getting to the bottom of it. Eckhart calls it Silentio, the condition in which the soul and God are in balance, so that the soul is born into God, and God is born into the soul.

The Stoics purely and simply called it peace of mind, Apátheia, also known in the expression Stoical Calmness. The Taoists called it Wu Wei, non-activity.

### ***D. Discrimination***

When the mind is quiet you begin to gain discrimination, the ability to discriminate between the known and the unknown. The known is your perspective on yourself and the world, it is your self-image and world-image, which originate from the images of time. The perspective distorts reality, because everything you see, is your own perspective, the known, the image. You don't see reality itself, truth or the unknown. Far the most people confuse their perspective with reality, the description with the described, the word with the thing, the map with the landscape.

However when the mind is quiet you get the ability to discriminate these from each other. The Dominican mystics called this step Discriminatio. In Indian philosophy it is called Viveka.

Jesus also mentions this step in the Sermon on the Mount, where he speaks about, that you shall not judge others, because the judgment you judge with shall you yourself be judged with. He speaks about that you see the splinter in your brother's eye, but you are not seeing the beam in your own eye. He speaks about the hypocrisy in this and suggests that you first take the beam out of your own eye, before you can see clearly enough to take the splinter out of your brother's eye.

This way of thinking also occurs in Kierkegaard's *The Postscript* in the famous formel: "To relate absolutely to the absolute and relatively to the relative". That is: not to confuse the relative, the image, with the absolute, reality itself.

Discrimination is a purification process where you look your destiny in the eyes, where you do penance after having realized how your perspective distorts your relationship with the surrounding world. This corresponds to the Purgatory in Dante's Divine Comedy.

### ***E. Creative emptiness***

Creative emptiness is the condition where the mind is completely released from your perspective, from images of any kind, and the ideas, symbols and conceptions, which are their manifestations. The known has stepped aside for the benefit of the unknown, the beauty of creation. Everything is new, unnamed, unformed, non-linguistic presence. The mind is pure, fresh, young, innocent; completely open and receiving. The mind is awake and the heart is open, awareness and love in one. And in this creative emptiness reality and truth can be discovered, or received, it is one and same.

Lao Tse said it so simple as it can be said, that the wise rules by emptying the mind and filling the stomach. Eckhart called the creative emptiness Virgin Mary, or the

Virgin Mary-state, where God the father can give birth to Christ into Man. The creative emptiness is the possibility for the birth of Christ in us.

Jesus said it with the words about, that unless we change and become like children again, we shall never enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.

### ***F. The wholeness of the observer and the observed***

Is what we refer to as the mystical experience. It consists in, that the observer is one with the observed, so that everything only is the movement in the state of experience. You are self-forgetful open for, and engaged in life itself, the observed. Your life has become real and present. The happy life is the real, so that the individual fully and entirely exists, and the important is present. Fully and entirely to exist means, that there isn't any dreamer, any spectator, any doubter within yourself. You *are* your activity. The real life is characterised by a devotion, which creates that coherence in life, where you are drawn into, and are melting into, a unified wholeness, that contains middle, fullness and light. Your being is one with reality and truth.

Patanjali called the wholeness of the observer and the observed Samadhi, the unity of consciousness with its object, or the complete fall of the consciousness into the higher itself, the unification with the absolute. In Zen Buddhism it is called Satori, and in Buddhist philosophy Nirvana.

The wholeness of the observer and the observed can happen in glimpses, and it can be a permanent condition. The by glimpses condition mystics, such as Teresa and Eckhart, called Illuminatio, in which the soul and God in a single moment is one. That permanent to be one with God they called Unio Mystica. The same is Dante describing when he finally arrives in Paradise.

### ***Conclusion***

The existential fundamental conditions, and the common to all mankind growing conditions and growth levels, which I have illustrated under the six steps, therefore constitute a common core in the various wisdomtraditions, which work with philosophy as an art of life. If you work in practice with art of life the steps will all the time appear in a new light, and yet the core is changeless. That way the teaching, which originates from them, will never entirely be the same, though the same things often are repeated. The human growth, which the steps describe, is usually a slow organic growth, which takes many years, not to tell an entire life. But the steps can also be runned through in a moment. It depends upon the individual mind.



As the Danish life-philosopher Mogens Pahuus says, then it is admittedly not everyone, who knows so great conditions as the great mystics. And these mystics' religious coloured usage of language can be difficult to interpret. But there is a mysticism we all know. And that is the mysticism, which I will try to encircle in more modest life-philosophical terms. It is the mysticism we know from the childhood, and the child in ourselves, and from experiences of the beauty of nature, music and art.

In *Life Itself* Mogens Pahuus writes, that it is this mystical experience, which is standing in the centre of the whole of the Danish poet Paul la Cour's thinking and poetry. In the sketch of memory *The Sail Around the Sun* Paul la Cour writes, that he often has experienced the mystical experience, and time after time he compares it with the child's way of relating to life.

Likewise has the Danish life-philosopher Ludvig Feilberg, in his descriptions of nature, been talking about a mysticism, which he has named Nothingness-conditions. Also in Walt Whitman's poetry you will find a mysticism, which is connected to the relationship with nature.

## **2. The ability to wonder**

### ***A. To become like a child again***

"Wonder got already from the beginning human beings to philosophize and still does it". This statement from Aristotle goes back to Plato and is also applying for today.

Philosophy begins with, that human beings are wondering. We all know, how curious children are. Children want to know something and see much more, than the adults do, they catch sight of things, which the adults not even put notice to. Children's nature is much more watchful, much more curious and eager to learn. They are lost in being. It is therefore children have so easy learning maths, geography or whatever subject. When we become older, our mind progressively becomes crystalized, it stiffens, becomes heavy and dull. We stagnate. We begin to have prejudices about everything and everybody. The mind is no longer open, to any problem we have taken position in advance. We are lost in becoming, or in the will to power.

Elsa Morante's *History: a Novel* is a novel about how we as children are lost in being, and how we as adults are lost in becoming. The main character Useppe lives as a child in a poor district in Rome in the 1940s. He is happy, he is lost in being, there

is no original sin. But he also lives in an age, where the great scoundrels of history, Hitler, Mussolini and Stalin, rule, and who force people to identify themselves with the will to power. Useppe, the happy, innocent child, dies of epilepsy six years old.

Morante's novel is not only about the history of the 1940s, it the history of the will to power as it always has been. It is the history of the continuous Fall of Man. The novel is one of the most beautiful and terrible novels I have ever read.

The child is curious after knowing all about everything: why the sun is shining, what the stars are, all about the moon and the world around us; but when we become older, our knowledge only becomes a collection of information devoid of passion. We become specialists, we know a great deal about one or the other subject, but we don't care much about, what happens around us, about the need and the misery in the world, about the stars and the beauty.

If we want to know, why there is wealth and poverty in the world, we can find an explanation. There is an explanation for everything, and explanations seem to satisfy most of us. The same is the case as regards religion. We are satisfied with explanations, and to explain away everything we call knowledge.

Is that what we understand about education? Do we learn to discover, or are we only coming to look for explanations, definitions, conclusions, in order to be able to dull the mind, and stop questioning?

The common theme in the French author Antoine de Saint-Exupery's authorship, is Man's ability to wonder, and the loss of this ability. And the ability to wonder is the philosopher's basic virtue. If you as a lifeartist want to start philosophizing, you must therefore become like a child again.

In Saint-Exupery's book *The little Prince*, it is the little prince who is the philosopher and not the adult. In *Sand, Wind and Stars* Saint-Exupery tells about, how he, on a rainy morning, sits in an omnibus moving towards the airport, where he is going to have his baptism of fire as airmail pilot between France, Spain and Africa. He is sitting and puts notice to the sad passengers, who are brooding over their daily worries, and he thinks, that the clay of which they were created, has become dry and hard, and that no one ever will be able to awake the musician, the poet or astronomer, who maybe originally accommodated in them. What pains him is not their life as such, but a feeling of, that there in each of these human beings exists a wiped out track, a murdered Mozart.

### ***B. To be critical***

In philosophy it is extremely important to inquire, observe and never accept. Unfortunately most of us only listen to those, we think are great, to the so-called acknowledged authorities. We seldom listen to the birds, to the sound of the ocean, or to the weak in society. Therefore we seldom hear what the weak says – and there is perhaps truth in what he says, and perhaps no truth at all in what the strong, or the acknowledged person says. It has always been strong and acknowledged people, who have led humans out in violence, war and destruction.

In philosophical respect you can therefore not find out what is true only by reading books, you can't discover something by repeating what others have said. You only discover something, if you investigate, are critical and never accepting. Many of us read a number of books about one thing or the other, and this reading forms our minds – it makes it difficult, for ourselves, to find out, what is true and what is false. When the mind already is formed, cast, it can only with greatest difficulty discover truth. And directly to discover, and experience, truth, is the goal of the lifeartist.

As a lifeartist you can therefore not accept handed down truths. You must begin to be critical, inquiring and discovering. But you can nothing examine if you inwards are afraid. To be critical is equivalent with revolt in philosophical sense, and that will say to create a new world. The lifeartist is a philosophical rebel. What you are coming up against is the politicians, who don't want us to revolt, because they want to control us, they want to model and form us, so we can fit into their ideological patterns; and as long as that is happening, life will remain being a torment.

Against all this is needed a critical ability – not self-opinionated critique – but the critical ability which is lying in meditation, in being present in passive listening. This critical ability, which not is self-opinionated, contains at the same time an unprejudiced openness. Man is a whole, a complete way of being. But because we don't meditate, but are thinking, we become absent, we place us outside ourselves, as well as outside the surrounding world. As Kierkegaard says in *The Postscript*, then we hold existence away with the finest of all deceptions: thinking. And in accordance with Kierkegaard, the most unhappy is the one who has his ideal, the content of his life, the fullness of his consciousness, his actual essence, somehow outside himself. The unhappy is always himself absent, never himself present.

With the help of thinking we divide our total way of being in the observer, or the thinker, who is standing outside the observed, or the thought. Meditation is to stop this division in the whole of your being. This awakened condition is only possible

when you as a mirror are devoid of the desire for saying yes and no, commenting, changing and controlling, but only are present in passive listening.

There is nothing mystical or abstract about this. It is much closer to us than we think. When a mother for instance is listening to her child, she needs to be present in passive listening in order to understand what the child says, she needs to, in that moment, to be without thoughts. In the same way when you are listening to a piece of music: in order to be able to enter into the music, it is of no use if you are absent in thoughts about everything else. And in order to be able to fall asleep at night, you also need to let go of problems and thoughts.

To be present in passive listening means to be critical in philosophical sense, not to criticize using evaluations and opinions, what we after all do all the time, at the same time as we become ourselves more and more absent. In other words: if this critique is personal, surrounded by fear or prejudices of any kind, it is no longer critical in philosophical sense.

What is essentially for the lifeartist is the understanding of the total process, the wholeness of life, and not of a certain fragment. As a lifeartist you don't ask, what you should do with a certain problem, with an activity of society, which is independent of the life-process as a whole; you try to find out, what is implicated in this understanding of reality, if there is such a reality at all - something timeless and absolute. It is this whole, total perception, which is important for the lifeartist.

But this understanding of the movement of the whole of life, as one complete activity, is only possible when you don't allow the thinking to suck life out of the present, and change past and future into reality, and the reality into emptiness. All this must stop on all planes of your way of being. This is the first thing, which must be clear for the one who will practise art of life. First after that you can decide to discover, what it will say to be alive.

### *C. To ask questions*

As a lifeartist you must be free, so you can think and question, and you yourself begin to discover everything. Unfortunately most people don't want to think and discover; their mind is closed. To think deeply, to meditate, to get to the bottom of the many questions, and you yourself to discover what is true, are connected with great difficulties; it requires a purely reflecting ability to observe, a deep passion, which doesn't seek to achieve anything, an incessantly investigation, and most people neither have desire or energy to do this.

For those who only are active in the daily, in work, career etc., there exist no fundamental questions; their only interest is their own activity, which perhaps makes superficial benefit (in the politicians' eyes), but which on a deeper plane makes harm. They solve no vital problems, they don't explore the questions which are of vital importance in life, the so-called philosophical questions.

It is immensely important to ask questions; not only because you thereby expose your inner, but by questioning philosophical, by training the mind and the heart existential, you find the answer yourself. If you ask the right question, the right answer is lying in the question. Contrary to religion and politics, philosophy in this way doesn't give answers, but ask questions.

The lifeartist must be critical towards everything in life, your short or long hair, your dress, the way whereon you walk, the way whereon you eat, what you think, what you feel – everything must be looked at in the critical light, where you neither justifies or condemns. Then the mind becomes extraordinary sensitive, alive and reasonable. And such a mind allows life to flow back to the present, where the heart opens itself in love. Only such a mind knows what a happy and real life is.

When people ask questions, they are generally more engaged in finding the answer than understanding the problem. But if you study the problem philosophical, explore it, investigate it very closely, understand it, you will see, that the answer is lying in the problem. The lifeartist will therefore seek to understand what the problem is, and not seek an answer, neither in the books, or from one or the other professor or lecturer. If you really can understand the problem, the answer will come by itself; because the answer is in the problem, it is not divided from it.

These complicated things can, as Socrates claimed, not be communicated through education, they must be studied. You can indicate their importance, point at the door, but to learn by what has been suggested, is not the same as directly experiencing alonebeing and meditation.

In order to be able to experience what alonebeing and meditation are, you must become a lifeartist, you must yourself open the door, you must incessantly question and explore. Only the mind, which is in such a condition, can learn in philosophical sense. But when this inquiring attitude is suppressed by previous collected knowledge, or by another's authority and experience, you don't learn, you only imitate, and imitation gets people to repeat the acquired without experiencing it.

## 2. Meditation

### ***A. The complete perception***

Through the understanding of what it is to meditate, the lifeartist perhaps becomes able to obtain a complete perception of life, without any division and separation. A perception which consists in, that you fully and totally exist; where you are what you are in progress with; where there are no inner spectator, theorist or doubter within you.

To meditate is about seeing the whole thing, everything as a whole; that is to say: where you in self-forgetful openness are allowing the thing to fill you out. Meditation is a presence of something, which is not hidden. It is a presence of something evidently, something the individual has a clear understanding of. It is a presence of something straightforward, a presence in naturalness. It is a perception where you so to speak become drawn into the thing, and are melting into a unified wholeness, which contains middle, fullness and light. Usually this happens in a short glimpse, inconspicuous; what you often describe as intuitive cognition. Suddenly you understand something. There is no causal explanation for it.

Man is in habit of seeing the things from outside, fragmented. You observe the tree as something separate, you observe your wife or husband, as something separate, the office, the boss – everything in fragments; that is to say: from outside as something cut off. Meditation is about seeing the world, which you are a part of, completely, as a complete whole and not divided; that is to say: where you fully and totally exist, and the important is present and real; without letting the past and the future separate the Ego, the observer, who places himself outside the observed, which is life itself.

In the same way you can look at all the questions of life as a whole, and not as isolated parts. All this is the complete perception, where you not are outside, but in the middle of life itself. And then you truly are a lifeartist.

### ***B. The nature of experience***

It is therefore completely central for the lifeartist to investigate the nature of experience, the way in which you can observe, listen, see. As a lifeartist you must try to find out, whether it at all is possible to see with more than just one side of your being: sight, intellect or feelings. Is it altogether possible to observe very closely, without that there happens a distortion? In the lifeartist it is worth the effort to investigate this. What will it say that you see? Can you observe yourself, observe

what you in reality are: desirous, envious, worried, fearful, hypocritical, deceitful, self-assertive – can you quite simply observe this without distorting it?

It of course requires, that you learn what it is to see in philosophical sense. The word philosophy means love of wisdom, or love of learning. To learn in philosophical sense is a continual movement, a continual renewal. It is not "to have learned", and see on the basis of that. Usually we see on the basis of a memory about what we have learned, and have experienced; memory is the starting point. This is therefore not to see, not to learn in philosophical sense. That something is learned in philosophical sense presupposes a mind, which each time learns anew. There must be a creative emptiness. The mind must therefore always be new and ready to learn, just like a child. For that reason it doesn't interest the lifeartist to worship memory, but rather to observe, see and experience what really happens. As a lifeartist you must try to be extremely aware, awake, so that the seen and learned don't become a memory from which you see, and which in itself is a distortion. You must see each time as if it was the first time!

But what is it you must see? Regardless what problem, what thing you as a lifeartist are dealing with, then the starting point is yourself. Over the door into the temple in Delphi there stood: Know thyself! Self-knowledge is fundamental within all traditions, which look at philosophy as an art of life, both in the East and the West. For instance it was the returning meditation technique in the Indian philosopher Ramana Maharshi, all the time to ask himself the question "Who am I?", to everything, that happened to him.

When Ramana Maharshi asked *Who am I?* he answered like this: *I am not...*for instance *I am not* my body, *I am not* my reactions, *I am not* my feelings, *I am not* my thoughts. So the whole of Ramana's teaching was about motivating the different seeking people to turn their search in towards the Source of the thoughts and consciousness. Who am I? Where do the thoughts come from? What is consciousness, and where does it come from? Philosophical questions asked in a meditative-existential way.

Self-knowledge is the door you must open in order to reach into the source of the secret: your total being. And that is precisely not pleasant, therefore is it the fewest who do it, but thereby they also miss the most wonderful in life, which reveals itself when you have opened the door. What you must see, and experience, is what you in reality are. But to see, to observe and experience what you are, on the basis of a memory, means that the memory dictates, forms, or controls, your experience, and therefore it is already distorted.

The lifeartist must seek to find out what it means to experience. The scientist is perhaps seeing something through a microscope, and is observing it closely; there is an object outside himself, and he observes it without preconceived opinions, though with a certain knowledge, which he necessarily must have in order to be able to see. But the lifeartist observes the whole structure of life, its whole movement, including the whole of the being, which is "yourself". This can't be experienced with the intellect alone, or with the feelings alone, nor with any conclusion concerning right and wrong, or what "not must be", or "should be". When you therefore start a philosophical way of life you must, before you thoroughly can study yourself and life, be aware of the thinking's addiction to say yes and no, to comment, deny and accept, to arrive at conclusions; this ongoing process, which will distort the experience.

The lifeartist must therefore seek to understand the nature of experience, the beauty in observing, in seeing neutral as in a mirror, and in feeling deeply and incisively without seeking to achieve anything. As long as the mind of Man in any way is distorted – by neurotical impulses and feelings, by fear, despair, by self-assertion, snobbery and striving after power – it can not possibly listen, observe, see neutral. But this art of seeing, of listening, of observing, is nothing you just can choose to do, and nor is it a question of thinking, which develops towards something else.

When a person is aware of a danger, there happens an instant action; the instinctive, immediate reaction of the body and the memory. From childhood Man has been used to meet a danger in this way, so that his being at once reacts in order to avoid physical destruction. The lifeartist must ask, whether it in the same way is possible to act immediate, spontaneous, when something is seen - without that it happens on the bases of your historical limited background. Can the human being react free, and at once, to any kind of distortion of the experience, and therefore act spontaneous? That will say an action where sensation, action and expression, are a wholeness, where they are total, and not divided in fragments?

This is what happens in meditation, in the passive listening presence. In accordance with the Taoists, the actual thing to be present in passive listening (wu-wei), is the same as to act spontaneous (tzu-jen). Any spontaneous action is an expression of, that there is a passive listening presence, a space between the thoughts. When for instance the Taoist is seeing, that there is fear, he observes it neutral as in a mirror, without saying yes and no, and feels it deeply and incisively, without seeking to achieve anything with it. The actual experience in this passive listening presence, makes the experience free from fear; and that is to act spontaneous.



In all this the unknown is at stake; reality or truth. Meditation is in other words to enter into the unknown. Beside meaning love of wisdom, the word philosophy also means love of the unknown. But a mind which in any way is historically limited by the known, by its own perspective, - the personal and collective images in time, which all fear-conceptions, ambitions, desires and disappointments, are manifestations of, - can not possibly enter into something, which presupposes discrimination; that is to say: a balanced, harmonic being, who is healthy on both body and soul.

### ***C. The unknown***

Meditation has nothing to do with concentration, all that which sort under the supporting exercises. Meditation is itself the art of life. Art of life means that you are present, that you are listening and observing passive with the whole of your being, with your body, your nerves, your eyes, your ears, your mind, with the heart, completely. It is this, which is meant with, that art of life is a philosophical way of life, something, which concerns your complete existence, the whole of your way of being in all the relationships of life. In this complete presence – in which there is no division between the observer and life itself – you can do anything; and in such a presence there is no resistance.

Art of life is an attempt directly to discover and experience truth. In order to be able to understand truth you must be exceedingly present in passive listening, and logical, healthy, reasonable; observing and feeling any of the movements of the thought, without evaluating them, and without attempting to achieve anything with it. Then this sense perception in itself is a complete act, and you can thereby be released from the thought, and achieve being-cognition.

Philosophy as an Art of Life is therefore not the chase after a thought or an idea. It is all thinking's essence, which is to go beyond all thought and feeling. It is, as Plotin said, the thinking's journey back to its own Source. Not until then philosophy is a movement into the unknown. To meditate is a voyage of discovery into the known, into your own perspective and history, into the whole of your world of ideas, knowledge, faith and experience, and through discrimination, to be released from it, and thereby to enter into the unknown, into the Source of wisdom. On this journey you are in company with Odysseus, Dante and Faust.

## **3. Human problems**

### ***A. The answers are in the problems***

Man is facing extremely big problems, the problem of war, the problems, which concern our personal relationships, and the relationships with other people, our status as citizens, the problem of religion, and the incessant conflicts in society. In addition to this there is the problem with the lack of philosophical freedom, this feeling of constant uncertainty and anxiety, the fight for creating oneself a means of livelihood the rest of one's life without any feeling of human growth, without having any philosophical life-teaching and practice.

All these problems are human problems. That means that they are about Man as a whole. They are about the common and universal, which all of us are part of, and about the attempt to discover unity and coherence in life. Therefore they are of philosophical nature, they come to deal with questions of existential, conceptual, ethical, epistemological and metaphysical kind. And therefore they can only be solved philosophical, not technical.

To ask a question is very easy, but often we in a higher degree are occupied with the answer to the question, rather than to listen passive to what the question means and is implying. As a lifeartist it is yourself you shall question, not only one place, but everywhere. To ask the right question is far the most important, rather than hearing the answer. In philosophy as an art of life the solutions to a problem are lying in the understanding of the problem; the answer is in, and not outside the problem. You can't thoroughly observe the problem if it is the answer, the solutions, which absorb you. (I speak here only about human problems, not about technical problems).

Most of us are so eager after solving the problem without investigating it deeply. In order to be able to investigate deeply you must have energy, intensity, passion; but most of us are indolent and lazy – we want another to solve the problem for us. But none other than ourselves will in depth be able to solve a single human problem, whether it is of conceptual, political, religious, ethical or existential character. You must have more than a little vitality, passion and intensity, in order to be able to be the problem present in passive listening, and then, while you observe and feel passively, the answer is there, quite clearly.

Therewith is not said, that you shall not ask questions; on the contrary. The beginning of philosophy is to ask questions, to be critical to everything, that anyone has said.

The lifeartist must therefore seek to enter the problem without waiting for a result, a definition of what is the right to do. The right action will emerge, naturally and completely, as the problem becomes unveiled. The discovery of the problems' importance and consequences is the central, and not the final result. Any answer will only be a new conclusion, a new opinion, another good advice, which not at all will

solve the problem. It is the problem itself, which must be understood, and not how you shall react to the problem, or what you shall do in order to solve it. The right understanding of the problem is of importance, because the right action is lying in the problem itself.

If you see one movement completely - that is to say: where you are one with the movement, and there is no displacement or distortions between the realizer and the realized – then all other movements are included in this wholeness. If you have the full understanding of one human problem, then you understand all human problems, because they are all mutual related.

### ***B. The philosophical revolution***

With the industrial modernization Man has cultivated a mind, which can solve almost any technological problem; that, which the philosopher Habermas calls the instrumental reason. But apparently human problems have never been solved. On the contrary mankind are about to be drowned in its problems: problems concerning communication, the relationship with others, heaven and hell. The whole of the human existence has become one extremely complex problem. And apparently it has been like that through the whole of history. Despite the knowledge of Man, despite his millenniums of evolution, Man has never been free from such problems.

The solutions to such problems require a communicative reason, a reason, which understands the human community. But as Habermas says, then we are not using such a reason, on the contrary we are using the instrumental reason on human problems, where it only should be used on technical problems. We seek to solve human problems technically, where they should be solved in a philosophical way. The systems (the market, the economy, the bureaucracy) have colonized the lifeworld.

In this way we today have a peculiar situation. We have solved almost all technical problems, a number of countries have democracy with large political freedom, but at the same time the human problems still flourish, and the attempt to solve them technically, seems to have brought about a condition of total confusion, of fragmentation, decay of values, consumerism. A condition, which is spreading globally.

We live in an age, where we are on the way into crises, which are of a size, that never before have been seen in the history of mankind. Mechanization, automation and introduction of new technology have created new forms of work, but also a massive unemployment. On the background of modernization the increase of population is

fastly rising, and this growth is in the long term quite untenable, and will unavoidably involve increased problems of distribution between the richest and the poorest areas. In addition to this, we are getting closer to that moment, where there not will be food enough to the population of the earth – regardless which discoveries and inventions, that might see the light of the day.

The industrialization has also had global consequences. The "side effects" of industrialization in the form of emptying of resources, possible climatic changes and pollution of earth, water and air, is now so massive, that it is obvious, that the now known forms of industry and industrial agriculture not will be able to continue unchanged, not to talk about spreading to the whole world. The enormous growth in productive power has also been accompanied by a perhaps even larger growth in destructive power. The spread of weapon of mass destruction makes possible the extinction of all human life, and perhaps all life on the planet. We must expect, that the mutual economical dependency the nations between will be larger and larger, and that public mixing and clash of cultures will heighten. Terrorism has in this connection seen the light of the day.

And humans' existential experience of this condition, are characterized by unreality, alienation, meaninglessness, a thorough boredom and ennui. Boredom has become connected with drug abuse, alcohol abuse, smoking, anorexia, promiscuity, vandalism, depression, aggression, hostility, violence, suicide, risk behaviour etc. etc.

And the meaninglessness, and the decay of values, can lead people to begin to take extreme ideologies up to consideration again, perhaps even in the name of democracy. It is a fact that we have begun to bring about democracy through war, without investigating the question about the historical limited mind, not in the others, or in ourselves. In spite of the fact, that we have introduced outside democracy in a number of countries, then this namely doesn't make the mind democratic. A democratic mind requires a human being, who both in mind and heart is clear-sighted and peaceful, a human being, who has gone through a philosophical revolution. And before that has happened, any democracy is a process that dissolves itself from the inside, and a ticking bomb.

Herein is lying a gigantic, worldpolitical and localpolitical challenge to think again concerning the relationship between Man, society and nature, and not only automatically continue thoughtpatterns from the liberalist and socialist traditions, which have grown out together with the industrial modernization.

Philosophy as an art of life looks at all this as a philosophical challenge. Only by emphasizing the primary things, the secondary can be understood and solved. The

economical and social evils can't be solved without first understanding, what has caused them. And in order to be able to understand them, and in this way create a radical change, we must first fully understand ourselves, since we are the cause of these evils.

When all this is seen – the wars, the unreasonable dividings, which the religions have created, the division which exists between the individual person and the society, the family, which is opposed to the rest of the world, each individual person, who clings to some personal or collective images, and divide himself in "me" and "you", "us" and "them" – when all this is seen, both in objectively and in philosophical sense, then only one question is remaining, one essential problem, and that is whether the mind of Man, which in high degree is limited by its historical background, its personal or collective images, can change. Not in a future incarnation, not through political development, not when life ends, but radically change now, so that Man enters into a creative emptiness, where the mind become new, fresh, young, innocent, released from its images, so that it knows what love is, and what it is to live in peace. It requires a philosophical revolution.

In philosophy as an art of life this is the most important problem. When that is solved all other problems, the economical and the social, everything that leads to war, will end, and another structure of society will arise. The question is therefore whether the mind of Man - that is: the whole of Man's being - can live as if it was the first time, immaculated, young, innocent, and know what it is to live happily, delighted, in deep feeling, and in direct realization of the immeasurable.

The question about whether Man can be changed from the ground, is a question which affects the whole of your being; it includes observation, truth, beauty, love. And these are in philosophy as an art of life something else than words, they are something you directly experience and are in. The lifeartist must find a way in which you can live so that they become reality. You must go from just having some images of life, personal or collective, to having a philosophical way of life. It is herein the philosophical revolution is lying. In that sense the lifeartist is a philosophical rebel.

### ***C. The difference between having some images of life, and having a philosophical life-practice***

How can it be, that humans live as mechanical beings, trained to accept certain jobs for then finally to die? How can it be, that we live in this way – live, struggle and die?

When you as a lifeartist, really in full seriousness, ask such a question, determined to understand it, then there is no room for images, no room for all the views,

conclusions, conceptions and opinions, which are manifestations of that basic self-image and world-image, which the thinking continuous produces and modifies, and which is the actual cause of unreality, of the separation of the observer and the observed.

As Kierkegaard says: "A human being can divert in many ways, and there is hardly such stunning a way as abstract thinking, because it here is about behaving as impersonal as possible."

What is important for the lifeartist is not that which should be, or that which could be, nor what principle you ought to follow, what kinds of ideals you ought to have, or to what religion, or what political party, you ought to belong to. It is clear, that all such reactions altogether are meaningless when you are facing the confusion, the need, misery and continuous conflict, in which we live.

Man has made life into a battlefield; each family, each group, each nation are turned against each other. When you as a lifeartist in this way see the whole of the battlefield of life, not as an image, but as something you are facing, and in fact are observing, then you ask yourself what it all is about. Why do human beings continue in this way until they die, without living or loving, but full of fear and anxiety? Albert Camus opens his book *The Myth of Sisyphus*, with saying, that there only exists one real philosophical question, and that is the question about the suicide. Why do we not commit suicide in a meaningless world devoid of both faith in reason and faith in God? (in part four: the lifeartist as a natural being - I will, in the section about the body, go deeper into the question about suicide).

As we have seen, then Albert Camus' philosophy in remarkable way reminds about the "nihilistic" moment in spiritual practice, where all images and ideas are leaving the mind, the so-called creative emptiness. Albert Camus' philosophy was about, that we live in two dimensions: a superficial dominated by conventions, norms and moral – but under this, life shows its true face in form of the meaningless, absurd and cruel. Sisyphos, who was condemned by the gods to the endless, futile task of rolling a rock up a mountain (whereafter it would roll back down because of its own weight), thus becomes an example of the human condition, struggling hopelessly and pointlessly to achieve something. The rock is an example of the wheel of Samsara, the wheel of suffering, the wheel of up-cycles which endlessly are followed by down-cycles, the wheel, which precisely is created by our images of life, which causes ignorance, and therefore suffering.

A condition, which Sisyphos, in the end, is accepting, because he hasn't got any philosophical life-practice. As Camus is saying, then we have to imagine Sisyphos as

a happy man. As mentioned it is a nihilistic moment that reminds about the moment in spiritual practice, where all images and ideas are leaving the mind, the creative emptiness. And in this accept he therefore experiences some kind of happiness, but it is not the spiritual happiness, it is without realization and compassion. It reminds about it, but it is not the same. In spiritual respect it is still unhappiness, illusion, the separation of the observer and the observed.

So why do we not commit suicide in a meaningless world devoid of both faith in reason and faith in God? What will you as a lifeartist do when you ask this question? It can't be asked by people, who have arranged themselves comfortably with familiar ideals, with a bit of money, and which are extremely respectable and mediocre. If people of that kind at all ask questions, then they interpret them from their personal need of satisfaction. But because this is a highly human, common problem, which affects all of life, the rich and the poor, the young and the old, why do we then live in this monotonous, meaningless way, go to the office, work in a laboratory or in a factory in forty years, put a few children in the world, bring them up after absurd precepts, and then die?

As a lifeartist you must ask this question with the whole of your being in order to be able to find out why, not intellectual, but by observing it calmly and passively, with strong eyes, without judging or evaluating. And then you can ask the next question: whether Man ever can change radically, essentially, existential, so that he can observe the world anew, with other eyes, with another heart, a completely other mind, no longer filled with hatred, resistance, racism, but a mind, which is extraordinary clear and which possesses a mighty energy, that gives life back to the present, opens the heart and fills the existence with vitality, urge to live and joy of life.

All this is healing, but not healing caused on the background of a psychological theory. An aspect of, that the instrumental reason has conquered territory from the communicative reason consists in, that we in connection with human problems treat each other as means or as items, which have come on the wrong course (the treatment society). It is interesting, that New Age, which actually should be a spiritual alternative to this, and be an advocate for a communicative reason, on the contrary is one of the most aggressive advocates for the instrumental reason. This is due to their psychologizing of philosophy. They are possessed with all kind of self-invented forms of treatment, and with pseudo-scientific attempts to justify them as science. Often they manipulative use instrumental/scientific inspired terms about their methods, but which are without any scientific meaning at all. It is just a rhetorical trick to persuade people to pay the fee.

It is also interesting to compare this characteristic trait of New Age with Aldous Huxley's novel *Brave New World* (notice the similarities in the titles). This novel foresees the end of democracy in a pseudo-scientific, technological fixated meritocracy. The novel is precisely about a totalitarian state, which keeps psychological and genetic control with everybody, so that they surrender to the claimed "blessings" of the progress of the instrumental or technical reason. Everything, also humans, and human problems, are treated instrumental or technical. Psychology and genetics are controlling people down to the smallest details, children are being born and "grewed" on bottles, brains are being trimmed, characters are being converted after the needs of the dominant state. Notice the similarities with the New Age product called NLP (Neuro-linguistic programming), which are about programming your brain so that you can become a success in society; that is: so that you work in favour of Consumer Capitalism.

In the section about needs (in part four: the lifeartist as a natural being) I will go further into NLP and other directions within personal development and New Age – and in the section about the brain I will compare this whole tendency in society with the so-called Matrix Conspiracy. But below I will sketch a few frightening traits of what *could* be the end of democracy:

#### ***D. The possible end of Democracy***

The fact is that every society always is runned by some kind of ideology. An ideology is a malfunction in the human mind, which function with the implied instrumental assumption, that **the end justifies the means** (Machiavelli's notorious assumption), and where the means to get there is to make people into slaves for this goal. Today people undoubtedly are being made into empty consumer machines. There are no doubt either, that we are being supplied with some kind of virtual reality through psychological theories, that seems to justify Machiavelli's famous and notorious assumption - for instance through elimination of critical thinking.

It is a fact, that we today see an ideology behind the democracy, where true spirituality, philosophy and science systematical are seeked destroyed; that is: the destruction of the best tools Man has in his love for wisdom, and quest for truth.

The main name for this ideology is relativism.

You could call relativism for the main Matrix philosophy. To explain this further I have connected my version of The Matrix Conspiracy with three other known conspiracies. Here is a short introduction to two of them (I will explain the third – The 666 Conspiracy - later, in the section about the brain):



1. The Bilderberg Group
2. Illuminati

### *1. The Bilderberg Group*

Every year 100 of the most powerful men of the world is gathering in an informal talk about politics and economics. Of these men are 1/3 politicians and 2/3 intellectuals and leaders of multinational companies. Their ideological results? Facts about these are:

- A) The main political tool is economics and Consumer Capitalism.
- B) The main intellectual tool is relativism.
- C) The main management theory is based on psychology, or rather a certain American psychology: Humanistic psychology.

All these support each other in the five education-instruments of Consumer Capitalism; what you also, with inspiration from NLP, could call the five main programming-technologies of the Matrix Conspiracy:

1. Sensitivity language
2. Coaching
3. New Age
4. NLP
5. The Law of Attraction

A headline for these technologies could be the concept of personal development. A concept you as a fact see described in EU's project on lifelong learning, education and management theory. A positive sounding concept until you find out what this personal development is all about.

### *2. Illuminati*

The bilderberg group is said to be runned by Illuminati, which is a secret society, that goes way back in history. The background is real. This organisation has in fact existed. The goal was a challenge to for instance the church, working towards a new world order, and with connections to occultism.

Illuminati is said to be an advocate for a scientific world-view, but this has nothing to do with true science. True science can't be connected with certain political views, or occultism. So the "scientific" in Illuminati is rather pseudo-science. Note that I

don't discriminate between the pseudo-science of New Age (demands for "alternative" sciences), and the pseudo-science of reductionism (for instance biologism and sociologism), though these views can disagree in between. They all advocate subjectivism and relativism, and certain occult and/or political views.

Today you can see all this in the New Age movement, which name also clings good with New World Order.

The worshippers are fighting against Western science and human rights, which they consider as an expression of a patriarchal, racist, colonialistic, eurocentric, cultural dominion-discourse. Why? Because subjectivism and relativism claim, that there doesn't exist any objective truth. Truth is something we create ourself, either as individuals or as cultures, and since there doesn't exist any objective truth, there doesn't exist any objective scale of truth. All truths are therefore equally true and equally valid, and if one person's truth, or one culture's truth, try to intervene in the truths of other individuals or cultures, then this is considered as an aggression.

This ideology is penetrating everything. Today, after the celebration of the 100 year of womens' day it is interesting to see how this ideology also has penetrated Western feminism, which must be considered as playing a leading role in the Matrix Conspiracy.

Political freedom (the right to vote, to run as candidate for election, and to express yourself freely), economical freedom (the right to education and paid work) and sexual freedom (womens' right to conduct the privacy they want) are the conquests, which traditional feminism achieved for the women of the Western worlds. This kind of feminism could be called reform feminism. The conquests were achieved rather quickly in the previous century.

But the progress, which the large majority of women in the West enjoy, is standing in glaring contrast to the different reality, which women without the West live in. In the Arabic-Muslim world most women are refused access to an education. The figures for womens' reading ability are depressing low. Their sexuality is controlled by a patriarchal system, and they have only limited possibilities for achieving economical independence.

Many places in Asia the prejudices against girl children still flourish, and the result is that embryos of girls are miscaried, or that small new-born girls are put out. Moreover Asian girls and women in disproportionate degree are suffering under the disgusting sex traffic with women – the modern kind of slavery.

Poverty and civil wars affect girls and women in Africa in ways, which men are spared from, because mass rapes lead to unwanted pregnancies and infections with hiv and aids. Moreover a shocking large number of girls die under births, because their bodies not yet are mature enough to give birth, or because disfiguration of their genitals causes, that they die of a birth fistula, one of the most painful ways to die in, that you can imagine.

Here there seems to be a giant task for Western feminists. Unfortunately there is completely silence, because the Matrix Conspiracy has programmed them what to think. They have now become what you could call radical feminists. Reform feminists have become replaced by moralizing Sensitive Susans, who individually are fighting against Western science and human rights, which they, as mentioned, consider as an expression of a patriarchal, racist, colonialistic, eurocentric, cultural dominion-discourse (the insulting ways in which I myself have been attacked, can be read in my article *The Rulers of Newspeak* in my book *Dream Yoga*)

The radical feminists (for instance Sandra Harding – but also New Age worshippers of all kinds) see themselves as liberal givers of charity to their non-western sisters/non-initiates. They see their charity towards their sisters/non-initiates as a loving, tolerant, nonjudgmental, therapeutic “permission to be different”. They try to “decolonize” the minds of their sisters by trying to make them repudiate Western science and human rights. But their invitation to be different is in reality an expression of intellectual apartheid, and a justification of intellectual apartheid. They dehumanize their sisters by denying them their ability to critical thinking, and this has, as expected, already contributed to a rather uncritical adoration of the nation and its traditions in many parts of the Third World.

*Scenario 1, India:* Frederique Apffel Marglin has recently declared that the eradiction of smallpox from India using the modern cowpox-based vaccine is an affront to the local custom of variolation, which includes inoculation with human smallpox accompanied by prayers to the goddess of smallpox, Sitala Devi.

Ashis Nandy has branded those who protested a recent incidence of widow immolation (sati), as modernized Westernized elites who denigrate authentic folk practices. Not surprinsengly this has found a sympathetic audience among right-wing Hindu fundamentalist parties.

*Scenario 2, Pakistan:* Though the Matrix Conspiracy systematical is trying to eliminate critical thinking and science, then it, in its manipulation, is extremely scientific, technological and instrumental fixated. As it says, then modern science must be replaced with so-called “alternative” sciences. This has caused a boom in all

kinds of pseudo-scientific theories; what I call the “Illuminati” aspect of the Matrix. One of these “sciences” is for instance the “investigations” of the biology of Western Men; investigations, which sounds like Fascism. And so-called “investigations” have concluded, that women’s pain under birth is a social construction created by Western Men, and that it thereby is necessary to eliminate this construction.

In Pakistan and other Islamic countries, notably Egypt and Saudi Arabia, we now see the state-sponsored movement of “Islamic Science” (for instance around Ziauddin Sardar, a Pakistani émigré living in Britain, and Munavar Ahmad Anees, a US-based biologist and Islamist).

This movement tries to “Islamicize” science, and create a new universal science in which the facts of nature would be different, derived solely from the conceptual and ethical categories of Islam. They find attempts by modern science to bring modern science to bear on specific values and problems of Muslims as misguided, if not actually a crime against Islam. Explicitly they are citing the work of Western radical feminists.

In turn, Sandra Harding cites Sardar and associates among the “progressive” postcolonial critics of science.

Recently, demands for specifically Islamic (and also Hindu, Confucian, and African) conceptions of human rights have also been put forth.

*Scenario 3: China:* The protesters at Tiananmen Square demanded democracy, human rights and science together. Tragical for the dissidents, the Chinese government saw it differently and sent in the tanks. The Deng regime, though anxious to cultivate modern science and technology for economical development, treated any attempt to relate scientific ethos to antiauthoritarian politics as a sign of the “spiritual pollution” of China’s socialist values – using the same phrases as the Matrix Conspiracy.

Especially China is gradually adopting this rhetoric (which could be taken out of George Orwell’s novel 1984), and are demanding special Chinese interpretations of science and human rights, where scientists and advocates of human rights must be civil obedient; that is: state sponsored. For instance we already see some special state sponsored versions of NGO’s. And when China discover how the “spiritual” education-instruments of the Matrix are supporting their ideas, we will probably also see a state-sponsored kind of “New Age-spirituality”, which will cause a boom in followers. But all kinds of civil disobedience will still be eliminated.

Add to this, that China now has adopted Consumer Capitalism into its own ideology (Communism), whereby it has created a curious hybrid, you could call The Matrix Hybrid. In the Matrix Hybrid the two ideologies have economical interests in common, and therefore we might gradually see how the West more and more is allowing China to violate human rights.

The future scenario is that Consumer Capitalism and Communism are melting together. The West might gradually be more and more fascinated by China's growing consumer culture (right now especially seen in Shanghai), and might adopt it more and more. And then we have the Illuminati scenario: a "New World Order" where all countries are led by a global government, which will try to create a world with no class barriers and religions.

With this Matrix Hybrid we have something, which could develop into Aldous Huxley's Brave New World.

### *E. Civil disobedience*

Anyway, when you bring human problems of existential character on for discussion, most people today believe, that it is something a psychologist must take care of. We have forgotten, that such problems are of philosophical nature.

Psychologists have their function, but this must not be overriding, as it is today, where everything is being psychologized, and where social problems are seen as personal problems with adapting to society. Psychology, and all its therapeutical branches, has in that way become a kind of thought-police, which control people like a totalitarian state; just like Huxley's novel *Brave New World*, and just like George Orwell's novel *1984*. The whole thing happens through coaching, personality-developing courses and management theories. It is impossible to live and work in our society today without being forced to accept these images of life.

Psychologists help patients to adapt themselves to society, and to become usefull citizens. They treat the abnormal cases and don't try to create humans, who are beside the usual, as for instance lifeartists. It is not their function. Psychologists are therefore not engaged in the total development of Man, but only in a certain aspect of his complete being. It can be necessary to heal a certain aspect but if we don't understand the complete process of Man, and are using a more communicative kind of reason, we can cause new forms of sickness. Psychologists do for instance not help the patient with getting rid of the current civilization's confusion and misery.

But as Huxley claims, then humans still have one weapon left, and that is the protest.

The philosopher's function is to create a complete new social order, a world where there are no wars, where there no hostility is, and no desire to compete. But not in the way *The Matrix Conspiracy* works. All these impulses and obsessions are namely creating an environmental society, which develops abnormal humans. If the only thing you want, is to help the individual person with adapting himself to the existing patterns of society, here or elsewhere, then you preserve one of the causes of the frustration, the confusion, the misery and the destruction. And that is precisely what is happening.

In a certain sense the philosopher also is a healer. Many philosophers make as a doctor a diagnosis and suggest a treatment. So did Buddha, and so did Kierkegaard. But what they were treating were the human problems, therefore problems common to all mankind. The sickness unto death, which for instance Kierkegaard's script *The Sickness Unto Death* has as subject, is the despair. The despair is here presented as a sickness in the self, and the condition for healing is to become yourself. In the same way in Buddhist philosophy, where the sickness is the suffering common to all mankind, and the treatment is meditation, and the recovery is enlightenment.

The philosopher is seeing, that human beings everywhere in the world are in the same situation, and that the problems of the individual person also are the world's problems, they are not two sharply separated processes. The philosopher is facing the actual human problem, whether Man lives in the East or in the West; East and West are after all only arbitrary geographical things. The whole being of Man is concerned with God, with death, with the daily bread, the right and happy life, with children and their education, with war and peace. Unless there is an understanding of the whole of this, Man can't be healed from the ground.

A further aspect of, that the instrumental reason has won territory from the communicative reason, is the fragmentation of knowledge in all possible kinds of specialization and specialists. And since everything in the modern life is uncertain, we all try to solve the human problems within our own special area. For instance the economist is trying to solve the economical problem within his own area, and therefore we can never find any solution for it. Also the politician is trying to solve it within his own area, but it will never succeed for him, because the economical crisis, the political crisis, the various problems, which constantly surround us, are connected, and must be solved on a complete other philosophical plane, and it is here, there must happen a revolution.

Most humans are afraid of being alone; they are afraid of themselves to think and discover, afraid of feeling something deep, of exploring and finding out, what

everything in life is implying. It is therefore they say they love God, and are dependent of what they call God; but it is not God, the unknown, but their own perspective, the known, which the thinking itself has produced.

In this way the lifeartist doesn't engage in faith. Faith has no meaning at all for a human being, who is searching truth. Faith is only a kind of secureness, an anchorage, a harbor. A human being, who is searching truth, must navigate on unmapped oceans, like Odysseus. As a lifeartist you have no harbors, no place of refuge, you must go out on the open sea in order to investigate.

A human being, who is searching truth, is not dependent on authority, neither in books, or in any person. As a lifeartist you are searching for truth, not the authority of a person or of a thought-system. You are seeking to investigate the images of life you already have; that is to say: you are seeking to know yourself. To know yourself is to understand the whole of Man, including the various sides of the being of Man: Man as a historical being, as a rational being, as a desirous being, as a natural being and as a communicative being. And it is to understand how your images come to expression herein, their meaning and consequences. Then you not only have some images of life, but a philosophical life-practice.

A philosophical life-practice is a rebellion against the moral of society, against all images of life, both your own and the others'. If we shall save our humanity, and our democracy and welfare society, it is absolutely necessary, that we in relation to democracy-parasitic ideologies become philosophical rebels like Socrates, Henry David Thoreau, Gandhi, Martin Luther King or Krishnamurti – a kind of spiritual anarchists.

Also Albert Camus had this thought. In his book *The Rebel* he investigates the question of terror on many different levels, and have some distinctions, especially the distinction between rebellion and murder. He emphasizes that the rebellion – but not necessarily a violent – is necessary, if the world not shall stiffen, and if you at all shall be able to survive as a human being. A rebellion can cost human lives, as in the resistance movement during the Second World War, but murder must not be a goal in itself. In that connection he mentions the role of art, which creates a space in the single person where he in a situation of rebellion can orient himself, so that the rebellion not becomes inhuman. The problem with Albert Camus' philosophy is though, as we shall see later in connection with existentialism, that it ends in subjectivism, which really can't function as ethical foundation.

Personal I constantly make the distinction between ideology and philosophy/human rights. A rebellion must not be ideological, where you treat humans as means for a

goal out in the future; that is: you must not treat human problems instrumentally. A rebellion must always be a philosophical revolution, where you treat humans as goals in themselves; that is: where you treat human problems in a communicative way.

In that connection the concept of civil disobedience is important. Civil disobedience describes the situation, where a person offends the law by referring to moral values, which the disobedient puts above all citizens' duty to obey the law. Civil disobedience is therefore closely connected with ethical practice – and *not* the use of violence.

On the constitutional plane civil disobedience can contribute to, that there happens a change of system, and yesterday's disobedience can thereby become the next day's heroic deed.

The concept of civil disobedience as it is known today, was created by the American author Henry David Thoreau in an essay from 1849, wherein he advocated the private conscience's right against the state's demands, for instance the refusal to pay taxes under the war against Mexico.

Civil disobedience is especially known from Gandhi and Martin Luther King, and in the campaign of protest against the Vietnam War. In Denmark it was seen during the Second World War, where some people helped Jews to escape to Sweden.

The reason why civil disobedience is a necessary political tool is, that any political ideology in some way is offending the human rights by making humans into means for a goal projected out in the future by the mind of the ideologist, and that the end therefore, with Niccoló Machiavelli's famous and notorious words, justifies the means (Machiavelli's work *Il Principi* is a textbook in statesmanship, and have been source of inspiration for, for instance, Hitler).

Ideology of any kind, political or religious, is - to cut a long story short - a psychic disease, a malfunction in the human mind.

The correct understanding of the human rights is healing this malfunction. The human rights deal with the idea about the individual human being's autonomy and dignity: You shall treat the other **not as a mean, but as a goal**. Therefore the exact opposite of Machiavelli's preachings. This doesn't mean though, that I advocate totally pacifism. I have investigated this in my book *Meditation as an Art of Life* – a basic reader, in the philosophical question *How ought my attitude to war be?*

***F. James Cameron's movie Avatar***



James Cameron's movie Avatar is, with its paradoxical interplay between nature and technology, simple spirituality and greedy materialism, one of the best movies for many years, and it is also, with its provocative concluding moral, one of the most revolutionary.

My fascination of the movie is of course also due to that it contains the most essential elements in my own philosophy, which I call Meditation as an Art of Life.

With a sale record on over two billion dollars, and nine Oscar nominations, James Cameron has emphatically ensured his science fiction adventure a prominent place in the history of movies.

The movie owes its thunderous success a paradoxical interplay between nature and technology. On one side the viewers are moved by the vigorous moon Pandora and its inhabitants, the Navi, a race of blue, three meter tall noble savages, who live in spiritual and ecological harmony with nature. On the other hand we have the humans, who, with a lot of technology, are on the moon in order to exploit its natural resources for own winning. To this comes the ultramodern animation and 3D technology, which brings the Navi alive on the screen, together with images of Pandora, which are of a beauty seldom seen before in a movie.

With this paradoxical interplay the movie touches one of its many fascinating philosophical discussions, that in stunningly way reminds about the discussions in this book, and in my book Dream Yoga. As we have seen, then Man, with the industrial modernization, has cultivated a mind, which can solve almost any technological problem; that, which the philosopher Habermas calls the instrumental reason. But, as we have seen, then human problems apparently have never been solved. On the contrary mankind are about to be drowned in its problems: problems concerning communication, the relationship with others, heaven and hell. The whole of the human existence has become one extremely complex problem. And apparently it has been like that through the whole of history. Despite the knowledge of Man, despite his millenniums of evolution, Man has never been free from such problems.

And, as we have seen, then the solutions to such problems require a communicative reason, a reason which understand the human community. But as Habermas says, then we are not using such a reason, on the contrary we are using the instrumental reason on human problems, where it only should be used on technical problems. We seek to solve human problems technically, where they should be solved in a philosophical way. The systems (the market, the economy, the bureaucracy) have colonized the lifeworld.

You can also talk about an instrumental and communicative view of nature, which we will investigate deeper in part four: *The lifeartist as a natural being*, and in part five, *The lifeartist as a communicative being*. The instrumental view of nature is only seeing nature as something causal and mechanical, and as a means for human exploitation. There is no meaning in nature in itself. The communicative view of nature however claims that nature is of value in itself, that there is a beauty and richness in nature, which is of non-causal and non-mechanical kind, and that Man as a natural and communicative being has a community with this nature.

So the movie is of interest for environmental activists, who fight for both human rights and environmental rights, and who will save the world through protection of forests and global peace.

But the movie is also of spiritual interest. There are some fascinating equal signs with Tibetan Dream Yoga and traditional Shamanism, which not must be confused with New Age though. Dream Yoga is a spiritual night practice where you through certain techniques can develop a so-called astral body, or dreambody. With the help of this you can leave your body during your sleep and travel elsewhere, both on this planet and other planets, but also into the so-called astral worlds. These worlds have had many names: it is Plato's world of forms, the Bardoworlds of the Books of the Dead, the Anabasis of the mystery cults, the image galleries of the Alchymists, the Akashian Archives, the collective subconscious, the dreamtime of the aboriginals etc. etc.

The moon Pandora can of course be seen as such an astral world. This focus on dreams as admission to Pandora is no way accidentally, but on the contrary based on Avatar itself. The technological and storytelling clue in the movie is namely, that a new technology anno 2154 makes it possible to grow an artificial body, a so-called avatar, based on DNA from both humans and Navis. You can be connected to the avatar, by the help of certain machines, while your human body is lying sleeping in the machine and is dreaming.

By the way you can say that the concept of Avatar original comes from Hinduism, where it designates the incarnations of the god Vishnu, for example Rama and Krishna, who, by the way, are considered as being blue. So the main character, Jake Sully, could be seen as an incarnation of Vishnu.

The deity of the Navi is called Eywa. Again this reminds about a lot of spiritual traditions - and with a communicative view of nature. It is a balancing energy or consciousness, which is in everything. It is a holistic concept, and because the

wholeness is a reality then all parts of this wholeness are defined by each other. If there is put too much energy in one part then this unbalance will be contrabanced by the energy's swing over in the part's opposition. We for example know this from the Chinese philosophy of Yin and Yang.

Now, if we take the growth fanaticism and ego-fixation that characterize the humans of today, then this Ego-extreme is reflected in countless fields. Too much energy is invested in armament; too many atomic weapons; too much pollution; too unequal distribution of the riches of the Earth; too unequal distribution of the food and fruits of the Earth. And first of all: too many people are too focused in their Ego; they accumulate energy to their Ego, to oneself; or to the family Ego; the company's Ego; the national Ego.

Now, if you look at the energy-law, then this is the energy in its one extremity. With necessity the energy will swing over in the opposite extreme. And this will not happen in a silent way, when you consider the enormous moment which is in the actual extreme, and it will happen very simple: through pollution of the environment, through disease (aids, cancer and other) through warfare, terror, crises, inner mass psychotic collapses, and through natural disasters.

So, the provocative moral of the movie is, that we, like Jake Sully, must become some kind of philosophical rebels or spiritual anarchist, and give up the ideology, which our society right now is infected with, and which spreads globally: consumer capitalism.

We must become lifeartists who dance with the energylaws of nature. We must create balance. If you are on a wavecrest then remember the trough of the wave, if you are in the one extreme of a thought-swing, then remember the opposite extreme. Remember that your energy-radiation recirculates and returns to yourself.

All this together do, that I consider Avatar to be one the most revolutionary movies I have ever seen. And therefore one of the best.

#### 4. The philosophical diary

The beginning of your philosophical journey starts, as mentioned, with religion and supporting exercises. And just like a captain on a ship it is a good idea to keep a log book over this journey, a philosophical diary. In my book **Meditation as an Art of**

**Life** I have, in a more systematical way, described how you can keep philosophical diary. Here I will describe it a bit different.

To keep philosophical diary, or life book, is an exercise in creating connection between reason and action, thought and conduct of life (logos and bios). For instance the emperor Marcus Aurelius kept such a philosophical diary (published in his book *Meditations*), and Montaigne's *Essays* is also a kind of life book. What is the exercise about? Yes, it is about learning how to know yourself. Montaigne said about his *Essays*: "They are attempts to paint myself".

You can say, that meditation is to lead a thought all through. Meditation is a way of self-forgetful thinking, a deeper passion after understanding, after feeling deeply and incisively, without seeking to achieve anything with it.

That which is finished is subject for renewal, while that which continues is of time. Our common everyday thinking is a self-producing way of thinking, it is the whole of the mind's stream of words, images, feelings, sensations, intuitions, inner monologues, comments, logical reasoning, memories, plans, etc. etc., - which all are about becoming something and achieving something, and which therefore is controlled by the will to power. This way of thinking is not renewing itself, but is repeating the same themes again and again, because it is not completed, not finished. It is the eternal recurrence of the same, where you preserve the thoughts in a linguistic form.

The instance, which is using the past to preserve the thoughts in a linguistic form, is the inner thinker, who reacts to challenges by dividing, evaluating, comparing. To finish thoughts, so that they can end and renew themselves, is therefore equivalent with ceasing to preserve them in a linguistic form, which again is equivalent with meditation: that, to let the thoughts rest in longer periods of time, to let the space between them expand in passive listening presence. It is as simple as that.

The creative thinking, or renewing thinking, is the self-forgetful way of thinking. But in order to, that the thought can renew itself, it must be finished. That which is finished ceases, and therefore there is a renewal. To finish thoughts, so that they can end and renew themselves, is equivalent with the process, where the thinker understands himself, because the thinker and the thought are not two separated processes. And in order to understand yourself, you must partly become yourself present in passive listening, partly slow the speed of your thoughts down.

When you become aware of your thoughts, you will see, how hurried they are, the one incoherent thought follows after the other, wandering and absent-minded, and it

is impossible to observe, investigate, such a confusion. James Joyce's novel *Ulysses*, and Virginia Woolf's novel *Mrs. Dalloway* are both experiments in following this thought-created confusion, as well as fictional examples on, how the thinking sucks life out of the present, makes the past and future into reality, and reality into emptiness.

Meanwhile, in order to create order, and therewith clarity, you can try to write your thoughts down. This whirling machinery must slow the speed down in order to be observed, therefore writing down is a help. Just like when you in a slowly driven movie can see all the movements, in the same way you can, through the reduced speed of the mind, be able to observe all thoughts, banal as well as important. The banal leads to the important, therefore don't try to push it aside as unimportant; since it is there, it is a sign of the pettiness of the mind, and to push it aside doesn't make the mind lesser banal and stupid. To push it aside is contributive to, that the mind continues to be small and narrow, but being aware of it, and understanding it, leads to great treasures.

You can of course not get all your thoughts and feelings during the day written down, but experiment with it, write down a little bit every day. Use for instance two minutes where you write all thoughts down. Do it for instance in combination with the supporting exercise, the Hara meditation, which I described in my first book.

You know how to keep an ordinary diary; in the evening you write down all the incidents of the day, at the same time as you make considerations over them, evaluates them. But to keep philosophical diary is not to keep such a retrospective diary, it is to write all thoughts down at the very moment as they arise. Nor does it consist in trying to write profound and philosophical thoughts down. The philosophical is lying in bringing a passive listening presence into the thoughtprocess. The great philosophical thoughts will then begin to come by themselves.

If you decide from time to time, every day, to write down all thoughts, even the most banal and stupid, the shameful as well as the comfortable, then you will, how little it may succeed at first, soon discover, that there happens something strange. Since you don't have time to write each thought and feeling down, because you have something else to do, you discover, that somewhere in the consciousness, all thoughts and feelings are stored. In spite of the fact, that you not directly use the whole of your awareness to write, you are nevertheless inner aware, and when you again have time to write, you discover, that what is kept in the consciousness, rises to the surface.

If you in the evening look through, what you have written, but are evaluating - that is to say: condemnatory or approvingly, defending or comparative - as you are when you keep ordinary diary - then this will prevent the unfolding of the thought, and therefore there is no understanding.

The philosophical in the philosophical diary consists in being the writing-process itself, and the reading-process itself, present in passive listening. When you in that way try to understand and feel it, you will then discover, that these thoughts and feelings are symptoms of something much deeper. They are symptoms of time and its images themselves, and time is not only your personal history, it is also the collective and universal history.

Your personal history is the thinking's past and future as a whole, your self-image and world-image moving from past towards future, as well as all the experiences, conclusions, values, norms, ideals, theories, speculative conceptions etc., which are manifestations of this history. They are also symptoms of the will to power in this history, the desire after becoming something, to control and form happiness, truth and reality. In other words they are symptoms of the self-production, the production of your ego, the whole of this idea-complex, which creates the calculator, the dreamer, the doubter, which place itself outside yourself and your surroundings. And they are symptoms of the consequences of this process: the disappointments, the guilt, the sorrow, the bitterness, the anger, the resistance, the anxiety, the hope, the despair, the unreality, the absence.

This process, the process of unreality, which so excellent has been described by various authors, for instance in Camus' *The Stranger*, Baudelaire's *The Flowers of Evil*, Dostojevskij's *Notes From an Underground*, Kafka's *The Castle*. Also in the art of painting you can see it depicted, for instance by Cezanne, Van Gogh, Picasso.

So in the writing down you begin to form the mirror, which reproduces your thoughts and feelings without distortion. And when you observe them, you understand your actions and reactions, and therefore your self-knowledge becomes deeper and wider. You are not only understanding the current immediate action and reaction, but also the past, that has created the current. You discover the difference between presence and absence.

When you are sitting silent and are becoming absent in mind, you discover how the thinking sucks life and energy out of the present. Past and future become reality, while reality becomes emptiness. You discover how the thinking analyzes, separates and divides in order to evaluate, understand. You discover how the thinking removes the mind from the Now, and creates the inner calculator, the experiencer or the

thinker, who compares with earlier, or who hopes and desires something else; the thinker, who slides off from the Now's facts. And you discover how the Now's facts, seen from the thinking's past and future, can become a problem. You have pure and simple discovered the cause of your problems.

The writing down of all these thoughts unravels them, breaks them up and brings them out in the light. The writing down itself brings a passive listening presence into them, and you discover, that when you again are present, then there flows energy and life back from past and future, back to the Now, to reality. The energy, which was invested in your personal history, its sorrows and bindings, plans and problems, flows in and fills the Now, increases the vitality, the joy of life and the clearness in the Now. In that way you release yourself from the past, which is based on time and its images, both personal and collective images, and you become yourself. You have moved from just having some images of life, to having a philosophical life-practice.

It is a life book, the story about yourself you are writing down. It is the book of self-knowledge. Become for instance aware of your anger. Being aware means being aware of what the cause is, why and how it has accumulated, how it affects your actions and reactions, and how it is your continuous companion. Also feel the anger, enter into it, deeply and loving. Being aware of the anger, and feeling it, means being it present in passive listening. Write down what you discover. Each thought and feeling must flower in order to live and die. And it is this flowering the writing down helps you with.

Everything in you must flower, the ambitions, the greed, the hatred, the happiness, the lusts. In the flowering is their death and freedom. It is only in freedom that something can flower, not in suppression, control and discipline, which only pervert and corrupt. Flowering and freedom are goodness and virtue. To allow for instance your envy to flower is not easy; it is condemned or justified, but never given freedom. It is only in freedom that the fact of envy exposes its color, its form, its depth, its oddities. If it is suppressed, it will not expose itself fully and free. When it has exposed itself completely, there is an ending of it. This ending can then allow new facts to expose: emptiness, loneliness, anxiety.

As each fact is allowed to flower, in freedom, in its completeness, the conflict between the thinker and the thought ceases. There is no longer the inner thinker, who places himself outside the thought, but only self-forgetful thinking. There is no longer the inner calculator, dreamer or doubter, but only a being one with yourself and the experienced. There can only be freedom in accomplishment and ending, not in recurrence and suppression, or in obeying the thinking's pattern.

As Montaigne said, then that to philosophize means to learn how to die. Only in flowering and death there is accomplishment. There is no flowering unless there is ending.

To allow the thoughts to flower is not equivalent with a continued thought-activity, on the contrary it means, that you in neutral observation, and passive listening presence, allow the thoughts to rest in longer periods of time. Whenever there then comes a thought you understand its consequences. It is this understanding, which is its flowering. In the understanding you don't preserve it in evaluations, and therefore it is finished at the very moment it arises. Then the mind doesn't end up becoming troubled.

That which has permanence, that which is an eternal recurrence of the same, is the thinking in time, the self-producing way of thinking, which evaluates, justifies and condemns. But to allow this thinking to flower is to make an end of it; because only in death there is the new. The new can't be unless there is freedom from the known, from your perspective of yourself and the world, the thinking's movable pattern. The thinking, the eternal recurrence of the same, can't produce the new. It must die so the new can be. The writing down allows it to flower, and therefore to die.

In the evening go through what you have written down in the course of the day. This study is the philosophical art, because from there comes the understanding. What is more important than the writing down - and more important than the contents of the thoughts - is, how you study what you are writing, and have written. It is about not to break into it with evaluations.

Also make a status over the day, try to remember the most important challenges, as well as your reactions. To make such a status was one of the important exercises in *The Spiritual Exercises* of St. Ignatius of Loyola. In that way you put in order all what you have been doing in the course of the day. And in that way the brain doesn't go to sleep in a condition of disorder. This of course doesn't mean, that there rules disorder in the day-time. The writing down, and by the way the art of life as a whole, is order, and it is this order you summarize before the sleep, as an end of a harmonic day. It is just like the person, who keeps account, and every evening is balancing it, so that he can make a fresh start the next day, so that the mind, when he goes to sleep, is in peace, empty, not worried, confused, anxious, or afraid. And when he awakes, there is this light, which not is a product of thought-activity. This light is reason and love.

Then you are a lifeartist. Your philosophical diary is in that way **A Portrait of a Lifeartist**



## II

### **The lifeartist as a rational being**

Aristotle meant, that what differentiates Man from the rest of the animals, is reason. He defined Man as a rational animal.

Up through the Western history of philosophy we have meant, that reason was the most crucial thing in Man. Our thinking about state and society are based on the idea about, that Man is an enlightened and rational being. The democracy is standing or falling with, that the individual is able to understand and decide on political problems.

But what are then reason and rationality? They are at any rate an utterance of the mind; they are connected with, how clearly the mind can see without distortions. The question about reason is therefore connected with the question about what the mind actually is, including our ability to think and analyse. Add to this the problem with dualism; the problem with mind and thoughts as separate from body and surroundings.

In philosophy as an art of life you don't seek to construct any philosophy on the background of these questions; any answers or conclusions. The question about reason is rather sought clarified by investigating why the mind not is able to see clearly. The answer is sought in the problem about the mind's loss of reason, and what you in practice can do in order to change this.

### **1. The mind**

#### ***A. What is consciousness?***

What is consciousness? When we ask this question, we usually don't think about the brain, the physical organism, which reacts to stimulations through nerves which are exposed for multifold influences, and whereof we can be told by any physiologist. We think about something else. What is this?

Descartes' concept of consciousness and reason is contained in his famous sentence: *I think, therefore I am* (Cogito ergo sum). And it is after all the consciousness which says: "I think"; "it is mine"; "I am hurt"; "I am envious"; "I love"; "I hate"; "I am Danish"; "I am Moslem"; "I believe this, but not that"; "I know, and you don't know"; "I have respect"; "I despise"; "I want to"; "I don't want to".

What is this consciousness? Only a few traditional philosophers have gone deeper into the question than Descartes, and for instance also Kant. But in philosophy as an art of life you go deeper, because you, through intellectual training, thinking, can't be content with constructing a philosophy about the question, but by, through existential training of mind and heart, also are getting insight in the dimension and importance of meditation in connection with the question. Descartes and Kant only trained themselves intellectual, and they never reached beyond thinking. However, as a lifeartist, you can use them as philosophical sparring partners. Because Descartes had a point, when he said, that what you usually understand by consciousness is thinking, and that it usually is thinking which constitutes the whole of your self-image and world-image, the whole of your foundation of existence. I think, therefore I am.

If Man not from childhood begins to understand, and makes himself altogether acquainted with the whole of the thought-process, which is called consciousness - unless you already as a child learns fully to be the thinking present in passive listening - you will, little by little, as you become older, become hard, stagnated and grow fixed in a particular thoughtpattern, some specific images of life.

So consciousness is the way in which we think. And also the way in which we feel. It is the way in which we look at the trees, the ocean, the way in which we observe other human beings. And as Man develops from child to full grown, his mind gradually becomes warped, or it stiffens in a particular pattern. It is this development, which do, that we gradually begin to place ourselves outside life itself. As desirous beings we want something, we are burningly longing after it, we desire to become something, and this desire leaves a particular pattern; that is to say: our mind produces a pattern, and is thereafter being caught by it. The thinking's production of a self-image creates the desire, and this desire makes our mind stiffen. Herewith the reason, the clearness, is lost; life is sucked out of the present, past and future are transformed into reality, while reality becomes emptiness. Our vitality, and urge to live, are reduced; they crumble, they dissolve.

To understand what consciousness is, is impossible without that you also understand other sides of the being of Man, for instance Man as a historical being. To understand consciousness as something, which places itself outside, is to become aware of your historical limitation. In addition to this Man also is a communicative being, because

admittedly consciousness is the whole of the area where the thought functions, but the thought functions only in relation to other humans, society and nature.

All motives, intensions, desires, pleasures, misgivings, inspirations, longings, expectations, sorrows, joys, are within the area of consciousness, but all this is a movement in the thinking. What we mean about consciousness, is in this way, on a superficial level of the mind, clearly enough the thinking's process.

The thought is a result of memory, the memory expressed in words; that is: to give a name, register and store some experiences with the purpose of making contact with other humans. On this level there is also multifold prohibitions, forms of control, regulations and forms of discipline. All this we are fully acquainted with.

Often it is this process we call reason, but perhaps this process is, as the neuropsychology says, only an aspect of Man as a natural being, some reactions in the brain. Or as Freud and Jung made aware, then such a reason perhaps only is rationalizations of subconscious impulses, something that more has to do with Man as a desirous being than a rational being. If you namely go deeper into the consciousness, you come to the traditions of the generation, the hidden motives, the collective and personal ambitions and prejudices, which are the result of knowledge, contact and desire.

But in philosophy as an art of life this is not all of it, because it originates from time and its images; that is: not only from the personal images, but also from the collective and universal images. This, the whole of consciousness, the hidden as well as the open, is circling around the idea about the Ego, not a psychological ego, but a philosophical ego; that is to say: it is circling around the thinking, which, in order to create meaning and coherency, produces the reality of the self-image and the world-image.

Consciousness and thought are therefore usually the same; usually there is no difference between thinking and being conscious. As the Buddhists say, then that to think is a skandha, a reaction to a challenge. To be conscious is therefore, in accordance with the Buddhists, usually also only a reaction, an aspect of Man as a natural being. When you for instance are conscious about a chair, this consciousness is a reaction to a sense challenge. It is this reaction, which we call an experience. The experience can therefore not be separated from Man as a natural being. The experience is both challenge and reaction. And this experience, and the designation and the registration of it – this complete process on various levels – are what we usually call consciousness. The experience is the result, the product of the sense challenge. Thereupon you give the result a designation. The name itself is a

conclusion, one of the many conclusions, which constitute the memory. This concluding process is the consciousness. The conclusion, the result, is ego-consciousness.

The Ego is memory, the many conclusions; and the thought is the reaction of the memory. The thought-activity is in this way always a line of conclusions, or the process towards reaching conclusions, and therefore the thought never is free, it isolates itself. It might sound as a cognition-psychological exercise, but as mentioned it is all based on time and its images.

The structure of consciousness is time and its images, not only the personal images, but also the collective and universal images; altogether the foundation of the whole of mankind's knowledge and belief. Belief and knowledge are the recognition-processes, the processes out of which the thinking creates the perspective on oneself and the world, the known. This process isolates itself and produces the Ego, a process, which both is conscious and unconscious.

The question for the lifeartist is whether the mind can disengage itself from its own structure. Can the mind empty itself for its own structure? That is the problem. The mind, as we know it, has belief and knowledge as historical background, is feeded by desires, wants, the desire after safety. In this way the thinking sucks life out of the present and transforms knowledge and belief into reality, and reality into emptiness. And in this way the Ego is made independent in relation to the individual's reality.

So, usually the consciousness therefore *is* the historical background of Man; the consciousness *is* usually the result of time. The consciousness is the past, from where it can project itself into the future by throwing itself out as projects and plans. In that way it uses the present as a passage to the future, and therefore it still is – whatever it do, whatever activities it is involved in, whatever it intends to do in the future, whatever it do now and has done in the past – captured in the web of time. The consciousness must therefore also be understood from Man as a historical being.

But again: is it possible for the mind altogether to empty itself for its historical limitation? The mind has, as we have seen, many layers of images, both personal, collective and universal. The so-called consciousness consists of these many layers of images, and there is an intercommunication between these layers, all the layers are dependent of each other and influence each other. The whole of the consciousness of Man is not only a process whereby something is experienced, but also whereby something gets name, is designated and stored as memories. Consciousness is therefore not only a characteristic by Man as a rational being. It is also, on various levels, a characteristic by Man, both as history, desires, nature and relationships.

The consciousness can for instance not be separated from a human's actions. But often the consciousness keeps itself outside them, so that it can achieve a feeling of continuation and endurance. And it is especially this isolating process - the Ego - which the lifeartist is seeking to understand. Self-knowledge is the virtue of art of life.

How is the individuality of Man formed, the Ego? We all originate from life itself, from a special original energy, the source of life, the source from where all life-power and joy of life originate. This energy creates, through its self-production, its own substance, namely sensation, observance and thinking. It was this substance Descartes called the thinking substance (*res cogitans*), which is standing as opposed to the outstretched substance (*res extensa*).

The thinking substance you could call the abstract side of Man (*logos*). The action and conduct of life is the practical, or concrete side (*bios*). There exists of course not such an absolute division. Nonetheless it is the thinking's self-production which creates the separation of the observer and the observed, the split in the thinker, who is standing outside his own actions and conduct of life, who distances himself from them, and relates thinking to them.

Descartes had an experience of this separation, and therefore he concluded, that soul and body must be separated: dualism. It is not totally wrong. Shortly said you can say that the thinking, or the consciousness, is in time, while conduct of life, or the existence, is in the Now. The abstract in the thinking is time, and the practical in the conduct of life is the Now. The discrepancy between the thought and the conduct of life consists in, that the Now's facts, seen from the thinking's past and future, can become a problem. You compare with earlier, or you hope, fear, or desire, something else. The past and the future of the thinking are your images of life. The consciousness is your perspective on yourself and the world. Usually.

The thinker is himself absent. The experience of absence is the experience of, that what happens around you, and with you, doesn't concern you, that you not are in it, not are involved. You are not here, nor other places, but outside in the meaning absent. You are shortly said not present. That will say that your actual being is hidden for you, you are ignorant about what you are. Unreality is absence of something for the individual hidden. It is a specific state, a suffering emptiness, a being outside. You are not your activity. You are something else than your activity, or rather: your activity is something else than yourself. Unreality is weightlessness, that existence without weight, which Milan Kundera was seeking to depict in his novel *The Unbearable Lightness of Being*: the lacking presence, and the weightlessness.

In the unreal existence the actions of Man come to rest on ignorance; that is to say: prejudices, inclinations and demands. And it results in absence, and therefore suffering. In this way the human existence becomes a friction, a conflict, and herein there is no reason. The being of Man includes both the state of the mind and the conduct of life, logos and bios. But the Ego is formed by an interaction between the activities of the mind (demands, prejudices, inclinations) – and the hindrances, which the challenges of life create, and therewith you have the unreality.

### ***B. The activity of the mind***

What is the function of the mind? Is the function of the mind reason? And in that case: does it then function reasonable and clearly?

In order to find out you must, as a lifeartist, know what the mind in fact is doing. What is it that engages your mind? As we have seen it is usually the thoughtprocess. If the thoughtprocess is quiet, the mind is no longer present as we know it. When the mind is not engaged by thinking, conscious or unconscious, the mind shortly said is something else than what we usually understand by it.

As a lifeartist you must therefore find out what the mind – the mind, which you daily make use of, and also the mind about which existence most of us know nothing – is doing in relation to your problems. You must observe the mind as it is, and not as you think it ought to be.

Now, what is the mind when it is active? The reality is that it is an isolationprocess, which sucks life out of the present and places itself outside. Basically this is what the thought-activity is. The mind is thinking in an isolating, or self-producing way, in spite of the fact that it still is collective. When you are your thinking present in passive listening, you discover that it is an isolating, splitting process. As a natural being you think on the basis of your reactions, and on the basis of the brain's memories, but also on the basis of your underlying images of life, the reactions of your knowledge and belief, of your historical limitation.

Constantly the mind is in motion: thoughts, feelings, sensations, arrangements. Always the consciousness has something in mind, always the mind is in progress with changing, choosing, planing, throwing out projects, commenting, remembering and creating images. Always it is worrying, and is creating problems, because it compares facts with earlier, and is hoping and desiring something else. Always the mind is in a condition of becoming, caused by the thinking's fundamental

construction of the reality of the self-image and the world-image. The mind is therefore characterized by a thorough restless, or creative, turbulence.

When you become aware of your thoughts you will see how hurried they are, the one incoherent thought follows after the other, wandering and absent-minded, and it is impossible to observe, investigate, such a confusion. As we have seen, then James Joyce's novel *Ulysses*, and Virginia Woolf's novel, *Mrs. Dalloway*, both are experiments in following this thought-created confusion, and fictional examples on, how the thinking sucks life out of the present, makes past and future into reality, and the reality into emptiness. Also Thomas Mann has in his novel *Magic Mountain*, examined the time-phenomenon, and this in relation to the many different aspects of the being of Man, in the same way as I try to do it in this book.

Time is also a central part of Marcel Proust's series of novels *In Search of Lost Time*. Proust depicted how memory and expectation characterize your actual experiences. When you are absent in past and future, then your self-understanding is often connected to a certain, often inarticulate project (intentionality) - eventually to a whole chinese box of projects of various universality. The self-understanding is then often focused on a certain object, as goal for the concerned project (inexplicable tensions, worries, but also joy). But this, apparently holistic, goal-directed self-understanding, can however suddenly break together, when the object of your desire, or expectation, loses its importance, or, more generally, when you become conscious about the arbitrariness of the whole of your system of habits and values. That is the anxiety. The anxiety is experienced as a break in a continuous space of time. And then it is you often make a jump into a new frame of understanding. Hereby also your earlier self-understanding – your earlier ego – comes to appear different.

The main character in *In Search of Lost Time*, - Marcel – is seeing the things around him in the light of his projects; that will first of all say his love affairs. When his being in love has faded away, the things appear meaningless and ordinary. It is a nihilistic moment in the same way as in Albert Camus' novels.

On the one hand these reactions are an expression of Man as a natural being, on the other hand they are also an expression of the historical limitation of Man, and therefore the instance, which under various forms makes it possible for the Ego to continue. The historical limitation is time and its images, the perspective you have on yourself and the world. The Ego is this historical limitation. The Ego is therefore a philosophical ego.

In such a process there can't be any openness, devotion and love. Love can only arise when the Ego is not present. When the Ego is not present, then Man, and the Otherness, can fill each other out. This happens in the devotion. True love is devotion, where you in self-forgetful openness give yourself away with the whole of your being. That is the reason why the lifeartist must understand the whole of the process of mind, which is the thinking's process.

It is in connection with this, that you as a lifeartist also must understand yourself as a communicative being. Because the whole process of the mind can only be understood through the relationship with the surrounding world – the relationship with nature, to society, to humans, to our own projections, to everything around us. Life is simply the same as all these relationships. Art of life is to understand yourself in the relationship with the surrounding world. Art of life is meditation. Meditation has therefore nothing to do with introspection.

The expression of the mind is life – not the ideal life, but the real life, with its sorrow and joy, with its self-deceit and clarity, with its illusion and outer humility. To understand the mind is to be aware of how all this express itself in the relationship with the surrounding world. The activities of the mind are not in themselves reason. Reason arises when you are these activities present in passive listening.

### *C. The peace of the mind*

Is it possible for the mind to be completely silent, to be in a condition of passivity, non-control, non-interfering?

It is this condition, which the Stoics called *Apátheia*, freedom from emotional strain, indifference within some limits, a condition of "Stoical Peace". Many Stoics showed in practice that this condition is achievable. The Stoics are unusual in Western philosophy because their teaching more was based on meditation than on thinking. They saw philosophy as an art of life, something, which they in practice were training. They lived their teaching, and were living expressions of what they taught.

The Stoics had the conception, that the perfect philosopher, the Stoic sage, should be completely independent of all conceivable bindings. Everything imaginable, that could happen to him, had to pass unnoticed over his personality. And then he would be able to act in accordance with the reason, which also was a cosmic principle.

The Stoics' *Apátheia*, the Stoic peace, corresponds in remarkable degree with the Taoists' *Wu-Wei*, non-activity, which leads to Tzu-jen, spontaneity and naturalness.



In a condition of completely peace of mind you are in a condition of timeless being, where there can be created; that is to say: where the Ego is not present. Then your being has become real. Reality is a being, which is middle, is fullness, is lying in light. The middle is the quality, which is lying in, that you not are decentralized, not are beside yourself, not away from the actual. On the contrary you are in the middle of the actual, in the middle of the stream of life, where creation takes place.

But all of the mind's activities, whether they are positive or negative, are usually experiences, that actually strengthen the Ego, because they suck life out of the present, out of the Now and the timeless, and into time's self-producing movement from past towards future. Is it therefore possible for the mind to let life flow back to the present, to allow a total existential presence in the Now? As the Stoics and the Taoists say, then it can only happen when there is completely silence.

First when you can penetrate the massive idea-complex, which is standing in the way for you – and that will say the Ego, which in order to experience itself as partly or completely continual, has split itself in the observer and the observed – first when you reach beyond this, when the thought is completely in peace, the timeless experience can take place. And then you will know what truth is: the ultimate expression of reason.

#### *D. On emptying out the mind*

What relationship does the content of the mind has to the mind itself? Is the content the mind itself? Yes, usually it is so. Provided that the content of the mind is furniture, books, what people say, your prejudices, your habitual concepts, your fear-conceptions, yes, then all this is the mind. Provided that the mind says, that there is a soul, there is a God, there is a Hell, there is a Heaven, there is a Devil, then this is the content of the mind. And the content of the mind is usually the mind.

In Taoism and Zen Buddhism you time after time hear the statement about emptying out the mind. To empty out the mind means, that you are emptying it for its content. The content of the mind is the known, your perspective of life, your historical limitation, the past which projects itself into the future, the past and the future which sucks life out of the present and transforms memories and plans into reality, and reality into emptiness. In this way the mind, or the Ego, makes itself independent in relation to your reality, and the reason is lost. To empty out the mind is the opposite movement. You give life back to the present, you are emptying the mind and are filling reality with vitality and urge to live. In this way the mind becomes one with your reality, and the reason is won.

Provided that the mind can empty itself for the known, for your perspective, your images of life, then it is something entirely else; then the mind is something new, and therefore, according to Taoism, immortal.

How can the mind be completely empty? The intellectual would probably claim, in order to defend his theories, that an empty mind is the same as being in a condition of apathy, idiocy, or what he might call it, and he would probably react instinctively by disclaiming this condition. But a mind which is extraordinarily silent, a mind which isn't being distracted by its own thought, a mind which is open, can see the problems much more directly and simple. It is in other words immensely reasonable. And it is this ability to see our problems - without in any way letting yourself be distracted - which is the only solution for the lifeartist. A silent mind, a mind in peace, is a requirement.

Meditation, or art of life, is to empty out the mind completely. The content of the mind is a product of time, of that which usually is called development and cultivation; it is a product of thousand experiences, a gigantic accumulation of knowledge, of memories; therefore an aspect of Man as a historical being. The mind is in that degree loaded with the past. The past is based on the images in time, both the personal, collective and universal images; the reservoir, from where we get all our belief and knowledge. All knowledge originates from the past, all experience is the past, and all memory is the accumulated result of thousand experiences – this is the known, your perspective.

Can the mind, which both are the conscious and the subconscious, completely empty out itself for the past? This is the whole movement in meditation. When Man is himself present in passive listening, when he passively observes and feels his own complete movement – can this presence then completely empty out the mind for the known? Because if there is as much as a remnant of the past, of a perspective, Man can't be in the middle of the actual, in the stream of life. Meditation is in that way the complete emptying of the mind, so that life flows away from the thinking, back into reality, which is being filled with vitality. But it can only happen in an understanding of what thinking is, what it means and what it is implying.

## **2. Thinking**

### ***A. What is the thought?***

*"I think, therefore I exist!"*, Descartes said. That he is existing as a thinking being was his criterion of truth, an insight he understood as reason itself, something similar to the insight you have in a mathematical proof. Since antiquity mathematics has indeed also been a standard-example on truths of reason.

Descartes begins with a presumption, which he doesn't investigate further, namely the thinking. From Descartes you get very little information about where the thought itself is coming from. His way of philosophizing is based on thinking, it is a pure intellectual form of training. The lifeartist's way of philosophizing, is based on meditation, on an existential training of the mind and the heart. A central part of this training consists in investigating the thinking itself. If you namely investigate your thoughts you will soon make two discoveries. Firstly, that there is space between the thoughts. Secondly, that the mind can be something else than thinking. You can namely be the thinking present in passive listening, and this presence is not itself thinking. Descartes doesn't seem to have directed very much attention towards these two elementary facts. We don't find many investigations about, what happens between the thoughts, or what the mind is, when it is in peace. And that is by the way applying to most philosophers in the West. Both Aristotle, Kant, Hegel and Kierkegaard were putting their focus on the dividing function of the mind; but this function explains, that the thoughts are separated, but not what the space between them consists in, or where the thought-material is coming from.

If you as a lifeartist investigate yourself as a mixture of nature and history, you can see, that the thought is a reaction, which emanates from your knowledge, belief and experience, in the form of accumulated memory, the historical background from where the thought reacts to all challenges. If you are asked where you live, there is an immediate reaction. The memory, the experience, the knowledge, is the historical background from where the thought is coming. The thought is therefore never new. The thought is the eternal recurrence of the same. The thought can never be free, because it is tied to the past, and therefore it can never see something, which is new. But when you understand this, observe it quite clearly, the mind becomes silent. And then it changes.

As a lifeartist you are also a communicative being, a being, which is in the movement of life. Life is a movement, a constant movement in the relationship with the surrounding world. But the thought, which is trying to catch this movement by using the past, as memory, is afraid of life, and places itself outside.

So the thought is the memory's, the past's, reaction to the challenges of life, a mixture of nature and history. The past is that, which was for an infinity ago, or for a second ago. The past is based on time and its images. And when the thought acts, it is

this past, which acts as memory, as experience, as knowledge, as possibility. And desires also play a role. All will is desire, which basis is this past, and its goal is lust or avoiding pain. It is the past, which is active in the thought, and therefore there is not any new life at all when the mind isn't something more, and something else, than the thinking. The past lives in the Now, where it modifies itself and the Now. The Now itself it can't grasp. The thought can't be in the Now, it can't think the Now, or the existence. As Kierkegaard says: "When that to exist isn't letting itself be thought, and the existing person yet is thinking, what does that then mean? That means, that he thinks momentarily, he thinks ahead and he thinks behind. The absolute continuity his thinking can't get".

If you allow the thinking to come into power, it sucks life out of the present, and there will no longer be anything new in life, because you make the known, your perspective, into reality, and the reality into emptiness. It is the eternal recurrence of the same. If you therefore as a lifeartist want to discover something new, then the past must be passive, the mind must not be filled up with thoughts, fear, lust and all kind of other things. Only when the mind not is overloaded, it can be in the middle of life, or the Now, and the new can reveal itself.

Therefore the thought must be in peace, and only function when it has to – objective and effective. This is the foundation for the reason.

All continuation in time is thinking; and in this continuation there is nothing new. It is actually a question of life itself. Either you live in the past, or you live in a completely other way.

### ***B. The thought can't understand the unknown***

Descartes, and the philosophical rationalists, were emphasizing, that the reason was the way to insight in the unknown, in the eternal truths and the universe's connections, in universal scales about the Good, the True, and the Beautiful. But with reason they meant thinking.

The enlightenment philosophers were emphasizing, that the reason shall function objective and effective, and they rejected, or criticized, everything that were obscure and subjective: superstition, tradition, myths, religion, feelings. Opinions, conventions, institutions, manners and customs, none of this were able to justify anything. Only the reason was able to do this. When the reason functioned objective and effective you had a clear and certain knowledge. And clear and certain knowledge you had in the natural sciences.

The enlightenment's counterpart to tradition and its prejudices therefore became the knowledge of natural science. Herewith arised the so-called progressive optimism, which meant that scientific knowledge not only would create material progress, but enlightenment would also make mankind better. Individualism, the thought about the individual person as a rational, and therewith independently, autonomous being, is connected with the thought about the individual human being's rights. The enligthenment philosophers were advocates for what we today understand by human rights.

The enlightenment philosophers' conception of reason corresponds to what Habermas calls the instrumental reason, or the technical reason. It is controlling, it is about achieving something, acquiring something and becoming something, and about finding means for these goal. And that way it must necessarily function in connection with material and technical questions and problems. The problems arise when this attitude come to characterize human relationships, where values should to be crucial. Then it becomes will to power. So Habermas will agree with the enligthenment philosophers in, that an instrumental reason very likely can create material progress, but disagree in, that it can make mankind better. To suppose this has led to, that the systems have colonized the lifeworld.

Let us try to investigate, both the rationalists' and the enlightenment philosophers' conception of reason, a bit deeper. As mentioned there is in European philosophy a strong tradition only reckoning with two forms of cognition, sensation and reason, where there with reason is meant thinking. When for instance Kant speaks about realization as such, then he speaks about the reason, or the thinking. He claims that realization can't lead us beyond the borders of experience, from the known to the unknown, and that the validity of realization alone can be given reasons for transcendently, as conditional possibilities for the experience. A speculative philosophy, a metaphysics, which wants to go beyond natural science – beyond the borders of experience - for instance in order to realize "Das Ding an Sich" - is a semblance of science.

However Kant also claims, that it is lying in the nature of reason, that it is seeking answers to questions, which is lying outside the borders of experience, but that you shall be aware, that all metaphysical assertions are invalid and unfounded. Kant calls the central metaphysical questions - which the reason can't help struggling with - for transcendental illusions. That is for instance the ideas about an immortal soul, about God, and about the world as a wholeness.

Kant was right, that the reason, or the thought, only can deny or confirm, it can't discover or track down the new. Nor can the thought accidentally find the new. But

something Kant didn't reckon with, was, that when the thought is in peace, or when there is a space between the thoughts, then the new can occur. Discoveries of any kind happen in the space between the thoughts. But then the thought instantly transforms them into the past, into experience. Perhaps it was therefore Descartes, and the philosophical rationalists, thought, that the thought was the way to the unknown. Descartes called it rational intuition.

Kant was right, that the thought is forming, modifying, coloring in compliance with the pattern of experience. The function of the thought is to communicate itself, not to be in the experiencing condition. When the experience has gone, then the thought takes over, names it, and places it within the known's categories and forms of experience. Therefore Kant discriminated between reality in itself – "Das Ding an Sich" (the things in themselves) – and the reality as it appears for us – the world of experience or phenomena "erscheinungen" (the things as sensed appearance); that is: our perspective.

So the thought can't enter the unknown, and therefore it can never discover or experience reality. The thought is a result of the known, of our perspective, which is time as such, and therefore it can't embrace the unknown, the timeless, that, which can't be known.

In one direction the thought is necessary, in another direction it is dangerous. In the necessary direction it has to function as instrumental reason on material and technical problems; that is to say: objective and effective. The dangerous direction is when it instrumentally is seeking to work on human problems and values; that is to say: when it becomes characterized by desires, the desire after material necessities, or after the highest spiritual goal; that is: the will to power which is seeking to control, to become, to remodel, to acquire in philosophical sense; that is to say: in order to find meaning.

Nietzsche and Freud were in their reckoning with the reason right, that thinking usually is desire, both in its lowest and highest forms, and that it always must be self-encircling, limitary, when it functions that way. Our thinking is narrow, limited by our historical background, whether we think about the Universe, about our neighbour, about ourselves, or about God.

The immense can't be sought by the thought, because the thought can never stop measuring, it tends towards separating and splitting phenomena in order to analyze them, understand them. The sublime is not within that, which the thought has build, and nor is it a product of choice, will, or feelings. The negation of the thought is meditation, the passive listening presence. The position of the thought is division,

sorting, acceptance and denial, accentuation and elimination, and therefore distraction and isolation. The negation of the thought is love where you give yourself away with the whole of your identity, where the Otherness and you fill each other out.

If you are seeking the highest through choice, will, steering and control, you will not find it. It comes to you if you are lucky – and luck is then a window, which the passive listening presence has opened, not the thinking.

### *C. The thinker and the thought*

We have seen, that one kind of unreality and absence is lying in, that you place yourself outside life as a spectator, a theorist, or a doubter. This is of course an illusion, a self-deceit, because you after all always are in the movement of life. Another kind of unreality and absence is lying in, that the thinker places himself outside his own thoughts. The thinker is then his thoughts absent, he is not present and aware in his thoughts, but outside them, in the meaning absent.

But does the thinker in fact exist independently of his thoughts? Is the thinker not the thought? Is it not the thinker, who is thinking his thoughts, or rather, is it not the thinking, which thinks up the thinker?

We have seen that we all originate from life itself, from a special original source, the source of life. Plotin called the source of life *The One*, and he claimed that it is also therefrom the thought originates. So the thought is in its origin a part of life itself. But in its self-production, in its production of the reality of the self-image and the world-image, the thinking creates the thinker, who places himself outside the thought. It creates a separation of the thinker and the thought.

So the thinking can place the thinker on a very high level, give him a name, and separate him from the thought. And nevertheless the thinker is a part of the thoughtprocess. There is only the thinking, and the thinking produces the thinker into a constant, independently being, namely the Ego.

The thinking is seeing itself as something passing, in constant change, and therefore it produces the thinker as a constant entity, as separate from the thought, different from it. Then the thinker works in on the thought, divides, accepts and denies, accentuates and excludes. But all the time there is only the thinking. No more than we can place ourselves outside life, no more can the thinker place himself outside the thought. It is an illusion, a self-deceit.

The experience of this truth is of great importance for the lifeartist. Real thinking is the wholeness of the thinker and the thought; it is the thinking, where you are one with the thought, with your possibilities and your past, yes, the thinking, where there not at all is any inner thinker, but only the thinking, which happens in a satisfactory way. This is the self-forgetful way of thinking, which I will return to.

So the thinker's destiny consists in being a result of his thinking. The thinker consists of his thoughts. The self-deception is lying in believing, that there is a separate being, a thinker, which is of another kind than the thoughts he is thinking. It is the thinking that has produced the thinker, given him continuance in the middle of the thinking's inconstancy. The thinker is the thinking's refuge, and the thinker places himself on different planes of continuance.

Therefore it is the thinking, which produces the net in which Man becomes caught, the reality of the self-image and the world-image. This dividing and self-producing way of thinking binds, it leads to the outstretched and fragmented space of time, where opinions, theories, viewpoints and conceptions are of absolute importance. Regardless how refined or how simple the thinking is, then it can't break down itself, or reach beyond itself.

The mind, which places itself outside, and observes in fragments from a certain perspective - the one who is choosing, censoring, condemning and justifying: the thinker - all this must stop in an experience of life-feeling, spontaneity and self-forgetfulness, without any hope of reward. The seeker must cease to be. And this happens in meditation, in the passive listening presence of art of life. Peace of mind can't be produced through any act of the will. There is first peace when the will stops. Reality can't be seeked. It is only present in the moment of self-forgetfulness, where there no inner seeker is. The mind is time, and the thought can, as Kant claimed, not uncover the immeasurable.

How shall you then as a lifeartist solve your problems? Can all problems be solved at the same time, in one single stroke be cut off by the root? Firstly you must as a lifeartist discover who is the creator of the problems. If you understand the creator of them, the problems will cease spontaneous and naturally; that is: the human problems, not the technical problems.

The creator of the problems is the thinker. The problems don't exist separate from the thinker. The thinker is the creator of the one or the many problems. When the thinker places himself outside the problems, the facts, then the problems will continue, because he creates the problems, precisely by differentiating from them and concerning himself with them, by comparing the facts with earlier and by hoping and



desiring something else. He is then the facts absent by being either in the bygone or the coming time. It is an absence of something for the thinker hidden, an absence of something complicated, veiled, an absence in uncertainty. But if the thinker is the thoughts, the problems, present in passive listening, then he can – because he himself is the creator – begin to realize himself, without concerning about the problems, or the thoughts. You are then totally existential present in the Now.

In the Now there are no problems, only facts, existential conditions. A problem arises when the thinker distances himself from the Now by comparing, wishing etc. The thinker slides off from the Now's facts. And the Now's facts, seen from the thinker's perspective, the past and the future, thereby become a problem.

Far most people think that the thinker is separate from the thought – and it is precisely this, that all the images in time, all the theories, ideas, religious persuasions, political ideologies, etc., are based on. But when the thinker places himself outside the thought, the problem will continue. However if the thinker is the thought present in passive listening, then this will be a presence of something, which not is hidden. It is a presence of something obviously, something you have a clear understanding of. It is a presence of something straightforward, a presence in naturalness. And herein you will become released from the source of all problems.

Patanjali's *Yogasutras* start with the aphorism, that yoga is control of thoughts in the mind. So how can you as a lifeartist control the thought? In order to control it you must firstly know what the thought is. Secondly you must know who it is, who controls it. It is not two separate processes, but a united problem. At the same time you can see, that it requires art of life, an understanding of yourself as a communicative being. The supporting exercises, the relaxation, and the concentration exercises, will not in themselves be able to solve the problem. They must necessarily develop into meditation, the passive listening presence, the total existential presence in the Now.

The thinking is always in a duality-conflict between self-image and world-image, between my and mine, as opposition to what not is my and mine; what causes division. These oppositional conflicts will always exist if you as a lifeartist not are the separation of the thinker and the thought present in passive listening. Art of life is implying a complete understanding. It is a kind of communicative reason.

#### ***D. The necessity of the thought***

In a large number of books about meditation you are given the information, that the goal of meditation is, that the thought has to stop completely. However such a choice

of words can function deceptively, because we need to think. In order to be able to do a piece of work, you must think; in order to be able to walk home to your house, you must think; linguistically we must communicate to each other, and language is a result of the thought. So what role does the thought have in life?

The thought must be active when you are doing something. The thought is a necessity so that we can do no matter what technological work. In order to, that our actions can be clear, we must think clearly, objectively, without letting us be carried away by moods; without prejudices and preconceived opinions. It was this, the enlightenment philosophers understood by the reason. But we also know, that the thought produces human problems, fear and anxiety, and that this anxiety will hinder us in acting effectively. The question is then, whether you as a lifeartist can act without anxiety when thought-activity is required, and when it is not, be silent? Can you act with afterthought when it is necessary, and when it is not, let the thought rest? In fact it is rather simple. Can Man in that degree be so present in passive listening, that he in the awake condition will think and act when it is necessary, and remain awake whilst he acts, so that he neither falls asleep, or works pure mechanical?

It is therefore not a question about whether you have to think or not, but about how to remain awake. In order to be able to remain awake you must have this deep understanding of the thinking and its consequences: anxiety, desire, hate and loneliness. You must be completely engaged by living with what you are, but not in sheer acceptance. Because at the same time you must understand it up from the ground. And you can only understand it fully when the mind is completely awake, without that it in any way is distorted. The question about when you have to act with afterthought when it is necessary - when the thought has to function clearly, objectively, and when you have to let it rest - is coming by itself, spontaneous and naturally, in the passive listening presence. Then the thought is made transparent in presence and reality.

So the thought is dangerous in a certain direction, the direction of self-production, or of the will to power: the direction, which separates the thinker from the thought, and creates absence. Nevertheless the thought has to function logical, sensible, objectively, healthy, in another direction. This other direction the Western philosophy has made very much out of investigating, for instance the Logic of Aristotle. But they have not only neglected the dangerous direction, on the contrary they have considered it as a presumption for philosophy: that you through thinking construct philosophies; that is: self-images and world-images, perspectives and conclusions. Therewith they have lived in the mistake, that the thought begins to function logical, sensible, objective, healthy - through teaching logic.

The dangerous direction of the thought is the past's reaction, which intervenes, places the thinker outside, and produces an identity without wholeness. This lack of wholeness consists in the experience of being homeless, without belongings. To be without belongings is to lack foundation for your development, to be in the air, to be locked off from, or locked inside, without resort, hearth, seat, to be without place, without living space: the expression of anxiety itself.

Anxiety is to have your identity in an absence, in the constant becoming something. In this self-production there is no being. Anxiety is therefore anxiety of nothing, anxiety of an uncertain threat. The uncertain threat paralyses the identity, precisely because it is uncertain. The inhibition in the anxiety is lying in the paralysation. Because the identity is paralysed in the anxiety, it is suspended. The hold, the grip of the world, which the identity is, is suspended. Anxiety is therefore an experience of an identity crisis. The whole of the situation is paralysed, and the space narrows around you.

As a lifeartist you must therefore study the whole structure of the thinking, and see what place the thought has, see where it isn't a necessity, and only then you will discover, that the mind functions in a reasonable way, both when the thought isn't active, and when the thought has to be active.

So the paradox is, that in the one direction - technological, instrumentally - the thought has to function completely pure and clearly, so that you in the daily life can function, earn your living etc. - and in the other direction it produces anxiety.

The thought is in this way necessary on some levels, but when the thinking in philosophical sense projects itself as the past and the future, and produces anxiety as well as secureness, the mind is becoming absent, and the inevitable result hereof is unreality, emptiness, boredom and ennui. So in philosophical sense the thought must rest, so that the anxiety in existential sense can stop.

In the higher degree that the thought is logical, sensible, healthy, objective, unsentimental, impersonally, the more effective and capable it is. Here the enlightenment philosophers were right in their view of the reason. In the sense the thought is necessary, in that sense you must use the thought in order to be able to function in life. And still the mind must have the ability to be completely free from all kinds of distortion, so that it can find out what is true. There must be harmony between the living function in the thought and freedom from the thought.

To be the movement of time present in passive listening - the thinking, which projects itself in philosophical sense - is not an option. Choosing is a part of the same

movement from the past, to divide, to say yes and no, to accept and deny, accentuate and exclude, to remember and throw out projects, to produce self-images and world-images - the whole of the historical being of Man, the thinking's philosophical activity.

But to be this movement present in passive listening, is not itself a movement, which originates from the past. To observe neutral without the symbol of the thought, is an act in which the past has stepped aside.

When the Taoist monk is sitting and observing a tree passively without any kind of thought-activity, then it is an act, which isn't defined by the past. And passively to observe and feel the past's activity is also an act without past. To be the past present is to be one with your past, without that there is any displacement or distortions between the realizer and the realized.

The condition in which something is seen is more important than what is seen. To be the past present in this observation without evaluation is not only to act differently, but to be different. In such a presence the memory acts unhindered and effectively, because it in the presence is made transparent.

Art of life is in that degree to be present, without that it is something you have chosen and constructed. It is to have your identity in a presence, and this identity you have discovered, not constructed. There is freedom from the known, your perspective, even when the perspective acts where it necessarily must act. To have your identity in a presence is to be safe in existential sense, it is to feel at home in life, and in your relationships with the surrounding world. Existential safety is the utterance of freedom, where you fold yourself out, or are resting; where you fill out, or are allowing yourself to be filled out, without basic restlessness, or fear. Basalt seen you are in confidence. Safety is in the good, and is the safety of the good, it is trust and self-reliance in one. At the same time safety also is space, width, both physical space and spiritual space.

But usually the perspective, the known, the past, still once in a while acts even where it should not act; actually it acts constantly and causes conflict. But to be aware of this is to be in a condition of inaction concerning the active past. Freedom from your perspective, the known, is in this way truly an ethical life. It means that you have discrimination, and don't pull your perspective down over others. But it doesn't mean, that the known is deleted, but that there is introduced a completely new dimension where you are the known present in passive listening, where the known so to speak is made transparent in being and openness.

You can also say, that where the known before was characterized by personal and collective images, which worked in sequences in past and future, then the known now is characterized by universal images, which work in synchronism with the Now. It was this Karen Blixen was describing as the ancient, the original, and which she always was seeking as authenticity, autonomy, possibility, freedom and adventure. It is a return to the Now, the timeless eternity. As Rabindranath Tagore said: "The light is young, the eternal ancient light; the shadows are a brief moment's matter, they are born aged."

This act, to see and feel without dividing, choosing, ruling and controlling, is the act of love. The ethical life is this act, and all life is this act. The real life is the being where you are one with yourself, with life and love. You are in the middle of the stream of life.

Where the unreal life is characterized by, that emptiness and loss slide in between, create reflections, displacement and darkness, in relation to the Now, to the facts, to the existential conditions, then the real life is characterized by fulfilment, middle and light. And that is altogether the reason in flowering.

### *E. Self-forgetful thinking*

As mentioned there is in European philosophy a strong tradition for only reckoning with two forms of cognition: sensation and thinking. Yet there is also an opposition to this tradition. Mediaeval philosophers, and many Catholic philosophers in the present day, speak about revelation as a third cognition-form. Some of our time's existentialists speak about a kind of being-cognition, which neither is due to sensation or thinking. And finally a couple of European mystics, as for instance Plotin, Meister Eckhart and William Blake, have spoken about a spiritual realization of God and higher powers, which is reaching far beyond the areas of sensation and intellect. Such a realization the philosophers in the East always have reckoned with as the final goal of the philosophers' efforts. The true philosophical thinking is here a completely other way of thinking, not a self-producing way of thinking, but a self-forgetful way of thinking.

Life contains many problems, and especially in our time, where there is so much confusion, where each and everyone, each society, each group of people, or nation, meet, and yet are seeking secureness at the expense of others. It is therefore very important to find out, how you can think rational as the problems arise, and how you can meet each problem in a reasonable way.

In philosophy as an art of life it is not so important what you ought to think about each problem, or how your attitude ought to be facing the problem, but what means something is how you think about it. We are used to be told what we shall think, in which way we shall solve a problem, but we don't know what thinking is. In art of life it is therefore very important to find out, what rational thinking is, because the various problems, which appear, the problems we constantly meet, require rational thinking. In art of life such a rational thinking is a self-forgetful way of thinking.

There is a true solution to each problem, but it requires self-forgetful thinking, and not only a wish to solve the problem. The point for the lifeartist is not what you shall think, but how you can think self-forgetful. There can only be natural and spontaneous act, when there is self-forgetful thinking. If we don't know, how we can think self-forgetful, we don't know how to think at all. What is then self-forgetful thinking?

In my first book, **Meditation as an Art of Life**, I characterized such a thinking as rational and critical thinking, or flexible thinking. You could also simply call it deep thinking, or that to ask philosophical questions in a meditative-existential way.

That critical thinking is self-forgetful means, that the truth you seek, in this way of thinking, is beyond personal interests. But critical thinking requires much training, and you see this training both in the philosophy studies in Western Universities, as well as in the training of the monks in, for instance, Tibetan Buddhism. Often a critical attitude is connected with anger, and the training of critical thinking is based on moving from a personal painful anger, and the subjective argumentation connected herewith, to an impersonal, philosophical anger, and the objective argumentation, which is connected with this (see my article *The Hermeneutics of Suspicion* in my book *Dream Yoga*).

As a historical being Man has created the confusion in the world, the wars, the crazy chaos, but Man can't change this, unless he knows, how he can think self-forgetful concerning this problem. We can't think through the problem self-forgetful, unless we are the problem present in passive listening. But because our minds are poisoned by others' ideas, and by books, and because our minds constantly repeat what others say, we have become parrots and not thinkers.

Self-forgetful thinking is not based on personal or collective images, though it can express itself through such. Self-forgetful thinking can only take place when there is self-knowledge; that is to say: when the individual understands his position as a whole. And it is here the greatest difficulty appears. To understand something

requires intensity, a rational intensity, which is beyond the usual. But you are not used to think from the wholeness, only from special interests.

We must, in order to understand our minds, slow down the speed of our thinking – not stop it – but slow the speed down in order to be able to study it, follow it to its outer limit. A help to this is to keep philosophical diary. If you are the thoughtprocess present in passive listening, the thought is understood as it is. And in this practice you are not self-assertive, desirous after power, after a name, after position. You are what you are, simple and nobody. Then the thinking no longer is self-producing, but self-forgetful. It is made transparent in being.

Usually the thinking is a self-producing process; that is: the process where the thinking creates the reality of the self-image and the world-image, and therewith the separation of the observer and the observed. When the Ego is standing in the centre, then the whole of our life, the whole of our perspective on life - rests on the choices we make, and the desire in this process, the movement of time where we are seeking to achieve something, become something, acquire something. Self-forgetful thinking is thinking, which releases itself from time, because through time the timeless can't be grasped. The timeless is the Now, and self-forgetful thinking is thinking which is one with the Now, with the facts, with reality. That way self-forgetful thinking is not based on the personal or collective images of time, which work in sequences in past or future, but on the universal images, which work in synchronism with the Now.

The self-producing thinking is a thinking, which takes place in time, where the thinker places himself outside the Now and the facts, and compares them with earlier, and desires and wants something else. This is the unreal life, the life where you only really exist in the hope of a richer future, in the dream of a lost past, or in compensatory and consoling acts: the problem-creating source itself.

If your life shall be real, the self-producing thinking must stop. And the whole of the art of life is about bringing this thought-activity to an end. This is very important to understand, because the thought is a product of time, of the experiences of yesterday. The thought is caught in the net of time, and that which is of time, can never grasp the timeless, the life which happens fully and which is in the middle of itself.

The life which is in the middle of itself is a complete life, which is fully integrated with life, the Now which is timeless and imperishable. That which is uncomplete is impermanent and characterized by emptiness and loss - it is the life in time.

The complete life has nothing to do with a feeling of being melted together with another human being, though many are claiming this, because it is one of the few

experiences where we approximately have a feeling of self-forgetfulness. The melting together with another can be broken in pieces; it will eventually end. The integration must start in yourself, and only then the integration is imperishable. The integration is coming through a process of self-forgetful thinking, and it is the highest form of insight and reason. In this deep self-denial - in which the thought has given up itself, because it clearly has seen how dangerous it is - there falls peace over the whole of the structure of mind. It is in reality a condition of pure awareness where there flows energy and life back to the present, and opens the heart. It is a being, which opens itself in and for itself, or it is the existential openness as being.

From the openness for own and therewith also all others' being, arises a happiness, a delight, a creative emptiness, that can't be formulated with words. When it is formulated with words it is not the real.

We are ceasing being creative, when we imitate, when we as natural beings only reacts on the bases of memories. Answers from the memory are usually called thinking. But such thinking is only reactions from those preconceived conceptions, which are memory. It is only a reaction in the brain and not real thinking. There is only real thinking, when there isn't any reaction from the memory. In this awake and passionate emptiness there is creation. And when you are in this condition all stimuli and demands of life vanish.

This self-forgetful thinking, this aware and understanding presence, where you have your being with you in your experience, where the experience constitutes the whole of your being's fullness – it is this deep thought's vibrant silence, this wordless realization, this creative spontaneity, which is the richness of life.

### **3. On analysis**

In Descartes' philosophy the reason is given various functions, which he among other things explains in his small treatise *Discourse on the Method*. For instance it is the ability to analyse a subject, or a problem, so that you can reach down to its smallest, or most elementary, component parts. Therefrom you can then build the realization up, so that any sentence has its valid reasons in the precedent (one can say, that it is the reason as ability to synthesize, or the reason as discursive thinking). This constitutes Descartes' methodical doubt: the analysis leads to the elementary fact, that I exist, and on this Descartes was building a substantiated world-image. A classic example on the self-producing way of thinking.



Descartes' method might very well work on problems of technical character, but does it also work on human problems? Not in philosophy as an art of life. The thinking can analyse a problem, but it can't see the problem as a whole. This is only meditation able to. Thinking is suitable on problems of technical character, but not on human problems where it is the wholeness it is about. But consciousness, or thinking, tends towards separating and dividing all phenomena in order to analyse them, understand them. And that is the thinking's dangerous direction; that is: where the analysis becomes used in the purpose of self-production, where the separation of the observer and the observed is created.

If you take a human problem as anxiety, then philosophy doesn't speak about the content of anxiety in the individual person's life, about its results, or causes, in the life of the single person, or about how it clouds this individual person's life, makes it miserably and ugly. Philosophy asks after what anxiety *as such* is, and how it arises.

In order to discover the cause of anxiety philosophy doesn't analyse the anxiety in the individual person's life in the way that psychology does, but is seeking to clarify the concept of anxiety, the nature of anxiety, as it is everywhere. In addition to this philosophy investigates the anxiety as a whole – not the numerous psychological forms of anxiety, but the anxiety. In philosophy there is only one anxiety. Though there in the individual person's life are different causes of anxiety, developed by multifarious challenges and reactions, then anxiety still is only one in philosophical sense.

So as a lifeartist you will put into question whether you, in order to get rid of anxiety, continual must analyse the content of anxiety in order to discover the endless many causes in your own individual life. It is namely so, that if you - when you begin to analyse the content of anxiety - have to discover something true, then you must be completely and altogether free from all prejudices and historical limitary influences. Otherwise, if your conception in any way is being distorted, then this distortion increases as you continue your analysis. So in art of life it is not the problem's content that is interesting. What is interesting is the one who is seeking to solve the problem. It is the separation of the analyst and the analysed, which is the cause of the problems, when we speak about human problems.

Analysis of the content of anxiety - with the purpose of bringing the anxiety to an end - therefore doesn't bring the anxiety to an end. Because when the cause of anxiety is sought in the content of anxiety, and there is acted on the bases of what you now discover, you become entangled in an endless chain of cause and effect. You discover that the anxiety doesn't end after you have discovered the cause. Then you are seeking a new cause, act from it, whereupon you again discover that the anxiety not

has ended. Once again you can then begin to search for causes. The cause becomes effect, and the effect becomes cause. The effect, and the action, which is made on the bases of this effect, with the purpose of discovering the cause - and the following discovery of the cause, as well as the action, which now is made on the bases of this cause, becomes the next effect.

Why? Because the cause can't be found in the content of anxiety. The cause shall be found in the separation of the analyst and the analysed. You have the existential condition, the anxiety. This is the fact, it is not in itself a problem. Then the analyst places himself outside the anxiety, analyses it in order to discover the cause of it, compares with earlier and hopes and desires something else, namely to get rid of it. The analyst slides therewith off from the Now's fact. And the Now's facts, seen from the analysts' past or future, become a problem, anxiety-causing. When the analyst is seeking the cause of the anxiety by comparing with earlier, and by desiring something else, he only isolates himself further, and therewith increases the anxiety.

The mind can therefore not empty out itself for anxiety through analysis, whether it is self-analysis or professional analysis. This is because that the problem, in philosophical sense, is connected with other things. When you analyse yourself, observe yourself, layer for layer, then you judge and evaluate, you say yes and no, accept and refuse, accentuate and exclude. You say: "this is right", "that is wrong", "this I will keep", "that I will not keep". But are you, when you analyse, different from what you analyse?

The analyst places himself outside the analysed, as a creature who says: "Now I will observe the anxiety, get rid of it, or get in contact with it". But then you become a spectator, a theorist, a doubter, in relation to your own life. As a spectator you observe, improve yourself, entrench yourself, and defend yourself, in inner isolation, making a nobility out of your condition. As a theorist you can loose yourself in probabilities (as the main character in Max Frisch's novel *Homo Faber*), experiences, rash generalizations, astrology or science. As a doubter you lay a distance to all presence, all reality, by doubting it. But the problem is, that you then are outside yourself, you are yourself absent, you are lacking reality, you have the reality-loss as a way of life. And this is precisely anxiety-causing.

The analysed, the anxiety, and the analyst belong together. The anxiety is an existential condition, a fact, which exists in the Now in the form of what you are. The Now is the wholeness of the observer and the observed, but then time slides in between, creates reflections, displacement and darkness. A part of the wholeness, the observer, begins to analyse another part, the observed – which is absurd, because the observer can't be separated from the observed. It is an illusion, a self-deceit. And a

vicious circle. You are not able to be one with yourself. If you were able to be one with what you are, with the anxiety, there would be a total existential presence in the Now. And then the anxiety, the existential condition, would no longer be a problem. The problem would be dissolved in the experience of fulfilment, middle and light. The answer is in the problem, not outside it.

So the analysis includes, not only the analyst and the analysed, but also time; time in the sense, that there are so many reactions, associations of ideas and memories, which have to be analysed. But also time where many other factors arise, which will give the whole thing another direction: the comparison with earlier, and the hope and the desire after something else. And then, when you in many days and years have analysed yourself, you are still anxious. You are not one with yourself.

The analysis demands more than a little time, and when the house is standing in flames, you don't sit down and analyse, or go to the professional analyst and say: "Tell me all about myself" – you must act. The analysis is a kind of escape, laziness and ignorance. This doesn't mean, that it can't be a good idea for the neurotic to seek out a psychologist or a psychiatrist, yet after the treatment he is not finish with his anxiety.

The analysis takes time, and in the time-process arises, as mentioned, other factors, which give the whole thing another direction. If you put notice to it, then there always is coming a wave of depression when you analyse yourself, when you observe your own thoughts and feelings in order to change yourself. There always arises a sadness, which you must fight. And in order to defeat this feeling you must once again investigate yourself and so forth. Analysis is a process, which doesn't lead to liberation.

What is it you overlook in this process? What you overlook is the analyst. The analyst is your perspective on the analysed, and the desire in this perspective is the desire after achieving something, being something, acquiring something, being something else than what you are. Therefore you overlook, that the analysis becomes a means with the purpose of changing what you are to something else. What you are, the fact, the existential condition, becomes in other words a problem. You are not able to be one with yourself. This is clearly enough what happens when you analyse yourself.

In this action there always happens a self-production-process, the production of the Ego, the whole of this idea-complex, which investigates something in order to change it. And therefore there always is a duality-conflict, the Ego, which places itself as

opposed to life: a process, which leads to disappointment. Because you are not becoming released, and when you realize this frustration, the depression follows.

## 4. Dualism

There are three crucial features in Descartes' image of Man: dualism, the definition of reason, and the thought about the self-dependant human being.

As we have seen, then Descartes conceives Man as composed by two different kinds of reality, or substances: thinking things (consciousness), and outstretched things (the body). This is the mind-body dualism, which also is known from Plato and Augustine. We have also looked into Descartes' definition of reason as analysis, synthesis and rational intuition, which, just like Plato and the Rationalists, believed in reason as the ability to get insight in the Good, the Beautiful and the True. A thought, which the enlightenment philosophers and Kant were opposed to. In addition to this Descartes' cogito, *I think, therefore I am*, leads to the thought, that Man is self-dependant and can be understood from himself, not from Cosmos, as the Greek were thinking, at first nor from God and his world-order, as in the Middle Ages, or from society, as Marx was thinking, nor from nature.

The dualistic image of Man has been worked out in various ways. An ontological way, where Man is composed by two kinds of reality, two substances, mind and body. An ethical way, where Man is composed by higher and lower parts, for instance reason and feeling. And an epistemological way, where the realizing ego, the subject, and the subject of realization, the object, are divided, and of different nature.

I will not go into the discussion about the problems of mind in connection with dualism as a metaphysical theory, and the other theoretical attempts to solve them (materialism, idealism, the dual-aspect theory). My investigation is not an attempt to construct a philosophy, a new theory or conclusion. In the following I will try to investigate the problem about dualism from life in practice, and thereby perhaps find the background for how the theories arise. It is after all so, that all the theories point on certain aspects of Man, which are quite relevant, but they overlook, that any conclusion about Man, any image of Man, is in conflict with Man as a whole, and his ability to change; that is: life in practice.

### A. Opposites

In a more broad sense the concept of dualism has something to do with opposites, or doubleness; the fact that something contains contradictory properties or principles.

That there often is an inner conflict in Man is a fact, and this must not be understood as a metaphysical theory. Metaphysical theories are without importance when it is a matter of understanding who you are.

In philosophy as an art of life an investigation of dualism will be an investigation of, whether there exists a way of life without any division between living and dying, conscious and subconscious, business and social life, individual life and family life.

The divisions between nations, religions, classes, etc., originate from the contradiction-filled limitations in yourself. The question of the lifeartist is therefore, why human beings live in this way? The inner conflicts grow confusion, division and war; they develop actual insecurity, inwards as well as outwards. We see this division in so many ways – in God and Devil, in good and evil, in what you are and what you ought to be.

Why has Man always created a conflict in himself, and in the relationship with others, and consequently violence, and the hope about achieving something through violence? Man has tied himself to a way of life, which leads to war, and yet he at the same time wants peace and freedom; but it is peace and freedom exclusively as an idea, an ideology. And at the same time Man is historical limited by everything he does.

Let us try to look at how the opposites arise. There are the philosophical division in time: time as past, present and future. Time is therefore a problem you as a lifeartist must explore if you shall find a way of life in which there isn't any division. You must consider if it is time as past, present and future – the philosophical time - which is the cause of the opposites. Is the opposites caused by the known, your perspective in form of the remembered, the past, which both is history and nature, because that's what the brain contains? Or is the opposites caused because the observer places himself outside the observed? Or is it the self-centred and selfish activity, the self-producing way of thinking, which constantly works and weaves the reality of the self-image and the world-image, the subject and the object, the Ego and the other?

When you investigate this you must be aware of all these factors: time, the observer who places himself outside the observed, the Ego and its desire. And you must investigate whether all this can be combined with love, or if it is an outcome of violence.

When the Taoist monk is sitting and observing a tree, then it is not so much the tree, he is sitting and observing, but more the whole of the above-mentioned process. The first step consists in, that he is trying to achieve clarity over the fact, that when he reacts to the tree, when the tree is being evaluated from what he like and what he doesn't like, then his awareness is being divided in the observer, who places himself outside the observed. He is trying to achieve clarity over, that the observer, in relation to the surrounding world, is the reaction of the past, of the memory and of the experience: the historical limitation.

The next step consists in whether he can be the tree present in passive listening, without that there is being judged, and whether his reaction, all the reactions, can be observed without that there is being judged and intervened.

In this way the Taoist monk is wiping out the separation of the observer and the observed, both when he observes the tree, and when he observes himself. The tree is in that way a philosophical sparring partner, which helps him to a real existence, the wholeness of the observer and the observed, where he in self-forgetful way is one with the observed, the tree; where there no displacement or distortions are between himself and the tree, but where the tree fills him out, where he so to speak lives included in the life of the tree, and the whole of life, which is breathing and pulsating in him. He is then in the middle of the actual, the source of life, not outside it.

### ***B. Conflict***

One of the primary reasons why there happens a division in opposites, in doubleness, is anxiety. The stronger the anxiety, the stronger the resistance against it, and in that way a number of neurotical activities are set in action.

So you have the anxiety, and then you have the mind, which says: "There must not be anxiety!" In this way the doubleness arises. There is the observer who places himself outside the anxiety, and makes resistance against it, sucks energy and life away from the present and into condemnation, justification, comparison; the observer who analyses, theorizes, or goes to a psychoanalyst. And then there is the observed. The observed is the anxiety. The observer places himself outside this anxiety. In this way there immediately arises a conflict between the anxiety and the observer who is in progress with defeating this anxiety, in getting rid of this anxiety. In other words there is resistance, which has been produced by an inner spectator, doubter or calculator, who creates a discrepancy between the observer and the observed.

All this is the unreal life which is characterized by, that emptiness and loss slide in between, create reflections, displacement and darkness, and therewith conflict between the anxiety and the observer, who wants to get rid of this anxiety.

The anxiety is the existential condition, what you are. The problem originates from this conflict between the experience of anxiety, and the observer who thinks he is separated from the observed, and who sets himself up against the anxiety, who is seeking to defeat it, flee it, oppress it, or rein it. This division will inevitably create conflict, as it is the case between two nations with their armies and fleets and governments.

So we have the observer and the observed. And the observer says: "I must get rid of this terrible thing, I must clean it away!" The observer is in a continual fight, in a state of conflict. This has become a habit of mankind, of its tradition, its historical limitation. And some of the most difficult things are to break out of, no matter what habit, because we enjoy living in habits, in smoking or drinking-habits for instance, or sexual or psychological habits. And the same is the case with nations and governments, which say: "My country and your country", "my God and your God", "my faith and your faith". There is tradition for that we have to struggle, resist the anxiety, and in this way the conflict increases, and blows much more energy into the anxiety.

Both Hegel and Kierkegaard made in different ways this tradition part of their philosophies. In Hegel the fight between opposites was a part of a world-historical reason or thought. Hegel believed, that division and suffering work formative, that they are a natural part of the complete world-history, which also is the story of the human reason's development towards still higher levels. It is a conception of reason, which thinks that opposites can be reconciled by the way of the thought.

Also Kierkegaard was engaged in the divisions and opposites of life. But where the divisions in Hegel were natural stations on the thought's way towards higher syntheses, then a couple of fundamental opposites have, in Kierkegaard, character of fundamental conditions. According to Kierkegaard's conception, then the task is to persevere in the opposites; that is to say: to put them together in the action of existence, without neutralizing them. Among the opposites which can't be reconciled, are the opposites between the temporal and the eternal, and between good and evil.

The central in Kierkegaard's accusation against Hegel therefore directs itself against Hegel's reconciliation, called mediation (not meditation) of implaceable opposites. You can in that way say, that Kierkegaard is more pessimistic, or nihilistic, than Hegel. By the way then Kierkegaard believes that Hegel is overlooking the individual

human being's existential problems. This implacability is also applying for the Postmodernists, who see the world as chaos, as fragmented.

Marxists and existence-philosophers are common in understanding the drama of the human life as a play between alienation and freedom, and they understand the fundamental in the two concepts in the same way: alienation is division between what Man is being made into, and what he actual is. Freedom is this state's neutralization through a human achievement. But here the resemblance also stops. The actions - through which the alienation arises, and is maintained and abolished - is in Marxists collective, in existentialists individual.

Another difference is the attitude to the opposites of existence; that is: suffering, division and unhappiness. In Marxists they have their foundation in social conditions, primarily the production. They can be neutralized once and for all by changing the way of production. But this will happen by itself through history's natural development between opposites. In the existentialists they have their root in the individual's wrong attitude to himself.

Finally they are interested in different parts of the human life. The existentialists talk about the meaning of existence, about guilt, anxiety and death. This has the Marxists allmost nothing to say about. Just like that the existentialists allmost nothing have to say about political and social problems.

The question is whether you can move from one opposition to the other? Can you change what you are to something else, to something you ought to be? Can disharmony be transformed into harmony? Is conflict necessary? Is conflict the natural order of things, is war everything's father, as Heraclitus said? Both Hegel and Marx are claiming this. But if you accepted this, you had to accept everything the society stands for: wars, self-assertive competition, an aggressive way of life – all the violence of Man, both inside and outside his so-called holy places. Such an acceptance we have seen in the totalitarian regimes of both Nazism and Communism. We also see it in our time's Consumer Capitalism, where the destruction not is coming from outside, but from within. Is this natural? Will it lead to any kind of unity?

Would it not be better to investigate these two facts – the conflict, with all its struggles inwards and outwards, and the mind, which requires order, harmony, peace, beauty and love?

### *C. On choosing*



Also existentialism can be used to justify a political ideology. The act-oriented ideas of existentialism match as hand in glove with a capitalistic-liberalistic ideology about being the architect of your own fortune, the right for each individual person to seek his own idea of happiness – the philosophical point of view, that there isn't any objective value-goals for the human life, only individual subjective choices. That is: value-subjectivism. This is a whole tendency of time within school, folk high school and continuing education, where you focus on so-called "personal development" and "Personality-developing courses" in connection with demands about lifelong learning, continuing education, readiness for change and flexibility; precisely what management theory and coaching are all about (see my article *The Dark side of Coaching* in my book *Dream Yoga*).

For instance they use Sartre's scriptures as a request for uninhibited and egoistic self-expression, where the individual person is letting his choices decide everything. The existentialists say that Man has the freedom, through his choices, to be the creative power in his own history. As management theorists and coaches say: "It is not facts, but the best story, which wins!"

In the existentialists the choice gives reasons for all meaning, but can't in itself be given reasons for in anything. The viewpoint is called decisionism, because values at base are founded on a choice, or a decision.

The ideology is in that way extremely ingenious, because it precisely is based on an assertion about, that you are free to, yourself, to create your happiness.

Ideologies have always been destructive for Man. They are a psychic disease. Where the destruction in the great totalitarian ideologies obvious comes from outside, then the destruction in Consumer Capitalism comes from the inside. It is namely so, that the demand about lifelong learning, continuing education, readiness for change and flexibility, have led to, that human being's freedom, contrary to the assertion, becomes taken away from them. It is for instance impossible in the society today to follow a feeling about having a call in life. Unless what you dream about, matches into society, you will be forced to change, to find a new project. You shall be able to become a success and a winner, and this you can only become within the society's frames and ideals.

And the coercion is there. In order to be able to have a job today, you have to go on personality-developing courses, which all are based on management theory, coaching and psychotherapy, frightening often mixed with New Age religiousness, for instance NLP. And it all is more or less governmental accepted as valid curriculum in all educations (management theory seems directly to have been imported into the state as

ideological weapon). Frightening because we in other areas are so much concerned about separating religion and state.

Personality-developing courses are about that you should be able to adapt the company's development. And this change-demand is not only applying to the working-life. You shall also be able to change your private life, your personality, your thoughts and feelings, so that they fit into the company's ideals. And all of it happens more or less in a context of treatment. Personality-developing courses are virtually the same as being forced in psychotherapeutic treatment – psychotherapy is namely an integrated part of the whole ideology.

If you are unemployed the coercion is much more obvious. Here the, often hopeless uninducted, coaches and psychotherapists, are in clover days; an abuse of the intelligence of those of the unemployed, who have a much higher education.

The personality becomes in these courses forced to remodel itself to a persona (a mask), an eternally change of role, because when the role begins to stiffen in relation to the society's demands, it becomes insignificant and uninteresting. New is good, as long as this new follows the society's development. What before characterized the personality's relation to the world, was a call. Now this relation becomes forced to be something else, namely a project, which is thrown out, quickly is being carried out and dropped for the benefit of a new project, when this in relation to the society becomes necessary.

The whole thing reminds about the re-education institutions in China; a clear Stalinistic feature, which we only have seen the beginning of.

An important question therefore becomes, whether Man actually has such a large-scale of freedom to, through his choices, to give everything an arbitrary meaning. In any choice there rules a dualism, a doubleness between two alternatives. And what is the scale when we choose between different possibilities? Is there no rationality or irrationality behind the choosing? Why do we altogether choose?

Exactly like Descartes, then the existentialists begin with a presupposition they don't investigate further, namely the thinking. Why should it be necessary to choose, when you see a thing quite clear; that is: when the mind is characterized by reason? Is it not the confused, uncertain, obscure mind, which chooses - the mind, which is characterized by irrationality? (I don't speak about choosing physical between red and black, but about philosophical choosing between human possibilities, values and ideals). Why should you choose, unless you were confused?

If you see a thing very clear, without distortions, is there then any use of choosing? There are no alternatives; alternatives only exist when you shall choose between two physical roads – you can walk the one road or the other. But alternatives exist as well in the mind, which is confused and irrational; therefore it is in discord with itself, and its actions are violent. Shakespeare's play Hamlet is an illustration of such a mind. It is the mind, which practises violence, which says that it wants to live peacefully, but when it, as nature, reacts to challenges, then it practises violence (physical or psychological). But when you quite clearly are seeing everything violence means, from the most raw, to the most refined, forms of violence, then you are free from violence. And that is the culmination of reason.

In order to be able to see clear, you must be present in passive listening, you must listen, not only to the outer things, but also to the inner movement of life, the inner movement, which is desires, motives, worries, fear-conceptions, sorrows. To listen passively without choosing is to be aware of the colour in which someone is clothed, without saying: "I like it" or "I don't like it", but only observing it neutral as in a mirror. And it is, when you are sitting in the bus, to feel your movement of thought, deeply and incisively, without seeking to achieve anything with it, without justifying and condemning, without choosing.

The thought is never completely free because it has its roots in the past, which again is based on both personal and collective images. The thought is therefore never new. Freedom of choice is therefore impossible, because it is the thinking, which is active when you are choosing. The freedom, which exists when you make true discoveries, is not freedom to do what you want, or freedom to unfold, to become something, choosing, or freedom to think what you want, or act after your wishes.

Does a mind, which is free, choose? A choice is implying that there is made a decision between the one and the other; but what need is there actually for a choice? A choice is implying that there is made a decision, and a decision, which is taken on the background of a choice, is an act of the will. This arises the question about, who the person is, who shows his will to the one or the other?

If your existence is real and you are one with yourself, your possibilities, feelings, sensations and actions - that is to say: if you fully and completely exist and the important is present and real – what need is there then at all for making a decision on the background of a choice?

Any decision, which is defined by a choice, therefore exposes a person, who is confused, who is unreal and absent, who places himself outside and creates reflections, displacements and darkness. A person who is in the middle of his own

existence, experiences on the contrary a presence of something obvious, something the individual has a clear understanding of. Such a person's mind doesn't choose, there is only the power of action and decisiveness. The lack of clarity, and therefore reason, arises when there is a division between the observer and the observed, and there slide emptiness and loss in between.

If you understand the consequences of a choice, the consequences of deciding something on the background of a choice, then that to choose becomes an insignificant matter. A person for instance says: "I am confused; I have been raised as a Christian, or as a Moslem, here in the world; I am not pleased, and I therefore convert to another religious organization which I have chosen". If this person studied a certain religious culture's whole historical limited background, he would see that the whole thing is propaganda, a couple of assumptions of faith-conceptions, which all have arisen on the background of anxiety, of desire after philosophical safety. Because in himself he believes, that he doesn't suffice, he feels miserable, unhappy, insecure, he puts his hope to some images of life, which can make him safe and wise. When therefore the particular religion he belongs to doesn't suffice, then he converts to another, in the hope of finding this safety there. But it is the same thing under another name.

When the mind is aware of this, then it understands the whole situation, and it isn't in need of choosing. Then the whole reaction - which is an action on the bases of the will to power, the will to control and form truth, happiness and reality - altogether ceases. The will to power is implying resistance, and is a kind of isolation. A mind, which is isolated, is not free.

I mean, that the concept of free will and free choice is unfortunate concepts. In my understanding the will is the will to power, and belongs to the Ego, which makes its choices on the background of the past, and which therefore is determined by both its personal and collective history. Therefore the Ego always strives towards being something else than what it is, it imitates others, are a slave of others ideas and ideals, and its actions are characterized by irresoluteness and doubt. A more fortunate concept would in my understanding be the freedom that is lying in the existential concept of being yourself; that is: where you live in accordance with your own essence and thereby achieve authenticity, autonomy, decisiveness and power of action. I will therefore use the concepts of freedom of action, and freedom of decisiveness.

Where shall you then start as a lifeartist? You must start with freedom. When there is freedom there is love, devotion, where you in presence give yourself away with the whole of your identity, where you are self-forgetful engaged in the situation. This freedom and love will show you when you shall co-operate and when you shall not

co-operate. It is not a choice you make, because the choice is a product of confusion and irrationality. Love and freedom is therefore an expression of clarity and reason.

In the self-forgetful unity of experience and being, of openness for own, and therewith also everything else's being, there are values present which in themselves are good: values such as love, wisdom, meaning, truth, freedom, beauty; something, which the Danish life-philosopher Løgstrup, called sovereign, or spontaneous, life-expressions.

These values are an objective criterion of quality of life, an aspect of Man as a communicative being. They can in other words not be chosen, but are coming to you when you are open for it, when you are in a condition of creative emptiness. But it is neither an expression of absolutism or relativism, which both are theories.

In philosophy as an art of life truth can't be found in any images of life, whether they are relativistic or absolutistic. Truth is something, which comes in a philosophical life-practice.

#### *D. Idea and action*

Also between idea and action there rules a dualism, a doubleness. In order to illustrate it, then let us once again look at the concept of violence. Constantly Man is trying to become non-violent. In that way there rules a discord between what you are, that is to say violent, and what you ought to be, that is to say non-violent. This is the actual core in the waste of energy, which happens, and where the vitality and the life-desire are reduced, are crumbling and dissolving.

As long as the doubleness between what you are and what you ought to be, endures – Man who is trying to become something else, who strives after achieving and acquiring what he thinks he ought to be – there is conflict, and in that way a waste of energy. As long as there is conflict between opposites, Man hasn't energy, vitality, and passion, enough to change.

Here there is a radical difference between having some images of life, and having a philosophical life-practice. To have some images of life will say to have some ideals. As a lifeartist however, you will ask why you altogether need the opposite, the ideal? The ideal is not real, it has no meaning; it only leads to various forms of hypocrisy: to use violence and pretend not to do it. Or if you say you are an idealist and one day will become a peaceful human being, then it is a loose assertion, an excuse, because it takes many years before you are without violence – yes, it can be, that it never happens. Meanwhile you are a hypocrite and still full of violence.

If you therefore, not as an abstraction, but actually, can push all ideals aside and only concern yourself with the facts – which is violence – there happens no waste of energy. As long as Man lives in the corridor of opposites, he will inevitably waste his energy, and in that way he can't change. You must therefore as a lifeartist sweep all ideals, all opposites, aside.

The person, who only has some images of life, but no philosophical life-practice, seeks to build bridge between the Ego and something else; the Ego, with all its ambitions, initiatives and contradictions, and the other, which either is the ideal, the formula, the concept, or the society. Constantly Man seeks to build bridge between what you are and what you ought to be. And precisely herein there is contradiction and conflict, and therefore are all energy, vitality, and urge to live, wasted.

But can your mind stop dividing - by placing itself outside, and being absent in ideals - and instead be yourself present, remain what you are? Is there at all any conflict when you are yourself present, and understand what you are?

When there are some images of life, some ideas from which the action is defined in philosophical sense, you have the inner calculator, which creates a discrepancy between the action and its occasion. You become decentralized, beside yourself, away from the actual. You become something else than your activity, or rather: your activity becomes something else than you yourself. Therefore there is discord. This discord between idea and action is one of the most confusing factors in life.

Is it possible to act without that there is formed conceptions; that is to say: so that there is seen, and acted, at the same time? That is: an action where you have your being with you in your experience, where you are what you are in progress with, where there are no dreamer, spectator, doubter, within you - where you are your activity? Because when we are facing a big physical danger, a crisis, then we actually are doing it: acting immediately. Is it possible to live in such a way?

So: is it possible clearly seeing the danger of for instance Nationalism, or of religious faith-conceptions, which set humans up against humans, so only that to see it, is equivalent with an understanding of, that it is false; and where it isn't a question of believing that it is false? Belief has nothing at all to do with seeing; on the contrary, belief prevents you in seeing. If you have a formula, a tradition, or a prejudice – you are for instance Christian, Moslem, Jew or Communist etc. – then this division itself creates hostility, hatred, violence, and you are unable to see reality. As soon as there happens a division in idea and action, there must be conflict; and this conflict is neurotic, insane.

Can the mind therefore see directly and self-forgetful so that it acts in the very moment it is seeing? It requires passive listening, it requires awareness, a love and sensibility of the mind. But at the same time you will experience something peculiar: you will experience - when you are completely clear in your innermost - that what is happening, always is correct. When there is this inner clarity the correct is not that, which is agreeing with your wishes, but with what you are, and with the fact, regardless what it is. This is what reason is all about.

### *E. Contradictions*

It is fairly obvious, that there is conflict in the world because there is ruling discord in ourselves; a discord which shows itself outwards in society, in the Ego's, and the other's, activity. Our images of life are filled with contradictions; that is to say: the Ego with its competitive lust and anxiety, and the other, which can be the ideal about living without conflict. Herein there are a lot of mutual contradictory wishes, goals and initiatives. If we are aware of this tension, we can in ourselves see how mutual contradictory desires, opposite assumptions, ideas and goals, move in separately directions.

It is this doubleness, these opposite wishes, in addition with anxiety and the inner contradiction, that develop conflict. This is fairly clear, if we are ourselves present. The pattern is repeated again and again, not only in the everyday life, but also in the political and religious life – between heaven and hell, love and hate.

Our life consists of disorder, which means contradictions: you say something, do something else, and what you think is neither what you say or what you do. Our existence is divided in fragments, and in this division we try to find an order of some kind, a self-image or a world-image. We think that this order is caused by discipline and control. But a mind which is controlled, which is disciplined in the meaning adapted to a pattern - whether this pattern is defined by yourself or by society, or by a certain culture - such a mind is not a free mind, it is a distorted mind. Therefore you must, as a lifeartist, investigate this question about disorder. And when you understand what disorder is, how it arises, then there is order – which is something living.

What is then the actual core in disorder? Our existence is disorderly, split, we are absent, place ourselves outside, and are classifying life in different rooms, using specific perspectives; we are not a complete nature. The core in disorder is the inner contradiction, and where there is such a contradiction in ourselves, there must be the will to power, and therefore disorder. You can easy see, how disorderly your own life

is, how the multifold desires, purposes, conclusions, intensions, are in contradiction and tear up each other: your actions are violent, and you want to live peacefully; you are self-assertive, desirous, you compete with others, and you say that you are compassionated; you are self-centred, egoistic, historical limited, and talk about an all-embracing brotherhood. We pretend something, and there is in this way an unbelievable hypocrisy.

To live in self-contradiction is to live in discord and despair. In the Ego's own structure there is contradiction. The Ego consists of many creatures with different masks and perspectives, and they are all in opposition to each other. The Ego's whole build-up is a result of mutual contradictory interests and values, and of many widely different wills to power on multifold levels of its nature; and these wills to power grow separately their own opposition.

The Ego is a net of complicated wishes, and each wish has its own motivating power, and its own goals, and these are often opposed to other hopes and goals. These masks and perspectives are used depending on when the situations, and sense impressions, are stimulating to this; and therefore the contradictions are inevitable within the Ego's structure. Montaigne expresses it in that way that we all are composite of patches, and so shapeless and confused, that each patch every moment plays its own game.

These contradictions in ourselves grow illusions and pain, and in order to get away from them we take our refuge to a line of self-deceits, which only increase the conflicts and misery. And when the inner contradiction, because of crises, or violent challenges, becomes unbearable, we conscious or unconscious seek to escape through insanity, or through death; or we dedicate our life to an idea, to a group, to a country, to some activity, which completely can swallow up ourselves; or we subject ourselves to the organized religion with its dogmas and rituals. In that way this split in ourselves either leads to self-construction, or to self-destruction, insanity.

When we try to be something else than what we are, we cultivate the contradiction. The anxiety of what you are grows the illusion about its opposition, and by striving after the opposite we hope to avoid anxiety, but this becoming something has no being, it is therefore the anxiety of nothing. Synthesis is not, as Hegel claimed, the cultivation of an opposition; there arises no synthesis through resistance, because all opposites contain the seed to their own opposites.

The contradiction in ourselves leads to many forms of physical and psychological reactions; they can be gentle or violent, respectable or dangerous; but the consistent self-image and world-image only confuse and veil the contradiction. The one-sided



striving of a single desire, or of a special interest, leads to self-embracing resistance. The contradiction inwards creates conflict outwards, and the conflict is a sign of the contradiction. Only when there is understanding of the nature of the will to power, there is freedom from the contradiction. This means, that you as a lifeartist also must understand yourself as a desirous being.

### **III**

## **The lifeartist as a desirous being**

Reason has, from ancient time, been stressed as the most essential and important in Man. But modern points of views have tried to turn it upside down. Because maybe all reason only are rationalizations of desires and subconscious impulses.

The sharpest critic of the tradition is probably Nietzsche. He couldn't become tired of sneering at reason and all the illusions about the Good, the True and the Beautiful, which the philosophers, with the reason, had created. While the European view of human nature through millenniums had claimed reason as the hallmark of Man, Nietzsche turns the image upside down. He wants to convert all values.

And after Nietzsche Freud has been busy following the attack on reason up. Freud believes, as Nietzsche, that human reason is a weak and secondary part of the human nature. It is desires, and subconscious motives of different kind, that determine our actions, and reason is only seat for rationalizations and illusions.

Desires have, as Nietzsche made aware, to do with the striving of Man, to do with the will to power and becoming; something, which more is characterized by a Dionysian desire, than by an Apollonian rationality. Desires also have, as Freud made aware, to do with the question of the conscious in relation to the subconscious, including the question about the meaning of dreams. But desires have also with passion to do, the deep and incisive feeling of something, where you don't seek to achieve anything, because the feeling in itself contains fulfilment. A feeling, which not is possible without that there also is reason, clarity and awareness included in it.

### **1. The will to power**

#### ***A. What is desire?***

In his famous Benares talk on the existential conditions, growing conditions and growth levels of Man, Buddha, like a doctor, made the diagnosis: "The nature of the illness and its cause", after which he gave guidance in how it can be healed and the medicine hereto. Shortly said "the illness" is suffering, and the suffering's cause is, that Man clings to impermanent and temporal things. The many desires, that can't be fulfilled, give suffering and sorrow. The medicine consists in teaching Man how to rise over the changeable world with all its desires and transient joys. In Buddha's teaching there is in that way spoken about The Four Holy Truths: 1) Suffering. 2) The suffering's cause. 3) Suffering can be brought to an end, and this happens through 4) The Path, namely The Eightfold Path, where correct meditation, or correct self-communing, is the last step on the path to full enlightenment.

Desire in Buddhist context has with the symbol and its sense impression to do. Any sense impression comes with a symbol, either from within or from outside. That the symbol also can arrive from outside is due to that the object-field is a projected world-image, which is made up by symbols: the collective images of time.

The desire is a feeling, which you seek satisfied. If the symbol and its sense impression not are present, there is no desire. The symbol can be an image, a person, a word, a name, a god-image, an idea, which is affecting you in one or the other direction. This makes you feel, that you like it or dislike it. If the sense impression is lustful, you wish to achieve, to own, to hold on to its symbol, so that this lust can continue.

Now and then you change - according to the strength of the desire - the image, the god, the object. You are for instance fed up with one kind of lust, and therefore you seek a new influence, a new idea, a new symbol. You reject the old sense impression and adopt a new, with new words, new meanings, new experiences. You defend yourself against the old, and surrender to the new, which you consider as being superior, nobler and more satisfying. In that way there is in the desire both resistance and being evasive, which is implying temptation; and naturally, when you evade from a certain symbol of desire, there is always an anxiety present, the anxiety of becoming disappointed.

If you as a lifeartist observe the whole process of desire within yourself, you see, that there always is an object, which your mind is directed towards. What you wish is to become more affected by the object, and this process is implying resistance, temptation and discipline. The mind becomes the mechanical instrument for a process in which there is included knowledge, sense impression, conflict and desire. In this process there is created a self-image, an inner calculator, around which all desire, all striving, all forms of self-assertion turns. This inner calculator is the Ego.

The question for the lifeartist is whether you can neutralize this inner calculator – not the inner center for a certain desire, a certain lust or longing, but the whole structure of the desire, of longings and of hopes, which always bring along the anxiety of becoming disappointed. The more disappointed you are, the more you strengthen the Ego. The Ego is the one who says: "It is no use with me!"; or: "Wonderful me!" Both the denial, and the confirmation of the Ego, continues the Ego-process.

As long as there is hope and longing it is always on the background of anxiety, and the anxiety strengthens the inner calculator. In philosophy as an art of life it is in the inner calculator the only revolution can take place, not on the surface, which only diverts the awareness from the actual.

Philosophical seen it is therefore not interesting for the lifeartist to know who you are in a certain conflict, to know the peripheral conflicts in your nature; their content. What you want to know is why there altogether is conflict. When you ask yourself this question, you see a fundamental problem, which nothing has to do with the peripheral conflicts and their solutions. It is this central problem, which is important. And what you see is, that the actual nature of the desire, if not fully understood, inevitably must lead to conflict.

There is always contradiction in the desire. You desire contradictory things – which doesn't mean, that you must destroy the desire, oppress, tame or sublimite it – you must quite simple see that the desire itself is a contradiction. It is not the things you desire, but the nature of the desire itself, which is a contradiction. And you must understand the nature of the desire before you can understand the conflict. With ourselves we are in a condition of contradiction, and this condition is created by the desire – this, that we strive after lust, and try to avoid pain.

We then see, that the desire is the root of all contradiction – to wish something on one plane of your nature, and not to wish it on another – a double-activity. We don't strain when we do something lustful, but lust brings along pain, and then we struggle in order to avoid the pain; and this is once again a waste of energy, which reduces our urge to live and our vitality.

We have a couple of organical, and therefore nature-determined, wishes. But these wishes are formed by, and are expanding, due to the philosophical desire, and it is this desire we will speak about in the following.

The philosophical desire corresponds to that, which Nietzsche calls the will to power. In accordance with Nietzsche reality is in its nature dynamic. It is power. The

primitive force, which can be retrieved in all reality, Nietzsche calls the will to power. Power is in Nietzsche an expression of increase. The will to power is therefore a power, which discharges itself in the striving towards something more. It is, in accordance with Nietzsche, a creative power, which seeks to form, upgrade, absorb, overcome, restrain, remould etc. The will to power is a life-principle and the basic power in Man. According to Nietzsche.

But precisely like Descartes and the existentialists, Nietzsche begins with a presumption he doesn't investigate further, namely the thinking. The will to power is entirely an expression of the philosophical desire in the thinking, not an expression of reality or life itself. It is an expression of the thinking's desire after controlling truth, happiness and reality. It is therefore I call it a philosophical desire. It is not enough to designate it as a psychological desire.

But rather than being the power in reality or life itself, it is perhaps rather what could be determined as the power of unreality and lifelessness. The power in reality or life itself, and which only come to expression in the creative emptiness, is determined by the concept of passion, which I will return to.

Concentration is the nature of the will to power, and it is the thinking, which concentrates itself. Something is accentuated by the mind, is being brought in focus, something else is excluded, steps in the background. Concentration is a choice. What you concentrate on, is accentuated by the expense of something else. It is a kind of isolation and exclusiveness, reserve.

The enterprising concentrates because he wishes to accumulate wealth or power, and when another concentrates himself in misunderstood meditation-exercises, it is also because he strives after achieving something, after a reward. What they both pursue is success which can give them self-confidence and a feeling of safety.

The will to power has its origin in the thinking; the will to power has created our mind on the background of one or the other image of life, so that you have the observer, who is standing outside the observed. You can't just choose to stop concentrating, because the choice is itself a result of concentration. In the supporting exercises concentration exercises are therefore combined with relaxation exercises. In that way the union of concentration and relaxation by itself develops into meditation.

We have seen that the images in time, both the personal and collective images (therefore the whole of mankind's storeroom of belief and knowledge) are the common human structure of consciousness, the recognition-processes which form the inner calculator, the Ego. And as long as we don't understand the process of the will

to power, where it works from our belief and knowledge, there will necessarily rule quarrel, conflict, sorrow, and humans will be turned against humans – and this is after all what we every day are witnesses to.

If you therefore as a lifeartist realize - that is to say: if you are enough aware - that this process forms yourself from a belief, as an expression of the desire for inner safety, then your problem isn't that you should believe this or that, but that you should disentangle yourself from the desire after safety. Can the mind then disentangle from the wish for safety? This is the problem, and not what you should believe, or how much you should believe. That would only be an expression of the urge for philosophical safety; that is: being convinced about something, when you don't have any philosophical life-teaching and practice, and everything else in world is uncertain.

To your knowledge is also connected a process which looks like the process of the will to power. We put knowledge instead of belief. "I know, I have had an experience, it can't be disproved; it is an experience, I completely trust it". In all these words your knowledge comes to expression. But if you go behind your knowledge, investigate it, observe it with greater insight and more carefully, you see, that the assertion itself - that you know something - only is one more wall, which separates the observer from the observed. Behind this wall you seek refuge, comfort and safety. Therefore, the more knowledge a mind is burdened with, the more difficult it becomes to understand.

As long as there is the Ego, which experiences, and which remembers the experience, then truth, or reality, is not there. Truth is not something which can be remembered, stored, be written down and then introduced. That which is accumulated is not truth.

The desire after experience produces the Ego, the observer, the one who experiences, the one who accumulates and remembers. The will to power leads to, that the observer distances himself from the observed, and that the thinker places himself outside the thought. And this is unreality, falsehood. You are absent from the surroundings, and absent from your thoughts, in the sense that you are on a distance from them, they have so to speak moved outside you, where you relate theorizing, timorous, or agonized to them.

The desire after becoming something, after experience, to be something more or less, divides the observer from the observed, and this was Nietzsche overlooking. But to be the paths of the desire present in passive listening, is self-knowledge, and self-knowledge is the beginning of freedom.

### ***B. Striving***

Is there not in us all a striving after living on the bases of some specific images of life, a specific scale, in compliance with a pattern; an incessantly attempt on assimilation to a pattern, an incessantly striving after becoming something, either in another's eyes or in our own eyes? Is there not in us all a wish about assimilation after a pattern, an image of life? And when you can't live up to this pattern there is contradiction.

Why does the Ego - also when the mind either is in excitement or tormented by despair - cling to different forms of outer and inner satisfaction, to different forms of striving, which inevitably develop disappointment, bitterness, hate, anger?

The hunger after doing something positive, opposite the negative, makes us strive after being something else; in this struggle we feel, that we are alive, that there is a purpose with our life, that we gradually can remove the causes of the conflict and the sorrow. We feel, that if we no longer were active, we would be nothing, be lost, our lives would be completely without meaning. Therefore we continue, and that will say: we continue the divisions, the conflicts, the confusions and the opposites. But in this process we at the same time feel, that there is something more which we all the time loose, that there exists something, which is quite different, something, which is above and beyond all this distress and misery. This feeling is the existential guilt, the guilt over the unlive life. In this way a permanent struggle is going on inside us.

The more emphasis, which is being put on the outer greatness, the greater is the inner guilt over unlive life. But freedom from this guilt is not asceticism. The cause of this inner emptiness is the desire after becoming something; and no matter what you do, then this emptiness can never be filled out. You can escape from it, whether it happens in a clumsy way, or in a more cunning way; but you can't move further away from it than from your own shadow. You perhaps don't want to look into this emptiness, but it is there nevertheless. Neither those ornament things can give you, nor the suit of penance, which the soul can dress in, can conceal this inner poverty.

Striving means a struggle of changing what you are to something else, to something you ought to be, or ought to become. It will in other words say, that we all the time struggle to avoid facing what we are, or we seek to escape from what we are, or to transform or limit it. But the human being, who truly is satisfied, is a human being, who understands what he is, and is putting the right importance in it. This is the true satisfaction: the one who doesn't worry about the number of possessions, but about understanding what he is, when he is himself present in passive listening, not when he seeks to remodel, control, or change it through the will to power.

So we see that our striving is a combat, or a struggle, in order to transform what you are to something you wish to be. I speak exclusively about the philosophical struggle, where you seek to produce yourself, the struggle of meaning, not about the struggle, which has to be led with a physical problem, as for instance an engineering project, or a discovery, or a change, which is of purely technical kind. I only talk about the philosophical struggle, which always overshadow the technical. You can with the utmost care - as you draw advantage of the limitless knowledge which science has granted us - build a wonderful society. But as long as you don't understand those philosophical sticking points, the philosophical struggle which is going on - as long as these philosophical overtones and streams not are being solved - the structure of society must, how wonderful and solid it might be, necessarily be crushed, in the way it, through history, again and again has happened.

From where does that will to power originate, which leads to the philosophical struggle? We saw, that the desire in Buddhist philosophy has with the symbol and its sense impression to do; that is: Man as history and nature. Perception, the relationship between humans, sensation, demands, wishes and identification - causes desire. The origin of desire is sensation, from the lowest to the highest forms. The more you require to be satisfied sensuous, the more materialism and worldliness, which seeks continuation in the world beyond. The Buddhists also say, that in spite of the fact, that all existence is sensation, you must not become a slave of this, identify yourself with it, but only understand it and in that way free the mind by raising it to pure awareness, to its own Buddha-nature.

You can say, that there is three main forms of desire: sensuality, worldliness and personal immortality: 1) Sensuality is the satisfaction of the senses. 2) Worldliness is the desire after progress and wealth. 3) Personal immortality is the personal power and fame.

This painful conflict between good and evil, hope and fear, love and hate, the observer and the observed, has arisen from our striving after achieving something, acquiring something, becoming something. And this striving gives itself expression in sensuality, in worldliness, or in aspiration after personal fame and immortality. So we create the conflict through our aspiration.

Through outer stimulation Man is reduced to a sense impression. There are several different forms of stimulation, and the importance they get corresponds closely to the person's conditions, to his images of life. But in one respect all stimulations look like each other: they are expressions of the desire after escaping from what you are, from

the daily routine, from a human relationship which no longer is alive, and from knowledge, which always loses its freshness.

To break with this requires extremely high understanding of everything the symbols and their sense impressions are implying; the symbols and their sense impressions, which are striving. We wish so many things, which often are mutual contradictory. We are so many contradictory masks and perspectives; we take on a mask when it suits us, and carry another when that is more worthwhile, when it is more lustful. It is this condition of contradiction, which develops the lie.

We are greedy, full of sentimentality and emotions, which both can be used to one thing, and the other: to destroy, to massacre, or to gather around some foolish purpose, which is rooted in ignorance about ourselves. And under those circumstances there can't rule neither reason or love. You can only learn to know love when all this have ended, have been brought to cessation, when you don't seek to possess, achieve or acquire, when you no longer is emotional or sentimental, because you worship a symbol and its sense impression. Only then you can be absorbed, and self-forgetful open for the new.

### *C. The will*

According to Nietzsche the will to power is the basic power of all life. He therefore thought about a special meaning of the word will. Normally the will is understood as Man's ability to bring a more or less reasonable decision out in life. And ahead of the will's effort goes the consideration. But Nietzsche's will to power is neither connected to reasonable considerations, nor consciousness. On the contrary it describes life's fundamental character of striving towards increase.

Will is normally a psychological concept. It describes an ability, or an aspect, of the human consciousness. In contrast to this Nietzsche is seeing it as an ontological, or metaphysical, concept. The fundamental idea is, that if we shall understand the multifold expressions of all life, then we must interpret them as outcome of will to power. This idea led to Nietzsche's revaluation of all values. The eternal values are only a slavemoral without reality and truth. They are illusions or fictions. Therefore he dethroned reason as the ability to insight in the eternal values. Body, desires, and nature, are the central in Man, not reason. God is dead and the world is chaotic, empty, absurd; something, which Man himself must control. Man must himself create his values: a master moral created by the so-called superman.

In the philosophical life-teaching, which I seek to present here, the will is neither something psychological, nor something ontological. It is something philosophical



understood as an aspect of thinking. Neither thinking, nor consciousness, are therefore understood psychological as the contents of specific experiences and thoughts, but philosophical. This means, that the thinking is understood as the construction of meaning, the construction of the reality of the self-image and the world-image, the consciousness as a perspective of oneself and the world. In order fully to understand this, you must understand, that the thinking's structure both consists of personal, collective and universal images in the movement of time.

Your thinking takes place in time. Your thoughts are words and images, which work in this stream. It is The River of Heraclitus, it is the River of Time.

As the Indian philosophy claims, then this stream not only contains your personal history, it also contains a collective and universal history – together a history, which consists of images. These images are form-formations of energy, creative up-tensions, a kind of matter, though on a highly abstract plane. These images exist in other words in the actual movement of the matter, and therefore not only in your mental activity, but also outside you in nature. So your thinking rises from an endless deep of images, which flow in the actual movement of nature.

The Indian philosophy claims, that the movement of time in itself is a negationpower. Time is one great negation of the Now's unmoved being, which is the unmanifested, the actual source: the Good, the True and the Beautiful (God, Brahman). The negationpower is in that way the power behind the world's manifestation. This manifestation, the Indian philosophy claims, has arisen on the background of a mighty universal vision, which originates from past universes. In this way the future arises, and an outgoing creative movement; a movement, which can be compared with what they within science call The Big Bang. In the outgoing movement the great vision becomes, because of the negationpower, shattered in many images, which now become a kind of memories about the great vision. In this way the past arises, and a longing back towards the origin, the unmanifested. And then a destructive backmovement is created.

In that way the movement of time consists of two universal movements, which we could call the outgoing movement and the backmovement: future and past, creation and destruction. These two movements are reflected throughout the universe in a multiplicity of different lifecycles; they are Samsara's wheel of up-cycles which are followed by down-cycles and vice versa (for instance life and death, success and fiasco, joy and sorrow) – all this which is lying behind the law of karma and rebirth. This universe is for instance considered to be a reincarnation of a past universe, in the same way as a human is being considered to be a reincarnation of a past existence.

So the images in the movement of time are shattered reflections of the great vision of the universe, and are background for the manifestation of the holy scriptures of India, the Vedas, which are claimed to have been "heard" by wise men (the so-called Seers) in the dawn of time, and by word of mouth delivered over oceans of time. They are shadows, dreams, masks, mirrors, fables, fairy-tales, fictions. The Vedas therefore both include the most sublime and difficult available philosophy, as for instance in the Upanishads, and good folktales as Ramayana and Mahabharata, with the famous Bhagavadgita, which with its clear ethical messages is told in village temples, to the children as bedtime stories, and which is inspiration for great poets as Rabindranath Tagore.

Because of the negationpower the images in time are coming only to exist in relation to their negation. For instance images of the powerfull, the perfect and the good, only exist in relation to the powerlessness, the fiasco and the evil. So all images contain a structure of opposites. The most universal images include their polar partners, they are a kind of visionary mandala-structures or yantrafields. The more collective and personal images expel their polar partners. However this is in accordance with the logic of the images not possible, and the result is contradiction and division (suffering).

As the Buddhist philosopher Nagarjuna said, then the Now's lawfulness around the function of the negationpower, is due to, that energy works as streams and dividings within a superior wholeness. And because the wholeness is a reality, each part will always fit into a correspondent part. This means, that each part only can be understood in relation to its negation; that is: what the part *not* is. Firstly this is implying, that each part comes to appear as part of a polarization-pair, or a pair of opposites – like in the teaching of Yin and Yang. Secondly it is implying, that each part only can be understood in relation to *everything* else; that is: in relation to the wholeness.

So the more you, through the Ego's evaluations, isolate these parts from each other, the more the abandoned parts will work stronger and stronger on their polar partners. Therefore these polar partners in their extremes will finally switch over in the opposite extreme. Another aspect of this lawfulness, or another way to describe this lawfulness is: energy returns to its starting point. This is also called compensatory karma, and the lawfulness works as wave movements and pendulum movements.

And since everything in this way only work correlative, yes, then Nagarjuna claimed, that we actually can't say anything about the wholeness, only about the parts. Therefore he called the wholeness the Emptiness (*'sûnyatâ*) – a teaching, which had

one quite determinate purpose: the neutralization of all the dogmas, theories and viewpoints, which ignorance has created.

So time and its images consist of energy and energyfields, as well as their lawfulness within the wholeness, which forms so-called karmacially structures.

Now, if we take Nietzsche, then his idea about the will to power has to do with the outgoing movement of time, the future; but as an ontological principle. He would reject the whole above-mentioned cosmology, the divine source of it all, the destructive backmovement of time, the past, all the karmacial energylaws etc. So what he is talking about is the becoming of everything, becoming and not being; that is: a state of non-being, nothingness, which only you yourself can fill with meaning. So - though Nietzsche is talking about the will to power as a creative force - this is not something positive connected with life itself. Nietzsche's view of life itself, the eternal recurrence of the same, is a view of life devoid of values. God is dead.

According to Nietzsche there neither exists a sensuous, a material, or a spiritual world given in advance. Everything are created by being interpreted. With this Nietzsche introduced a quite central concept: perspectivism. Through our interpretations (language) we directly construct the world. And you must therefore have the will and power to create new values, and you must have the power to give them name in a new way, because namegiving is the same as an unfolding of power. Or else you end up as a slave.

To live is to will, to will is to create values. The will to power is becoming through us, and in that way we get control over the things through a perspective.

It is now easy to see how much the modern management theory and coaching industry is inspired by Nietzsche: the relativistic and subjectivistic ideas about that it only is the individual himself who, through his interpretations, or stories, can supply the world with values – or rather, not supply, but directly create it like a God; the denial of the past, and the orientation towards future; the superman idea about being a winner, a succes, a person standing on the top of the mountain; the preaching about that it is not facts, but the best story, which wins.

Let us try to see the whole thing in connection with the understanding of the will. We often say, that where there is a will there is a path. In some sense this is right. It is possible to get what you want in the world. But what if the will essentially is violence? The will to destroy other humans is there, and it has succeeded, we have found the way. Nietzsche believed that the will - that is to say: the defeating, the remodeling, the striving - is something creative. No, the will is the most destructive

of all, in spite of the fact that it constructs very many self-images and world-images. The will rests on lust, on desire, and not on that joy in freedom that has to do with passion and creative emptiness.

The will has to do with the mind that says: "I want to do this!" – "I don't want that!" – "I will do this!" The will has to do with that you are opposing, requiring, wanting. Altogether a kind of resistance, and resistance is violence. The mind must be altogether aware, that it can't escape this violence. In that way there in art of life can't be any unfolding of the will that says: "I want to defeat violence!" because the will is essentially violence. When there is used control there is always a will; that is: a compelling desire to control, form and lead. But this is destructive, and has nothing to do with creation.

The will is violence. The will is a result of the wish, the desire after becoming something; and the desire is of nature aggressive, dominating. The will to achieve something, acquire something, becoming something, and the will to fight - is the cause of the conflict in our inner, to the dualism, that causes the struggle in our inner.

The act of the will leads to confusion, because the will, though it can be very sublimated, still is the tool of the desire. The will to become something, to be something else - also when this "something" is worth the effort, and very noble - can suggest a direction, can clear a path through the confusion; but such a process leads to isolation: the Ego that places itself outside, and is creating displacement and distortions.

So clarity and reality doesn't originate from isolation. The act of the will can temporarily lighten the present foreground, which is a necessity in order for it to be active, but it can never clear the historical background; because the will is itself a result of this background. The background grows and feeds the will, and the will can sharpen the background, increase its development-possibilities, but it can never purify the background. It is therefore always old, and never new. The will is the eternal recurrence of the same. Therefore it has nothing to do with creation.

As mentioned Nietzsche himself is not seeing the will to power as something positive. It is a state of becoming and not being; that is: a world devoid of meaning. He is letting his "Zarathustra" preach the teaching of the "eternal recurrence of the same". This teaching contains in its poetic language some complicated considerations over the problem of time, over the perception of time and the understanding of life. But in all briefness it says, that any event repeats itself in all eternity – that is: without change and without any kind of increase. History is a circle, and there isn't anything, which hasn't been before, and which doesn't come again. A nightmarish thought

because each event then must be an endless number of events, an abyss of events, countless, swarming, branching to all sides in labyrinths, yet without that the events ever become mixed together. The crucifixion of Jesus Christ has happened an endless number of times before, is happening again right now in an endless number of worlds, and will happen again an endless number of times in the future.

The weak nihilists break down, when they realize the meaninglessness in the eternal recurrence, while the supermans on the contrary "insatiable shouts Da Capo, not only to themselves, but to the whole play and acting". Nietzsche's considerations once more show the problem in the lack of discrimination between the thinking and life itself. The argentine author Jorge Luis Borges has in his texts made many considerations about the nightmarish consequences of a total lack of such a discrimination. The problem arises, because the thought, which of nature is limited, try to understand the unlimited. Just try, with your thought, to grasp how it can be, that the universe just continues and continues. You can feel it in the stomach. It is the essence of anxiety and nightmare (also see my article *Dream Yoga* in my book *Dream Yoga*).

The conscious effort, the will to understand and create, to accumulate, the will to become something, is a continuation of the past, perhaps modified, but still a continuation. When we strain ourselves to become something, then we have projected this something ourselves. When we conscious strain in order to understand and create, it is the noise of our own accumulations we hear, the noise of all the life we have sucked out of the present and into thinking and time. And it is this noise that precisely hinders the understanding and the creation.

There is first freedom when the whole of the human nature, the obvious as well as the hidden, becomes refined from the past. The will is desire; and as long as there is an act of the will, any striving after becoming free, or after laying bare the Ego, there can never be freedom; then this complete refinement and emptying of the whole of the person can never take place. Only when the many layers of consciousness are silent, in absolute peace, can life flow back to presence and self-forgetfulness, and then the immense is there, the happiness that not is of time, the renewal of creation.

### ***D. Becoming***

As told, then the will to power, according to Nietzsche, is a creating power. That this power is the basic power in Man means, according to Nietzsche, that all expressions of the human life must be understood as forms of will to power; intake of food, arrangement of the everyday life with home and clothes, cultivation of nature, as well as sensation, feelings, thinking and will in usual sense - are expressions of the will to

power. Nietzsche is not least thinking about the will to power in the image of art. All human unfolding is actually a creative process where a content, or a material, is formed. Life is seen as a work of art.

A similar thought exists in the so-called self-production thesis, which is the thought about, that Man is the being, who creates himself through his history, and thereby controls his own freedom. The thought exists in the German idealism, for instance in Fichte, Schelling, Hegel. Both Existentialism, as well as Marxism, also builds on the understanding of the freedom of Man to form his own life, and that this is an unconditional value. Freedom is a good thing, a demand and a responsibility. What it is about, is the freedom to be the creative power in your own history. In the Existentialists it is the life-story of the individual, in the Marxists it is the world-history of the community.

The self-production thesis builds on the thought, that Man is in a continual state of becoming. The concept formation also often becomes used in connection with the concept of becoming. Let us try to look at what the concept is implying.

Just like the concept of desire is an important part of Buddhist philosophy, then you can say that the concept of becoming also is it, though under another word, namely Maya (sanskrit "illusion"). And just like desire, then also becoming is a negative concept. It means suffering, that which veils your realization of life, that, which veils the path, that could lead to the end of suffering.

In accordance with the Buddhists it is immensely easy to lead yourself behind the light, to convince yourself about anything. The feeling of, that you shall become something is the beginning of the deception, and this idealistic attitude leads to multifold forms of hypocrisy.

What does the illusion consist in? Yes, one of the factors is the eternal comparison between what you are and what you believe you ought to be, or could be – you are evaluating the good and the evil and the distance between them – the thought that is trying to improve, the memory about a lust, which is trying to achieve more of this lust, etc. It is this desire after more, this dissatisfaction, which gets you to accept, or believe, something, and it must inevitably lead to any kind of deception and illusion. It is the anxiety and the desire, the despair and the hope, that are projecting the goal, the conclusion you want to experience. Therefore this experience has no presence and therefore no reality.

All so-called religious experiences of visionary kind follow this pattern. The actual wish about becoming enlightened must according to Buddhism also lead to an accept

of the authority, and that is the opposite of enlightenment. Desire, dissatisfaction, anxiety, lust, wish about more, wish about becoming different – which altogether is to evaluate – all this is the nature of illusion, Maya. Becoming is therefore according to Buddhism not a good thing, but an evil.

We try incessantly to become this or that, to achieve a special condition, to get one kind of realization and avoid another, and in this way the mind is eternally occupied by something, namely the Ego. Constantly the mind is in action: thoughts, feelings, sensations, arrangements. Always the consciousness has something in mind. Always the mind is in progress with changing, making plans, commenting, remembering, creating images, and throwing out projects. Both the German Idealists, Nietzsche, the Existentialists and the Marxists, took this restless or "creative" turbulence of the mind, as a presumption they didn't investigate further.

Collectivists are seeing the thinking's philosophical becoming something as the creative power in the world-history of community. Individualists are seeing it as the creative power in the life-story of the individual. The Buddhist's objection against this will partially be, that it confuses the thinking with reality or life itself, partially that becoming not is something creative, but something destructive.

If you just take the thinking as a presumption you don't investigate further, yes, then the mind will never be silent, so that it can listen to the noise of its own battles and pains. But both Stoics, Epicureans, Taoists and Buddhists, instead say: "Be simple and don't try to become something else than what you are, or to catch up some kind of experience".

The thoughts and the feelings are limited by their own cause: the desire after becoming something, which is time-binding. What creates a conflict in Man is the desire after becoming something: to have luck and progress here in the world and inwards: to achieve a result. But as long as our thinking is concerned with time, with what we will achieve with our position, there will inevitably be this conflict. The mind is after all a product of time. The thought builds on yesterday, on the past, and as long as the thought works within the area of time and is concerned with the future, with becoming something else, with winning and with achieving, there will be opposites, and then we can't see the real, the Now, the existential conditions. Only by realizing, by understanding, by - without wanting to choose - being aware about what you are, you have a possibility for releasing yourself for the dissolvent factor, which a conflict is.

To this is needed no images of life, no religious ritual, or any scientific theory or method. Discipline, adaption to a method, only stresses the thinking's philosophical

becoming something. The memory is equivalent with time. The memory creates yesterday, today and tomorrow. The memory about yesterday limits today and produces in this way tomorrow. That will say that the past - which is based on time and both time's personal, collective and universal images - through the present, creates the future. It is this we call the historicity of Man. There happens a time-process, which is the will to become something.

The memory is time, and with the help of time we hope to achieve a result. Today you are perhaps a bank clerk and, if you get time and opportunity to it, you one day could become managing director. Therefore you must have time, and it is the same mentality, which says: "I want to reach reality, I want to realize God!" In that way you believe, that you must have time in order to be able to realize, and that means, that you must cultivate the memory, strengthen memory through a ritual, a method, a theory, through discipline with the purpose of becoming something, achieving something, winning something, which is equivalent with a continuation in time.

Striving after becoming something is based on anxiety and creates anxiety, the anxiety of being or not being - the conflict of Hamlet. To live and to become something is two different conditions. Life perhaps involves a striving in technical or physical sense, but what we consider here is the self-production, the philosophical becoming, the belief that you can create yourself and your values through thinking, and the illusion in this; this that you on the background of anxiety is seeking to escape from what you are, into ideals about being something else.

This philosophical becoming is the factor that makes the daily life a torment, a competition, an extensive conflict: the philosophical striving after becoming something more, which we find in the priest, who wants to be bishop, the disciple, who wants to be master, etc. In this becoming there is a positive or negative striving; and that is the fight for changing what you are to something else; the fight in order to control and form truth, happiness and reality; the fight that makes one or the other thing into a foundation of life. You say: "This is what I am, and that there I would like to become!" But this becoming generates a series of conflicts. When you then have become what you desire, then there immediately is a new desire, and that way it goes on indefinitely. That is due to, that you still are in a state of becoming, and don't know how to go into being; the problem of Marcel in Proust's *In search of Lost Time*.

The process of what you are becoming what you want to be, is a never-ending process, and therefore the conflict is never-ending. And all this time you don't live, see or feel. You are a living dead. And this is connected with a constant feeling of guilt, which you can't place anywhere.



The wish to become something is the beginning of all complications. Driven by a still increasing desire after becoming something, inwards or outwards, we accumulate or renounce, cultivate or deny. As we see time steal everything, we cluster to the timeless. This struggle after becoming something, positive or negative, through attachment or separation, can never be solved by any outside gesticulation, discipline or method. But the understanding of this struggle will, natural and spontaneous, evoke freedom from the inner and outer accumulation, and from the conflicts it is implying.

In order to understand what you are, the duality-conflict must cease, because the negative response – to become something - is to deny the understanding of what you are. If you as a lifeartist want to understand for instance haughtiness, you must not try to become the opposite, you must not become yourself absent in the effort of becoming something else, because this creates anxiety. When the anxiety is removed you can be yourself present. But it will be anxiety, and therefore absence, as long as there is a desire of becoming something.

Instead of thinking you must put meditation. Meditation is not concentration. Meditation is not prayer. Meditation is not worship. Meditation is not a method. Meditation is a condition in which you discover yourself as you are, without deception and illusion. Self-knowledge is not a goal in itself. Self-knowledge is this, to discover the desire of becoming something. When you as a lifeartist have examined the many different sides of yourself in activity, you have discovered, that there only is one process, and that is, that you only are interested in becoming something, in continuity. And this is the will to power.

## **2. Conscious and unconscious**

Just like Nietzsche, Freud turns the tradition's view of human nature upside down: the primary in Man is desires, and the subconscious. They have definitive influence on the rest of the psyche, including reason, which has a secondary and deflected function. Roughly said the activity of reason is in Freud only rationalizations.

Freud understood himself as a natural scientist. It is indeed also characteristic, that he is seeing Man's desires as the actual motive power, and therewith gives them the place, which Nietzsche ascribed to the will to power. Desires are actually a biological or physiological - and therefore a natural scientific - concept, though Freud conceives desires as psychic representatives for bodily energy-sources.

But like Nietzsche, Freud is not least occupied by all the mechanisms, where through the energy of desire is remoulded and distorted. Freud puts names on such as repression, sublimation, reaction-formation, and rationalization, but the phenomena are in a wide expanse described by Nietzsche, only with other names.

And as we have seen, it is in philosophy as an art of life quite central to investigate the mechanisms, which do that the mind loses reason, can't see clearly and distorts reality. Philosophy must therefore also involve the thoughts about the conscious and the subconscious, questions about the importance of the dreams etc. But there is a crucial difference between psychology and philosophy, which it in this connection is on its place to get clarified. Both psychology and philosophy as an art of life help people in practice. The question can therefore be clarified by investigating the difference between psychological counseling and philosophical counseling.

### *A. The difference between psychological counseling and philosophical counseling*

Philosophical Practice is a new alternative way of counseling people, who don't feel, that priests, doctors, coaches or psychotherapists, can offer them enough help concerning their spiritual/existential questions and problems. It is a possibility for asking a *philosopher* for advice (in my book **Dream Yoga**, I have, in the article *Philosophical Practice*, examined the concept in a more systematical way).

Philosophical Practice is a unifying term for two different basic methods: Philosophical Counseling and The Philosophical Café. Where Philosophical Counseling mainly is connected to dialogues face to face, then The Philosophical Café of course is used in groups. Both methods are however common in that way, that they, through dialogue, involve the participants in a self-inquiring practice, where it is about asking philosophical questions.

It is a rebirth of something very old, perhaps close to the authentic origin of philosophy, for instance Socrates' philosophical dialogues at the town square in Athens, or the philosophers in ancient India and China, who ordinary people could come and consult regarding their daily problems.

Philosophical Practice is in other words a rebirth of that kind of dialogue, which isn't based on religious/political doctrines, ideologies, myths or conceptions (or as today: psychological theories/management theories), but on realization and inner transformation, and which has been used by great masters such as Socrates, Epicurus, Confucius, Ramana Maharshi, Krishnamurti, Dalai Lama and Eckhart Tolle.

In the following I will concentrate about Philosophical Counseling, and just mention, that the Philosophical Café includes the same elements on group-level.

Within traditional psychology you work from a medical and psychiatric view of treatment. This presupposes a certain view of human nature, and a certain conception of health, a so-called normality-understanding; therefore some images of life. These images, this view of human nature, are characterized by what Habermas calls the instrumental reason. Today it has spread so much over its scientific borders, that it has become the system, which has colonized the lifeworld. We see it in form of the treatment society, where we treat each others as means, or as items, which have come on the wrong course in relation to the ideals of society. You treat "mental disease", and pathological cases, from a medical model, which is implying the conception of health as normal functioning, or adjustment to society.

This view of human nature is widely spread in the society today, and therefore the belief, that all human problems are something you shall in treatment for at a psychologist; a belief, which the new movement of philosophical counseling, becomes confronted with again and again.

In philosophical counseling you don't work with any determined view of human nature. It is not a therapy, or a form of treatment. People with heavy psychical sufferings are therefore referred to a psychologist or psychiatrist. But at the same time you believe, that common people with common human problems, don't need to go in therapy, as so many psychotherapists advice you to do, because they thereby can make money.

In this connection it is interesting to refer to a history about a young Englishman, who should write a PhD thesis about the social aspect of Jung's psychology (which probably rather is a philosophy of life, more than a scientific based psychological theory). He got permission to an interview with Jung some time first in the 1950s. Introductory he tells Jung, how he understands Jung's concepts, and come to say "therapy of individuation." Jung unhesitating interrupts: "Why therapy? Individuation is not a therapy. Is it therapy, when a cat becomes a cat? It is a natural process. Individuation is a natural process. It is that, which does, that a tree becomes a tree; if anyone, or anything, intervenes, it becomes sick or can't grow as a tree, but if it is allowed to develop in peace, it develops into a tree by itself. That is individuation." (*C.G. Jung Speaking. Interviews and Encounters*, ed. William McGuire, London 1978, page 210)

Philosophical counseling doesn't work with Jungian individuation, but the same words could be used on philosophy as an art of life, versus therapy. Psychotherapy

has to day on the whole taken over the role philosophical counseling had earlier, but it is not able to satisfy the demand for a philosophical approach, and reduces often wholeness, coherence and meaning to something intra-psychic, a certain side of the human mind. Often it is absurd to see how for instance newspapers prefer to ask psychotherapists, and not philosophers, about philosophical questions such as *Who am I?*, *Is there a meaning of life?*, and so on. Many psychotherapists namely think, that it is their calling to teach people life-philosophy, but most often their teaching is a kind of self-psychotherapy, and not life-philosophy.

Let us presume that a person goes to a psychotherapist with a philosophical question, a human problem or an interest, without that he actually suffers from any heavy psychical suffering (this often happens today, because people don't have any other places to go). Because of the finished analyses and theories the psychotherapist has, such questions will be seen as a symptom, or an expression, of behind lying causes, which are lying in a certain side of the human mind. Ideas are for instance seen as symptoms of underlying psycho-dynamical powers.

At the philosophical counselor such questions are not seen as symptoms of something else, but as an actual problem, and the guest is neither met with finished analyses, nor is he enforced specific perspectives and theories. On the contrary you try to lay such aside and investigate the problem anew, as if it was the first time, as if you nothing know in advance. Rather than being a method philosophical counseling is a kind of art, a creative process, where you seek to discover and experience something new. And rather than being therapeutic, philosophical counseling is pedagogic. You could call it the pedagogic of art of life.

The psychological counselor is dealing with the individual person, and the contents of this person's life, for instance the contents of specific perceptions, feelings, memories or thoughts. Ideas will for instance be seen as the content of a certain thought. A client who has a problem with love can for instance be met with questions such as: "Which perceptions and experiences have you had with love?" Problematic ideas you will seek to modify by modifying the contents of specific thoughts.

The philosophical counselor engages with Man as he is everywhere, what you could call the human nature, and therewith also with the nature of the experiences, feelings, memories and thoughts as they are everywhere. Ideas are therefore seen as concepts. A guest who has a problem with love can for instance be met with a question such as: "What is love?" And problematic ideas you will seek to modify by, either clarifying the concepts, or to bring the guest to realize the lacking coherence in his perspective on himself and life.

The psychological counselor seeks to investigate, discover underlying "hidden subconscious truths", whilst the philosophical counselor investigates and exposes philosophical attitudes, ideas, values, conclusions, answers, images. The psychological counselor works with knowledge and helps the client to achieve a knowledge about how you can solve a problem. Here it is the practitioner who investigates the patient. The philosophical counselor works with wisdom and helps the guest with himself to discover and experience truth, wisdom, beauty; that is: with how you can think in connection with a problem. The philosopher helps the guest to investigate himself.

In psychological counseling personal problems, interests, daily actions, feelings, choices, fantasies, hopes, plans etc., are seen as expressions of the subconscious, or underlying psychological structures; that is: a psychological ego. In philosophical counseling they are seen as expressions of the person's images of life, the perspective on life, which is build-in in the guest's thoughts and lived life; that is: a philosophical ego.

To understand consciousness, desires and thinking, means psychological, that you speak about the contents of the observed, and the contents of the thoughts in the individual person, and that you take a psychological perspective on the observed and the thought. To understand consciousness, desires and thinking, means philosophical, that you speak about the perspective and self-production of Man as such. You direct the awareness towards the observer and the thinker, rather than towards the observed and the thought, towards the form of consciousness and thinking, rather than towards its content. And the subconscious has here to do with absence and unreality; that is: the separation of the observer and the observed.

In psychological counseling you will seek to modify the present psychical powers and processes within the psychological ego. In philosophical counseling you will invite the guest on a journey into the philosophical ego's land of ideas, and seek to go beyond this ego in order to, in the self-forgetful experience, directly to discover truth, the unknown.

In psychological counseling the perspective is lying in the contents of the client's different wishes, hopes, fears, pleasures etc. And in the same way with the psychological theories, perspectives and interpretations, which try to explain some psychological conditions. To lay a psychological perspective on a client with for instance a sense of guilt, can consist in, to get the client to talk about this feeling, or associate to other feelings and moods, and perhaps childhood memories, which can have had influence on the actual sense of guilt.

In philosophical counseling the above-mentioned psychological perspective will itself be considered to originate from the past, which is based on time and its images, which not only are of a personal kind, but spread over both collective and universal image galleries. And as mentioned you don't wish to enforce the guest specific perspectives and theories. You will rather seek to get the guest to investigate what guilt as such is, and to become aware about the way in which he experiences the guilt, and the way in which he thinks of the guilt; that is: to become aware about his own perspective on the guilt.

In psychological counseling you work with the intra-psychic, and will lay the awareness on the psychological ego. You will here work with personal development; that is to say: development of the psychological ego. Psychology traditional only works with Man as a desirous being.

Philosophical counseling works with Man as a wholeness; that is to say: both as a historical being, a rational being, a desirous being, a natural being and a communicative being. And questions within these fields are connected with questions about society and nature. When you seek after the unity and the coherence in all this, the questions become philosophical, they become existential, conceptual, ethical, epistemological and metaphysical.

The clarifying function in philosophical counseling is pointing towards a self-forgetful dimension, the wholeness of the observer and the observed. It goes beyond the intra-psychic, and claims that it is in the self-forgetful dimension that the real formation happens. Rather than personal development, you here focus on human/spiritual growth as a wholeness.

In psychological counseling the cause of human problems is sought in underlying psycho-dynamical, social or organical powers, and the counseling will seek to be a normalizing discipline. In philosophical counseling the cause of human problems is neither sought in underlying psycho-dynamical, social or organical processes. The cause is on the contrary sought in problematic ideas, convictions and world-images, and the procedure will be a critical investigation, clarification and revision of this, and a pointing on the transition from having some images of life, to having a philosophical life-practice. This can very well lead to a spirit of rebellion, rather than "normal" behaviour.

The concept of the person will in psychological counseling be seen as follows: There exist powers in Man, which he is under influence of (subconscious dreams, biological instincts, silent knowledge, preconscious habits etc.). Man is a result of either inner or outer influences; it is these, which constitute the person.

In philosophical counseling these de-personal powers are not fully the person, in spite of the fact, that they in Buddhist philosophy are saying something similar. The person is rather that, which relates to these inner and outer powers; that is to say: which can be them present or absent. Identity you can have either in an absence or in a presence. And if you have your identity in an absence, you can very well say, that you are a result of a line of challenges and reactions. But the thought about challenge and reaction is in philosophical counseling much more composite, and has a communicative character. You are not only challenged within a certain area, but from life as a wholeness. And what you are is due to the way in which you relate to yourself.

Psychological counseling will be oriented towards an understanding of the personal motivations, wishes, fears, loves, ambivalences, etc., which are lying under the way, in which the individual person understands and lives in the world. The person is linked to the underlying feelings, motivations etc., which are lying under the conscious outlook on life. A philosophical world-image will for instance in psychotherapy be looked on as a tip of the iceberg, the outer facade, or the "grip" of himself and the surrounding world, which the person can establish, a rationalization, or defence mechanism, to dam for repressed wishes and desires, and which can lead the individual away from that, which is the personality's "sincere emotional core". The authentic person is here the person who is in contact with deep latent wishes and feelings.

Philosophical counseling will be oriented towards an understanding of the images of life, which are lying under the person's conception and way of living. So it is some images of life, a self-image and a world-image, which is based on time and its images as such - that is: both personal, collective and universal images - which are lying under, or which are a thought-created presumption for the person's feelings and motivations, and which manifest themselves in a certain image of life and way of living. To have his identity in an absence means that the person is identified with his perspective on himself and the world, and this is an expression of an un-authentic person; that is: the person who has some images of life, but no philosophical life-practice. The authentic person is the person who has his identity in a presence, and who has a philosophical life-practice.

Finally you can say, that the discipline within psychology, which mostly looks like philosophical counseling, is the existential psychotherapy. But where the existential psychology builds on some specific images of life, then philosophical counseling doesn't build on some specific images, but is a finger which is pointing at a

philosophical life-practice, which seeks to investigate, and thereby transcend all images of life, in order to become self-forgetful engaged in life itself.

In existential psychotherapy you don't necessarily philosophize. This is partially because that you have an answer build-in in everything you do, partially that you most often are too much influenced by psychology to disentangle from it. In philosophical counseling you are philosophizing, and the critical wonder makes fixated point of views, standard attitudes, or permanent solutions, impossible. You seek to ask questions and understand the problem through the guest's own experience and understanding. Everything is surprise, new discovery, wonder. There can no prediction be, and no therapeutic goals.

The philosophical counselor is a philosophical sparring partner, a challenge, a mirror, a means to self-exposure, a travel guide beyond the kingdom of the psychical realm, into the realm of the universal images, and further on, into the unknown.

In existential psychotherapy you are given no tools for such a journey. You are not able to use, and draw on, the many philosophical insights; that is to say: other philosophical thoughts than existence-philosophy.

### ***B. The division between the conscious and the subconscious***

Let us now try to look deeper into how you philosophical seen can look at the thought about the conscious and the subconscious.

Why does this division arise, between - on the one hand the conscious mind, which is wrapped up in its daily activities, worries, problems, superficial pleasures, earning one's living etc. - and, on the other hand, the deeper lying layers of the same mind, with all its hidden motives, its initiatives, its enforcing demands, its anxiety-conceptions? Why is there this division?

This division exists because we are so occupied, on the surface, by continual talking, the continual demand, on the surface, about amusement, entertainment, both of religious and of other kind. This means that you become yourself absent, you are the deeper layers of your own mind absent. And absence is unreality. Unreality is absence of something for the individual hidden. It is a specific condition, an emptiness, a being outside. There is a displacement, or distortion, between the conscious and the subconscious; emptiness and loss slide in between, create reflections, displacement and darkness. You are decentralized, beside yourself, away from the subconscious, by being away in the conscious. You are locked off from the



subconscious, by being locked inside the conscious. And this superficial mind can impossible go into depth, enter yourself, as long as this division is going on.

What do the underlying layers of the mind contain? The thought about the subconscious was known before Freud and can be followed back to Leibniz. Nevertheless Freud's theory about the subconscious is a pioneering work. General the subconscious can be defined as a storeroom of thoughts and impulses, which work on conscious thought and behaviour, without being accessible for the consciousness. But in Freud's opinion the subconscious first of all contains impulses and thoughts, not least sexual, which not are acceptable for the consciousness; that is to say: which are offensive, immoral or dangerous. There is a sharp censorship in the threshold between unconscious and conscious. Therefore Freud also was able to refer to the subconscious as "the inner foreign country".

However as a lifeartist you must have another approach to all this, than what the psychologists, Freud, and others, have said. The question is here how you are discovering it without reading what others have said. How can you as a lifeartist find out what the subconscious is? You must be yourself present in passive listening. But what is it you shall listen to? Can you be sure, that your dreams will interpret the content of the unconsciousness? Freud meant so. The problem is though: who shall interpret the dreams? The experts? The experts, who also are limited by their specialization? And is it, as the Buddhists say, possible not at all to dream, and to understand the content of the unconsciousness directly while you are sleeping?

Of course the subconscious exists, however the question is what it consists of? The subconscious has two sides, which can't be separated: partial the thinking's past and future, partial the Now's existential condition. The thinking's past and future is based on time and its images, on personal and collective outlooks on life, and world-views, and their remnant inheritance, the family traditions, the multifold religious and social limitations, influences from literature, the religious as well as the temporal, the countless reactions, responses, conclusions, ideas, disappointments, hopes, longings, plans and projects, all the hidden, dark undiscovered. All this is the thinking's past and future.

But the thinking's past and future is only active in relation to the existential conditions and relations in the Now. The question becomes then: Can all this be discovered and be brought out into the light without dreams, or without going to a psychotherapist? Can all this be discovered so that the mind, when it really is sleeping, is calm and not continual active. And can it then happen, because it now is calm, that it can be filled with quite another quality, an activity of quite another kind, which is without connection with the daily worries, misgivings, annoyances,

problems, demands? A quality, which is a presence of something not hidden, a presence of something obvious, something the individual has a clear understanding of, a presence of something straightforward, a presence in naturalness.

In order to be able to find out whether this is possible, whether it is possible not at all to dream - so that the mind seriously is fresh when it awakes in the morning - you must, as a lifeartist, understand yourself as a communicative being, you must be your communicative life present in passive listening, be aware of hints and signals. And these you can only discover in the relationship with the surrounding world, when you listen to your relationship with others without condemning, evaluating, when you merely are noticing how you behave and react, when you see without first having found an option, merely listen, so that the hidden, the subconscious, your perspective, your ideas, attitudes, conclusions, and their consequences for your way of living, actions, relationship with others – is exposed in the day-time.

### *C. Dreams*

Freud came to the theory about the subconscious from studies of dreams and parapraxes. Behind the manifest content of the dream (the dream we experience) he found a hidden, latent, meaning. Roughly said Freud meant, that all dreams are expressions of wish-fulfilment of especially sexual wishes. And you must admit him, that he is a master in interpreting even the dreamcontent, which clearly seems to be inconsistent with the theory, so that it appears as a latent wish about fulfilment. Freud characterized dreaminterpretation as the main path to the subconscious.

As mentioned you have, as a lifeartist, another approach to dreams. Here dreams are seen as a continuation in the sleep of the awake state's thought-activity. In the dreams you notice that there always happens something, there happens something in the dreams just like in the awoken state's thought-activity, a continuation, which still is part of one whole movement. The content of the dreams has for the lifeartist not the value, which Freud ascribed it. But the nature of the dream-activity itself requires understanding, exactly like the nature of the thought-activity requires understanding (I have in my book *Dream Yoga* given a more systematic presentation of the dreams and their nature in the article *Dream Yoga*)

The mind, which in the awoken state, in the day-time, functions after the images of life in which it is brought up - the conscious mind with all its daily activities - continues these activities in dreams while it is sleeping. These activities consist in thoughts, feelings, sensations, arrangements, modifications, plans, comments, memories, image formations, and all the daily worries, misgivings, annoyances and

demands, which are connected with this, because you from the thinking's past or future make the Now's facts into an problem.

And in the dreams there also happens something, an action of one or the other kind, and in that way your sleep becomes a continuation of the awoken state's thinking. Both time, and the thinking in the awoken state, are consequently a kind of dream, an absence because you in the thinking either are in the bygone or in the coming time.

When you fall asleep the thinking dissolves in images and dreams, because the awoken state's clarity, precision and stability are lost, but it is the same process, which is continued. In the Danish poet Ole Sarvig's poem *Daystreams* it is described in this way:

The day's murmurous slim river  
widens out by evening  
and becomes night's deep,  
for miles, obscure lake,  
reflecting the stars.

and deep by the bottom of the lake  
the day's wild stream has  
its way in dreams.

The sleep itself is however an interspace, a radical break in the coherence of the consciousness and the thought-stream. The sleep itself is in the Now, the dreams are in time. In the sleep there is a wholeness of the observer and the observed, a deep rest, but no awakeness.

Each time we fall asleep we in fact move through the growth levels I described in Part One, from the separation of the observer and the observed, the daily turbulence, to a certain relaxation as in the supporting exercises, over a passive listening presence, discrimination, creative emptiness, for finally, in the deep sleep, to be in the wholeness of the observer and the observed. The only difference is that the awakeness lacks. This has the great philosophers, wise men and mystics been aware of time out of mind. Already in the Upanishads it is described in the principle: in the deep, dreamless sleep you are with God, Brahman.

Again an example of, how close the common growing conditions and growth levels are to all of us. By the way they in both Buddhist and Indian philosophy believe that you also in a more radical sense, go through these steps in the moment of death (see my article *The Death Process* in my book *Dream Yoga*).

In dreams there is a vague separation between the dreamer and the dream, a turbulence in the mind, but still no awakeness. In the awoken state there is of course awakeness, but usually also a sharp separation of the observer and the observed, and the mind is troubled without rest.

In the deep sleep there is rest, but black screen, practical taken no consciousness-activity. In dreams there are lots of reality, but in relation to the awoken consciousness, great lacks and limitations in clarity, precision and stability. In dreams you only vaguely know where you are, who and what you are, you can be all roles, carry all masks, have all ages and be both gender in all kind of imaginable activities. This, the dream state's creative richness and multiplicity, is however costing clarity and stability of your identity.

Compared herewith the awoken state distinguish itself by much greater intensity, width, clarity, precision and stability: the Ego knows its biographical, historical and cultural identity. Abilities and education are stable and cumulative. The world is reasonable stable: things, nature, and human beings, are recognizable and only change after reasonably predictable patterns. But the observer and the observed are sharply divided, the mind is troubled, and the state lacks the rest, which is in the sleep.

Now, how shall you in the waking state relate to the dreams? The conscious mind is in the end a total process, though it perhaps contains contradictions. It can place itself outside, divide itself in the conscious and the subconscious, the hidden and the open. The consciousness might contain contradictory masks, perspectives, wills to power, values, impulses, but nonetheless it is a total, a complete process, it includes the whole of the separation of the observer and the observed. The conscious mind can be aware of a dream, but the dream is a result of the whole activity of the consciousness.

When the upper layers of consciousness, the Ego, the observer, is trying to interpret a dream, which is the whole projection of consciousness, a projection of the whole of the separation of the observer and the observed, then its interpretation must be partial, imperfect, unreliable. The interpreter inevitably gives a wrong account of the symbol, the dream, because the interpreter places himself outside the dream, is himself absent and therefore hasn't got himself included in the interpretation.

The consciousness has many, many layers. These layers *are* the separation of the observer and the observed, they *are* the disproportion between the observer and the observed, where emptiness and loss slide in between, creating a myriad of reflections, displacements and distortions. These displacements can be hidden motives, chases,

worries, fears, painful disappointments, which originate from an even deeper world of images. Disproportions are time, the thinking's past and future, which make the Now's facts into problems. These layers can in symbolic form project themselves to the conscious mind, and when the mind then awakes, it says: "I have dreamt!"

Do the dreams want to tell you something? All kinds of signals and hints have with Man as a communicative being to do. Signals and hints therefore only come to expression in the relationship with the surrounding world, or differently said: in the Now. But the conscious mind is so occupied by its daily activities, annoyances, anxiety, that it is unable to receive signals and hints in the course of the day. However in the sleep there is a resting state, which also is there even when you are dreaming. When the superficial mind falls to peace, then this resting state makes it possible for the many layers of the mind to project themselves to this, and then you are dreaming.

There are of course superficial dreams, and dreams that really have a meaning. The superficial dreams are those, which are created by bodily reactions, indigestion, overfedness etc. These you don't need to take into consideration. The other dreams are signals from deeper layers of consciousness. Such signals have with the separation of the observer and the observed to do, the disproportion in relationship with the surrounding world, and the Now.

Dreams are expressing themselves in symbols. When the life, the energy and the content, which have with the disproportion to do, arrive to the superficial mind, this energy, and this content, symbolizes itself. This is due to the fact that the disproportion has with the wholeness to do, or the separation of the wholeness, and this wholeness the split, superficial mind can't contain. The vague, wide contents and energies from the disproportion are therefore narrowing together in the meeting with this mind. The symbol is this quintessence, this shortened, condensed form of expression of the vague, wide material from the whole disproportion.

The symbol is a telescoping, a representing quintessence of the information quantities, which the wholeness contains. The disproportion *is* the subconscious. The subconscious is the emptiness and the loss, which slide in between the observer and the observed, and which create displacement, reflections and darkness. The disproportion is also time, the thinking's past and future, which make the Now's facts into problems. And the past is as mentioned based, not just on the personal images of time, but also on collective and universal images. All this can be projected to the conscious, be interpreted as symbols, which inform a meaning to you when you wake up.

So how can you then as a lifeartist understand this meaning? If you are the dream present in passive listening it will uncover its meaning. Dreams are an indication, an exposure of the deeper motives and intentions; the anxiety, which has to do with the separation of the observer and the observed, or different said: with your self-image and world-image, the discrepancy between idea and conduct of life.

Passive listening presence is the only way to deal with dreams. You must be yourself present all day through, be aware of the relationship with the surrounding world, your reactions and thoughts, and see the dreams connectedly with this. If you isolate the dreams from this coherence, place yourself outside them and interpret them from your historical limited background, your images of life, without having yourself included in your understanding, yes, then you will never get insight in what dreams are.

Therefore you don't need to go through any process of dream interpretation in order to reach to the subconscious. If you the day through are yourself and the surrounding world present, yes, then you will not at all dream. Then there will be a presence of something, which not is hidden, because the mind is empty and creative.

Meditation is to empty out the mind; not just the conscious mind, but also the hidden layers of the mind, the disproportion, which is called the subconscious. And then there flows energy and life back to presence and reality. The subconscious is in other words just as insignificant and absurd as the conscious. And during the sleep there is a multiplicity of superficial dreams, which hardly are worth granting a thought – dreams entirely without meaning.

But then there is the dream which has a meaning, and this meaning can be understood at the very moment it is dreamt, without that there are any displacements or distortions between the interpreter and the interpreted. But as mentioned, this is only possible when you in the day-time are all movements of your thoughts, motives, feelings and ambitions present.

At first this can sound as an exhausting, hopeless affair. But this awareness is not exhausting, tiresome, as long as you don't adjust what is observed. But if you say: "It must not be in this way", or "It has to be in that way", then you become tired and bored. If you are listening without choosing, are aware in the day-time without saying yes and hanging on to, without saying no and pushing away, without commenting, prioritising – just are allowing everything to be exactly as it is, yes then you can let go and be deeply relaxed. And when you then are dreaming, and the dream has a meaning, then will, at that very moment you are dreaming – all dreams are active, there always happens some action – then will this action itself be understood. When

you in that way have done all this, then the resting mind becomes extremely awake, and you don't have to seek out someone, who analyses dreams.

This awakeness in the mind is something, which the separated superficial mind never can see. Silence is therefore nothing which can be chosen and self-produced through the will. Silence comes when you understand the whole structure and beginning of life, and know what it is to be alive. Silence has with life-feeling, spontaneity and self-forgetfulness to do.

When there no dreams are, then the consciousness can enter deeper and deeper down into itself; that is to say: into life itself. Dreams are a sign of that there is disturbance, discord between the thought and the conduct of life, that there is displacement between the thinker and life itself. But when there no disturbances and displacement are, and the body during the sleep is very calm, when the mind is quiet, you will, when you wake up, find, that you haven't dreamt, but that a renewal has taken place, a renewal, which constantly takes place, because there all the time is ending. This renewal is the creation, the source of life, because you in the silence rest in the middle of life itself.

#### ***D. Hints from the subconscious***

One of Freud's first students, C.G.Jung, claimed, that the subconscious also contains a line of common human thought-complexes, which he called the archetypes. The subconscious was in Jung therefore also a positive and creative source in Man, not only a storeroom of "negative" impulses, in the way Freud described it.

And the mind *is* a huge treasury where all the experiences of Man, his visions and thoughts, are stored. The mind is a result of many thousand years of traditions and experiences. It can invent fantastic things, from the simplest to the most complicated. It is receptive for odd self-deceits and extensive visions. Both the collective, and the experiences and expectations of the single person, the anxiety, joy and accumulated knowledge, the self-images and the world-images, are stored in the underlying layers of consciousness, and you can live over again the inherited or acquired experiences, visions and thoughts: what I call the collective and universal images in time.

But you must discriminate between the collective and universal images. The collective images, which are human made, work in sequences in past and future, whilst the universal images, which not are human made, work in synchronism with the Now. In a spiritual practice it is about going round the collective images, and direct yourself towards the universal images.

The Czech-American psychiatrist Stanislav Grof is famous for his ground-breaking research with LSD-psychotherapy (see also my article *The Spiritual Crisis* in my book *Dream Yoga*, where I have given a more systematic description).

LSD works reinforcing on the experiences, visions and thoughts, which the subconscious in advance contains, and is therefore a means to, in a very short time, to get down into very deep layers of the subconscious. LSD brings clarity, a vision of the depths and the heights, which can unburden the mind for its confusion through giving it much energy and insight. Grof shows, that you through LSD can live over again the visions of the outlooks of life, and the world-conceptions, which are lying hidden in the subconscious, and he believes that these images not only range far back in time, but also across all cultures.

That these images exist is not anything new, the new about Grof is, that he has worked scientifically with it, and shown their existence through experimenting, collecting systematical experiences, and from them has drawn up a theory, which can be determined through new experiences.

But what Grof works with, is the collective images in time, which are lying on a so-called astral plane, and which are working in sequences in past and future.

Also Plato worked with the images in time. But he worked with the universal images, which are working in synchronism with the Now. He called them the world of forms. In Plato the world of forms is the Good, the True and the Beautiful itself, it is reality itself, or eternity. The forms are a kind of perfect, eternal, and unchangeable models, and everything in the world of phenomena are incomplete imitations of these. Only the forms can be subject for true realization. The true reality is the forms, and they can be realized through thinking alone. And here Plato didn't meant ordinary thinking, but deep thinking, self-forgetful thinking, or meditation.

In the dialogue *Menon* Plato is letting Socrates claim, that all realization in the end is due to a recollection (Greek: *Anamnesis*) of the eternal forms, which are lying as foundation for the accidental phenomena, because we before birth had a direct experience of these forms. But here it is about understanding Plato correctly. Because the recollection he speaks about is the spiritual practice in the Now, not about directing the consciousness into the past. You can only recollect the eternal forms in the Now, precisely because they work in synchronism with the Now. It reminds a bit about Karen Blixen, who calls the universal images for the ancient, the original.

So Plato also had a sense about, that time is based on these images. Plato said, that time is the movable image of eternity.



The religious historian Mircea Eliade called the universal images The Holy. In Eliade the holy is neither a human made factor, but on the contrary something, which has existence, form and structure in the consciousness of Man and outside history. This is similar to Indian philosophy, which claims that the whole of the universe is created due to a universal vision, a vision, which in its holographical nature, consists of an infinity of universal images, that are inextricable connected.

These images show themselves for Man in religious myths, rituals, images and symbols, and thereby they become a part of history, and it is such manifestations of the holy, which in Eliade is the study-subject of the religious historian.

Eliade's work is an interesting investigation of how the religions use the universal images. Like Nietzsche Eliade also had a theory about the eternal recurrence. He believes that the events of life, and not least suffering, only get a meaning interpreted as a repetition of a mythical pattern. But contrary to Nietzsche, then these images, in their originality, is not human made.

The universal images express themselves through the collective images, which again express themselves through the personal images. And herein lay the danger: that you confuse the collective images with the universal images. The universal images work in synchronism with the Now, or reality, and can therefore be said to be an expression of reality itself. This are the collective images on the contrary not, because they remove the consciousness from the Now and reality, since they work in sequences in past and future. They are human made, and therewith you also get the separations the religions in between.

When philosophers take the collective images for the actual reality, they are thinking in models, and this there is a long tradition for, especially in the West. To think in models means that you explain something apparently from behind lying mechanisms, which you can't see.

In Greek antiquity Ptolemaios for instance explained the movements of the planets from the so-called epi-cycle model, or they explained why the things or processes, which we can see, behave as they do, from the teaching about the four elements (fire, earth, air and water). In Greek antiquity there also was a competitor to the teaching about the four elements, namely Democritus' atomic theory.

The American philosopher Thomas Kuhn has made account for how various scientific world-images have replaced each other. Seen under the quite big angle there is three phases in the history of physics: 1) the Aristotle-Ptolemaios period

from approx. 300 b.c. to 1600 a.c. 2) the Galilei-Newton period from 1600 to 1900, and 3) the Einstein-Bohr period from 1900 and forward. Each has their set of paradigms or world-interpretations. They then become exposed for a crisis and become replaced as you discover lacks in them. This you can by the way apply to all world-images.

The collective images are, as a matter of fact, creating a subject-field and an object-field, but this is not reality, it is based on a self-image and a world-image, therefore an illusion, a poetic work of mankind, as they both in Buddhist and Indian philosophy point out. It is here important to understand, that those cosmologies, as well as my own, must be seen in relation to spiritual practice. In this perspective they shall not be seen as true models of the world, but on the contrary as illusions; that is: as a kind of map of the spiritual journey through the world's dream-labyrinth of illusions.

The universal images are, contrary to the collective images, an expression of reality itself, though. In Yogacara Buddhism they use the term Alaya-Vijnana, the common human storeroom of consciousness, which doesn't consist of anything else than forms, the carrier of all latent possibilities and the store place for all accumulated tendencies. It is the foundation for the activity of the mind, and because it always both is changeable, dynamic, and at the same time a continuum, which is an oneness and homogeneous, it can't be understood by the thinking.

Nonetheless the universal images are of linguistic kind, language, which however no longer is verbal, but superior, visionary syntheses and wholes, that work more in synchronism with the Now than in sequences in past and future.

We can now talk about two types of symbols and symbolizing. There exist two types of symbols, dependent on whether it is the collective images, or the universal images, which are lying as foundation for the symbol.

When energy and content arrive to the consciousness from the collective images, then this energy, and this content, will symbolize itself. This is due to, that the collective images are in a condition of vague, diffuse oneness. What is coming from the collective images therefore contains a much greater width and depth than the liminary, relatively narrow and clear concepts and classes of the ordinary consciousness. The vague, wide contents and energies from the collective images are therefore growing narrower in the meeting with the consciousness. The symbol is this quintessence, this shortened, condensed form of expression of the vague, wide collective material.

What happens in a LSD-trip is, that the consciousness draws more and more energy, and more content, in from the collective images. The danger is that the past, or future,

can suck life out of the present. The memories can in higher and higher degree be transformed into reality, while reality becomes emptiness. The same can happen in the so-called Kundalini Yoga, and through Pranayama breathing exercises.

Meditation is, as I understand it with reference to art of life, the opposite movement. And by the way I believe, that this is a fact concerning all spiritual practice, when practised correct.

At first you release yourself from the personal images, here next from the collective images. Herewith you give energy and life back to reality and presence. You can also say that it is a downward movement, a foundation of ground connection, a being with weightiness and grounding.

A LSD-trip, and a great deal of the exercises you find in Kundalini Yoga and Pranayama exercises, can lead to an upward movement which ends in unreality, weightlessness, a being without weightiness, without foundation for your unfoldings, where you become more and more locked off from, or locked inside, the thinking's past and future.

In this connection it is interesting to note, that if you read about human beings, who actually has experienced the genuine mystical experience, the wholeness of the observer and the observed, as for instance Sri Aurobindo and Martinus, then you discover, that they don't agree with the many philosophies which speak about the necessary in - if you shall experience illumination and enlightenment - that the Kundalini power must be awakened and climb from chakra to chakra. Both Sri Aurobindo and Martinus describe illumination and enlightenment as a descent of energy or spirit, an intervention from above, a grace, and therefore the direct opposite process.

The other types of symbols are coming from the universal images, and therewith from reality and truth itself. All reality, which shall mirror itself in the superficial mind, will automatically symbolize itself. Again the symbol is a telescoping, a representing quintessence of the informationquantities, and the greater clarity, which are connected with reality.

Symbols from the collective images reproduce a more vague, more imprecisely, but richer organic oneness. Symbols from the universal images reproduce a clearer, more precise and superior oneness. The more vague oneness, or the more precise oneness, shows itself in symbolic form in the dividing, separating structure of consciousness.

Symbols from the collective images are known from the archetypes and primordial images of the dreams, from fantasies, fairy-tales, myths etc.

Symbols from the universal images are formed in the transition from the wholeness of the observer and the observed, to the separation of the observer and the observed. What reality in itself contains, is real in this dimension, not symbolic, not linguistical. But when reality becomes unreality in the separation of the observer and the observed, it narrows, loses clarity and light, is being muted to the split consciousness, and that – which in reality was truth – will transmute itself to symbols. That which is truth in reality and presence, is symbolic in unreality and absence. It is therefore very difficult for the universal images to communicate themselves to an ordinary absent consciousness. It requires, that you yourself do your part of the work.

Where you in LSD-psychotherapy, Kundalini Yoga and altogether in most of the therapies in New Age spirituality, will seek to draw energy and content in from the collective images, then you in philosophical counseling will put a question mark about whether the mind has to travel through all these dark and hidden corridors in order to come to the light. The philosophical counselor will ask whether the mind, when it through one of these means, really is coming out in the light, whether this light then is the unknown, truth or reality, or whether the light and oneness are symbols.

If you confuse light and oneness with symbols, then this is a forgery, an inflation-creating enlargement of the Ego. The philosophical counselor will ask, whether the light perhaps could be thought to originate from the known, from your own symbolical perspective, the recognized, and caused by search, struggle and hope. The philosophical counselor will ask, whether you must through the burdensome process in order to discover the immeasurable, whether you can't go around all this, and meet that which could be called reality or life itself.

Herewith is not said, that hints or suggestions from the subconscious, whether it is the collective images or the universal images, not are necessary. They are as necessary as the thought is, but as we saw concerning the thought, then it can be a dangerous course, unless you understand their symbolic form. However, in the vast majority of cases you are not able to receive such hints at all. Let us try to look closer on how such hints or suggestions function.

Let us presume that you have a problem. There is something, which is called "to sleep on it". What happens is, that your conscious mind, which doesn't understand the problem, in order altogether to be able to fall asleep, must disentangle from the

problem, and after having released itself therefrom, it achieves larger clarity. Now the subconscious, or deeper layer, begins to project itself to the conscious mind, and when you awake the problem is quite simple solved. So the conscious mind, the upper layers of the consciousness, must be clarified, in order to, that the mind can be silent, so that it can receive hints or suggestions from the hidden. The problem is that we aren't calm.

We can reach to clarity over the underlying conscious and subconscious activity, if we give the subconscious mind a chance, because it is much faster in reacting than the conscious mind. If your conscious mind is aware, and in silence is thinking and observing, the subconscious mind is much more actively awake and much more receptive; therefore it can find an answer.

So the conscious mind must be in peace in order to be able to receive the projection of the unconsciousness. Then it is able to receive signals from the subconscious, from the many, many hidden layers of the mind, from the hidden universal images and from the collective images of mankind, from the stored memories, the hidden striving, the hidden wounds, which not yet has been healed, and from the discrepancy between the thought and the conduct of life, between the observer and the observed.

It is first when all this has projected itself and becomes understood - when the whole of the consciousness is relieved, and no longer places itself outside because it is tied to a contradiction, to some wounds, or chained to some kind of memory and image - that Man is able to be self-forgetful engaged in life, to be himself in his being, a being which as a flower opens itself for himself, and therewith also for all other's being, and herein is able to receive the new, truth.

First when this has happened, you can begin to understand the function of the dreams.

Firstly the dreams function with reference to bodily and energetical balancing and regulation of the thought-distortions' swings. The dreams balance the energetical swings of the thoughts. If you follow your dreams you will see, that wherever and when the awoken life has slipped out in one extreme, then the dreamprocess seeks to balance this imbalance by insisting on the opposite extreme. From the dreams you can also see, that the restless activity of the thoughts in many ways is determined by, that their energy always seeks to finish unfinished situations. Each and every day leaves a long line of unfinished situations. These the dreams seek, as good as possible, to finish. However this is a Sisyphean task, as long as the consciousness does not help. In that way the dreamprocess is a self-regulating system. And this first function of the dreams has to do with compensatory karma.

Secondly the dreams have a development-specific function through their symbol function. This has to do with progressive karma.

As we have seen, there exist symbols both from the collective and universal images of time. Symbols are manifestations of these images. They are all a telescoping, a representing quintessence of the informationquantities the images contain.

Symbols from the collective images are, as already mentioned, shortened, condensed modes of expression from a subordinate, vague, diffuse and imprecise time unit, which moves in sequences in past and future; or said differently: in cycles. The collective time is lying on a so-called astral plane, and symbols from here are known from the archetypes and primordial images of the dreams, from fantasies, fairy-tales, myths etc. To experience symbols from here is however not the same as directly (without the intermediate state of the symbols) experiencing the collective time's astral images and worlds. Here the consciousness has to be in an astral state (read more about this in my article *Dream Yoga*, in my book *Dream Yoga*).

Symbols from the universal images are of a completely different character. They reproduce a much clearer, more precise and superior wholeness. It is from these symbols you can receive direct teachings about your spiritual development process.

When you have trained meditation and dream yoga in many years, a so-called dream master can visit you through a symbol. Such a symbol is, as mentioned, a telescoping, a representing quintessence of the informationquantities, which the wholeness in a universal image contains. The dream master will in that way canalize information to you from the universal image, which, together with the whole of the universal vision, constitutes the dream-tracks and the songlines in the artwork of your life. The dream master will in that way help you to compose, to synthesize and interlock, what your inner thinker in the waking state has divided. This is truly dream yoga.

### ***E. On examining the subconscious***

Not to divide, but to see the wholeness, that is the lifeartist's problem. It is the problem of seeing the whole of the consciousness, in the end the whole of the essence of Man, not a certain fragment, as for instance the conscious or the subconscious.

To see the wholeness is extremely difficult, while it is fairly easy to see a fragment. In order to be able to see something as a whole - and that will say: to see it rational, healthy and completely - there must be no inner spectator, doubter or calculator. There must neither be any disproportion between the feeling and its object, or

between the action and its occasion. Your life must be real, so that you fully and completely exist and the important is present. Fully and completely to exist will say that you are what you are in action with. Where the unreal life is characterized by, that the dreamer, the spectator, the doubter within you, slides in between, creates reflections, displacement and darkness, there the real life is characterised by fulfilment, middle and light.

To be present in passive listening without that there is any inner calculator, will say, that you look at your partner, your children, without having any conceptions about them. A conception is perhaps of superficial kind, or it is lying dwelling, deep down in the subconscious. And in the lifeartist it is not enough to listen to the conception you have pieced together outwards. Also the conceptions you have innermost you must be aware of – your conceptions about the race, about the culture, the historical perspective in the conception you have about yourself. So it is not only on the conscious plane you shall listen, but also on the hidden plane, deep in yourself. In all the most distant corners of the mind, there must be created a listening presence.

The more passively you listen, negative watching, awake, without choosing side, the more the many layers of the content of the unconsciousness are rising up to the surface. You don't have to interpret them, because in the moment they arise, they are understood.

If you experiment you will feel an immensely liberatedness, because the whole of your essence, including the consciousness, which now is broken up, becomes a wholeness. There is no longer any struggle in your consciousness; thinking and conduct of life, the observer and the observed, is one; the heart is opening, and there is flowing life and love from your inner. This is because, that you no longer have your actual essence outside yourself, but *in* yourself. Your actual essence is that, you live out from. You have your essence with you in the life you in fact live. It is covered by, and is unfolded in, your life. Your life is real, is complete and undivided wholeness. This is liberatedness, and when all these hidden layers of consciousness are open, free, there will no dreams arise.

### **3. Passion**

#### ***A. Self-assertion***

In his book *The Good Life* Mogens Pahuus writes, that if you ask about, what the old Scandinavians saw as the highest and the greatest in life, the ecstasy of life, then the

answer would be, that it is self-assertion – the assertion of oneself and the family. He also writes, that you in Christianity find a diametrically opposite view of self-assertion, – both in its Catholic form as in Protestantism. In Saint Gregory and Thomas of Aquinas haughtiness/pride/self-assertion was the first and greatest of the seven so-called deadly sins. And in Luther self-assertion nor was a goodness, but the vice over all vices. It is the seven deadly sins Dante in *The Purgatory* must look in the eyes one after one, in order to be able to progress. He must use the discrimination, which is the purification process, where you look your destiny in the eyes and do penance after having realized how your perspective distorts reality.

So self-assertion is a vice. Self-assertion is a kind of self-interest, where everything turns around the Ego, and therefore makes the mind mediocre. To live in a world, which is controlled by self-assertion, without being self-assertive, means, truly, to love something for its own sake, without seeking a reward, a result; but this is very difficult, because the whole world, all your friends, your relatives, struggle to achieve something, to accomplish something, to become something.

Today self-assertion once again is considered as a virtue. The gurus are the many advocates for the market and the economical competition, as for instance several management theorists. And the education-instrument is the personal development movement. The disciples are the consumers; that will say, that this outlook of life obviously is shared by most people in our society: that it is about becoming something, to get success, to conquer a place on the top of the mountain, to become a winner. Mogens Pahuus believes that the modern ideal about becoming a success, a winner, is a perverted ideal. The society praises a self-assertion, which has gone over the top, and there dominates a self-assertion, which is a vice, because it both spoils the life of the self-assertive, and the lives of those, whom the self-assertive measures himself in relation to, and whom he wants to overpass.

Pahuus mentions some of the forms of self-assertion: 1) Vanity, which is a vice, because the vain-full always is bearing in mind, how he or she looks like, or is considered like, in the eyes of others. 2) Ambition, which is a vice, because you here constantly are on the way forward, or upwards. 3) Haughtiness, which is a vice, because you here, in your feeling of own superior value, look down at others, are letting others feel their inferiority; that is: because haughtiness is unethical. But also in the arrogant himself, haughtiness is destructive: it isolates. 4) Joy of power. The ethical seen most violating form of self-assertion is the joy of having power over others, of controlling others, or oppressing them.

Pahuus quotes Alfred Adler and says that the above-mentioned forms of self-assertion are attack-characterized. But there also exists a non-attack characterized



form, as for instance the hostile isolation, anxiety and bashfulness, which you see in the *Underground Man* in Dostojevskij's small novel *Notes from an Underground*.

The vice in the different forms of self-assertion is that it leads to an unreal life; what we earlier have examined in the section about the will to power.

### ***B. Why I am an apostle of loafing***

That being invisible to the culture – that being unregarded, ignored, devalued, is in a culture of self-assertion a curse. I have myself experienced that in a rather special way, namely in connection with my awakening of kundalini, which threw me out in a spiritual crisis, years of investigating this crisis (see my article *The Spiritual Crisis* in my book *Dream Yoga*), university-studies in philosophy, and the slow development of my teaching **Meditation as an Art of Life** - and then that, again and again, being unregarded, ignored, and devalued by my surroundings - made me think of my own life as being befelled by a curse. First it was the devaluation of the kundalini-experiences I have had. But after I had got my education in philosophy, it was this education in itself, that was being devaluated, especially in the environment of personal development and New Age.

I was namely so, that I, because of my experiences, contacted the New Age environment because I thought, that I here could find kindred spirits. But here I met this peculiar prejudice, that an *educated* philosopher can't be spiritual, that he somehow only is living in his head, is arrogant, neurotical, sexual frustrated and so on. He is not really able to talk about spiritual issues. It is his *education* that is the problem (I am not exaggerating this, on the contrary it is almost an automatical response in this environment).

Of course I know where this prejudice comes from. Partly it comes from relativism and subjectivism, and the sorts of pernicious consequence for standards of scholarship, and intellectual responsibility, which this has caused in all areas of education (see my article *The Rulers of Newspeak* in my book *Dream Yoga*). Partly it is also due to, that so many uneducated people within New Age have put a whole business up teaching other people about life-philosophy, ways of living, and pseudo-scientific fantasies and therapies. These people of course have a problem, when an educated philosopher is exposing all the invalid claims, they often are building their business on.

As I have said before then it was actually my education in philosophy that learned me how to think clearly, and which was a main reason for, that I at all got out of my

spiritual crisis. And that is also the reason why I again and again emphasize the importance of philosophy in a spiritual practice.

As far as I can see, then anyone, who is going to start a spiritual practice, ought to take some academical classes in philosophy. Though the spiritual practice not is intellectual when it is going beyond all concepts and ideas, then it must begin with the training of critical thinking, and here an intellectual and academical study in philosophy is crucial. And besides, this is not something new in spirituality. The monks, in, for instance Tibetan Buddhism, are going through up to ten years of studies in philosophy. The same is the case in the philosophical schools of India.

And, by the way, many of my philosophy-teachers on the university are actually some of the most spiritual humans I have ever met, and who have been the inspiring sources behind most of what I write in my books.

Therefore it was also annoying me more and more, when talking to New Age devotees, to have to discuss whether one or the other selfmade New Age guru are greater philosophers, than the great philosophers in the history of philosophy. It was as discussing whether some kind of superficial supermarket pop music, is greater than the works of Bach. Moreover I began to discover the whole culture of narcissism within New Age.

I must admit, that I have seldom met so many unpleasant people, as within New Age, especially because of their overestimated self-images, people who play spiritual teachers without the necessary philosophical knowledge, training and experience. Almost anybody within this environment seem to be talking and behaving as if they were spiritual masters, and are meeting other people with a lot of unrealized prejudices, thought-distortions and manipulation; impossible to have a sober discussion with.

Anyway, when I overcame the anxiety connected with the kundalini-experiences, and the experiences with, again and again, being devaluated, I went into periods with periodical alcohol-abuse, which I found justification for in the works of the Beatwriters, who also were the first kinds of dropouts I felt inspired by. I could also suddenly explode in extreme anger, where I insulted a lot of people, often in my nearest family. All this of course didn't made my situation better.

The whole thing was, in spite of the deep suffering in it, of course due to self-assertion. And then I had to go into that (see my investigation of anger – which I claim in certain situations can be justified - in my article *The Hermeneutics of Suspicion* in my book *Dream Yoga*)

To understand and be free from self-assertion, and to do something, which you really love to do – regardless what it is, how small or how little remarkable it is – awakens a spirit of greatness, which never is seeking others' approval or reward, and which do a thing for its own sake, and therefore possesses strength and ability not to lie under for mediocre influences.

Here is that being invisible to the culture directly a blessing – that being unregarded, ignored, and devalued, can be an impetus to take another route: the quiet way, the gentle, steady, behind-the-scenes path. This is the invisible way of empowerment, the slow path of alchemy. Soul work takes time. This meant I intentionally had to make time, especially in our increasingly hyperactive, extroverted secular culture.

My own discovery of this, was what finally turned my crisis into a healing and transformative spiritual practice. Instead of seeing my life as befelled by a curse, I began, deeply inspired by Karen Blixen, to realize that this might be God's plan with me. I could begin to see the dreamtracks and songlines in the artwork of my life.

The question I had to ask, involved as I was in exploring extraordinary phenomena devalued by mainstream consciousness, was whether the burden of being disregarded by noninitiates is truly greater than the burden of trying to convince them that I had an experience that, at least by implication, made me somehow "special". I began to adopt an Epicurean way of life.

Epicurus (341-270 b.c.) was a Greek philosopher and lifeartist, who contrary to most other Hellenistic philosophers, was Athenian citizen. His place of birth was however on the island Samos by the seaside of Asia Minor, and on this, and on the other, cultural seen, rich islands in the eastern Aegean Sea, Epicurus came in contact with philosophical traditions, that hardly was alive in Athens; especially the thoughts of the great philosopher of nature, Democritus.

Epicurus left Samos after having stepped his philosophical child-shoes on the island, and established as philosopher on the island Lesbos. However he was banished from the island because of his viewpoints. In 307 he travelled to Athens with the mental ballast, that he was Athenian citizen; this meant that he, contrary to the other philosophical schools, had the right to own land in Athens itself.

Epicurus established one of two central schools in Athens. It was in constant sharp opposition to the Stoics. I will not go deeper into the philosophical opposites, just mention, that philosophy of nature was central in Epicurus, whilst the Stoics had a

concept of a god, which in them was the central. But both are common in the view of philosophy as an art of life.

The school of Epicurus was called The Garden, and since then the concept "to cultivate your garden" has in European way of thinking been synonymous of living a life retired from the world's ups and downs, to give up all ambitions about social status. This is a completely central aspect in my own way of life.

Epicurus had a real garden, a kitchen garden with vegetables, and to that he retired, and lived of own productions. It was an attempt to avoid the bindings of the world, just like the Stoics, but in quite another way. The Stoics were radically extroverted, and went into Athen's central buildings, where they, among the cloisters, forced themselves speech access to the citizens, whereas Epicurus retired, and avoided all kind of – also political – debate. As he said: "Live in secret!"

Note, that avoiding debate doesn't mean not to lead a critical dialogue in philosophical sense. Epicurus wrote critical texts, and his way of life is in itself a deeply critical attitude (I have investigated the difference between debate and critical dialogue several times in my books. For instance read my article *The Hermeneutics of Suspicion* in my book *Dream Yoga*).

In his garden he realized his own life-ideal: together with friends and pupils to live a life in silent peace and joy, in peace to cultivate his garden and his needs, afar from the world's noise and political quarrel. It was a kind of philosophical commune, which stood open for all sections of population and for both sexes, and where the master with his friends practised, what they taught. The teaching of Epicurus is in other words a way of life, a teaching, which puts undisturbed happiness and refined pleasure up as the supreme good.

This Epicurean attitude became a central inspiration for my own life, my teaching, my kind of philosophical counseling and cafés.

It is a passive way of meditation, a non-acting, receptive receiving, relaxed, enjoying, easy laid-back holiday-like kind of awareness, as when you listen to the birds or the breeze in the trees.

So today I live like a kind of philosophical mendicant friar, in poverty, chastity and obedience to some philosophical principles. I earn my living by what people give me, and what the society can offer in form of social security benefit. This is sometimes not very popular, but as I have mentioned, sometimes you have to be a kind of spiritual anarchist, a philosophical rebel, if you want to live in accordance with your

call in life. And not so different from how monks and nuns, or artists, always have lived.

Krishnamurti said, that it would be wise to retire in the age of 40 or 45, or even younger. Not in order to enjoy the fruits of what the world can offer, or what you have gathered of wordly things, but retire in order to find yourself, to think and feel deeply, to meditate and discover reality; because then you would actually be able to help the world in quite another way, because you not are identified with it. An insider in society is namely an outsider in relation to life itself, while an outsider in relation to society, is an insider in life itself.

Well, now, when I am writing this, I am 45 years old (December 2010), and have retired from the world. I worked some years as a gentlemen's outfitter in Harrods in London, I have gone through a spiritual crisis, I have taken an education in philosophy, written three books on my teaching Meditation as an Art of Life.

Now it is time to go deep into this teaching. People might get angry, and call me an idler. And they are correct. With the words of the great life-philosopher and idler, Lin Yutang, I call myself an apostle of loafing. But people have to remember, that I am not anymore contributing to the world's noise and political quarrels, and therefore not to conflict, violence and war. On the contrary I try to help people get out of this confusion. I do this by offering philosophical counseling and cafés to people, who are able to listen and learn; that is: initiates. Mostly this happens in Rold Forest, Denmark, which is the place I have retired to.

So, as an apostle of the philosophy of loafing, I am actually working quite hard. My art of living is an idle philosophy born of an idle life. And if my life raises the suspicion of lolling, then look at my actions. I am trying to help people, and are favouring a person who would react freely and incalculably to external circumstances, pitting their individual liberty against the process of society: the little man eluding the clutches of the traffic warden.

And look at what the wisdom of the art of loafing has given us. Chinese literary tradition is rife with the jottings of non-achievers – the cultured vagabond, the scholar recluse, the Taoist wanderer. Already in 500BC, the sage Lao Tzu recommended that one should “never be the first in the world”. Only he who is not wanted by the public can be a carefree individual, runs the Taoist adage. The importance of living is peopled with educated dropouts – for instance poets such as Su Tungpo and Tao Yüanming; Su, who sang about “the clear breeze over the river and the clear moon over the mountains”, and Tao, who sang about “the hen, which rested in the top of a mulberry tree”.

So after having followed the Beatwriters' way of living, then these kinds of dropouts have become the new great source of inspiration in my life.

Like Lin Yutang I actually see the art of loafing as democratic in its nature. But, as Walt Whitman is pointing out in his *Democratic Vistas* – it is the ideal of free men and women in the Now, not the ideal of the democratic progress or improvement (today Consumer Capitalism) - just look at Laurence Sterne on his “sensitive journey”, or at Wordsworth and Coleridge, wandering on foot through Europe, with a great sense of beauty in their hearts, but with a very few money.

The philosophical refined pleasure in the art of loafing is something, which costs much less than the lust of luxury. The only thing the pleasure of loafing requires is a creative emptiness, a life enjoyed as it is lived. Play without reason; travel to see nothing; a perfectly useless afternoon spent in a perfectly useless manner – these are the kind of activities that redeem the art of living from the business of living, which also Henry David Thoreau has shown in his *Walden*, where he describes his life in the woods, retired from the world's ups and downs.

Look at nature! All nature loafs, while Man alone works for a living!

No, I have retired to Rold Forest, where I participate in the joys of conversation on a moonlit night; to be in the middle of a joyful gathering of happy friends, like in Wang Hsichih's immortal little essay *The Orchid Pavilion*.

Only in such an art of life the magic of philosophical counseling and cafés can begin.

### ***C. Will to power is not passion***

Because it is not self-assertion when you do something, because you love to do it. When you write and paint – not because you want prestige, but because you love to write and paint – it is assuredly not self-assertion. Self-assertion occurs when you compare yourself with other writers or artists, when you want to distance them. This would be the will to power, and the will to power is self-assertion. But it is not self-assertion, when you do something, because you really love to do it. This is passion. And passion is love.

Will to power and passion is in this way two different things. The will to power is feeded by the thought, is stimulated by the thought, it grows and becomes a reality in the thinking, until it is bursting in its own violent forms of fulfilment. Passion is something entirely different; passion is not a thought-product, nor the memory about

a past incident. Its dynamic is not due to a lack of fulfilment, and it has nothing to do with boredom. It has something to do with joy of life and self-forgetfulness, which not are lust.

In lust (which can't be compared with philosophical refined pleasure) there always is an ingenious form of striving – there is sought, hunted, requested, fought – so that you can preserve it, achieve it. In passion there is not the slightest lack of fulfilment, and therefore there can neither be disappointment or pain. Passion is freedom from the Ego, the centre for all lack of fulfilment. Passion requires nothing, because it is.

Passion is the strict simplicity of self-forgetfulness, in which there is no ego, that places itself outside life. Therefore passion is the innermost essence of life. It is that which is moving, creating and living. But when the thought introduces all the problems – to acquire, have and preserve – then passion ceases. Without passion there can't be created, and everything goes in dissolution. Precisely what happens in society today.

#### *D. Existential guilt*

Why have human beings lost this passion? Have human beings lost it because they use too much energy on self-assertion - because their eternal self-evaluations are sucking life out of the present, transforming the self-image into reality and the reality into emptiness? This vampire-like life, where the life-urge, or the vitality, slowly is reduced, crumbled, dissolved, and where ennui and boredom makes the whole of the world of Man, and Man himself, empty, waste and dark.

Stagnation is in its actual form blocking, fixation, paralysing. Stagnation is a lack of ability to, or possibility for, being fully alive. Life ends, is stopping up, of irrelevant reasons. Stagnation leads to obduracy, drying, lifelessness. There comes something grey, sad, colourless, monotonous, over the individual person's life. The same is applying for the individual person's world. Stagnation is connected with, that also the world, or parts of it, becomes grey, sad or monotonous. Lifelessness in the individual person corresponds with a life-lessness in his world. Habits and tedious repetitions take over life. The life rhythm decays to stereotypy. The individual person is fixated in specific patterns.

Another utterance of stagnation is officiousness, restlessness, busy-ness. So these are not a positive alternative to stagnation, but an outside movement, which covers over a lack of inner, of actual movement. Boredom has, as mentioned, been connected with lots of problems in the modern society.

We use ourselves over ability by doing things, which basically don't interest us. And at the same time we have still not found out, what we seriously are interested in. We haven't discovered what our real interest is, and we feel a fundamental disappointment, bitterness, or perhaps rather guilt: the feeling of not having accomplished our possibilities, the feeling of lack of life-unfolding and unlived life, and the annoyances over this.

It is necessary that you as a lifeartist ask yourself the question about what you are interested in. Not what you ought to be interested in, but what really absorbs you. More and more people become interested in finding out. And it is really important that you, with yourself, find out, in which direction your interest goes.

So far you perhaps have tried different things, you have devoted your energy and intelligence to these, but they haven't given you any deep satisfaction, like in Kazuo Ishiguro's novel *The Remains of The Day*, where the ageing butler Stevens realizes, that his loyalty to Lord Darlington has implied, that he himself never really has lived fully. Or you have perhaps burned yourself up by doing things, which didn't had your profound interest, or your real interest is still lying in torpor, and is waiting to be awakened. So which of the two possibilities is then the true?

Many people today have a need of discovering what the truth is concerning this question. If you have burned yourself up, the problem requires a special attitude; but if your fire still is sleeping, then it is important that it becomes awakened. And as a lifeartist it is important that you yourself discover the truth, rather than letting another tell you what is true. The truth about what you are, is its own action. If you are burnt-out then it is a question of healing, about recovering, lying fallow in creative sense. This creative state of fallow follows when you have cultivated and reseeded, it is non-action, which leads to complete action later.

If your real interest not yet has become awakened, and if the prompting to find out is present, then you will find out, not by constantly seeking after an answer, but to be inquiring, clear and warm in your prompting. Then you will see, that when you are awake, there is a sharpened attention in which you receive any hint from the hidden interest, and that dreams also play a part. In other words: the prompting gets the mechanism of discovery to function.

You shall not seek your real interest; the real interest will emerge by itself, because you are in a passive listening presence. If you conscious try to find out what your real interest is, there is a danger that you just choose one, weigh it up against another, calculate and judge. This process is only a cultivation of resistance; you use your powers on speculations about whether you have chosen correctly etc. But when there



is passive listening, and not a positive effort to find, then the movement of the interest steps into this presence.

If one should suggest a technique, then try to think about the interest as something that can't give you any success, money or power. This technique disarms the Ego in the same way as the monastic vows: poverty, chastity and obedience.

The French philosopher Bergson's philosophy of life is a part of a large-scale world-image, in which all forms of life have their origin in an *élan vital*, a life-upswing, an eternal breeding power. In Bergson life in all forms is that, which strives up-wards, outwards, still forward – in a fight against the material, against the inertia, which spoils life. That is: a dualism between dynamics and stiffness, or between movement and stagnation.

The Danish life-philosopher Ludvig Feilberg also talks about two forms of life-unfolding. The first is characterized by the possibility-raising life, where you are in a creative condition, characterized by self-forgetfulness, movement and freedom. The other is characterized by the possibility-reducing life, where you are not creative, but controlling, self-evaluating, split and closed.

We know movement and change from the outside world. Existential movement is connected with Man, with identity and personality. It arises in the individual person's relationships with the surrounding world. Movement has to do with human growth and development; it is to be integrated in something, which happens, not in whatever, but in something which folds the essence of Man out, contrary to stagnation and paralysation. It is to have your identity with you in a movement, which fills you, enriches you, favours you, promotes you. Movement is to *be* involved. It is an ontological phenomenon, a characteristic of being, not a phenomenon of consciousness.

Or you can say, that the happy movement is characterized by, that awareness and being go together. Existential movement gives life colour, or it is life in its colour-richness. It is lifegiving, or it is the identity in its life-given form. Movement creates light in the identity, gets it to light up. There is in it an energy, which is spreading as a live-likeness in the identity. It is the flowering of the essence of Man. The movement is so to speak a radiance of life. It is the thinking, which has been made transparent in being: self-forgetful thinking.

To begin to sense your true interest is a deep vitalizing, an *élan vital*, a new possibility-raising life, a transformation of the inert and possibility-reducing life.

### *E. The need of philosophical counseling*

The society is today characterized by a life-philosophical vacuum, a meaning-vacuum. Admittedly we all have a life-philosophy, yes, it is swarming with life-philosophies, but it is philosophies as images of life, not as conduct of life, it is as theory, not as practice. We have a lot of different ideas, conceptions, world-images, and are in extreme degree analyzing and evaluating. We put incredibly large emphasis on the positive in having a lot of views about everything, and we become more and more self-opinionated and obdurate. We confuse intellectual safety with meaning and coherence. In that way the thinking isolates itself in relation to conduct of life. We achieve intellectual safety at the expense of a meaningful conduct of life. The thinking is emptying the conduct of life for life and presence, and is filling it with boredom and absence.

Today we have no meaning-giving life-practice, no philosophical life-teaching, that has with our conduct of life to do, no philosophical life-practice, which can fill up our conduct of life with life-feeling, reality and presence. We think life and have all possible ideas about it, but it is very difficult for us to live with it in joy and fulfillment. This discrepancy between the thought and the conduct of life has created a kind of meta-pathology: existential problems such as experiences of unreality, ennui, boredom, guilt and anxiety.

There is therefore a need of that philosophical life-teaching and practice, which is offered in philosophical counseling. There is a need of philosophers who partly are university educated, partly have a philosophical life-practice; that is to say: philosophers who - like Socrates, the Stoics, the Epicureans, and the philosophers in the East - are and live what they think and teach, true teachers, whose thinking is made transparent in being, and who consequently live what they teach.

The function of the mind is to investigate and learn. To learn in philosophical sense doesn't only mean to cultivate the memory, or to accumulate knowledge, but to learn to think clearly and rational without illusions, to start with facts and not with beliefs and ideals. When the thought originates from the conclusion, you learn nothing. Merely to get information or knowledge is not to learn in philosophical sense. To learn in philosophical sense includes love of understanding, and love of doing a thing for its own guilt.

It is the philosophical counselor's job to help the guest to a philosophical life-practice, what again means to help the guest to discover his true call. What does "a true calling" mean? Something you love to do; something, which is natural for you.

What is then the purpose with education? As the Danish philosopher Finn Thorbjørn Hansen says in his book *The Philosophical Life* then the pedagogy in the twentieth century mainly has been dominated by psychology and sociology. That is to say: we have made specialized views of human nature to a starting point for education and upbringing, and therefore we have put emphasis on specific influences to Man. But Man is much more complex, and to emphasize one influence at the same time as you understate others, has created a lack of balance; it has led to much more confusion and decay. Man is a complete process. In pedagogy there must therefore be an understanding of the wholeness, and not just a part of it, regardless how important this part sometimes can be. Finn Thorbjørn Hansen says, that we are on the way into "the age of self-formation", and that there is a need for re-creating a thinking and a practice that consider philosophy to be the central discipline of pedagogy.

The purpose of education is to help Man to human growth, so that he can be free from self-assertion, and can find his true calling. And that means, as Finn Thorbjørn Hansen says, that pedagogy becomes a philosophical matter, that pedagogy becomes founded in the pedagogy of art of life.

The self-assertive has never discovered his true call, because if he had he would not be self-assertive. It is therefore the true teacher's duty to help humans to achieve insight, to be free from anxiety, so that they can find their true call, their own way of life, the way whereon they really want to live and earn their living.

But in society it is of course not so, because pedagogy is political controlled, therefore the purpose with education is not to create humans, but machines, which can be accommodated to the society, which the politicians want. And the politicians will do everything they can in order to prevent that pedagogy becomes founded in the pedagogy of art of life. Because humans who really have discovered their true call, will be philosophical rebels, and do what they can completely to break down rotten society-systems; that is to say: models of society that are based on a particular image, or ideology, whether it is of political or religious nature. Such humans will do what they with their essence love to do, either they are gardeners, painters or engineers.

And to do what you really love to do, is not to be self-assertive. To accomplish something wonderful, to do it completely, truly and in compliance with what, you deepest think and feel – is not self-assertive, and in such an act there is no anxiety.

You might have a talent as an author, poet, artist. Which potential you might have, if what you do, is something you really love to do, it is not self-assertion that runs you, but love. And in love there is no self-assertion.

Therefore it is very important, that humans, both younger and older humans, receive the correct help, so that their own reason can be awakened, and so that they can find their true call. Then you will love what you do life through, and this means, that there no self-assertion is, no competition, no struggle to achieve prestige or a high position; and then you will maybe be able to create a new world. In this new world will all the ugly the elder generation has created, cease to exist – their wars, their injury, their competition, their intolerant gods, their rituals, which all are meaningless - their strong government power, their violence, etc.

That to be interested in something, is not the same as self-assertion. We can add to the word "self-assertion" multifold meanings. In art of life self-assertion is based on becoming something, and therefore anxiety. But if a boy for instance is interested in becoming an engineer, because he is inclined towards raising beautiful buildings, to create wonderful bridges, to build excellent roads, then this is because he loves that act; and that is not self-assertion. It is an expression of what he is, and therefore there is no anxiety. In love there is no anxiety.

Self-assertion and interest are two different things. If you really are interested in painting, then you love to paint, you don't compete with others in order to become the best, or the most famous, painter. You simply love to paint. Perhaps there is another person who is a better painter than you, but you don't compare yourself with this other. When you paint, you love what you do, and in you this is enough. You are one with what you are, you are fully and completely existing, and the important is present and real.

### ***F. Reason and feeling***

One of the most common traits in our idea and mentality-history, is a constant change between a priority of the rational, the harmonical wellarranged, the controlled, and on the other hand the emphasize of the value and right of the feelings: Rationalism and the Age of Enlightenment is followed by the sensitive time, and of Sturm und Drang (1700-1800). Realism, Positivism and trust in the rational progress are followed by Symbolism and Irrationalism (1870-1900).

As Mogens Pahuus asks: "Should the right not be the golden mean – the successful synthesis of the rational and the emotional?" Pahuus mentions that we earlier have met this idea in our history of culture. Already in ancient Greece was formulated the thought about a combination of the Apollonian and the Dionysian – a thought, which came to expression in the organization of the Apollon temple in Delphi, which – under impression of the Dionysian fertility cult, which victorious forced itself forward from Asia minor – was changed to a temple, which the one half of year was

devoted to Apollon, the god of sun, light, order, control, and the other half of year to Dionysus, the god of wine and fertility.

As mentioned I suggest, that such a synthesis of reason and feeling is to be found in the concept of meditation, the passive listening presence, where you observe completely with mind and heart, where awareness and passion constitute a unity.

A such synthesis you can also find in Herman Hesse's novel *Guldmund and Narcissus*, where Hesse pictures two friends who are pure examples of respectively a man of reason and a man of feelings: Narcissus and Guldmund, the theorist and the dreamer, the thinker and the artist. Two humans, whose life without each other, are characterized by absence and unreality; the one is conscious evaluating, the other is unconscious dreaming. The one is conscious by experiencing himself as a theorist in relation to his own life. The other is unconscious by being beside himself in experiences and intoxication. First in synthesis they can become real and present, by learning something of each other.

What you as a lifeartist need, is a reason and a feeling which can provoke a philosophical revolution in your life, so that there no longer is any self-contradictory actions, but a whole, coherent movement. In order to, that such a change can occur in your life, there must be both awareness and passion. In order to be able to do something worthwhile at all, you must have this clear awareness and strong passion. In order to be able to understand the act in which there isn't any division, or inner discord, you must have this awareness and passion. Intellectual concepts, or formulars, can't change your way of life; this can only the actual act of understanding what you are, and to that is needed both awareness and passion.

Can you as a lifeartist observe yourself, what you are, the violence, the self-assertion etc., with the utmost care; that will say: in passive listening presence? You can only do this if your clarity, your energy, your interest and deepest passion fall together in the moment where you are exposed. In that moment you must have a heart, which is a burning passion after understanding what you are, and you must have a mind, which doesn't distort what it observes. These things must take place immediately in the moment of unveiling; what means, that you are sensitive enough, and free enough, to have this living energy, intensity and clarity, which fall together in the passive listening presence.

So in order to be able to see the truth you must also be able to feel, you must be endowed by passion after discovering, and having a great energy. When you observe a cloud and the light in this cloud, then there is beauty. Beauty is passion. In order to, that you can see the beauty in a cloud, or the beauty in the light on a tree, there must

be passion, there must be intensity. In this intensity - this passion - there is no sympathy or antipathy at all, and therefore not the feelings, which follow these. The intensity is not personal, not yours or mine. When there is lust there is yours or mine. But the mind, which is passively aware, allows life and energy to flow back from the past and the future, into presence and reality. The energy and the life, which are invested in sorrows and bindings, plans and problems, are flowing in, filling the Now, increasing the intensity and the consciousness in the Now.

This opens by itself the heart; being and reality fall together, your life is real, you are self-forgetful wrapped up in beauty; there is no theorist or dreamer within you. You are your activity in the beauty; it is a presence of something, which not is hidden, something obvious, something, you have a clear understanding of. And in this way reason and feeling fall together.

## IV

### **The lifeartist as a natural being**

In the thought about that reason only is rationalizations of desires and subconscious impulses, is also lying a disposition to another discussion, because with desires, senses and the whole of his organism, Man is a part of nature.

Naturalism stands for any view, which considers nature, or the natural, as the most common basis for explanations and evaluations. A naturalistic view of human nature is this conception: Man is a piece of nature.

Naturalistic views can be traced back to the oldest Greek philosophy, but all newer forms of naturalism are characterized by modern natural sciences. Naturalism therefore very often advocates the conception, that all phenomena in the world can be studied through natural science. However it is important to be aware, that naturalism in itself isn't a scientific point of view, but a philosophical point of view. No single branch of science gives anything else than a limited perspective on Man or reality. If you are claiming anything else, you end in reductionism; that is: where you reduce Man and reality to only being a result of a single influence. You accentuate one influence at the same time as you understate all others, and therewith you get a problem with creating unity and coherence in your theory. Both Man and reality are all too complex to be written down to one influence.

The view of nature, which is characterizing naturalism today, is characterized by three things:

- 1) Nature is understood as something, which goes off regularly. This regularity can be formulated mathematical, and is what we understand as the laws of nature. Through insight in the laws of nature Man can learn to make use of nature to his own advantage.
- 2) This regularity is not an expression of any, to Man, understandable reason. That will say: there are no purposes or intentions with how the ways of nature function. They are only controlled by causal regularity of a mechanical kind. This materialistic ontology claims, that the only thing which has real existence, is mass entities in motion. The whole of nature can fully be explained from the knowledge of these mechanical principles. All explanations use the cause and effect relation. They are causal. Teleological explanations - that is: explanations from purposes - are rejected.
- 3) Nature is understood and explained from itself. In other words: nature contains in itself its causes. It develops itself by force of immanent powers. It produces itself, is a natura naturans. Naturalism doesn't set the scene for religious explanations.

Meanwhile there also is a so-called communicative view of nature, which claims that nature is of value in itself, that there is a beauty and richness in nature, which is of non-causal and non-mechanical kind, and that Man as a natural being has a community with this nature. For instance Løgstrup is not naturalist in the way the word was used in the above-mentioned. Through the whole of his life he had an energetic controversy with all positivism and empirical naturalism. His main objection is, that these reduce reality for important dimensions. The sovereign and spontaneous life-expressions are given with "life itself". You can say, that they belong to our nature, if you thereby understand it as a metaphysical nature. This you can also call naturalism, but it is in that case important to emphasize, that it is a metaphysical naturalism.

Mogens Pahuus has in his book *Karen Blixen's philosophy of life* argued, that Blixen, when she speaks about God, is using the word in a quite other meaning than the traditional. According to him she uses it completely synonymous with nature, or rather, the creative powers in nature. In any eventuality it seems, like she thinks of the human nature as being related to the rest of nature. The human nature is a unity of spirit, instinct, sensation, body and feelings, something which you can't control and master by standing outside it, but which is connected to life-feeling, spontaneity and self-forgetfulness, when you are one with it. Reason, you can say, is lying in an adaption to the realities, both in oneself and the surroundings.

In his book *The Light of Nature* the Danish philologist of Middle Ages, Axel Haaning, is portraying a line of philosophers of nature from the Late Middle Ages and Renaissance, who advocate a communicative view of nature, and who try to illustrate both religion, as well as science of nature, in a more large-scale perspective, but who have been standing in the shadow of the Age of Enlightenment, as well as the breakthrough of modern sciences. It is names such as Roger Bacon, Albert the Great, Jean de Rupescissa, Marsilio Ficino, Paracelsus, Gerhard Mandrel, Giordano Bruno.

Finally shall be mentioned Buddhism, which in some areas can sound very materialistic and naturalistic, but again there is talk about a metaphysical naturalism. It is speaking about the Buddha-nature as the final goal of Man. The Buddha-nature is the original and innermost nature of the mind, which always is completely untouched by change and death.

Usually the Buddha-nature is lying hidden in our own mind, enveloped and hidden by the hurry of the thoughts and of the feelings. But as clouds can be brushed away by a strong gust of wind, and reveal the shining sun and widely open sky, so can also inspiration in us, under certain circumstances, uncover glimpses of this nature of the mind. These glimpses have many depths and degrees, but each of them throws light on understanding, meaning and freedom. This is because that the nature of the mind itself is the root of understanding. In Tibetan it is called Rigpa, an original, pure, untouched awareness, which at the same time is intelligent, realizing, luminous, happy and always awake. It can be said to be knowledge about knowledge in itself.

The nature of the mind isn't completely related to the mind. It is not the mind, but precisely the nature of the mind. It is in reality all thing's nature, and that to realize the nature of the mind is the same as realizing all thing's nature. And to meditate is to bring the mind home to this nature, to become enlightened, and released from suffering.

Let us now try to look deeper into, how the lifeartist, as a natural being, can be understood in the light of the above-mentioned. In this understanding are included aspects of Man such as needs, brain and body. A little more controversial is it, also to let language and identity be a part of nature, because they usually are seen as an aspect of Man as a historical being. However I don't think, that these can be separated, because history, including language and identity, also is connected with metaphysics and theory of knowledge; that is: philosophy of nature.



## 1. Needs

### *A. Sensitivity language*

The psychologising of our culture has led to an exaggerated focus on feelings and needs. The whole thing is canalized through management theories and coaching.

These theories are specially inspired by the American Human Psychology, for instance Abraham Maslow's theory of human motivation, and his famous hierarchy of needs, which most people today probably is acquainted with. This hierarchy is as follows: Man has both physiological needs, safety needs, social needs, esteem needs, and self-actualization needs. The lower needs require satisfaction before the higher needs can be satisfied. The theory is, not surprisingly, based on a biological view-point; that is: a specialised view-point, which can't explain Man as a whole. But that is precisely what it is trying to do: Man is a needing being.

It is a theory, which comes to speak the language of Consumer Capitalism. A consumer is a person with different needs. The constant growth ideal is therefore about creating new needs in all areas of life. A thought, that has created the so-called "shopping mentality", which not only is applying to food, clothes etc., but also to values and spirituality.

This ideology of needs is today an integrated part of all education within schools, folk high schools and continuing education, where they focus on so-called "personal development". The whole thing reminds about George Orwell's novel 1984, which is about a totalitarian state, where the citizens is kept in ignorance through thought-control, a special designed language called Newspeak, which works through the distinction between old thinking (bad), and new thinking (good). The language therefore contains prejudices and condemnation. Every time you in that way come to use a word or a sentence within old thinking, you are getting a condemnation-thought about yourself (bad) from your super-ego, or conscience.

Popular within the ideology of needs is the so-called giraffe language, originally developed by the American psychologist Marshall Rosenberg. In the following I will use this name, but a similar "sensitivity language", or "sensitivity ethics" is generally used by the management theories, though they might not use the name giraffe language.

They claim, that giraffe language/sensitivity language is the language of non-violence, or the language of the heart's compassion (because the giraffe's heart is so

big), but which quickly shows only to be the language of wishes, feelings and needs, which nothing at all has to do with compassion, but with your own ego. We quickly see, that it works through a comparison with wolf language (the bad anti-language), and therefore through prejudice and condemnation. So, you can see this is an ideology, which always thinks black and white, which always has an enemy-image, an anti-ideology, which shows precisely what it is the ideologists don't like.

The giraffe language is today penetrating everything, from the private life, to life on the working place, where the use of giraffe language often directly develops into something vexatious and harassing, because everything not just can be a question of satisfaction of needs and feelings. How is that?

The main problem is precisely that everything is reduced to wishes, feelings and needs. If the participants don't accept this, and not are willing *only* to focus on their wishes, feelings and needs, then they are condemned as wolfs, as a person with a resistance problem. The whole thing is based on a reductionism, namely psychologism. Within for instance NLP (neuro-linguistic programming) you can in such a situation be advised to seek to re-program yourself, and go into yourself and have a dialogue with yourself about what actually is wrong with you since you react in this way. So critique of for instance social problems on a workplace is oppressed by, that the critique is made visible with reference to psychological personality models and attitude evaluations. With the help of such a model you can then be considered as a negative person, who not are using the possibility for that personal development, which the loving NLP consulent, or company, is offering you (read more about the problem of theories of human types, or personality types, in section *G. Conclusion to NLP and LGAT* )

According to this psychologism, it is only the individual's own subjective evaluation, based on the Ego, or the Self (to me the same), which can provide something with value. There neither exists valid values, which come from the community, or objective values, which come from nature, the universe, or life itself. Nothing has value in itself, unless it comes from the Ego/Self. This subjectivism is often followed by grand claims about being able to become just about anything - that you through your choices, or story telling, can create a successful life as you think it fits your needs, desires or wants.

But the theory's view of morals is not only a subjectifying, which attributes the source of morals to the subjective itself (the Ego, the inner thinker, the Self), but also an emotionalizing, since it is the individual's *feelings*, which decides the moral quality of something. What it is about, is to do what "*feels*" right. It is the individual's (the Ego's) emotional experience of something, which defines values, not conversely.

And this is fully in thread with the ideology of Consumer Capitalism, where the customer (and his or her's wishes, feelings and needs) always is right. The consumer society, the therapeutic Ego-unfolding and the subjectifying of the moral, go hand in hand. The moral – the Ego's relation to itself – is therapized, and the moral is subjectified.

Through this we have reached the highest level of postmodern development for better or for worse. The same fully individualized core of personality, which makes us able to step out of the past's fixed and subconscious attachment, has itself become our main interest, center for our identity in a degree, that almost all our awareness is directed inwards in a global seen exceptional narcissism, that makes us behave like children, when our wishes, feelings and needs not can be satisfied.

Individually we have namely created a large-scale self-image, which in a quite high degree is based on assumptions/ideas. This self-image we almost continuously defend, by filtrating the impressions we receive from the world. We want to be in peace with our self-images, and quite convenient we therefore have created a cultural pluralism (=culture relativism), which forbid actual value judgment. I have my truth, and you have yours. Respect! Self-accept! I'm OK, you are OK! It all runs together in a fear of hierarchies, where it is political incorrect to claim that something is higher than something else. "You judge", is the same as "you condemn."

Relativism has in this way succeeded in creating an illusion of, that it is a kind of sacrilege (intolerance/thought-crime/old-thinking/wolf-thinking) wanting to utter yourself about, what is good and evil, true and false, beautiful and ugly, at the same time as the advocates (the relativists, the users of giraffe-language, the NLP consultants) does this themselves in all possible quibbling ways, under cover of concepts such as tolerance or new-thinking; for instance on the working place, where you have to recognize personal development as being something positive for you.

No matter whether it is about your professional skills, or your personal and private sides, then you are forced to consider your life as a developmental project where your personal development shall be in compliance with the succes of the company. In teambuilding courses the employees are learning to talk for instance giraffe-language (the language of sensitivity) to each other in the believe, that they in this practice are unfolding their own inner compassion, while the fact is, that it all happens in the name of the company's succes, and where the leader therefore escapes any responsibility, because critique is seen as a symptom of personal problems.

The way you have to use the giraffe-language, in for instance a conflict between you and another person, whom you have some kind of problem with, can generally be said to start with, that you have to say how much you respect, tolerate and accept the

other person's views; that is: the other person's wishes, needs and feelings – and how OK they are. Then you have to proceed to the subjectivistic, or relativistic claim, that there isn't any objective truth, but only individual/personal point of views, which therefore must be equally true (in this way the other person's arguments is devaluated). And then you can turn focus into yourself (because it is you yourself, and your ego, the whole thing is all about), and say, that you also have needs and feelings, which require respect, tolerance and accept, whereby you in an ingenious way can imply, that the other person is intolerant, and have some personal problems to deal with: a user of wolf-language.

That is how the whole vexatious and harassing "side-effect" starts in for instance teambuilding courses. In the beginning it can be felt as an annoyance over being talked to, and treated, like a child. Within their "non-violent" giraffe-courses the participants often are getting hats on either as giraffes or wolfs.

### ***B. Coaching***

But the giraffe-language user's behaviour can develop directly into psychopathic behaviour, where he doesn't think he has to take into consideration objective arguments, critical thinking, social problems, ethics or anything else, because truth and values only can be defined by what he himself wishes, feels and needs. All disguised behind his image of himself as a tolerant and compassionated human being.

The ideal about the Ego-unfolding human being shows itself - as the Danish psychologist Nina Østby Sæther writes in an article in the book *Selvrealisering* (page 89ff) – in a remarkable way, to remind about the actual behaviour of the so-called psychopath. The resemblance steps forward by comparing the characteristic psychopathic traits with the typical attitude to life, which is introduced by the coaching industry, as for instance sensitivity language:

1. Psychopaths are characterized by egocentrism/grand ideas about own value. They consider themselves as smarter than the most. The understanding of own abilities and importance is unrealistic exaggerated. Coaching is an expression of an individualistic way of thinking, where the main focus primarily is aimed on oneself. As the coaches says: "It is not facts, but the best story which wins! You can be anything, what you yourself choose to be!"
2. Psychopaths have a low frustration threshold and low threshold for aggressive reactions. In coaching the tendency to express feelings immediately and heavily, is cultivated. Inhibition of emotional reactions is namely regarded as neurotic.

3. Psychopaths are in need of new impulses, and are easily subjects of boredom. In coaching the idea about innovation, development and growth is lying as a vital need, where experiences stand in the centre. The value of the experiences is measured from whether something is interesting or boring.
4. The psychopath's behaviour is characterized by impulsiveness and lack of realistic long time planning. According to coaching, then the Ego-unfolding human is characterized by "increased spontaneity" and ability to live in the Now. (You shall here be aware of the contradiction between the future worship of coaching – the winner-mentality - and the ability of being in the Now. There is a big difference between the Ego's instinctive reactions, which origins in thought-patterns from the past, and the self-forgetful spontaneity in the Now, which the wisdomtraditions talk about).
5. The psychopath is seeking excitement, and shows a ruthless indifference for own and others secureness. In coaching they dissociate from a way of life characterized by secureness and monotony, and urge to take chances and to run risks.
6. The psychopath gives expression of having specific rights, which do, that he doesn't need to follow common laws and rules. By doing so he is characterized by irresponsibility and lack of consideration of social norms, rules and obligations. In coaching obligations and bindings are regarded as impediment for the Ego-unfolding.
7. The psychopath is characterized by lack of empathy, inability to long relationships, as well as manipulation. According to coaching emotional independence is a human right. The feelings, thoughts and expectations of others are regarded as restrictive elements for the Ego-unfolding, and the goal is most possible liberation from these.
8. The psychopath is characterized by lack of feeling of guilt and regret, marked tendency to push the guilt at others or to explain away the behaviour, which creates difficulties. Psychopaths often say, that they did something, because they felt for it. Within coaching all actions can be explained with starting point in feelings, which, according to them, are expressions of the authentic self (the Ego). In this way coaching itself can be regarded as a form of explaining away behaviour that creates social problems. Any action can be legitimized as a necessary expression of your self-realization/personal development (ego-unfolding).

### *C. The insulting use of sensitivity language and coaching*

In my book **Dream Yoga** I have described the insults I have met from people within the industry of sensitivity language and coaching (because I am critical). I myself have been forced to participate in giraffe-language groups (because you can't live in

the society today without meeting it), and have been condemned as a user of wolf-language; that is: a bad person. Why? Because I am a philosopher, who uses rationality and critical thinking. For instance I have often been met with the phrase: “*Would you rather be right, than happy?*” (which sounds like something taken out of George Orwell’s novel 1984) after which the insults typical continue on implications (most often they don’t say it directly) about that I am an arrogant, mediocre, sexually frustrated, unhappy philosopher, that ought to come in psychotherapeutic treatment. Insults so misplaced, that the only thing they expose is their own prejudices. The whole thing ends up in the direct opposite of what it was supposed to avoid.

It is by the way interesting, just to comment on the above-mentioned phrase, that many of the highest ethical placed humans on Earth actually have sacrificed their own personal needs, and even their lives, in the defence of truth, instead of just being happy over having their needs (greed) satisfied. It is after all so, that critical thinking is self-forgetful (=compassionated) in the sense that it is seeking a truth that goes beyond personal interests. Just take Gandhi and Martin Luther King. And take the Chinese dissident Liu Xiaobo, who in his defence of justice and human rights, is taking 11 years in prison. And take Jesus.

Try to use the phrase on these people. The answer could very well be, that these people rather should have been interested in own tiny narrow egoistic needs, instead of their quest of truth; that it would have been better for these people to use lies in order to get their egoistic needs satisfied, instead of insisting on truth. This is actually what the giraffe-language theory could imply, and what exposes a side of it, that is without compassion and ethical understanding, yes, that it can be used with the direct opposite intention.

So the ancient use of critical thinking within philosophy, and which time after time has shown to be the best tool to clarify thoughts, is within these theories eliminated as wolf-language. The only thing left then, is to rummage about in your own wishes, feelings and needs, where you can be manipulated by any charlatan that feeds your ego; and eventually: violence.

Precisely as in Orwell’s novel, and by injecting you a virtual reality/illusion about yourself as a free person, like in the movie the Matrix, where humans are living in a computer generated dream (see more about what you could call the Matrix conspiracy in the section about the function of the brain).

I shortly mentioned earlier in this book, that I think, that there especially are five main education-instruments within the movement of needs/personal development, which advocate the same superior ideology, namely Consumer Capitalism:

The five education-instruments are:

1. Sensitivity language
2. Coaching
3. New Age
4. NLP
5. The Law of attraction

We have already looked at sensitivity language and coaching. Below I will shortly describe the three others:

#### ***D. New Age***

When someone is going to question the New Age ideology, then it can be hard to send the critique to a certain address. It is often only a minority within the New Age ideology, who stand behind a certain practice, and a critique of a certain practice might be irrelevant for the other part of the ideology. The ideology is namely based on all kinds of imported spiritual traditions mixed with Western psychotherapy, coaching and management theory. But I put both psychotherapy, coaching, management theory, and New Age, under the same ideology.

Below I will show five common traits of New Age, that show how it distorts true spirituality:

#### **1. The psychologizing of philosophy**

This causes, that the practitioners turn their minds towards the content, and not the form, as true spirituality does. It also causes that the main focus is turned towards feelings. In true spirituality the main focus is the thoughts.

#### **2. The elimination of critical thinking**

The psychologizing therefore also causes that critical thinking is seen as something negative, as a symptom on problems with your feelings. This turn is coming from relativistic and subjectivistic theories on Western universities, which forbid actual value judgment (notice the self-contradiction). And it has nothing to do with spirituality, and causes that the practitioners close themselves to both own problems, and problems of the world. In true spirituality critical thinking is quite central, because the practice here is about *discovering* both own illusions, and illusions of the world.

### **3. Incompetent teachers**

The many short self-made and private educations within the New Age ideology, cause that there are extremely many teachers without enough experiences and philosophical training. This causes a lot of spiritual misguiding.

### **4. Pseudo-science**

New Age is filled with all kind of loose, self-invented and directly wrong interpretations of science. Furthermore there is a manipulative, and non-founded, tendency to call their own practices science. This also causes a lot of misguiding.

### **5. Narcissism**

The same fully individualized core of personality, which today makes us able to step out of the past's fixed and subconscious attachment, has itself within New Age become the main interest, center for the identity in a degree, that almost all awareness here are directed inwards in a global seen exceptional narcissism. The ideological use of relativism and subjectivism sounds like this: "I have my truth, you have yours!" "You judge" is the same as "You condemn." In true spirituality the central goal is the elimination of the Ego.

## ***E. NLP***

Most people within business world and continuing education have today probably heard about the concept NLP (neuro-linguistic programming). NLP claims to help people change by teaching them to program their brains. We were given brains, we are told, but no instruction manual. NLP offers you a user-manual for the brain. The brain-manual seems to be a metaphor for NLP-training, which is sometimes referred to as "software for the brain." We shall see that it is not a coincidence that I call NLP consultants for Matrix programmers; that is: injecting us a virtual reality of illusions.

NLP-texts are over-flooded with empty persuader-words - note that it often directly uses the word persuasion - such as "Persuasion Engineering", "performing non-elective surgery", "Programming Technology", "Design Human Engineering", "The Strategy Elicitation Model", "simultaneous installation". None of these terms have any scientific meaning, they don't refer to any scientific research or results, yes, they are without any meaning at all. They are made up with only one purpose: seduction, manipulation and persuasion.



And NLP itself means “Neuro-linguistic Programming”, “which programs are developed through hard studies of the works of all great thinkers”, for instance Einstein and Tolstoy (in such rhetoric it reminds about the Law of Attraction devotees). That is: if you let your brain become installed with one of the NLP-programs, you can become an Einstein. Or you can choose another program, if you want to become another great thinker/sportsman/politician – anything you want. And NLP is still developing new programs/models, which it can sell for enormous fees. Why the hell waste your time on doing the hard work great people have done in order to become what they are? Idiotical. NLP is the answer! NLP has a catalogue over the brain-programs of great people, which you can buy and thereupon install in your own brain. And wupti!

Why can't people see how foolish it is? Because it is hidden behind this layer of pseudo-scientific jargon, that makes it sound clever. That is the only thing you need today in order to fool people.

The most hilarious about NLP is, that it is supposed to teach you how to become a great communicator. Yes, if you thereby mean a great manipulator. The Sophists have certainly returned, and Socrates has been jailed again.

So, one common thread in NLP is the emphasis on teaching a variety of communication and persuasion skills, and using self-hypnosis to motivate and change oneself. In this it reminds about the so-called Large Group Awareness Training (LGAT).

### ***F. Large Group Awareness Training (LGAT)***

LGAT is a personal development training program in which dozens to hundreds of people are given several hours, to several days, of intense instruction aimed at helping participants begin to discover what is hindering them from achieving their full potential, and living more satisfied lives.

LGAT, or self-help programs, have also been developed for corporations and public agencies, where the focus is on improving management skills, conflict resolution, general institutional strengthening, and dealing with the eternal problem of employees who drink too much or use too many drugs.

LGAT gurus claim to know to help people become more creative, intelligent, healthy, and rich. They focus primarily on the role interpersonal communication plays in self-esteem, and in defining our relationships with others. LGAT gurus claim to know why their participants are not happy, or why they are not living fulfilled lives. They

assume everyone are being hindered by the same things, and that one approach will suit all.

Some LGAT gurus use public television and books as their vehicles. Others give seminars in hotel ballrooms. Some use infomercials and peddle books and tapes to the masses to help them on the path to self-realization and success.

It is a typical American phenomenon, which we see copied all over the world. It is penetrating everything, even on the highest political levels. We all know the concept of spindoctors. The famous coaches within the area travel around in the world as superstars, and their “shows” - with extremely high fees on tickets - are being attended by the highest placed politicians and business leaders, who worship them as divine beings.

Though some coaches within the area advocate visualization, self-hypnosis, and other techniques for achieving self-realization, most LGAT programs focus on communication skills and the effect of language on thought and behavior. As with other personal development phenomena, the whole thing is mixed with religion, spirituality and philosophy: a New Age phenomenon.

The importance of the messenger and the way the message is delivered can't be overestimated in LGAT/NLP. The messenger must be believable. He or she must appear sincere. He must exude confidence. She must know how to use her voice and body to get her message across. He must be a master of communication skills. She must have wit and humour. He must be a raconteur. She must not only talk the talk but appear to clearly walk the walk as well. And he must do it with a large group and utilize the energy and enthusiasm of the group members to infect each other. If she or he is successful, the participants will leave charged up and ready to take on the world. The revival will have revived them. They will be running on sixteen cylinders. They will be tuned up, turbocharged, and empowered to change their lives. They will have experienced a peak-experience.

But there are also examples of people having a psychosis after such LGAT seminars. And people are going bankrupt one after the other. Criticism is often brutally crushed. Many LGAT gurus are so rich, that they can sue almost anyone. And that is precisely what they do. It is a scare tactic. Which company wants to be sued for running a critical story? These days none. Because the whole thing is also about eliminating critical thinking. Are you critical? Then you really are a nasty person/company. And there are examples on, that LGAT gurus have crushed newspapers' criticism, because they didn't want the hassle of dealing the lawyers of these gurus. People, who were about to write critical about LGAT in books, have been stopped. The exact same

tactic as Scientology, and it works; especially because it is a way of violating the freedom of speech, which has been governmentally accepted as legal.

A true threat against Freedom of Speech, which happens within our own democracy, is for example the so-called Libel Tourism. People from all over the world are bringing actions for libel to the British court, because British tradition of law is very advantageous for the one, who feels offended, and the number of libel suits is rising more and more. In practice the burden of proof is lying at the accused. To this should be added, that the interpretation of whether there has happened any offend is very broad (relativism and subjectivism).

An example is the spectacular case against the British-Indian physicist and journalist of science Simon Singh, who in the Guardian April 19, 2008, wrote an article (Beware the Spinal Trap), where he accuses the British Chiropractor Association (BCA) for, without evidence, claiming to be able to cure almost any kind of suffering, also sufferings very far away from problems with your back. The Guardian offered BCA the possibility for answering Singh's accusations in the newspaper, what they didn't want to. Instead they brought a libel action against Singh.

In the court there then happens a kind of reversed production of evidence. It is now claimed, that Singh in his article is implying, that BCA conscious, and dishonest, is doing hoax treatments, wherefore Singh is demanded to prove this. He was spending £ 100.000 on the case, and if he was to loose it, he would face a claim for compensation around £ 500.000. He decided to withdraw his article, but has instead started a campaign against libel tourism, with supporters such as Alan Sokal, who also is fighting against the threat of relativism and subjectivism in our society (read about Sokal in my article *The Rulers of Newspeak* in my book *Dream Yoga*).

The problem is, that law and jurisprudence nothing has to do within the world of objective critical thinking, whether it is within science, philosophy or journalism. However, this has been turned upside down today. And it is due to, that the ideology of relativism and subjectivism also seem to have invaded law and jurisprudence. Anyone with a bit of money, whether private persons, groups or companies, can today, with the help of law, make scare tactics against critical thinking, and even shut it down, no matter how objective and well reasoned it is.

### ***G. Conclusion to NLP and LGAT***

So those running programs within NLP and LGAT must excel in persuasion skills. The trainers (coaches) are motivators. They must use their powerful communication skills to persuade the trainees to believe, that they only have experienced a small taste

of the wonderful pleasure and fulfillment that awaits those who sign up for advanced training. In short: the trainers are not just teachers, they are sellers. Their main job is to motivate participants to buy more services, i.e., sign up for new courses.

The whole thing typical goes off as follows: you are being invited to attend a free course in for instance NLP. This course is about persuading you to buy an “actual” course in NLP. If you then go on and buy this course, then this course is about persuading you to buy a more advanced (more expensive) course and so on it continues. You are still not becoming that Einstein you would like to be. The only thing you might have learned, is how you yourself can become a coach; that is: a seller of courses (if you not have gone bankrupted). And if you complain, criticize, well then you must have psychological problems to deal with.

The fact that trainers are unlikely to do any follow-up on their trainees, except to try to persuade them to take more courses, indicates that their main interest is not in helping people lead more fulfilling lives (they can't, because the theories are wrong from the start – they simply don't have any effect as life-philosophies). No, the trainers have a sales job to do. They are paid commissions for the number of people they recruit and train, not for the number of people they truly help. It is not their interest/ability to do follow-up studies of their trainees. It is in their interest to do follow-up recruiting calls. Often this is done as hard pressure direct contact with participants, including phone-calls that border to harassment, according to some participants.

Some critics even think that recruitment is the main goal of the program. So there is a hard sell to sign up for future participants. Leaders encourage people to bring friends and family to a free session to celebrate their newfound love of life and invite them to enroll in the next available weekend, and hereafter pay the fee.

Personal development programs such as LGAT and NLP (and even cults like scientology) can point to many “successes.” They can demonstrate that their programs “work”. They can bring forth to testify on their behalf hundreds, if not thousands, of satisfied customers, among of them famous celebrities. But it is important to know, that testimonials do not validate a self-help program. Scientifically seen this is pure nonsense, and deeply manipulative. All talk about that testimonials are a proof, is a sign of pseudo-science. Furthermore, the sense of improvement, for instance peak experiences, might not be matched by improved behavior. Just because they feel they have benefited doesn't mean they have. Often they just have become a nuisance for their non-initiated surroundings.

The problem with LGAT, NLP, and other similar programs - and their way of distorting philosophy - can be seen by comparing them with the relation between the

Sophists and Socrates. Socrates was a true philosopher, he was seeking wisdom, an absolute truth that transcends us, and his way to reach this truth was through the Socratic dialogue. But this is certainly not what is meant with great communication skills within LGAT and NLP. No, LGAT and NLP must support the Sophists.

The Sophists were subjectivists and relativists. They didn't believe in any absolute truth that transcends us, but in, that there are many truths, which each of us create through our senses and language. And because there is no objective truth-criterium to decide truth, each truth must be equally true; but not equally good, because some truths fascinate us more than others. And here we precisely have the personal development's slogan: "It is not facts, but the best story, which wins!"

The Sophists were teachers of rhetoric, who against a fee, taught people how to persuade other people about their "truths". Rhetoric is precisely the art of persuasion. Rather than giving reasons and presenting arguments to support conclusions, as Socrates did, then those who use rhetoric are employing a battery of techniques, such as emphatic assertion, persuader words and emotive language, to convince the listener, or reader, that what they say or imply is true. The Sophists taught their pupils how to win arguments by any means available; they were supposedly more interested in teaching ways of getting on in the world than ways of finding the truth, as Socrates. Therefore any charlatan is welcome.

Most NLP practitioners make grand claims about being able to help about anybody become just about anything. In this it follows other New Age techniques such as the Law of Attraction, as well as the use of relativism and subjectivism. This shows in phrases such as "there is no such thing as failure. There is only feedback."

And here the first dark side shows, because such claims fall for a *reductio ad absurdum* argument. As the critical thinker Robert T. Carroll says, then this would imply that NLP could be invented by the U.S. Military to explain their "incomplete successes." When the space shuttle blew up within minutes of launch, killing everyone on board, was that "only feedback"? If I stab my neighbour and call it "performing non-elective surgery" am I practicing NLP?

Another NLP presupposition, which is false, is "If someone can do something, anyone can learn it." This comes from people who claim they understand the brain and help you reprogram yours. As Carroll says, then they want you to think that the only thing that separates the average person from Einstein or Pavlov, or the world champion Log Lifter, is NLP.

As mentioned, then NLP is claiming that its “experts” have studied the thinking of great minds, and the behavior-patterns of successful people, and have extracted models of how they work. “From these models techniques for quickly and effectively changing thoughts, behavior or beliefs that get in your way have been developed.”

Besides that it is stunningly naive to think that you can become a new Einstein without having lived his life as a whole, then this thought ends in two deep existence-philosophical problems. The first is that it makes your behaviour remind about a psychopath (see section *B. Coaching*). The other thing is that it destroys you. It leads to, that you in your opinion formation strive after being something else than what you are, where you imitate others, are a slave of others ideas and ideals, and where your actions are characterized by irresoluteness and doubt.

NLP is said to be the study of the structure of subjective experience, but a great deal of the attention seems to be paid to observing behavior, and teaching people how to read body language; that is: non-verbal communication. There is no evidence for this at all, and it ends in what I call the hermeneutics of suspicion. The communication then goes on, that the NLP consultant claims, that he can see how my body language reveals my signals, or my feelings. How? Well, he knows the structure, the meaning, because the message is coming from my subconscious mind. How do we test these kinds of claims? We cant.

The philosopher Paul Ricoeur has referred to the “hermeneutics of suspicion” encouraged by writers such as Marx, Nietzsche and Freud. What people think, and the reasons they produce, may not be the real reasons at work. It then becomes easy to become suspicious of the motives of everyone, whether as the representative of an economic class, or the purveyor of a morality, or just as an individual with psychological problems to solve.

To try to have a normal conversation with NLP coaches and psychotherapists can be an odd experience. Often they just look at you with these empty eyes that says: “Well, it might well be that you think what you think, and that you produce the reasons you do, but I know better, I don’t think that is the real reasons at work. I think you have some psychological problems to solve!”

But how can they know this? How can they play the role as someone who know who you are better than yourself, at the same time as they totally deny and renounce what you think, and the reasons you produce; that is: your experiences, your education, your arguments, your articles, your books?

Well, the only way they then can get their knowledge from, is from their own theories. NLP for instance claims that each of us has a Primary Representational System (PRS), a tendency to think in specific modes: visual, auditory, kinaesthetic, olfactory or gustatory. NLP also often - like other New Age techniques used in management theories - uses specific psychological models, and characterizes people in psychological types. Within the movement of personal development and New Age there are numerous theories of human types and personality types, and there are still coming more. Each new number of a New Age magazine with respect for itself, must include at least one new “revolutionary” theory of human types, in the same way as it must present at least one new “revolutionary” spiritual theory “proved” by quantum physics. Such theories of psychological types are comparatively easy to invent, and earn money on, and they are certainly harmful because they involve all the problems of The Hermeneutics of Suspicion.

There is no evidence for such type-theories at all, and when a therapist or a coach - as it is the case most of the time - is lacking the ability of thinking deeper over things, then it ends in being a refined way of justifying prejudice. It can be a direct surrealistic experience to try to have a sober discussion with these people. One of the many self-contradictions for instance is, that though they talk a lot about meditation, neutral observation and science, then they have a very bad feeling about a neutral, impartial observer; they hate discussions, and it is impossible for them to keep critique of opinions apart from critique of persons. Critique of opinions is seen as personal attacks, which must be due to some psychological problems in the person, who is putting forward the critique.

They have especially two ways of reacting on critique: an angry way, and a happy way, which both are ways of explaining away the critique. The angry way goes on how bad a personality the critic must have, because he is critical. The happy way is much more weird, and can be directly surrealistic to experience (this is especially a reaction of the so-called giraffe language users). They look at the critic with a happy expression in their faces, and just keep on answering: “I *totally* agree with you! I *absolutely* agree! But I also have a point!” to no matter what you say, whereafter they walk away, happy over how they have solved the problem, and thereby can continue their false teachings, strengthened in their beliefs and prejudices (that goes on, that they are totally without prejudices).

Prejudice is a belief held without good reason or consideration of the evidence for or against its being true. The funny thing is that philosophy - that is: rationality and critical thinking - precisely is opposed to prejudice. We are all riddled with prejudices on a wide range of issues, but it is possible to eliminate some of them by making an effort to examine evidence and arguments on both sides of any question.

Human reason is fallible, and most of us are strongly motivated to cling on to *some* beliefs even in the teeth of evidence against them (for instance wishful thinking); however, even making small inroads into prejudice can transform the world for the better.

But these people do the opposite. They try to remove rationality and critical thinking through the hermeneutic of suspicion. And they have success. As already mentioned, then a whole time-tendency within school, folk high school, universities and continuing education, focus on so-called "personal development", which are inspired by them.

The removal of genuine rationality from the stage leaves open the possibility of accusations of rationalizations for ulterior motives. This form of analysis (leading us to think of groups or individuals "what is in it for them?"), is not only corrosive of trust in society. It is bound eventually to undermine itself. Why are such views themselves being propagated? What are those spreading them going to gain?

### ***H. The law of Attraction***

The Law of Attraction is the idea, that your positive or negative thoughts magnetically, magically, can attract this negative or positive into your life, so that it becomes reality. And what the idea considers as being positive or negative, is only circling around one special thing: how I can get my own wishes, feelings and needs satisfied (ups, there it was again). The believers claim, that the law of attraction is a spiritual law, which will help you in this quest. In other words: focus your thoughts on getting your own wishes, feelings and needs satisfied, and then you are living in compliance with the spiritual laws, and can make reality give you what you want.

An extremely manipulating thought, because if we take the true spiritual laws, then they say, that there is a duality in the Universe you have to realize in order to reach into non-dualism: for instance yin and yang, positive and negative, light and darkness, I and Thou.

This understanding of dualism goes on, that the opposites are defining each other; they are inseparable. If there comes an overweight of one of the poles it creates unbalance.

These laws exist everywhere: in nature, in society, in Man himself.

Now, if we take true spirituality, then you can say, that it contains three important concepts:



- 1) Critical thinking (spotting thought-distortions, created by dualistic unbalance)
- 2) Investigating the shadow (ignorance, the unconscious, the painbody, the cause of suffering, your own dark side, the Ego)
- 3) The spiritual practice (going beyond all ideas and images)

And now, if we take the self-deception in the Law of Attraction in relation to the above-mentioned:

- 1) The believers close themselves in the positive; that is: what they *think* is positive: namely their own wishes, feelings and needs. In this way they leave out the negative, which causes a lack of ability to realize the laws of dualism. Their so-called exercises - which they think the idea of the law of attraction helps them with - is about how to drive out, force out, repress, even ignore, the negative.
- 2) When ignoring the negative they fail to understand the shadow, their own dark sides, the Ego, ignorance and suffering as such. And understanding your own suffering is a necessity in order to train compassion. So this also causes a problem with empathy and compassion with other people - for example in the typical law of attraction idea, that peoples' suffering are their own guilt caused by negative thoughts; again: what the believers *think* is negative, that is: no focus on your own wishes, feelings and needs.
- 3) They close themselves in their own idea about the law of attraction, which causes, that they don't have any spiritual practice (no training of realization and compassion).

All and all it causes a total stop of any spiritual development, any ability to learn. They lull themselves into a huge illusion and self-deception (also the cause of their abuse of science, etc.). Their bad karma, their hubris-nemesis: an enormous unbalance.

The idea of the Law of Attraction goes wrong from the start because it is based on a misinterpretation of quantum physics and theory of relativity, which you can see repeated again and again in numerous New Age books (and also in the New Age movies *The Secret*, and *What the Bleep do we know?*). A misinterpretation, which the believers could see corrected, if they, (instead of their easy-solution-to-everything-quest), were seeking other sources to their ideas than New Age books, for instance Niels Bohr and Albert Einstein themselves (below I will give a description

of Niels Bohr's philosophy, and show how it, funny enough, actually disproves what the law of attraction advocates say).

The manipulative in the idea is then of course, partly that it says it is proven by science, but also that all great thinkers, artists and spiritual traditions, support it. This happens by taking short or longer quotes out of the correct context, and placing them so that it seems like they support the idea. Some of the coaches and speakers in the environment are masters in this manipulative art. Manipulating is also the swollen titles they use about themselves, such as for instance "Super Coach", "The World's greatest Money Coach", and so on in the same style.

The word proven is also used manipulative in connection with the experiences the believers say they have had, after they have begun to use the Law of Attraction; that their experiences therefore "prove" that the idea is true (Law of Attraction meetings are often going off as testimonials about these "proofs" – here it reminds about NLP and LGAT meetings). But again: scientific seen this is pure nonsense. Of course you can create success by creating a manipulative stunt like *The Secret*, but this doesn't prove that the idea presented in the movie therefore is true. And concerning the idea, then believers of all kinds of other beliefs (totally different from the Law of Attraction) also always have had experiences, and a lot of believers don't experience anything. It can also be pure fantasy, coincidence, etc., etc. Besides, black magic also seems to work. And psychopaths also seem to have a strange ability to attract what they desire and want. So, testimonials doesn't prove anything.

This raises another question. How can the law of attraction support the wishes of all people? What if these wishes are contradictory? What about two parts in a war? What if another person wishes me dead, and I wish to live?

And now, finally, to the most frightening thought: what if, that psychopaths, massmurderers, dictators, terrorists, got hold of the fact, that the Law of Attraction actually would justify their ideas of what they find positive (their wishes, feelings and needs)...? There is nothing at all in the Law of Attraction-concept, that can say that this would not be positive. Focusing on your wishes is per definition positive, and the concept doesn't have any other ethical foundation than this.

The Cult of the Law of Attraction is the largest – bordering to the surrealistic – manipulation-project, I have ever seen. Probably because of the way it totally turns spirituality into the direct opposite of what spirituality is all about. And it has to be exposed.

On the other hand it can also be quite hilarious to follow New Age magazines, and see how the next week's new "revolutionary" New Age theory gets truth by authority (argumentation swindle), by claiming, that their theories have been channeled by divine sources; hilarious because these divine sources often seem to be repeating quite particular theories within American human psychology (which can't be used as life philosophies) and myths about quantum mechanics, which has been shown wrong. Quite naive, not to say ridiculous, divine sources, one must say.

One thing I don't understand, though, is that these coaches, who sometimes are talking to enormous audiences, not even are considering the thought: what if someone among the audience, who actually knows a little bit about, for instance quantum physics, is beginning to ask questions? Another thing is, that there in society isn't any control at all with this large area of manipulation and pseudo-science, which for instance, if used in the universities, would have led to disqualification. But of course, we are talking about a new ideology, which the society, more and more, are building on. Later we shall see, that a lot of the ideas actually might be supported from highest political positions

### ***1. The philosopher Niels Bohr***

I have in my book **Dream Yoga** already looked at the abuses of quantum mechanics, which we see so widely-spread in New Age circles, and wherein the misinterpretation consists. However there has right now been published a new book by my professor David Favrholt, who was one of Niels Bohr's students. It is David Favrholt who has taught me about the philosophical aspects of Niels Bohr's thinking. His new book is called *The Philosopher Niels Bohr*, and I will here summarize the most central aspects of this book, in order to show the misinterpretation in a new way.

On Manchester University in 1913 Niels Bohr produced his atomic theory, which with his own words broke with the "customary forms of experience within the physics". The atomic theory was nothing less than a showdown with classic physics and the way, in which we look at the world. Mind you, Bohr's atomic theory doesn't replace classic physics, as many are claiming. Here we find one of the misinterpretations. It is showing where the limit is for our way to observe the world. But it ushered the atomic age, as David Favrholt is writing in his book.

The quantum mechanics, as it came to be called, and which is about physics on atomic level, was so great a dispute with rational thinking, that only a few physicists at that time were willing to accept it. Bohr's most famous opponent, Albert Einstein, tried in many years to disprove the theories of the Dane, but David Favrholt claims, that there today is common agreement about, that Niels Bohr won that debate.

Bohr found out, that we have to establish certain rules in quantum mechanics, which we can't use in classic physics. He discovered, that when we have to measure an electronic movement around the atoms, we come, with our units of measurement, to intervene in what we are investigating. In the same moment, we want to decide the location of the electron, we have disturbed its course.

Shortly said, then Bohr discovered, that we can't observe the physics on atomic level without coming to influence it. In 1927 he goes forward and ends a discussion, which had taken place through centuries. It had been about, what light is consisting in – is it waves or particles?

Bohr shows, that light in some experiments behaves, as if it is particles, and in others as if it is waves. And here we have the foundation for the next misinterpretation, that goes on, that it is the consciousness of the physicist, which affects the light. This has led to the misunderstanding in the public, that quantum mechanics should imply, that there isn't given any objective or true description of the physical reality, consequently that it is the human consciousness, which produces the phenomena: subjectivism. The same misunderstanding characterizes by the way also Einstein's theory of relativity, that this should support relativism.

But it is *not* the consciousness of the physicist (the subjective), which makes the electron behave like a particle or a wave. It is the macrophysical (material) experimental devices, which affect the electron in a certain way, so that you unambiguous know, that if you work with this type of apparatus, then it will always behave like a wave, and with another type of apparatus, like a particle.

Nonetheless there has been created a lot of philosophical theories, which claim to be supported by quantum mechanics, and which have lead a war against the time of enlightenment, as well as against the classic physics and the connected rationalistic thinking. You could gather them under the word constructivism. Constructivism claims, that it is Man, who through his language and interpretations, creates the reality/truth. And you can swiftly see, that it is this idea the law of attraction is based on.

The theories is in this way characterized by relativism and subjectivism, since they claim, that there doesn't exist any objective order, which defines what is true or false, and that truth therefore exclusively is due to our own idea- and language constructions. Relativism exists in many forms, but generally you can talk about an individualistic relativism, subjectivism, which claims that it is the individual himself

who creates his truth, and a collectivistic relativism, social constructivism, which claims, that it is groups of people, that create their own truth.

And both directions consequently, in richly way, use quantum mechanics to support their theories. But does it actually do this? No, the absurd is, that it actual directly pulls the carpet away under such theories. And these theorists could have discovered this, if they had read a bit of Niels Bohr's own scriptures, instead of repeating from others, who continue the misinterpretation. But now David Favrholt has written a book about the *philosopher* Niels Bohr.

First of all: if we now take the claims of for instance the law of attraction, then it say, that if you think in a certain way, then the universe will reward you in a certain way. This is actually a claim, which in extreme way is based on the principle of causation, namely that a certain way of thinking will cause an effect from the universe.

But what nuclear physics and the quantum mechanics learn us, is, that there exists processes, which precisely *not* is cause determined, and which do *not* follow the old rule about, that everything has to be continuous. Brain/thought functions are in a wide extent quantum mechanical, and since the quantum mechanics breaks with the principle of causation and determinism, then the human brain/thought is *not* fully a cause-determined system. And then you precisely *can't* explain brain/thought processes from a theory about a law of attraction.

Secondly, then Niels Bohr actually claims, that it is not us that put reality in order, as the law of attraction, and other relativistic and subjectivistic theories, claim, but reality, that puts *us* in order. Let us investigate it.

Bohr's new discovery made of course the physicists ask: "So what is light then?" And Bohr answered, that this you can't ask about. The only thing we can do, is to say, that in some experiments we can make wave-descriptions, in others particle-descriptions. They supplement and contradict each other, but we can't go behind our experiments and say what they are in themselves. From this Bohr founds the complementarity theory.

But could you then not imagine, that light is an entirely third phenomenon, which both consists of light and particle properties? No, Bohr claims. No matter how we try to imagine it, it is not possibly to imagine, that anything can be a wave and a particle at the same time. It is not possible.

In 1927 Bohr invented the so-called two-split experiment, and it has been discussed ever since. He says, that if you send electrons against a plate with two openings, it

produces a wave phenomenon. But what happens along the way? He answers, that along the way you can't see, what happens. But there must happen something? Yes, but you can't make a description of it. But this you will be able to some day? No. If you intervene into it in order to see, what happens along the way, the whole of the phenomenon disappears.

Using the conventionally conceptions which is lying in our culture, we say, that you must be able to make a model of everything. Bohr says, that you can't. The movements of the electrons are fundamentally not able to be experienced. But we can very well talk about it. Should we eventually create images, it is not in three dimensions, then it is in nine or several dimensions; this we can't.

David Favrholt continues, that Bohr's philosophy in this way originates from his physics. And Favrholt says, that Bohr's philosophy hasn't gained so much a footing as his discoveries within the physics. But this it ought to. Bohr's basic view on language is epochal, Favrholt claims, though he must admit that the epoch not yet has turned up.

And now comes the whole philosophical point.

Yes, according to Bohr's philosophy, then it is correct that we actually from our thoughts, language and interpretations construct our self-images and world-images. But we can precisely not do it as it fits us, in the way which constructivism claims. On the contrary it is this idea, which creates the whole of our illusion about reality, and therefore our problems and suffering.

Bohr says: If a person moves from A to B, it takes a certain time, and the faster he moves, the less time it takes. Here we suddenly have the concepts location, distance, movement, speed, time. It is therefore not ourselves who determine, how reality looks like. It is the constitution of nature, which determines, how we shall use the concepts in order to explain reality. This is lying in direct opposition to what the constructivists claim, and by the way to a number of Western philosophers up through time.

It is not us who put reality in order, it is reality which puts us in order. That is the soul in Bohr's philosophy. Then comes the next, where Man as a rational being suddenly again has entered into the discussion. Bohr says, that when we have to establish the unambiguous language, then this is due to, that two persons can look at a thing and agree about, that the thing is round or square. They can't agree about, whether it is beautiful or ugly. That is subjective. But they have an intersubjective agreement about, what means what, which you then can establish a language of

physics about. A language of physics is nothing else but specified every day language.

All this is implying an opinion about, how we observe the world – and here Bohr picks inspiration from his own discoveries within the atom theory. We can't place ourselves outside our own idea about reality, Favrholt explains. The physicist can't be a kind of God's eye, who looks at the world from outside, because he is himself a part of the world. We can't possibly think ourselves out of reality.

Personally I have had the honour of participating Favrholt's lectures on Chinese philosophy, which is another of his passions. And the Taoist teaching in China matches well with Bohr – it is therefore that Bohr's coat of arms, when he got the elephant order, carries the yin and yang-symbol.

In accordance with Taoism there is nothing beyond the world, Favrholt explains. You can't see the world from outside. You are in the world, and you can only define something from its opposition. What is the good? This you understand, if you know what the evil is. You can't say anything about the world as a whole, because you can't put the whole in opposition to anything.

These thoughts you find in all wisdomtraditions, in all the spiritual directions within the religions. There exists a fundamental dualism, which the spiritual practitioner must understand, in order to reach into non-dualism. And here we have, as mentioned, the fundamental explanation for why New Age, with its constructivistic ideology, is a false kind of spirituality.

Bohr often told the story about the ethnographer, who is send out to learn about Indians in the Amazon jungle. He begins to dress and dance, as they do, but he is still an observer. He learns their language, but is still Danish. Gradually he has eventually forgotten his Danish, and he throws his camera and the typewriter in the river. Now he knows, how it is to be Indian, but now he can't write about it.

Favrholt says, that Bohr always ended this history saying with a smile: "Well then we must send a new ethnographer."

### ***J. How the ideology of needs distorts human nature***

Let us now try to look at how the ideology of needs distorts the human nature.

The body becomes hungry because you use energy; it is in need of more food, this is natural. But if you say: "I must have the food, which is tasting best, I can only eat what I like most!", then the unnaturalness begins.

Everybody, - not only the rich, but each single human being in the world – shall have food, clothes and roof over their heads. But if these physical necessities are limited, controlled and becomes reserved by a very few, it is an unreasonable circumstance; an unnatural process has begun. If you say: "I must gather to house, I must keep everything for myself!", then you deprive others the possibility for getting their daily needs covered.

The problem is not simple, because we want something else than what is necessary in order to cover our daily needs. It would perhaps be enough for a human being to get a bit of food, a few clothes and a small room to stay in; but we want something else. We want to become a famous person, have a position in the society, have power, prestige, to be God's chosen, to experience that our friends think high thoughts about us, etc. The whole of the modern management and coaching industry is based on, that all people shall think in that way.

The problem is difficult, because the inner desire after being the richest and most influential human being, the desire after becoming something, only can be fulfilled through the possession of things, food, clothes and shelter included. You cling to these thing in order to become rich inwards; but as long as you in that way is dependent, it is impossible to be rich inwards; what will say: to be free and independent in psychological and existential sense. Therefore you become unhappy when you can't get what you want, or when you loose it.

Why shall we necessarily have what we want? Is it not, because we think we have the right for it? In political philosophy they have made much out of claiming that the right of ownership is a natural right, whereby you can justify waste and exploitation. A bit in the same way, as they have claimed, that conflict is something natural, whereby you can justify violence and war. And the ideology of needs is claiming the same: the desire after satisfying your needs, not only your basic needs, but also esteem needs and self-actualizing needs, is something entirely natural, and a human right. The problem is that there is a difference between actually *being* a self-realized person (persons who Maslow has described many times) – and then the desire after being such a person. To reduce the whole thing to needs is a distortion of what self-realization is all about.

Now, if we take the human rights, then they are ethical tools. In ethics you focus on, what co-operation and conversation require of you in order to, that you at all can



exist: that you speak true (don't lie), that you are prepared to reach mutual understanding and agreement (don't manipulate), don't make an exception of yourself (but treat others as equals). From this rises the eternal moral values (as for instance that it is wrong to lie), and generally our ideas of right and justice: the so-called human rights, the idea about the individual person's autonomy and dignity: you shall treat the other *not as a means, but as a goal*.

The society-ideology of today doesn't live up to this, because it increasingly makes people into means for the constant production of consumption in the future. And this despite, that it believes, that it is an advocate for freedom, peace and human rights, yes, that it even can use war under those slogans. So the communicative aspect of human rights (treat the other *not as a means, but as a goal*), has been turned into an instrumental way of treating humans as means for own goals (Machiavelli's notorious words: "The end justifies the means").

Today we especially see this in the use of the freedom of speech as a justification for insulting other people, and as a way of promoting own (un-intelligent) viewpoints, or (un-talented) goals as an artist. We have seen it in the controversy with The Jyllands Posten Muhammed drawings. And it has become so "natural", that talented artists, and other, more intelligent, people, or institutions, who do not want to use their freedom of speech precisely in this way, also are insulted, even from highest political levels. They are for instance called cowards.

The same is seen in relation with the violation of human rights in Tibet. Why are we, in the Western world, with our tribute to democracy and human rights, not doing anything about the violation of the human rights in Tibet, when we, with a lot of fuss, are doing it other places in the world (Iraq etc.)?

Because of ideology: partly the ideology of China, partly the ideology of the Western world. What is ideology? Ideology is a reflection time, which manifests itself in the thoughts of human beings, especially the thoughts' direction towards the future. The collective manifestations of the future have either appeared in the form of rigid religious believe systems, or ideologies such as nationalism, national socialism, communism and liberalism. They all function with the implied assumption, that the supreme good lies in the future, and that **the end therefore justifies the means**. It has not been unusual that the means to get there have been to make humans into slaves, or by torturing and murdering them here and now, as we see it practised in Tibet by the Communist ideology of China.

The ideology of the Western world is Consumer Capitalism, and the supreme good out in the future is constant increasing production, constant increasing consumption.

And the means to get there is, through advertises and other propaganda, to make humans into empty consumer-machines. Freedom is only consumer-freedom: freedom to choose between as many wares as possible. Identity and meaning you only find in wares you can buy or sell. Defect consumers (as for instance the elderly and unemployed) have become problematized or directly demonized. The production rush makes people sick of stress. Anxiety and depression are intensively increasing.

The absolute ruling political tool is economy, and the only ethics economy allows is the “happiness” you find in consumption. According to the economists (who are the wise men in a consumer culture) we therefore are “happy” in the Western world.

So Consumer Capitalism increasingly makes humans into means for the constant production of consumption in the future. And this despites, that it, as mentioned, believes that it is an advocate for democracy, freedom and human rights, yes that it even can use war under these slogans. The question is namely, whether people in the non-western countries (the poor) now also are being made into defect consumers, which you have to use force against.

The essential by the human rights is the opposite of ideology: **that you should treat humans as goals and not as means**. Consumer Capitalism is in other words a democracy and human rights parasitic ideology.

The reason why the Western World doesn't do anything about the violation of the human rights in Tibet, is, as mentioned earlier in this book, that China now has adopted Consumer Capitalism into its own Communist ideology, whereby it has created a curious hybrid. In this hybrid the two ideologies have economical interests in common. And the spiritual values of the Tibetan people can't be measured through the economical tools of this hybrid – these people therefore have to be considered as defect consumers. In this way the violation of the human rights can be justified, both in China and in the Western world.

Consumer Capitalism, or the ideology of needs, ends up in an extreme ego-fixation, totally opposite to, what human rights, and ethics, is all about.

Do we for instance ever ask ourselves, why we actual ought to have what we want, when millions of people not even have, what they need? And moreover, why do we want it?

Man has a need for food, clothes and shelter; but it is us not enough to get these needs covered. We want much more. We want success, we want to become respected, loved, admired, we want to have power, we want to be famous poets, speakers, we

want to be prime minister, president, pope, saint. And the whole quest is being justified through management theories and coaching.

So, In Man there isn't only the natural fight in order to keep alive - that is to say: the fight for food, clothes and shelter - but there is also an unnatural fight in order to change what you are to something else, the fight of the will to power; all the time with the consequence, that you don't understand what you are, that the reality about yourself is completely hidden.

Our natural needs are not the will to power, but it is the will to power when things and sense impressions tie us, both in psychological and existential sense; that is to say: in the sense, that we can't feel happy without them, that they become our foundation of existence.

### *K. Love of lust*

The thought about, that we can't feel happy without sense impressions - that happiness exclusively has with sense impressions to do; that happiness is constituted by lust - you find for instance in the enlightenment philosopher Condillac, who advocates naturalism and materialism. He thinks that all impulses to action have their origin in the experience of lust and unlust. These experiences are in themselves striving after achieving lust and avoiding unlust. All passions, and any will, Condillac lead back to this striving, which as experience is a kind of sensation.

Naturalism has moreover got a very influential framing in the English utilitarians. Jeremy Bentham for instance claims, that all our motives can be led back to striving after lust and after avoiding pain. It is a psychological teaching of lust, or hedonism, and in narrow connection herewith also an ethical hedonism; that is to say: the conception, that the highest good is the largest possible predominance of lust over pain. Bentham would say, that this is natural; that is: a way of justifying Man's striving after lust. But is it natural?

To gather more than you need is of course lustful, and we have seen, that that to gather more than you need leads to exploitation. The necessity of a certain amount of food, clothes and shelter is no basis for, that this natural need becomes the means, with which you use others for your personal satisfaction, whether economical, social, psychological or philosophical. Therefore this, to use others to win power, position and authority, becomes exploitation. And here the need becomes unnatural.

What is the reason for, that things, belongings, housing, clothes etc., have taken such an all-important place in our lives? Is it because they are necessary, or is it because

the whole of our happiness and *raison d'être* depend on them? Everybody needs clothes, food, shelter etc. This is obvious and natural. But what is the reason for, that these necessities have risen to become of such colossal importance and meaning, that they have become our foundation of existence?

This disproportionately importance is due to, that we have tied our thoughts and feelings to the things, so that we can't feel happy without them: they feed our vanity, they give us social prestige, they give us means for display of force. We use them for other purposes, than they in themselves are implying. That we need food, clothes, shelter, is natural and not wrong, but when we are dependent of them in order to be able to satisfy our love of lust, when the things not only become a psychological necessity, but directly an existential necessity, then they are taking an all too colossal place in our life. That way arise the fights and the conflicts for achieving and keeping the things, which we are dependent of. And this fight is unnatural.

As a lifeartist you must be able to ask yourself the question about, whether you are dependent of things in order to achieve and keep an existential happiness and meaning? If you seriously try to answer this apparently simple question, you will discover how complicated your thoughts and life of feelings are.

When the things only are of physical necessity for you, you limit them reasonably; but when they become a requirement for your psychological and existential wellbeing, then they get an all-important meaning. In that way you begin to understand the satisfaction of your senses and your desire for lust. If you want to understand the true, you must break away from such bonds. In order to be able to break away from this desire for lust, you must begin with observing the needs you are familiar with, and in this is lying the right basis for understanding.

The natural needs of our senses have their place, and when you understand them, they don't take the unnatural forms, which they get when they are connected with existential necessity; that is to say: a self-made necessity in order to be able to be alive, to exist, and to have an identity.

### ***L. The right relationship with the things***

Most peoples' minds are busy with things, and it requires understanding to grasp our right relationship with them. It is not about asceticism, or love of lust, not about giving renunciation, or gather into barns, but about being yourself present in passive listening, and herein understand your natural needs, without this clinging to the things. It was this realization Buddha came to after he as itinerant ascetic in 5-6 years had practised all possible penances, where he, among other things, tried to live of one

corn of rice a day. He realized that this self-torture didn't lead to enlightenment; that does instead the middle way, where you give the body what it needs, but without being in the control of the senses. When you understand this, it is no sorrow to give up things, or an eternal fight to keep them.

As a lifeartist you must be able critical to investigate and understand the difference between the natural needs, and the inner dependency of things, which creates the unnatural needs. You must begin with exposing your relationship with the things. Usually it is based on the will to power. But when does the natural need becomes the will to power? It is will to power when you, after having discovered the emptiness and worthlessness of things, still continue endowing them with a greater meaning than they really have, and thereby come in a dependence of them, so that they become an existential necessity, a necessity in order to be able to be alive and have an identity. This dependency can bring forth a certain social solidarity, but will always contain conflicts, sufferings and states of decomposition.

You must try to become clarified about your thought-process. Therewith is meant that you in your daily life must seek to be your will to power - and its miserable consequences and results - present. When you realize the difference between the natural need and the will to power, then the right basis for your thinking is formed. Some kind of will to power is always the cause of conflict, to unscrupulously national hate and masked brutality. Unless you understand and get grip of your will to power, you will never be able to understand the reality, which is transcending all struggles and sorrows. You must begin with yourself as a communicative being; that is to say: with your relationship with things and to your fellow men.

When it is so important to understand the right relationship with the things, then this is because they have an all-important meaning for most people. War is about things, and our social and moral values are based on things. We will not be able to understand reality, unless we understand the complicated process of the will to power.

## **2. The brain**

### ***A. Evolution***

Naturalism got new wind in its sails with Darwin's teaching of evolution. While the 16- and 1700 centuries' naturalism mainly was mechanical, then modern naturalism

is just as much biological inspired. Examples on modern theorists, who base their theories on the theory of evolution, are Konrad Lorenz and Edward O. Wilson.

The theory of evolution sets up a timeline, where you can see, how the apes develop themselves, and more and more come to look like humans. The returning question becomes: Is the animal the beginning of Man? Many evolution theorists say yes. But theologians say no, the beginning of Man is God's creation project. Let us try to investigate it.

If the beginning of Man is the animal, then the instinct is natural and becomes merely cultivated. Both Konrad Lorenz and Edward O. Wilson are claiming this. In that way we once again have an argument, which from an assertion about naturalness, and from an assumed scientific status, can be used to justify specific social conditions, for instance that war, or the Capitalistic economical system, is something natural.

Here we touch an old discussion. Central in the discussion about human nature has namely always been the question, whether this nature is innate and therefore a more or less eternal and changeless entity, or whether it, in the main, is a result of the outer circumstances, whereby it can be changed through a change of these.

Today this theme is discussed under the slogan about heredity and/or environment. A bit simplified you can sketch out the two extremities as follows: on the one wing they claim, that it only is the hereditary – today understood as biological and genetic – factors, which determine the human nature, and that the individual person fully is a result of the concrete genes. The human nature is universal and changeless in the same way as the genes are common and unchangeable. A science fiction perspective, which perhaps soon is a reality, is that a genetic manipulation of the genes can be a possibility for changing the nature of Man. The apprehension, that human nature in the main is universal and changeless, can be seen in for instance Plato, Christianity, Freud and Lorenz, whose theories by the way are very different.

The other wing claims however, that it only is the outer circumstances – for instance environment and upbringing – which plays a part in the individual person's development. In accordance with this conception it is practical meaningless to talk about a human nature as something wonderful and universal. If you in a certain historical period, in a certain society, think that you can find a line of common traits in Man, then this is merely due to, that these individuals all are a result of the same outer influence – the same environment. If you can control and change these outer circumstances, you can also fundamentally change the nature of Man. Here is the apprehension of the relativity and variableness of the human nature, represented by

names such as Marx, Sartre and Skinner, whose theories meanwhile in other definitive points are highly contradictory.

In the dispute between heredity and environment it is usually considered as political progressively ("leftist") to mean, that the environment is more or less the sole decisive factor. The environment (upbringing, social conditions) can Man in the principle himself control and change through political actions. This is also the background for, that Lamarckism in the form of Lysenkoism – which almost completely refuses the biological genetic importance – got monopoly on occupying itself with heredity in Soviet.

Equivalent it is usually regarded as political reactionary ("right wing") if they say, that the individual person's hereditament (genes) is the most important factor, which determines its actual development. Ideological this is connected with, that in that case a social reformatory policy is not a lot of advantage; the biological heredity has so far been a destiny, which you must tolerate.

But back to the question: Is the instinct natural? The instinct is cause and effect. But is it natural? Far the most of above-mentioned philosophies about heredity and environment are conclusions concerning the nature of Man. They become ideologies characterized by, that they are without any philosophical life-teaching and practice, and are typical examples of an university intellectualism, which still characterizes the universities, and which can't recognize anything else than the prejudices which are build-in in their own theories. They are attempts on creating intellectual safety in a society which is characterized by a vacuum of meaning, an intellectual safety, which hypocrisy came to expression in Europe's right-wing Fascist regimes from Second World War, and in the Marxist-Communist ideal revolutions, which exposed themselves as totalitarian regimes – but which you consequently see reappear in new masks on the universities; the eternal recurrence of the same.

In philosophy as an art of life you don't work with conclusions concerning the nature of Man, but you ask questions. Both parts in the dispute between heredity and environment have observed some tendencies, but it can't lead to any conclusions. You could for instance ask the question: It might well be, that Man looks like he is a product of heredity and environment, but why should he not be able to break with this limitation? Conclusions only work when you altogether ignore all philosophical life-practices such as meditation, and exclusively engage yourself intellectual with the thinking. Incredibly many sides of Man become in that way cut off (also read my article *The Dark Side Of Science*, in my book *Dream Yoga*).

It is obvious that we still have a behaviour, which arises from the instinct of the animal. This appears especially in situations of crises, such as for instance war, where all civilization and moral suddenly momentarily disappear. The brain has evolved from the primitive state, and carries in itself the instinct of the animal. Consequently there is something innate. In addition to this you can say, that regardless how sophisticated, intelligent, technical, the brain is, it can only function within the frames of time and space. The brain has also got accustomed to the evolution's idea about becoming something (the will to power). But you could ask the question: What happens if it suddenly realizes the nature of the will to power?

Our brain is not merely a certain brain, but the brain that has evolved through millennia. The brain has not merely been born; it is very, very old in the sense that it is a product of evolution. The evolution is contained in the brain. John Locke's empirical assertion about, that the consciousness, or the brain, from birth of, is to compare with an empty blackboard, a tabula rasa - is consequently wrong. But if the brain through centuries has become accustomed to, trained to, the one or the other, and it suddenly realizes this – can it then change? Can the quality of the brain itself change? This the heredity advocates would deny. And the environment advocates would deny it unless it is a result of an outer influence. This we will return to.

### ***B. The function of the brain***

What will it say to be in the Now? It can't be something mechanical. It can't be weighed down by the whole of this weight of knowledge, of tradition - that is to say: it is a mind and a being which really from the ground are free – free and without anxiety. It has with life-feeling, spontaneity and self-forgetfulness to do, an openness for own and therewith also all others' being, a being where being and reality fall together, where you live with, are included in something which happens, where the other fills you out, where you become drawn into, and are melting into in an unified wholeness.

The Danish Nobel Prize winner in literature, Johannes V. Jensen, has time after time, in his poems and novels, described this mystical experience of total existential existence in the Now. This is of interest, because that he in his youth is convinced atheist and finds his foundation of life in Darwin's doctrine of evolution. The linking of the biological inspired view of human nature, and the mystical experience, he for instance describes in the myth *Darwin and the Bird*, where the old Darwin is observing a bird, for thereafter to become one with the whole of the bird's existence, he himself wiped out by the nature, which surrounds him, not only experiencing the bird, but also the bird's relationships with its thousand years old ancestors, and the



fellow-feeling with all creatures, and his own thoughts; again a kind of metaphysical naturalism.

This is freedom. But is it after all not the brain's function to seek safety? Of course it is the brain's function to seek safety. This is something natural. But there happens an unnatural movement when the brain limits itself concerning nationality and faith in god, when it says: "This is mine, that is yours". And then it is not at all safe, even though the movement is due to a quest for safety.

One of the major hindrances in life is this constant striving after reaching, accomplishing, acquiring something: the will to power. From childhood we are brought up to achieve and accomplish something. It is the brain cells, which produce, and wish, this pattern of results on the background of an innate quest for physical safety. But safety is unattainable when the movement happens on the background of a philosophical idea about becoming something; that is: to be able to control and form happiness, truth and reality. Something unnatural has then stepped instead of the natural movement.

Therefore the thought has become so important in all peoples' existence – the thought, which is ideas, reactions from accumulated memories in the brain cells.

The brain is the source of the thought. The brain is matter, and the thought is matter, and both function mechanical and causal. But matter is also energy, and energy is not necessarily mechanical and causal. Energy is also life, and therefore both the brain and the thought have their source in life itself, in the stream and movement of life.

The thought is the reaction of memory - the memory, which is as a computer, you have fed with all kinds of information. And when you wish an answer, there comes a reaction from all that, which is accumulated in the computer. In exactly the same way the mind, the brain, is a storehouse of the past; that is: the memory. And facing a challenge, the memory reacts as thought in accordance with its knowledge, experience, historical limitation, images in time etc. In that way the thought is the movement of the mind and the brain, or rather: a part of the movement.

### ***C. The Matrix Conspiracy***

In our time it is the very popular to compare the consciousness with a computer. Among others in the supporters of the new materialism, which the development of computers with still more extensive programs, neural networks and so on, have been a source of inspiration for. For instance the American philosopher Daniel C. Dennett, who in his book - with the ambitious title *Consciousness Explained* - seeks to explain

consciousness, partially through computer analogies, partially through neurology and psychology.

Within cognition psychology the so-called "information processing theory" has been dominating for a number of years. In this theory is focused on the "inner psychic" processes looked on as symbolic information processing in analogy with the processes which happens in computers.

In the discussion about the reliability of our realization you often meet a variant of Descartes' argument from the evil demon (How can I know, that I am not deceived by an evil demon concerning all realization?). The variant (the so-called brain-in-jar-hypothesis) says as follows: Some day surgery will have reached so far, that you will be able to operate the brain out of a human being and keep it alive by placing it in a jar with some nutrient substratum. At that time the computer research will perhaps have reached so far, that you will be able to connect a computer to such a brain and feed it with all kinds of data, so that the brain thinks that it is a human being, who lives in the real world with all the experiences, memories etc., this is implying. It is this hypothesis the movie *Matrix* is based on (also see my article *Is Life a Dream?* in my book *Dream Yoga*).

There are many who think, that it is possible, that new inventions of computers can supply us with an experiential "virtual reality". There exist computer scientists, who think, that you can understand the consciousness as "soft-ware" and the brain as a "hard disc", (does that remind you about NLP?) and that you in very few years will be able to decode a human being for its whole content of consciousness, immediately before it dies, and therewith provide its soul an eternal life – admittedly on a discette, but what the hell, it is after all always better than to pass into nothingness, and the discette will after all be able to be played again and again.

What shall you say about such theories? Well, they originate from the specialized viewpoints which we have so many of today. The theory is only possible if you reduce Man only to be a result of a single influence. But Man is much more complex, and to emphasize one influence at the same time as you understate others, will create a lack on balance. For instance the theory only works with the *contents* of thoughts and experiences, not with the thinker and the experiencer himself, who is a part of an existential wholeness, that also includes conduct of life, being and reality.

However, you can very well compare the contents of your memories with a computer, and it is also interesting to involve the theory in questions about the relationship between unreality and reality. As already mentioned earlier in this book, then I

actually think, that the so-called Matrix Conspiracy is a very good way of explaining what actually is going on today, ideological seen.

Why are we so fascinated by conspiracy theories today? Because they not only are based on an illusion, but also a fact. The illusion is that we live in a postmodern society, where the distinction between reality and appearance/superficies is about to disappear. Reality is often the images, we receive through the stream of information. And it becomes more and more difficult to see, which objective reality that is lying behind. It seems more and more to be the images, which are real, and not some behind lying reality.

The fact is that every society always is runned by some kind of ideology. As we have seen, then an ideology is a malfunction in the human mind, which functions with Machiavelli's implied, terrible, assumption, that the end justifies the means, and where the means to get there is to make people into slaves for this goal. Today people undoubtedly are being made into empty consumer machines. There is no doubt either, that we are being supplied with some kind of virtual reality through psychological theories, that seems to justify Machiavelli's famous and notorious assumption - for instance through elimination of critical thinking.

It is a fact, that we today see an ideology behind the democracy, where true spirituality, philosophy and science systematical are seeked destroyed; that is: the destruction of the best tools Man has in his love of wisdom, and quest for truth.

The main name for this ideology is relativism. You could call relativism for the main Matrix philosophy. As mentioned I have connected my Matrix Conspiracy with three other known conspiracies. Here is a short introduction:

1. The Bilderberg Group
2. Illuminati
3. The 666 Conspiracy

#### *1. The Bilderberg Group*

Every year 100 of the most powerful men of the world is gathering in an informal talk about politics and economics. Of these men are 1/3 politicians and 2/3 intellectuals and leaders of multinational companies. Their ideological results? Facts about these are:

- A) The main political tool is economics and Consumer Capitalism.
- B) The main intellectual tool is relativism.

C) The main management theory is based on psychology, or rather a certain American psychology: Humanistic psychology.

All these support each other in the five education-instruments of Consumer Capitalism; which you also, with inspiration from NLP, could call the five main programming-technologies of the Matrix Conspiracy:

1. Sensitivity language
2. Coaching
3. New Age
4. NLP
5. The Law of Attraction

A headline for these technologies could be the concept of personal development. A concept you as a fact see described in EU's project on lifelong learning, education and management theory. A positive sounding concept until you find out what this personal development is all about.

## *2. Illuminati*

The bilderberg group is said to be runned by Illuminati, which is a secret society, that goes way back in history. The background is real. This organisation has in fact existed. The goal was a challenge to for instance the church, working towards a new world order, and with connections to occultism.

Illuminati is said to be an advocate for a scientific world-view, but this has nothing to do with true science. True science can't be connected to certain political views, or occultism. So the "scientific" in Illuminati is rather pseudo-science. Note that I here don't discriminate between the pseudo-science of New Age (demands for "alternative" sciences), and the pseudo-science of reductionism (for instance biologism and sociologism), though these views can disagree highly in between. They all advocate subjectivism and relativism, and certain occult and/or political views.

Today you can see all this in the New Age movement, which name also clings good with New World Order.

## *3. The 666 Conspiracy*

This conspiracy is about Evil's plot against mankind. Is the third Antichrist among us, and will our worship of him be a sign of Judgment Day?

The relevance of this conspiracy has five aspects:

A) That some of the relativistic theories on the universities, which seek to undermine truth (and for instance philosophy and science) are so absurd, that there is nothing behind them than chaos.

B) That ideology is a malfunction in the human mind.

C) That there in specially New Age is introduced a false spirituality where the main worship is the Ego, contrary to the traditional spiritual directions, where the main goal is the elimination of the Ego.

D) That occultism within New Age creates spiritual misguiding, often with deep spiritual crises as a result.

E) That the Ego-extreme according to the true spiritual traditions will be contrabalanced by the laws of energy (hybris-nemesis, karma, the will of God, etc.) This will happen through crises, illness, natural disasters, etc.

Below is a deeper explanation of the 666 Conspiracy.

### ***D. The 666 Conspiracy***

As mentioned then a unifying term for the Matrix Conspiracy is personal development, which is a mishmash of American Humanistic psychology, management theory, coaching, New Age, NLP, sensitivity language, and the law of attraction.

In order to explain the 666 Conspiracy, I will focus on New Age.

The demonical turn from true spirituality to false spirituality is in short about, that while you in true spirituality try to eliminate the Ego (which is seen as the main hindrance for reaching truth and the divine), then the Ego in false spirituality has become the object for worship; that is: the direct opposite. The whole thing is turned upside down.

As earlier mentioned, then true spirituality is in the end about going beyond all concepts and ideas, because language and linguistic mappings is the main reason for our distortions of reality, and therefore our suffering. It is in its nature absolutistic. In order to go beyond all concepts and ideas it must be possible to discriminate between

the language and the real, the map and the landscape. It therefore builds on an objective truth-criterium, which is lying in a reality, wholeness, or Otherness, that transcends us. As Niels Bohr says, then it is reality (the wholeness/the order of nature), that puts us in order, and not us that puts reality in order.

Contrary to this New Age is defending a relativism and a subjectivism, which doesn't allow this. And this is a bit of a paradox, because New Age is claiming to be spiritual.

According to New Age then the language *is* the real, the map *is* the landscape, the word *is* the real. It is, according to relativism and subjectivism, not possible to go beyond all concepts and ideas. But you can change these. So what it is about is to change your language, map and words so that they fit into your wishes, needs and desires, and in that way you can become whatever you like, and you can create whatever reality it fits you – that is: according to your ego. As the New Age coaches say: “It is not facts, but the best story, that wins!” And they often do it in a mix of interpretations of Shamanism and Western theories of hypnosis. But in true spirituality this is the same as enlargening your distortion of reality.

The paradox in New Age is, that its build-in subjectivism and relativism are implying, that there isn't any objective truth-criterium in any wholeness, or reality, that transcends us, at the same time as it is talking a lot about transcending everything. According to New Age then we create truth and reality ourselves through our linguistic mappings, and because there is no objective truth-criterium to decide the truth, then all such mappings must be equally true. This is implying that the “new age”, New Age is talking about, can't be said to be more true than the “old age”; violence and hate must be seen as having the same truth as non-violence and compassion.

Another paradox in New Age, is that it is saying, that quantum mechanics is supporting it. This is one of its quite central ideas. But quantum mechanics does actually support the direct opposite: it disproves it, as I explained in the section about the philosopher Niels Bohr.

But the idea about that we can create reality as it fits us, is the reason why New Age-supporters in extreme cynical ways are abusing science as it fit them, and use all kind of unrealistic exaggerated grand titles about themselves (for instance the world's greatest money coach, and so on in the same style). Because if they just think it is true, well, then it magical must be true. This is especially seen within the movement of the law of attraction.

In the following I will as short as possible show five consequences of the demonical turn in spirituality, which I call The 666 Conspiracy.

## **1. The temple in Delphi**

New Age, and the movement of personal development, are talking about that it is important to know thyself. That is not something new. Over the door of the Apollon Temple in Delphi was written: "Know thyself." And the same concept can be found in all true spiritual traditions.

But the conception of, what it means to find yourself, has been turned upside down in the personal development movement. Earlier the concept of finding yourself, was to find your place in relation to the Gods. At that time it was about being yourself without becoming arrogant and reckless (ego-inflated), and therewith commit hubris. The intention was to develop yourself in relation to something else than yourself. And the same thing can be seen in other true spiritual traditions.

In accordance with the authentic spiritual traditions the movement of time is a power, an expression of energy, which follows some laws. This power moves in wave-movements, pendulum-movements, in situation-movements, as well as in circulation-movements. The universal laws of energy in the movement of time are known as Tao, The Dharmalaw, Karma, Destiny, Hubris-nemesis, Logos, The will of God, etc.

As we have mentioned before, then the Buddhist philosopher Nagarjuna said, that the Now's regularity in the function of the energy, is due to, that energy works as streams and dividings within a superior wholeness. And because the wholeness is a reality, each part will always fit into an equivalent part. This means, that each part only can be understood in relation to its negation; that is: what the part *not* is. At first this is implying, that each part come to appear as part of a polarization-pair or a pair of opposites – just like in the teaching of Yin and Yang. Secondly this is implying, that each part only can be understood in relation to everything else; that is to say: in relation to the wholeness.

So the more you, through the Ego's evaluations, isolate these parts from each other, the more the abandoned parts will work stronger and stronger on their polar partners. Therefore these polar partners in their extremes finally will swing over in their opposite extremes. Another aspect of this regularity, or another way to describe this regularity is: energy returns to its starting point. And since everything in this way only works correlative, yes, then Nagarjuna claimed, that you actual can't say anything about the wholeness, only about the parts. Therefore he called the wholeness for the emptiness (śūnyatā) – a teaching, which had one quite certain

purpose: the neutralization of all the dogmas, theories and viewpoints which ignorance has created.

Here is the main reason why personal development has lost the true spirituality out of sight: the Ego-worship, which shuts itself away from this wholeness. Today the wholeness, or the Otherness, has been eliminated, and only the development of the self, or the Ego, is left. And the Self/the Ego is your personality; therefore personal development. The problem with this personal development is that it has developed into a never-ending development, an egoistic philosophy.

## **2. Becoming and being**

The problem with this is, that the Ego always is in a state of becoming. Becoming is the central concept in personal development: all the time to be in a state of becoming something else than what you are, a constant striving from past to future, where the goal is constantly increasing success. Contrary to true spirituality where being is the central, being in the sense studying what you are, to be what you are, to give up past and future, and be in the Now with what you are.

Becoming is the central concept in false spirituality. Being is the central concept in true spirituality.

Becoming is actually the main hindrance for the opening into the source, the Good, the True and the Beautiful. It contains four philosophical hindrances for the opening in towards the Source. They are:

1. A rational, where you take your assumptions, conceptions and values for absolute truths, and therewith end in a contradiction between your thoughts and your lived life.
2. A life-philosophical, where you are circling around your own past and future, and hereby create a closed attitude, inattention, absent-mindedness and ennui.
3. An existence-philosophical, where you in your opinion formation and identity formation strive after becoming something else than what you are, where you imitate others, are a slave of others' ideas and ideals, and where your actions are characterized by irresoluteness and doubt.
4. A spiritual, where you are identified with your lifesituation, are dependent on religious or political ideologies, and where you therewith exist on a future salvation.

You may say, that these four hindrances constitute an actual malfunction in the human mind. And it is this malfunction, which is the cause of the ignorance about the



Source of life. Ignorance is again the cause of suffering. In this way true spiritual practice is a practice, which helps people to correct this malfunction.

In that way you can conversely, when you actually are in a true spiritual practice, talk about the four philosophical openings in towards the Source:

1. A rational, where you examine the validity of your assumptions, conceptions and values, and are searching for coherence between your thoughts and your lived life.
2. A life-philosophical, where you are present in the Now, and hereby achieve that self-forgetful freedom and absorption in the world, which are a condition for love, spontaneity, joy of life and wisdom.
3. An existence-philosophical, where you in your opinion formation and identity formation are yourself, live in compliance with your own essence, and thereby achieve authenticity, autonomy, decisiveness and power of action.
4. A spiritual, where you are not identified with your lifesituation, and where you independently of religious or political ideologies, lives from something deeper: the Source itself: the Good, the True and the Beautiful.

Another problem with, that personal development today is on the fixed curriculum in all educations, is that life becomes one long examination, where you constantly have to develop your personality. An unavoidable part of the daily life is evaluation and continuous assessment of yourself, and what you do and feel. You can't avoid it. Therefore it is an ideology that penetrates everything. The workplace uses professional companies to mark and grade our performance and effectiveness. Our spouses relate runningly to, whether we continued are worth loving and living together with. Educators and schoolteachers call us in for meetings, where words are put on, whether we are good parents.

It becomes a lifelong examination, where we constantly strive after becoming something else, something more and better; a never-ending personal development. But instead of finding our inner "self", we become more and more stressful and insecure about, whether something is good enough. Anxiety and depression are spreading everywhere.

And this is of course due to, that something is totally wrong with this personal development movement.

### **3. The confusion of the Ego with the spiritual essence**

Both personal development and true spirituality are common in the belief, that humans have a divine core, which the goal is to reach. But personal development is

confusing the Ego with this divine core. And the main reason is that it has shut itself away from the wholeness, and the Otherness.

And the starting is also the same: namely ignorance and suffering. But the paradox is, that when you start a process of personal development, which are based on the above-mentioned confusion, then you make the ignorance and suffering even larger.

A main reason for this is all the incompetent teachers in the personal development movement. It is teachers, who most often only have taken a weekend-course or two (for instance in NLP and coaching), whereafter they with their certifications go out, and are beginning telling people about philosophy, spirituality, life-philosophy and existence-philosophy. That is: teachers without any philosophical education.

Actually philosophy today has been directly removed from all theories of learning, and therefore you also have shut away the possible for educated philosophers to get a chance on this market. A weekend-certification as coach, is today more valuable than an university degree in philosophy, even though both is about life-philosophy. That is a fact, and an example on, that we here, from the highest political levels, can see some preferences and choices!

So when you today make personal development into a guide for your life, it can encourage the development of narcissistic and egoistic human beings. Personal development is an expression of a “me-me-me-and-then-perhaps-you-if-it-serves-me-logic”. This logic is not written in the many self-help books. Perhaps on the contrary. Here it is pouring with homespun philosophical rules of living. Egoism is nevertheless a logical consequence of that self-centredness, which goes hand in hand with the movement of personal development. It is the hidden agenda, where it basically is about, that it is me and only me, who through *my* inner journey shall develop towards *my* self. Others are without importance in that connection. The result is the lonely personal developing human being, who works in order to find nothing else than himself.

#### **4. The psychopath**

If a person really succeeds in adopting the advices of the self-help books, she really gets a problem. Not only does she have to fight with the never-ending development, and the Egoism. She is also becoming a serious problem for her surroundings. Because she is now, as the Danish psychologist, Nina Østerby Sæther, says, a potential psychopath.

On a course about psychopaths Nina Østerby Sæther realized, that there was many similarities between psychopathic traits, and the advices, which are given in self-help books. It made her point out some frightening resemblances.

Though some of the self-help books' advices might sound similar to true spirituality, taken out of context, then you have to remember how the wholeness and Otherness have been removed. And when this happens it takes a totally wrong course.

I have mentioned the resemblances earlier in this book, but below I will repeat them in short form:

### *1. Smarter*

The psychopath: a psychopathic trait is to be extremely self-centered, and experiencing yourself as smarter than most. The conception of your own abilities and importance is unrealistic exaggerated.

Personal development: In Wayne Dyer's book "Free yourself – and get everything out of life", it is written that: "there is nothing wrong in perceiving yourself as perfect", and "don't be afraid of your own greatness".

### *2. More violent*

The psychopath: Psychopaths can't take critique, resistance or defeats, something they express with violent anger or aggression.

Personal development: In the Danish self-help guru, Thoele's book "Courage to be yourself", she writes that it is "unhealthy not to give expression for your anger".

### *3. Seeking experiences*

The psychopath: Psychopaths have a big need for new experiences, and routine and monotony often have a provocative effect.

Personal development: Thoele writes: "If a child behaves poor and dull, we take its temperature. Why is it then we feel, that it is alright for ourselves to flow through life in an ordinary and boring way?"

### *4. Impulsiveness*

The psychopath: The behaviour of the psychopath is characterized by impulsiveness. He follows the thoughts and lusts of the moment without thinking over the consequences, or future goals or actions.

Personal development: Dyer writes: “I have myself experienced, that you can live totally in the now, and I therefore know, that it is true” (this sounds like spirituality, but remember, that there is a big difference between instinctive reactions from the past, and being in the Now. Being in the Now can’t be without self-forgetful absorption in the Otherness, or in the wholeness. You are certainly not a person able to be completely in the Now, if you also are focusing on your own greatness and perfectionism).

### *5. Seeking excitement*

The psychopath: Psychopaths are seeking excitement and therefore have a large will to run risks.

Personal development: Thoele writes: “I choose to live! To me this means a yes to take risks....if secureness has been achieved on the cost of stimulating and creative development, it will just strangle us.”

### *6. Difference*

The psychopath: The psychopath gives expression for having certain rights, which do, that he don’t need to follow normal laws and rules.

Personal development: Thoele writes: “I have the right to say no, without bad conscience...I have the right to be different than what is expected of me.”

### *7. Without empathy*

The psychopath: The psychopath understands other humans from their actions, and is lacking the ability to familiarizing himself with others’ thoughts and feelings. He has no problem with establishing relationships, but lacks the ability to attachment. Furthermore he often instrumentally uses others with the help of manipulation, where others are used in order to get his own lusts and needs satisfied.

Personal development: Thoele writes: “Emotional independence is a human right. Others’ expectations can be seen as hindering elements, and the goal is most possible release from these.”

## 8. *Guiltless*

The psychopath: The psychopath doesn't know what a sense of guilt is. He has a conspicuous tendency to explaining away, or rationalizing, his social problem-creating behaviour.

Personal development: The Danish self-help guru, Thorsøe, writes in his book *A little guide to modern quality of life*, that: "Guilt is meaningless, when it comes to feelings. Actually I would like to have the word guilt removed from language."

Nina Østby Sæther concludes, that the self-help books don't have any alibi against producing psychopath-like, personal developing humans. The psychopathic traits are simply lying smouldering in the books. Her moral is, that the personal developing psychopath can be seen as an "actual social character in the Western society", supported by a whole industry of books.

But when you think about how many people who are reading self-help books, then it however is striking, that there then isn't that many psychopaths running around. But the paradox in this is, that people seldom totally succeed in liberating themselves from a moral, that doesn't come from themselves. As a rule they have some kind of ethics they can't escape from (because they can't escape from the Otherness, or the wholeness). The real psychopath hasn't got any ethics.

But this doesn't validate the movement of personal development.

## 5. **Back to the temple in Delphi**

In accordance with the universal laws of energy, which were mentioned in connection with the temple in Delphi, it is correct, that the thoughts and mind of Man are participating in creating the world, even the physical, but not in the way New Age indicates it, yes, New Age and the personal development movement actual directly commits Hubris.

We have mentioned it before, and will repeat it again. You can in short not use these laws as you want to; that is: through, for instance, "positive" thinking.

The eternal circling around your own dreams, desires, success etc. will in other words be contra-balanced through the opposite categories. As mentioned the personal development movement here exposes itself, and its followers, for the possibility of Nemesis.

An example: as soon as your thoughts spread themselves too much out in an extreme, the energy-system compensates by seeking to bring itself back to the balance of the middle. The system does this by seeking over towards the opposite extreme (for instance from perfectionism to feeling of fiasco). That is: through a contrabalancing, a compensation. The energy works as a pendulum. The more energy, which is invested in the one extreme of a pair of opposites, the larger the swing in the opposite direction becomes.

Now, if you test the personal development theories in relation to this law, then the law will say: the ideals about power/perfectionism/success only exist in relation to their opposites, namely powerlessness, fiasco, loss.

If you are extremely occupied by your own success, the system will seek to balance your thoughts by bringing them over in the opposite extreme, namely the powerlessness and the fiasco. It is therefore evident, that these modern ideals about being a success and a winner are participating in creating a swing over in stress, anxiety and depression.

What is applying for the individual person, also is applying for the collective and for nature. You can therefore also watch these laws of energy in groups, societies, world-images, yes, in the whole of mankind, as well as in the Universe.

Today the Ego-extreme is reflected in countless fields. Too much energy is invested in armament; too many atomic weapons; too much pollution; too unequal distribution of the riches of the Earth; too unequal distribution of the food and fruits of the Earth. And first of all: too many people are too focused in their Ego; they accumulate energy to their Ego, to oneself; or to the family Ego; the company's Ego; the national Ego.

Now, if you look at the energy-law, then this is the energy in its one extremity. With necessity the energy will swing over in the opposite extreme. And this will not happen in a silent way, when you consider the enormous moment which is in the actual extreme, and it will happen very simple: through pollution of the environment, through disease (aids, cancer and other) through warfare, terror, crises, inner mass psychotic collapses, and through natural disasters.

### ***E. Conclusion to The Matrix Conspiracy***

The task for the lifeartist is to become a kind of philosophical rebel, that treat humans, not as means for an ideology, but as goals in themselves – a kind of spiritual anarchist. The goal is a defence of Socrates. The problem today is namely the same as

on Socrates' time: the opponents against Socrates - the Sophists, who precisely were relativists - have again gained wide acceptance, and Socrates is again forced to drink Hemlock poison.

So you can say my Matrix conspiracy is the opposite of what conspiracy theories traditional have being criticized for (creating conceptions bordering to the paranoid). My Matrix conspiracy is about helping people to get out of the illusion they are caught in.

### *F. The brain and the mind*

Is there a difference between the brain and the mind? The physical brain which is a result of the past, which is a product of evolution, of many thousand yesterdays, with all its memories, knowledge and experiences - this brain is a part of the total mind – the mind, which contains a conscious and an unconscious plane.

The physical and the non-physical are altogether a whole. It is through thinking, evaluation, that you divide it in the conscious and the subconscious, the brain and the non-brain. As a lifeartist you must observe the entire thing as a whole, instead of fragmented.

Is there a difference between the brain as intellect, and the mind, so to understand that the mind is something else, a kind of consciousness? The mind is the total thought-process, where the thought is memory, knowledge, philosophical activity, and it also includes the brain cells. So you can't separate the brain cells from the rest of the mind. But is the mind a product of the brain? Or is the brain the instrument of the mind? The brain is of time, but is that also the case with the mind?

Some people say, that there nothing is beyond the brain. The materialists. But if insight can change the brain, then this is implying, that insight somehow is beyond the brain. This doesn't have to be something mystical. If an alcoholic is having the insight, that he must stop his abuse, and actually is stopping, then this insight is affecting his brain cells. And this insight must therefore be something different than the brain. Let us try to go deeper into this question.

We have seen that energy and matter have their origin in life itself, in the stream and movement of life, and this has the mind therefore also. But when the mind is in constant activity it sucks the energy and life away from the present, and transforms past and future into reality, and reality into emptiness. The mind makes itself independent as an ego, which is standing outside the stream of life, which is in

conflict with the facts. And this affects also the brain cells, which are wearied out and reduced in this eternal inner talking.

The brain is the centre for all the senses; the more the senses are awake and sensitive, the sharper is the brain. The brain is a storehouse of experience, knowledge and tradition. Therefore it is historical limited, conditional. Its activities are planned, thought out, but it functions in historical limitation, in time and space. Therefore it can't formulate or understand that which is the total, the whole, the complete.

According to the Buddhists, then the complete, the whole, purely and simply is the nature of the mind, the Buddha-nature. In lack of something better, the Buddhists often describe this nature as emptiness, which must not be mixed up with the nihilistic emptiness: the unreality and the absence. On the contrary it is precisely reality and presence. To use the concept emptiness is an illustration of, that you can't say anything about "the whole".

The condition for understanding a predicate is, that you can draw a dividing line between that, which the predicate stands for, and that, which it doesn't stand for. In Spinoza this is expressed in the principle: *Omnis determinatio est negatio*. The Buddhist philosopher Nagarjuna said something similar in his dialectics, which he developed in order to demonstrate the limitation of all concepts about reality. With a line of excellent arguments he disproved the metaphysical assumptions of his age, and showed in this way, that reality eventually can't be explained through concepts and ideas. He therefore gave reality the name Sunyata, which means "the emptiness".

If you, in order to recognize a door among many other doors, draw a cross on it, then the cross functions. But if you draw a cross on all doors (as in H.C. Andersen's *The Tinderbox*) then the cross loses its symbol-function. Therefore you can't say anything about the whole, and therefore you can't have any images of life, which can create harmony. Only a philosophical life-practice can do this.

So the nature of the mind is, according to the Buddhists, emptiness, total emptiness, and on the background of this emptiness the brain exists in time and space. Only when the brain has cleaned itself for its conditioning, only then it can grasp that which is complete. This complete is the emptiness, not the nihilistic emptiness, but awareness and compassion in one, the awake spacious presence which is a quality of the Now.

According to the Buddhists, then the brain in other words can empty out itself. The body and the brain can dive down into immense depths, into conditions of incredible beauty and sensitivity. This timeless expansion which takes place, and the quality of



it, and the level of intensity, is entirely different from the feelings, which have with absence to do; that is: feelings you are absent in, or absent from. You can for instance burst into anger, but at the same time surprised, or shocked, observe your anger. Or you can devote yourself in love, but relate dubious, astonished, offended, to your own feeling. Feelings, which you are locked off from, or locked inside, feelings, which you conscious relate distanced to, or feelings you are unconscious swallowed up in, or beside yourself in. All this are feelings, which have with absence to do.

The present intensity, which the Buddhists speak about, is altogether unrelated to any desire, wish or experience as memory. It is something, which flushes through the brain. The brain is here only an instrument, and it is the mind, or the nature of the mind, which is this timeless expansion, this exploding intensity of creation, where everything is middle, fullness and is lying in light. This light radiates both from the brain, and beyond the brain. This seeing and feeling are not only in the brain, but also beyond the brain.

So the mind, in which is the brain, the thoughts, the feelings, and any subtle emotion or fantasy, is, according to the Buddhists, an extraordinary thing. All its content doesn't create the mind, and yet without them the mind is not. The mind is more than what it contains. Without the mind the contents would not be; without the emptiness in the nature of the mind, there can't be content, just like that it is the emptiness in a pot, which makes possible, that it can contain water. The contents exist because of the emptiness. The intellect - the thoughts, the feelings, all consciousness - have their existence in the total emptiness of the mind. A tree is not the word, nor a leaf, branches or roots; the wholeness of them is the tree and yet the tree is none of these things.

The nature of the mind is the emptiness in which the things of the mind can exist, but the things are not the mind. Because of this emptiness time and space begin to exist. The brain, and the brain's things, can cover an entire field of life; it is occupied by multifold problems. But the brain can't catch the nature of the mind, because it only functions in division; logical analyzing in the one as different from the other, emotional evaluating in sympathy and antipathy, ethical in good and evil, religious in holy and profane, sexually in gender, the reality in the observer and the observed. None of these parts can produce the wholeness. And yet the brain is occupied by putting the many contradictory parts together in order to produce the wholeness. Just like the thoughts the brain functions philosophical. But the wholeness can't be assembled, and produced.

The brain can be aware, aware about itself as a part of the whole movement of the mind. But love, for instance, has only importance in the total perception of life, which

is in the mind's area, and not in the brain's area. So the brain can't see the wholeness of life; the brain is a part, regardless how educated it might be. It is not the wholeness. Only the mind can see the wholeness, and within the area of the mind is the brain. But the brain can't contain the mind regardless what it does. If it doesn't do anything there can come an insight in the wholeness, and this insight can change the brain, but insight itself is beyond the brain.

So human beings have two aspects: an energy aspect, and a consciousness aspect. Seen from the energy aspect lawfulness rules: your body is subject to the physical laws of nature, your psychic system is subject to the lawfulness of the energy fields, and of the energy transformations. Seen from the consciousness aspect, then a human being seems to be akin to the wholeness, to be transcendent in relation to these lawfulnesses.

### **3. The language**

Structuralism was originally a certain view of language within linguistics, developed by the Swiss linguist, Ferdinand de Saussure. During the 1950s structuralism is being transferred to other sciences than linguistics. For instance Lévi-Strauss used it in anthropology in the study of myths and kinship relations. However this transference is substantiated in, that these other fields themselves show a linguistic structure. Because of this transference structuralism is also developed into a philosophical point of view. Even though structuralism in its starting point in Saussure not is naturalistic, because language and signs here are considered as different from, and not tied to the order of nature, then it, among others, in Lévi-Strauss gets a naturalistic turn. Add to this, that structuralism fits well to the cognition ideal of positivism.

Through his anthropological studies Lévi-Strauss found out, that for instance kinship relations and myths are collective structures, which determine the thinking and acting of the subjects, without that they themselves know it. Structures are in that way an unconscious system of rules, which control human beings. To understand human beings will therefore say to see their actions as an outcome of interaction between underlying structural connections.

The conscious subject is in other words subordinate the subconscious structures. The freedom of Man is an illusion. Herein is, among other things, lying a showdown with all humanism and with Sartre's existentialism. It is not Man, who thinks the myths, but the myths that think themselves in Man, without that he knows of it. The myths

are a type of superpersonal anonymous thoughts, which the subject only is the carrier of.

Structures are in reality a part of the order of nature. The goal is to restore the culture in nature, and eventually life in the wholeness of its physical-chemical conditions. A statement, that both demonstrate the naturalistic tendency in Lévi-Strauss and the relationship with positivism.

In the following we will look at, how you in philosophy as an art of life can restore the culture, including history and language, in nature, without that it is implying the reductionism that is lying in, that cognition is identified with natural science, as Lévi-Strauss sets the scene for. Because if you should take Lévi-Strauss literally, then he ends up in relativism and subjectivism as all reductionisms do: if all humans' consciousness is subordinate the unconscious structures without that they know it, how can Lévi-Strauss himself know, that it is true what he is saying? And how can we have the freedom to restore culture in nature? He ends as a Hermeneutic of Suspicion in the same way as Nietzsche, Marx and Freud, and his theory is bound to undermine itself (see my article *The Hermeneutics of Suspicion* in my book *Dream Yoga*).

### ***A. Sense stimulation and symbolizing***

Observation consists of sense perception and expression, and the two parts can't be separated. Therefore the expression for what is seen also must be clear, there is required a linguistic understanding in unity with what is seen. Sense perception and expression must never be separated, because if they are, then you, as a user of language, or as a thinker, have moved outside the observed and are relating evaluating, theorizing, or doubtful, to what you see, and in that way you will create displacement and reflections. Sense perception and expression must always go together. So it is very important to use the right words, and think the right thoughts in unity with what is seen.

From this comes another factor: sense perception, expression and action. If your action isn't one with your sense perception and expression – expression in the meaning to express yourself in thoughts and words – then your action is either becoming absent from the world, or you are yourself becoming absent from your actions. Sense perception is in this way action. The actual thing that you see means that you act. Just like when you see an abyss and immediate act; your sense perception expresses itself through this action. Sense perception and action can therefore neither be separated, and ideal and action is something impossible.

If you see the self-contradictory in an ideal, then the actual thing that you see it, is a rational action. To be the contradiction present is therefore to clean the mind for the contradiction, and this is to act.

But usually there is displacement between sense stimulation, expression and action. You have for instance had a sexual feeling of lust; later you think about the lust in images - in the image language of the thought - and precisely because of this expression - the thought-activity in images – the lust increases. At the same time you perhaps, surprised or offended, are observing your lust; the action then consists in, that on the one side you are seeking to indulge yourself in the lust, on the other hand you relate doubtful, astonished, offended to your own feeling. When the lust is opposed there arises pain, anxiety, jealousy, annoyance, anger, brutality. All this doesn't mean, that you must not have lust, the problem is the displacements between sense stimulation, expression and action.

But what is it, that more deeply seen causes conflict? There arises conflict when the reactions to the challenges of life not are sufficient, and this conflict is the consciousness, which concentrates itself as the Ego. The Ego - the consciousness concentrated because of the conflict - is the experience. The experience constitutes the self-image. The experience is, as the Buddhists say, the many condensed reactions (the skandhas) on the multifold sense stimulations. Therefore an aspect of Man as a natural being.

But there is, mind you, only experience, when the phenomenon gets a designation or a name. The name is picked up from the store place, namely memory, which is based on the common human structure of belief and knowledge, the personal and collective images in time. This designation is the process of formulation; in this there is created symbols, ideas, words – which altogether strengthens the memory; altogether a mixture of nature and history/culture.

Your thinking takes place in time. Your thoughts are words and images, which work in this stream. It is the River of Heraclitus, it is the River of Time.

As the Indian philosophy claims, then this stream not only contains your personal history, it also contains a collective and universal history – together a history, which consists of images. These images are form-formations of energy, creative up-tensions, a kind of matter, though on a highly abstract plane, an astral plane invisible for the physical eye. These images exist in other words in the actual movement of the matter, and therefore not only in your mental activity, but also outside you in nature. So your thinking rises from an endless deep of images, which flow in the actual movement of nature.

Lévi-Strauss had in this way a point.

The consciousness, the Ego, which is standing outside because of the conflict, constitutes this complete process of experience in which something is designated and registered. You approach the challenge, on any level, with a set of experiences, some images of life, a perspective, which manifests itself as ideas, conclusions, prejudices; that will say: you give your experience a name. This designation gives the experience a special quality, a quality, which is connected with the name. The name originates from the memory. The past meets the new as the recurrence of the same. The challenge is met with memory, with the past. But the past's reaction can't understand the living, the new, the challenge; the past's reaction is not sufficient, and therefore there arises conflict, and that will say ego-consciousness. The conflict ends when this process of designation doesn't take place.

The trained lifeartist can in himself observe how the designation happens almost at the same time as the reaction. The interspace - which exists between the reaction and the designation - is the observing state. The observing state, in which you are one with the observed - where there are no displacements or distortions between the observer and the observed, but where you are in the middle of the actual - in this state there is no conflict. The conflict is a concentration of the Ego, which places itself outside in analyses and evaluations. But when the conflict ends, the thought-activity falls to calmness, and the inexhaustible begins.

Striving after becoming something, the will to power, is the beginning of anxiety, the anxiety of being or not being, the Hamlet-syndrome. The mind, the dregs of experience, always lives in anxiety of the unnamed, the challenge. The mind, which is the condensation of the name, the word, the memory, can only function within the area of the known, the area, which is mapped by those images of life it lives after. And the mind makes either resistance against the unknown, which is the momentarily challenge, or interprets it on the basis of its own perspective, the known. This resistance against, or interpretation of the challenge, is anxiety. The mind can't contact the unknown. The map is not the landscape. The known must end for that the unknown can be, you must move from having some images of life, to having a philosophical life-practice.

The question is then, whether the mind ever can be emptied for symbols, for all the words with their sense stimulations, so that there no longer is this inner spectator, theorist or doubter, who maintains himself by collecting experiences?

### ***B. The image-creating activity of absence***

Man as a natural being lives in a challenge-reaction relationship. What it is about for the lifeartist, is to look your destiny in the eyes; that is to say: to become your reactions present in passive listening; to observe and feel them completely with the heart and the mind; to observe them neutral as in a mirror without saying yes and no; to feel them deeply and incisively without seeking to achieve anything with it. Shortly said: to omit dividing your reactions in likes and dislikes, good and evil, pleasant and unpleasant. At the very moment you divide them, you become the reactions absent, you relate doubtful, evaluating or offended to them. And then you don't understand them.

As a lifeartist you could ask yourself, whether you ever have looked at other people without the images you have formed of them - images you have pieced together through many years. You have formed an image of other people, and they have formed an image of you. When it only is these images, which are facing each other, then there is no human relationship between you and the others.

These images arise when you not are your relationship with the surrounding world present. It is the absence, which creates images, because the presence, and therefore truth and reality, in the absence must symbolize itself. The absence is the disproportion between the observer and the observed, the unreality which is characterized by, that emptiness and loss slide in between, create reflections, displacement and darkness. And in this dividing state the wholeness must symbolize itself. The symbolism of absence and fragmentation is a telescoping of the oneness and coherence of presence and wholeness. It can't be in any other way.

The question then becomes, whether you can observe other people without condemning, evaluating, without saying whether they are right or wrong - only observing and feeling without letting your prejudices get any influence. Then you will see, that there is a quite different action, which takes place in this presence.

When you give something a name, you tighten it, through the name, to the past. Therefore you observe it with eyes, which the past has affected, and that will say: not in a new way. The past is your images of life, your perspective, and the only thing you see is your own perspective. To observe another human being with the eyes of the past, means, that what you see, is your own perspective of this human being, and not the human being in himself.

As a lifeartist it is important to pay attention to, that when you for instance observe violence, then you often try to justify it, as you say that violence is a necessity if you shall live in this barbaric world, that violence is a part of nature. Why do you do that?

You are used to observe in this way, to condemn, justify, or to make resistance. But you can only observe violence with fresh eyes, and an open mind, when you become aware, that you tighten what you see, together with conceptions about what you already know, your own perspective, individual as cultural, and that you therefore not are observing it in a new way.

In this way the question now arises: how are the conceptions created? What mechanism is forming these images? Another human being for instance says to you: "You are a fool!" You are yourself absent in your emotional evaluations, you don't like it, and it leaves a track in your mind. The other human being says something else, and also that leaves a track. These tracks are the images of memory, and in the memory exist the tracks of the evolution of million of years. It is these condensed reactions, the tracks, which are blended with many other tracks, which form the images in time; a mixture of history and nature. It is a wonderful picture book, the samсарical common human weaving spirit of the fates, reaching deep into beautiful and terrible astral worlds.

But if you are yourself present and the other human being says to you: "You are a fool!" if you in that moment are passively aware and feeling, then there is not left any track at all, because there is no displacement between challenge and reaction, but only a being, which is in the middle of itself, and characterized by fulfilment and naturalness. Perhaps the other human is right?

So we can see, that the absence weaves images, because emptiness and loss slide in between. Unreality is emptiness, absence, that to be outside. The concept absence indicates, that the unreality not is any emptiness, but an emptiness in relation to something defined. It is the absence of something. Unreality is defined from something, or in opposition to something, namely reality. And the unreal life is lying under for a constant tendency to fill it up. The emptiness has to be camouflaged, covered, forced out. You must keep the world together. And this you do by creating language or images.

The thinking weaves coherence, weaves meaning and weaves patterns. Feelings connect, suspicions suspect ahead, and fantasy creates images. The thinking puts together, associates and remembers the past. Untiring the thinking works and weaves the reality of the self-image and the world-image. And the thinking finds lawfulnesses in the stream of thoughts: laws of association, connections between causes, cyclic structures, archetypical attractors. All this constitutes a part of the dual and dualizing daily fate-weaving activity of the consciousness, and it happens on the background of absence.

But where absence weaves images, there presence releases the mind for images. This is very simple. If you in the same way become thoroughly present in passive listening when you for instance are angry, then it is not absence, which allows the past to push itself in and create reflections, and disturbing the actual sensation of the immediate anger.

The mind is pieced together by words and associations of thoughts, images and symbols, that are manifestations of the common human structure of belief and knowledge, which the images in time constitute. The evaluations originate from this historical background. Words such as God, love, Socialism, Communism, duty, necessity, etc. have an extremely important role in our life. Words have neurological as well as psychological meaning in accordance with the culture in which you have been raised. To a Christian some words and symbols have immensely meaning, and to a Moslem some other words have an equivalent vital meaning. And the evaluations take place within this area.

As we have seen, then the past is the foundation of the self-image and world-image, which form your perspective on yourself and life; and what you usually see, is your own perspective. The one who worship *is* therefore the worshipped. To adore another is to adore yourself. The world-image is a projection of yourself, only you divide yourself from it in the formation of the Ego, the self-image.

The fate weaving activity of absence is based on a desire after becoming something, to find secureness, meaning and coherence, and that which is weaved is the mutually dependent self-image and world-image, which divide themselves from each other in a subject-field and an object-field. This activity contains everything from dark and fateful movements, murmurous incantations, to highly raised epistemology, religious dogmatics and philosophical system-building. It is the many voices in Goethe's Faust-myth.

Your world-image, weaved by the past, by books and prayers, reflects, after all, only your own historical background, your self-image and perspective. You have yourself created it, even though many others also have had part in this image-weaving proces of creation. You choose that which is satisfying you, and what you choose is your own preconceived opinion. Your world-image is your intoxicant, and it is cut out from your memory. You worship yourself through the world-image, which your own thought has created, and thereupon divided itself from. Your devotion is love to yourself, camouflaged by the song your mind sings. The world-image is yourself, it is a reflection of your own self-image. And such a devotion is therefore a kind of self-deceit, which only leads to sorrow and isolation, and that will say: unreality.



The only thing humans can maintain is a projection of the known, their own perspective, but the unknown can't be maintained through the known. That which has a name is not that, which can't be mentioned, and when humans give a thing a name, they only awaken the determined reactions. How noble and pleasant these reactions might be, they are not real. Humans react to stimulus, but reality doesn't stimulate, it is.

The fate weaving activity of absence consists of speculation and imagination. Speculation and imagination are hindrances for the truth. The mind, which speculates, can never know the beauty in the present; it is caught in a net, which is weaved by its own images and words. No matter how widely it, like Orpheus, wanders around in its image-creation, it will still be in the shadow of its own structure, and will never be able to see what is lying beyond itself. The sensitive mind is not a mind with a big imagination. The ability to create images limits the mind historical; such a mind is tied to the past, to memory that makes it dull. Only the silent mind is sensitive. Any kind of accumulation is a burden; and how can a mind be free when it is burdened? Only the free mind is sensitive; the open is that which can't be measured and scaled, the wordless, the unknown. Imagination and speculation hinder the open, the sensitive.

Everybody lives within his own web, my in mine, the others in theirs. But will there ever be a possibility for breaking through this web, just like the butterfly, which breaks out from its cocoon? This web, this cloth, this case, is language, and it consists of your worries for your own person, and the others for theirs, your wishes contrary to theirs. This capsule is language, and language is the past, which have with personal and collective images in time to do. The web consists of all this. It is not one defined thing, but a whole heap, which the mind is carrying. I have my burden to drag on, the others have theirs, and in such a way we ramble through the world, alienated to each other. Can these burdens ever be put away, so that the mind meets the mind, the heart meets the heart? This is the actual question of the lifeartist.

It is clear that a human relationship, which rests on various fate-weaved images of life, never can be peaceful, because these images of life is fictional and you can't live in an abstraction. And yet this is what we all do: we live in ideas, in theories, in symbols, in conceptions we have created about ourselves and others, and which haven't anything with reality to do at all. All our relationships, in respect to property, ideas or people, largely build on this image formation, and therefore there is always conflict.

The whole wish about, through image formation, to weave meaning and coherence, is based on a wish about creating permanence, secureness for the Ego. But on the

contrary it creates anxiety, anxiety of that this pattern, this condensation, shall end. It is the anxiety of death.

Death is the unknown, which always threatens the known, the patterns you have created. The paradox is, that you can't be afraid of the unknown, because you don't know what the unknown is, and therefore there is nothing to be afraid of. Death is a word, and it is the word, the image, which creates anxiety. The word is a manifestation of your self-image and world-image. For as long as the image exists - the image from where the thought originates - the thought must constantly create anxiety. Then you rationalize your mortal dread and build a defence against the inevitable, or you invent countless faith-conceptions, which can protect you against the anxiety of death.

One of the more ingenious death-images is The Tibetan Book of the Dead. It is a kind of trailmarker and pathfinder, or travel catalog in the conditions after death, meant to be read loudly by a master, or congenial, to one, who is about to die, and also after death has occurred. But it still is lying within the area of the known, it is a philosophical mapping of death, the unknown. And the map is not the landscape. In the same way with the Egyptian Book of the Dead; the reason why the ancient Egypt's religious god- and symbolic world has fascinated people at all times - and given occasion to many mystical and enigmatic interpretations, which still have a splendid time - is perhaps due to, that it is a manifestation of some death-images which penetrate everything in ancient Egypt, architecture, art, politics etc., and that death is the greatest mystery of all. We like to have an explanation.

But it is still a religious conception made with the purpose of protection against the anxiety of death. Therefore there is an abyss between you yourself and what you are afraid of; that is to say: you are creating a distance to death by relating theorizing to it. In this abyss, which consists of time and space, there must be conflict; that will say: anxiety, worry and self-pity.

The mind can only be in peace when it doesn't experience anything; that is to say: when it doesn't determine and name, register and store anything in memory. It is not only the upper layers of the mind, which all the time name and register, it is all the various layers of consciousness. But when the superficial mind is silent, the deeper mind can send up signals. And when the whole of the consciousness is silent and in peace, free from the eternal self-producing becoming - this shutting itself away from life - when there is spontaneous openness for, and self-forgetful being one with life itself, not until then will that, which can't be measured, reveal itself: the new and unknown.

### *C. On communicating*

Propaganda is about using the meaning of the words to provoke a desired effect in the recipient. The propagandists ignore any direct communication, and use instead the many possibilities of language for manipulation. What they want is to organize sense impressions, the religious or the political sense impressions, the social or the private sense impressions, so that what you see, is the image the propagandists have created.

Neither the religious, nor the temporal propaganda, speak about truth. Propagandists are using, as Habermas expresses it, an instrumental usage of language on human relations, where it actual only should have been used on technical problems. They relate to humans in a strategic and controlling way, rather than the understanding way, which characterizes a communicative usage of language.

We are not only naming things in order to communicate to each other, but also in order to give an experience continuity and content, to reanimate it and repeat its sense stimulations, because this gives strength and continuity to the observer, to the wish about permanence, to the common elevation of the memory. Propaganda is always, in some way, about supporting this self-centred becoming something, the formation of the self-image, by integrating it in the world-image the propagandists seek to manipulate through. And they use words such as duty, necessity, God, freedom, homeland, reward, punishment etc.

The past is based on the images of time, which are of a linguistic kind. They manifest themselves as symbols. Language itself is a symbol, and we are used to symbols: we see the tree through the image, which is a symbol for the tree, we see our neighbour through the image we have created of him. It is apparently about the most difficult for Man, to observe something directly instead of through images, opinions, conclusions, which altogether are symbols. In the same way symbols play a great role in dreams, and therefore dreams are so deceptive and dangerous. The meaning of a dream is not always clear, though we realize that it consists of symbols, which we try to decipher. When we see something, we speak so spontaneous about it, that we don't realize, that the words also are symbols.

All this shows, that there perhaps is a direct communication in technical questions, but rarely in human relationships, and in the human comprehension. There is no need for symbols when we are getting beaten. It is a direct communication. Zen masters often use unexpected strokes in order to provoke their disciples to let go of themselves.

This is an interesting point: the mind denies seeing the things directly, to be them present without the word and the symbol. You for instance say, that the sky is blue. The one who hears it, interprets it from the conception he has about blue and reproduces it to you in his own code. In that way we live in symbols, and dreams are a part of this symbolic process. We are not able to perceive directly and immediate without the symbols, the words, the prejudices and the conclusions.

The reason for this is clear enough: It is a part of the self-centred becoming something, the will to power with its defence, resistance, escape and anxiety, and where you shut yourself away from life, are getting absent in evaluations and analyses, and where emptiness and loss slide in between, create reflections, displacement and darkness. In this unreal state reality can only communicate itself symbolic. The symbol is a telescoping, a representing quintessence of the wholeness, the information quantities, and the greater clarity, which is connected with reality and presence, but which the absence can't contain, because it splits, shuts itself inside, or shuts itself away from.

It is lying in Man as a natural being that the brain is a reaction converted to code language, and that dreams therefore necessarily must be symbolic, because we in the awoken state not are able to react, or perceive, directly.

#### ***D. The map is not the landscape***

In *Out of Africa* Karen Blixen somewhere describes the magic of the words. The natives named for instance an European after an animal, and a human being, who through many years, by all his surroundings, has been named with one animal-name, finally happens to feel himself related with the animal, he is named after; he recognizes himself in this animal.

In the natives' ability to create myths they don't discriminate between the word and the thing, the name and the named. The white men are really, in the eyes of the natives, both humans and animals. In the same way with their linkage of spirits and machines.

Karen Blixen tells about how the natives, because of this mythical "gift", can put experiences on humans, which they can't defend themselves against, and not get out of. They can make humans into symbols. She is telling, that it is a kind of magic, which is used on you, and that you later never completely can disentangle from it. It can be a painful, heavy fate to be exposed as one or the other symbol.

But also in the Western civilizations we become exposed for such a magic. It is not something, which we have come over. Now it is happening through one or the other kind of religious or political propaganda - and in particular through the media storm, which transforms humans into consumers. "You are what you eat!" It is also this magic George Orwell describes in his novel 1984, with the language called Newspeak, a language created by the rulers in order to control thinking. We all know it more or less. If you, by your surroundings, constantly are being induced some kind of image, you will in the end begin to believe in it, even if it is not true. Especially in family relations we see how family members are being induced roles, which are incredible difficult to disentangle from, because family relations also have with love to do. Krishnamurti is not all wrong, when he claims that the family is the most terrible institution of all.

Let us take the word God. The word originates from the past, the world-images; it is a condensation of a fount of tradition and memory, with all its intellectual and sentimental connotations. The past is your perspective, and what you see is your own perspective. The world-image is a projection of yourself, only you differentiate yourself from it in the formation of the Ego, the self-image. In that way there is created a dualism between the object-field and the subject-field.

Language in the object-field is like the atmosphere, which refines and thinner itself outwards: atmosphere – stratosphere – ionosphere; weightless floating in space – full outlook to the blue globe and the stars. The structure of language is the images in time; both the personal, collective and the universal images. The collective and universal images are lying in the object-field almost as a vast refined organic unity. It is therefore language must be seen as an aspect of Man as a natural being. Lévi-Strauss has, as mentioned, a point here. The culture must be restored in nature.

Language is most condensed in the spoken, communicated language: words, sentences, opinions, conversation. This is the subject-field, which primarily is characterized by personal images, but which accordingly originates from collective and universal images.

We have seen how the thinking divides everything. It separates large from small, outside from inside, up from down. The inner reality is divided in feelings and emotions, thoughts, sensations and intuitions. And the individual feelings are divided in hate against love, lust against pain. The outer reality is divided in the observer and the observed, the listener and the sound, the speaker and the spoken. In order to be able to function at all, the thinking differentiates the world in two: subject and object. The thinking is dual.

In close coherence with these aspects of thinking exists language. The thinking functions in language. And language is not only words and sentences. Language is music, mathematics, myths, archetypes, symbols, signs, etc. Language and thinking carry each other. And the collective history is so to speak lying in nature in the form of projected energy. The universal history though, is not projected energy, but is lying beyond Man, it is the actual foundation for the creation of the universe, it is the great vision, God's plan you could say, the dream-tracks and the songlines in the artwork of the universe and of Man. It works in synchronism with the Now, and therefore with life itself, and not projected in past and future.

The Pythagoreans were primarily mathematicians and astronomers. Their discovery of the mathematical relations of music made them assume, that the tones were the audible expression of the structure of the whole of the universe. They meant they had found consistency between for instance the movement of the planets and the individual tones, between the mutual location of the heavenly bodies and the intervals between the strings of the lyre. From this they concluded, that the movements of the planets in space had to bring forth tones, "the music of the spheres".

Since music in that way is an expression of divine or cosmic powers, it is also able to form the human soul in compliance with the divine relations of numbers. A thought, which came to characterize both Plato, Aristotle, Aristoxenes and Plotinus. The Christian mystic Hildegard Von Bingen wrote a series of songs in the Gregorian tradition; songs, which she received in divine visions, because she in that degree was able to be completely existentially present in the Now. And a similarly philosophy of music you also find in Indian and Buddhist philosophy.

Energy – and consciousness – has an immanent tendency to depict themselves. Energy moves, projects itself from latency to reality. Consciousness, or thinking, tends to separate and divide phenomena in order to analyze them, understand them. Energy projects itself in images and symbols. Consciousness divides images, symbols and phenomena in order to understand them. It is this, which happens when the thinking sucks energy and life out of the present, and transforms past and future into reality, and reality into emptiness. These two basic tendencies: the fall of the energy out in projection, and the fall of consciousness out in division - are what meditation seeks to avoid. Meditation seeks to give energy and life back to presence and reality. Let us try to go deeper into it.

The source of awareness, the actual place where consciousness is coming from, could be imagined as a film projector in a cinema. The film and its unfolded action could be an analogy to the object-field, both the outer events and phenomena of reality, and the inner reality (emotional reactions, sensations, thoughts, etc.).

The Ego, the feeling of identity, is deposited around the source of awareness. In the cinema you can look at the screen, and loose yourself in identification with the action. And you can turn around, and look into the lightsource of the projector. In the mind the projector is hidden in the Ego, hidden in the thinking, hidden in the awareness. In order to discover and break the identification with the samсарical producer of the mind, the subject must discover the hidden source in the awareness or in the innermost of consciousness. It happens by neutralizing the Ego's, or the thinking's, functions. This happens through meditation.

The Ego's functions constitute what you could call the ordinary consciousness. You can talk about four such, lower, functions of the ordinary mind:

1. Evaluation (accept/denial, yes/no)
2. Focus
3. Activity
4. Language (words, images)

The source of awareness, the naked consciousness, is hidden because it has melted together with these four functions. They have become a kind of veils, or layers.

Meditation is in all simplicity about separating and dismantling the consciousness' automatical identification with these functions. Then you can talk about four higher functions of the consciousness, which are becoming activated through meditation:

1. Neutral observation
2. Passive listening presence (defocus)
3. Non-activity (non-action)
4. Non-language (wordless)

The whole proces is like a flower opening itself.

The thinking is constituted by words and images. Words again consist of two elements, partly of a meaning-element, or meaning-symbol, partly of a sound. Whether the word is spoken, thought or only affected in a suspicion, it will always sound or mean something.

The image-side of the thought-process will also be seen to consist of two elements, partly – as all other images by the way – of a color (eventually only the color-nuance black/white) and partly of a structure.

The thinking's words and images are therefore composite by four fundamental elements: sound and color, symbol and structure.

You can then say, that all this is a manifestation of the past, the self-image and the world-image. It means that the subject-field and the object-field are equivalent with the ordinary thinking in words and images. Only for the thinking is the inner and outer world. By changing the thinking the world also changes. The space is around, and it is an objective outer occurrence. In that way it looks. And in that way they have believed it was; Aristotle and Newton agreed in this.

First with Leibniz, Kant and Einstein started a revolution in the conception of space. Einstein stated, that time and space are ways in which we think, and not relations we live in. Kant suggested, that space and time were forms of experience, not outer objective relations in themselves, but fundamental common human structures. Leibniz claimed that space and time is the order of things and not things, whereby he expressed, that space and time is human made conceptions, not objective facts.

But be careful now! This doesn't mean, that the ordinary inner and outer reality not are reel. The reality, both the subjective and the objective, is reel. But as mentioned it is the absence, which creates images, this, that you are yourself absent in your thinking, shut inside, or shut away from, in a disproportion between the observer and the observed, filled with reflections, displacement and darkness. Shortly said: space and time.

If the clarity of the mind increases through, that you are becoming yourself present, then the thinking can be made transparent, whereby it begins to unfold its components: sound-color and symbol-structure. In this structured clarity the mind meets the world in a new way, both the inner and the outer, even though inner, on this step, apparently still is clearly divided from outer. The wholeness has, from its deep, dreamless sleep, begun to dream.

Instead of, that you via the senses, only meet a world of houses, humans, trees and things – or of feelings, thoughts, lust and pain - then you in this presence furthermore can see a world-image of auric colors, archetypical symbols and yantric, or other, energetical structures. Moreover you can in this presence hear sounds, not sound-images communicated through the hearing sense, but the presence itself hears directly: un-mediated sounds. Your mind is now in an astral state.

If you are absent in the thinking you meet a world divided in inner and outer, and constituted by closed things, substances, structures. The Ego has, as we all know, not directly insight in, and access to, the inner of things, or the inner of other humans. If



you however are present in passive seeing and listening, you can, in your thereby gained clarity - in the astral state of mind - furthermore see and hear a world of vibrant, soundfilled energyfields, which shimmer in symbols and colors. This world-image is open. Such a presence has to a certain extent directly insight in that, which to the thinking's absence, is closed and inaccessible.

The clearness from the dissolved and evaporated thoughts and contents will widen the mind out towards the borders, where behind the collective common human structures are found: the images in time. These common deep thoughts of mankind, can the mind, by force of its increased clarity – the astral state - see as visions: primordial images, religious images and structures, symbols, wisdom-figures, figures from fairy tales, higher worlds, other dimensions. In short: the astral worlds.

The astral state of mind is also implicating a so-called astral body, or a dream body, which is able to leave the physical body while it is sleeping. It is called astral travel, or astral projecting, because it is a kind of projection of the mind, which goes out over the borders of the five senses, though these also seem to follow. With this astral body you can travel elsewhere, both on earth, to other planets, into the astral worlds, into the kingdom of death, and into countless heavens and hells. It is like entering the fairy tale of Peter Pan (also see my articles *A map of the Spiritual Journey*, *Dream Yoga* and *The Deathprocess* in my book *Dream Yoga*).

The personality, when it is in this astral state, can receive supernatural information through such astral worlds, and their images and symbols, partly from the collective images, partly from the universal images. However there is immensely difference between, whether the above-mentioned visions appear as a result of upward energy, which sucks energy and life out of the present, and transforms past and future into reality, and reality into emptiness – and whether it happens in the form of downward energy, where there flows energy and life back from past and future, back to the Now, to presence and reality. The last-mentioned condition is characterized by discrimination, whilst the discrimination is missing in the first mentioned. The first mentioned might be caught in a spiritual crisis (see my article *the Spiritual Crisis* in my book *Dream Yoga*).

Language is most condensed in the spoken, communicated language: words, sentences, opinions, conversation. The thoughts can be as speech, only without sound. But the thoughts can also be abstract, faster, dispositions to words and sentences. And here language nuances itself: polar structures, emotional, creative, intuitive, symbolic and metaphorical language games, musical and mathematical language games. All this is lying in the collective images. The collective images are lying on an astral plan, and work in sequences in past and future/cyclic structures.

Even deeper are the universal images lying, what Sri Aurobindo called vision-logic: language which no longer is verbal, but which is superior, visionary syntheses and wholes, that work more in synchronism with the Now, than in sequences in past and future. From this plane originates the world-images, the superior universal systems and paradigms: philosophical, scientific, religious-spiritual and cosmic world-images and mappings. These are linguistically refined, highly abstract, stratospherical or ionospheric levels of language and systems of reference, but however still linguistic structures and interpretations. However they are in their original form not human made, and there is in Indian philosophy many discussions about whether they are expressions of the actual divine unmanifested source, or whether they lie somewhere between the unmanifested and the manifested. They probably correspond to what the Western philosophers have called unmoved matter. They are the thoughts of God.

Language is accordingly not the real. The map is not the landscape. The word God, for now to return to that, contains all the above-mentioned, but the word is not the real.

### ***E. The task for the lifeartist***

The task for the lifeartist is about discriminating between language and reality. The Dominican mystics call this steps *discriminatio*, the ability to discriminate between how the energy is used temporal or religious. And despite the above-mentioned visions then it is still something temporal, or relatively. The Orientals call it *viveka*, discrimination, the ability to use your will on that part of the energy, you can steer yourself, and steer it towards exercises, prayer, mantras, meditation, instead of towards career, worldliness, self-unfolding, as personal development does.

This way of thinking is also found in Kierkegaard in *Finishing Unscientific Postscript* in the famous formula: "to relate absolute to the absolute and relative to the relative". Kierkegaard deepens this by demonstrating, that we precisely relate the other way round. We relate absolute to the relative. It is that which makes us self-opinionated and obdurate, creating inner conflicts and setting human up against human.

We are absolutely locked inside our self-centred becoming something, our images of life, our ideas and attitudes. Shortly said: language. We must therefore begin with relating relative to the relative. That is in Kierkegaard's language: "Die from the immediate". We must learn to relativize ourselves, and our samsarical-temporal becoming something (the will to power). And it happens through self-knowledge and

through relativizing of the Ego and the temporal life. First when we existentially concrete can relate relative to the relative, we can begin the next great work: to relate absolute to the absolute. The question then becomes whether the mind can be free from language.

The word God is tradition, the hope about finding the absolute, the desire after the highest, the movement, which gives life power and apparently weaves meaning and coherence. In that way the word itself becomes the highest, and yet we can see, that the word not is the real; the mind is the word, and the word is thought-activity.

When it is about a tree, then we have the object before our eyes, and the word refers to the tree, this has everyone agreed about. But concerning the word God, then it doesn't refer to something, and every human being has therefore created his own image of that, which can't be seen. The theologian does it in one way, the intellectual in another, and the believer and the non-believer do it in different ways. It is the hope, which grows this belief, and after this, the quest of Man. This hope is a product of despair – despair over everything we see around us in the world.

Despair is a relationship with loss. Sorrow can be the despair over a particular loss, namely death, but despair can also be a sorrow over all kinds of loss. Sorrow is a concrete despair, despair is a universal sorrow. The primary definition of despair is, that it is the lived meaninglessness. In the despair truth and values have broken-down. Despair is the experience of, that meaning in your existence has broken in pieces. There happens a breakdown in the structure of meaning, which you live in. In the same way the despair shows an identity, which more or less is lying in ruins. Despair is the emotion of breakdown. Despair, or meaninglessness, is existential chaos.

Hope is born from despair. They are two sides of the same coin. Where there not is hope, there is hell, and because we are afraid of hell, we seek the meaning, which is in the hope. Then the illusion begins. The word has in that way led to an illusion, and not at all to God. God is the illusion, which we worship, and the non-believer creates the illusion about another God, which *he* worships – science, the state, utopia, or a book, which he thinks contains the whole of the truth. So, what we as lifeartists ask ourselves, is whether we can be free from the word with its illusions? Would that lead to despair?

Belief is one thing. What you are is something else. The belief is a word, a thought, it is not the real, no more than your name in reality is yourself. Has belief with love to do? Can you place love in the place of anxiety? It would be an action steered by the thought, which is afraid and therefore covers over the anxiety with the word love.

Again a belief. You have covered the anxiety with a word, and you are clinging to the word in the hope of, that you therewith can dispel the anxiety.

But when we understand that the word not is the real, that the description not is the described, the explanation not the explained, then the mind has released you from the word. If you have created an image of yourself, then the image is pieced together by words, by thought-activity – the thought is the word. You think about yourself as large, small, skillful, or as a genius, or whatever – you have an image of yourself. This image can be described, it is the result of a description. And this image has the thought created. But the description, the image, is not the reality.

St paul writes in his second letter to the communion in Corinth, that: "the letter kills, but the spirit makes alive". Through centuries mankind has got descriptions in with spoons by their teachers, their authorities, their books, their saints. Mankind say: "Tell us everything – what is there beyond the hills and the mountains and the earth?", and they are satisfied with their descriptions, what means that they live of words, the word is their foundation of life, and therefore their existence is superficial and empty. They are the living dead. They have lived in what has been told them, either guided to it by their inclinations and their desire, or forced to accept it by circumstances and environment. They are a result of all kinds of influences and there is nothing new in them, nothing, which they themselves have discovered, nothing original, innocent, clear. It is the eternal recurrence of the same.

The dangerous in language is, that it also contains feelings. When you describe something, then the feeling usually is not different from the description. The name awakens the feeling. The feeling arises where the mind's description and the body meet. The feeling is the reflection of the name in the body. The name creates a build-up of energy in the body. It is this energy, which is the feeling. And most of us intensify feelings when we describe something. The feeling and the name happen almost at the same time.

And language is of time. If you as a lifeartist are the process of the mind present, you can see how it is dependent on words, how the words stimulate the memory or revive dead feelings and experiences. In this process the mind either lives in the future or in the past.

That the mind must disentangle from language is not equivalent with that language must stop. Precisely as we saw in the section about the thought, language is necessary. But in order to, that our usage of language can be precise, logical and clear, there must be a non-linguistical sensation, which carries it. It must be made

transparent in presence and reality. When language is made transparent it works from the universal images, and therefore synthesizing and healing.

The problem arises because there not is such a non-linguistical sensation. On the contrary we are ourselves absent in language, and create displacements, reflections and darkness.

There both have to be the linguistic explanation, and the non-linguistic sensation – because the description is never the reality, which is described. It is obviously, that the explanation never is the thing, which is explained; the word is never the thing itself. This saw after all also Kant, when he discriminated between the thing for us, and the thing in itself. But it is precisely that which we in our absence don't understand. We have no discrimination. Therefore our perspective has to be cleaned.

When we think that the description is the described, yes, then the thing we see is nothing else than our own perspective. To cleanse the perspective consists in being aware of how the perspective is made dull, muddy, unclear. And what makes it muddy is the lacking discrimination, the lack of ability to understand that the description not is the described, that language not is the reality, that the map not is the landscape. It is the perspective, which is captured by words. It is the perspective, which is the description, is the language, is the the philosophical mapping. But if you don't understand this, then the only thing you see, is your own perspective, the eternal recurrence of the same and the known, and not the dawn of the new and unknown.

### *F. Non-linguistic presence*

To be yourself absent in language means, that you always interpret the present reality on the bases of the past. Can you therefore, as a lifeartist, without interpreting the present on the bases of the past's conditions, observe your reactions in a new way, with an open mind?

Truth is coming when there is a non-linguistic presence, an observance and a love, which are without conclusions, without explanations, without words. The inner spectator, theorist or doubter, are constructed by words, which again are manifestations of a self-image. The Ego consists of explanations, conclusions, condemnations, justifications etc. There is only mutual connection with the observed when there isn't any inner observer and calculator, when you in self-forgetful way are open for, and engaged in, the observed. Only then there is understanding, freedom from the problem.

But people are afraid of living in this way, and this is because of their historical limited background. They accept this construction of formulars and ideals, just like others have done. They live with it, they accept conflict as the only way of life. But when you as a lifeartist see all this, not in a linguistical, theoretical or intellectual way, but where you, with the whole of your being, feel how meaningless it is to live in this way, then you have the abundance of energy and life-power, which are coming when there isn't any conflict at all. Then there is only the fact and nothing else.

This is only possible to understand when you are present in passive listening - without that there is a dreamer, interpreter, doubter within you - when you are one with your activity.

Understanding is not the intellectual process, which they have made so much out of in the hermeneutics. But understanding is neither that kind of intuitions or feelings, which you either can relate conscious distanced to, or unconscious can be absent in. When you say: "I understand a thing quite clearly", then the observance and the feeling originate from a complete silence – only then there is understanding. When you say: "I understand a thing", you thereby mean, that the whole of your being listens quite silent, it is neither for, nor against. This presence is that, which listens, listens completely – and only then there is understanding, and thereafter action; they happen at the same time, they are one and the same movement. There isn't any disproportion between the action and its occasion, but middle, fullness and fulfilment; a spring of life, the emptiness of creation. And this is genuine existential meaning.

Meaning is existential richness. Meaningful existence is fulfilled, it has no lacks, it is being and not becoming. Characteristic for meaning as a way of life is, that you are fulfilled by the other. It happens in the devotion. True love is devotion, where you give yourself away with the whole of your identity.

As despair has a relationship with loss, then meaning has a relationship with fullness. The meaning in what you do, is filling, lifting up and expanding. Meaning owns a freedom, which does, that it can't be emptied out, it is so to speak inexhaustible. Meaning is therefore also an utterance of freedom. Meaning opens your existence, or it is an opening in your existence towards the present, the Now.

Meaning is order. The meaningful life is in itself of order, it presupposes and integrates different kinds of order. It contributes in creating and expanding order, it is opening for new order and is limiting chaos. Order is cosmic, and existential meaning has a part in it. Meaning therefore expresses itself as reason.

Meaning doesn't create problems, doesn't fill you with worries, doesn't create anxiety, doubt or fear around itself. On the contrary it spreads intelligibility around itself, opens both you yourself, and the surroundings, for meaning. It has a validity in itself that can't be disputed. The emotional expression of fullness is joy of life.

#### 4. Identity

The question *Who am I?*, is old in philosophy, and in philosophy as an art of life it is perhaps the most central. As mentioned, then the returning meditation technique for the Indian philosopher Ramana Maharshi, was all the time to ask himself the question "*Who am I?*" to everything that happened him.

In traditional Western philosophy they have more been occupied by the question about, what it is that does, that you, through all changes, are the same. They have identified identity with the Ego, or the self, which it also is called.

(Here it is on its place to emphasize, that I don't discriminate between the Ego and the self, in the way, which others do. Popular concepts, such as personal development and self-development, is to me about the same, namely about development and unfolding of the Ego).

And they have sought the permanent in the Ego/the self. The whole of the Ego's activity is namely precisely about seeking permanence, about maintaining itself through all changes.

In Descartes' thinking is lying - in good compliance with tradition - the answer, that I am a thinking thing: *I think, therefore I am*. I am in other words an immaterial reality or substance, a constant self, contrary to the changeable material reality. And everything I can establish of properties in myself - for instance all the different kinds of consciousness in, that I think, feel, want, sense etc. - are properties in this substance.

However the philosopher David Hume takes this view up to consideration, and he rejects it. We all use the word "I" and think, that it has an importance, that we have a conception about the self. But if we look deeper into it, it is an illusion. Because which impression, which sensation, should the idea about the self be derived from? Hume claims, that if he uses his introspective method, then all he finds in himself, is a constant stream of impressions and conceptions. Nowhere exists an impression of an immaterial substance, of a constant self.

### *A. On seeking the permanent*

Is there at all anything eternal and unchangeable in us: an inborn nature, a soul, or some gene, which are not touched by the changing circumstances? Do we have a permanent identity? You could perhaps to this say, that that to identify yourself with something, apparently is a permanent element of the brain's function. That it is a permanent element will say, that it is something unavoidably and lasting. But is it true?

Any state of thoughts (or images) can assuredly be changed. Only the brain's strong, persistent demand for physical safety for the organism, is something inherent. The brain has constructed symbols in order to protect the Ego; that is what the whole of the thoughtprocess is all about. The Ego is a symbol, a manifestation of a self-image, not a reality. Here the Buddhists would agree with Hume, even though the self-image, according to Buddhism, is an expression of something much deeper than Hume came to realize.

After the thought has created the symbol, the Ego, the perspective – then the thought is identifying itself with this, its image, its conclusion, with the formula, and protects it. From there origins all unreality and absence. It is to have your identity in an absence, an existential fall, something unnaturally, and not something natural.

The feeling of the permanent consists in the condensed reactions; that is: the body, the feeling, the perception, the desires, and the consciousness. The feeling arises as a result of a challenge, and then you give it a name, which will say that you identify yourself with it. This, that we give it a name, restores the feeling in our images of life, the past pattern, which repeats itself again and again, which maintains the reactions and condenses them. Consequently an aspect of Man as a natural being. Unless you give the feeling a name - which will say, that you don't identify yourself with it and maintain it through evaluations - then the feeling is new, and it will disappear by itself. If it gets a name, it will gain strength, it will become permanent, and then we have the whole of the thoughtprocess.

The namegiving happens through evaluations, that to say yes and no, justifying and condemning, commenting, comparing, accepting and denying. Conversely it means, that when you only observe events or feelings neutral, then you don't give them any name. You will then be able to see how they come and go, blossom and wither away, without that they become maintained in the memory.



The memory consists of multifold experiences, which have been named, identified, and it is this process, which creates the Ego, the inner spectator, theorist, doubter. The Ego is tied to time and its images.

However we must discriminate between the personal/collective images in time, and the universal images. The personal and collective images work in sequences in past and future. The universal images work in synchronism with the Now. If you are completely existential present in the Now, you will receive information through the universal images – you will be made transparent in wisdom. The Ego has stepped aside. You will have contact with the world of forms, as Plato formulated it.

Are you on the other side absent in the Now, distracted in past and future, you will receive information through the personal and collective images, and then you will be clouded by belief and knowledge (ideology). And this is precisely the Ego.

Karl Popper has in his book *The Open Society And Its Enemies* described what there, society-philosophical seen, happens, when you confuse ideas with reality, and don't discriminate between language and reality, idea and nature, map and landscape.

He meant, that Plato's world of forms was the same as the permanent, the past and the old, and that Plato wrongly considered this for being the actual reality. Therefore change, the new and unknown, was of evil and had to stop, if the state of the society should be an exact copy of its original; that is to say: a copy of the form, or idea, of the state. In the same way with the soul: if the soul is based on the past - which according to Popper is what Plato means with the world of forms - then it is its task to realize its origin in the past.

All realization is, according to Plato, in the end due to a recollection of the eternal forms, which are lying as foundation for the accidental phenomena, because we before birth had a direct view of these forms. According to Popper this means a return to the past.

This is a misunderstanding of Plato. Popper doesn't understand – like many other academical philosophers today - that Plato understands philosophy as an art of life, where you strive after wisdom and joy, where you practise a certain realized or clarified way of life; that is: that Plato's concept of philosophy slides in one with a certain existential training and therapy.

The universal images (the world of forms, the world of realization) work in synchronism with the Now, therefore they are an expression of reality. Plato's recollection of the eternal forms is simply about returning to the Now. Precisely as

Karen Blixen formulated it. She depicted precisely the universal images as the ancient, the original. Contrary to this the personal and collective images work in sequences in past and future, and therefore they are an expression of illusion or unreality: what Plato called the world of experience, or phenomena, the world of shadows, of reflections, and of imaginations.

But Popper's analyse is ok to become clever of. Because if you misunderstand Plato's world of forms as an expression of the personal and collective images in time, then you end, as Popper rightly said, in a kind of historicism. And that has happened many times.

Historicism is a reductionism, it reduces Man to be a result of a single influence, namely time (history), at the same time as it understates other influences. It is a tendency to see all realization and all experience connectedly with historical change and development, and it confuses idea (language) and reality. Time in the thinking becomes the world history. World history and reality are one, and therefrom you can claim, that the thinking, time, and therewith your personal and collective images, are an expression of the natural development of the world history, and therefore the real and absolute, which have to be introduced with all means you have at your disposal, such as violence, suppression and propaganda. In that way is created totalitarian ideologies, and totalitarian models of society. This we have seen lots of examples on.

According to ancient way of thinking Man is for instance a society being, who has, as his purpose, to live in an ideal state. The ideal state, they meant, had a metaphysical anchoring in some eternal principles, which it was the task of Man to find and cherish. This perspective is, in Plato and Aristotle, the Greek city-state, while the state in the late Antiquity was identified with the Roman Empire.

Christianity introduces a Jewish inspired view of history, a so-called eschatological view of society, according to which the temporal society is part of a holy history, which culminates with doomsday. In the Christians this means, that Man has as his utmost purpose to achieve the eternal salvation after death; whereby it becomes a question, how this purpose relate to life in the worldly state. For instance Eusebios meant - when the Christian church got still more influence in the Roman Empire - that the Roman Empire was a part of God's plan with the creation, an earthly imitation of the real kingdom of god. Augustin discriminated between Civitas dei (Gods town = Paradise) and Civitas Terrana (the earthly town), and meant, that all formations of societies, including the Roman Empire, is a mixture of the two, and that it is hidden to mankind what is what.

Mediaeval thinkers of society took over Augustin's division, but identified the church as institution with Civitas Dei, and the temporal state power with Civitas Terrana. The Christian church should inherit the Roman Empire and ensure its continued existence.

In Hegel and Marx the philosophy of history is revived. Hegel thinks metaphysical and seeks to explain the development of history from the purpose of the world spirit. Marx thinks anti-metaphysical and seeks to explain the development of history from the economical class conflicts. However, both are they representatives for variants of secularized eschatological thinking, and as such, in each their way, heirs of the Jewish-Christian tradition.

All such models of society have had terrible consequences because they, in the undervaluation of other influences than the historical, create an imbalance. They confuse personal and collective images with reality. The simplest expression of the malfunction in the mind, which this brings about, is the concept of ideology.

We have already mentioned Niccoló Machiavelli a few times. His book *Il Principi* is a textbook in statesmanship, or in ideology, written in a pessimistic time of crisis, and with a recipe on how the crisis can be solved. In the book Machiavelli presents the famous and notorious idea about, that the end justifies the means, that for instance violence can have a right in order to achieve power in a given situation. The problem has lived ever since, what history speaks its distinct language about, and *Il Principi* is still one of the most controversial works in the world literature.

Let us repeat it: ideology altogether - that is to say: the identification between truth and idea (time/dogmas) - is a psychic disease. You are not in doubt about, that ideology is a psychic disease if you look at its collective manifestations. It appears for instance in the form of ideologies such as Communism, Liberalism, Conservatism, National Socialism and any other nationalism, or in the form of rigid religious systems of faith, which function with the implied assumption, that the supreme good is lying out in the future, and that the end therefore justifies the means, as Machiavelli said. The goal is an idea, a point out in a future, projected by the mind, where salvation is coming in some kind – happiness, satisfaction, equality, liberation, etc. It is not unusual, that the means to come to this is to make people into slaves, torture them and murder them here and now.

But such models of society is at the same time very seductive because they have with that feeling of permanence to do, which you get when you identify yourself with something. Identification with something is justification, acceptance, what at the same time means condemnation, and resistance against something else.

The difficulty of humans is lying in, that they identify themselves with their problems, and that the identification prevents the stream of thoughts and feelings. So with identification is here meant: assumption or denial, condemnation or comparison - which distorts the understanding.

But identification also creates anxiety. The anxiety is persistent as long as you escape from what you are. That you are altogether identified with something, with a person or with an idea, doesn't mean, that you have discovered a final refuge, because this anxiety always lives in the background. It appears in dreams, when the identification temporarily has stopped; and there is always such a break in the identification process, unless you are out of balance.

What you as a lifeartist must study, understand and neutralize, is the Ego's time-binding characteristic, which identify itself with the memories. Strong demands, especially the lustful, is about achieving something for the Ego, and it is the memories, which gives "me and my" an identified continuation. The thinking, which always is in motion, always streaming, becomes, when it identifies itself with me and my, time-binding, and gives identified continuation to memory, to the Ego. It is this memory - which always grows and increases - you must give up.

It is this memory – which is the cause of imitation, of thoughts, that are travelling from the known to the known, from perspective to perspective – which in that way hinders the realization of truth, the creation, which unfolds itself in the middle of the stream of life, the spring of the unknown, the actual unmoved mover - because it in its self-centred becoming something, places itself outside.

### ***B. Identification with the greater***

We have seen, that your world-image is inseparable connected with your self-image. The self-image manifests itself as a certain perspective, so that everything you are seeing, is your own perspective. The world-image is a projection of yourself, only you divide yourself from it, in the formation of the Ego.

What Man identifies himself with, is always the self-projected, whether it is the highest, the state, or the family. The identification is, regardless on what plane it takes place, a process of the Ego. Identification with the greater is still a projection of the small, and reverse. What you identify yourself with, when you identify yourself with the greater, is the idea. The idea is the Ego identified with for instance God or the state. But such an identified action only creates more discord, larger confusion, distress and misery.

The musician identifies his ego with what he thinks is beautiful music, and the religious identifies his ego with what he thinks is the great. They are all skilled within their special small fields, but often the rest of the extensive area of life passes them by.

The reason is that you seek philosophical safety - that is: meaning and foundation of life - alone in the idea about what you are concerned with, without having the whole of your way of life and being with you in it. But to be willing to have philosophical safety only in an idea, is to deny the physical safety. Why?

If you for instance want to be philosophical safe as Jew, with all the traditions, the supernatural conceptions and ideas, you identify yourself with the larger group, which feels as a great security. You therefore worship the flag, the nation, the tribe, and divide yourself from the rest of the world. And it is clearly that this division develops physical insecurity. When you worship the nation, the customs, the religious dogmas, the superstition - you limit yourself historical within these categories, and then you must of course deny all other people physical safety.

Man is in need of physical safety. But this is made impossible in the very moment he seeks philosophical safety in an idea. This is a fact, not an opinion. When you seek safety through your family, your wife, your children, your home, and the implicated ideas about all this - me and my family, the family ideals - you must be opposed to the rest of the world, you must differentiate from other families, be against everyone else in the world. This is a naked fact. You don't need to be special aware in order to discover all the conflicts in relation to other families. And just try to see how many conflicts your own family is creating if you try to get out of the role, which this family has induced you with.

This is important to understand, because we are so used to observe life in fragments. And as long as this division in fragments continues, we will also have the demand about the fulfilment of the Ego; the Ego, which wants to unfold, to achieve something, compete, be ambitious. It is this fragmentation of life that makes us both individualistic and collectivistic, self-centred at the same time as we are in need of identifying ourselves with something greater, while we remains separated. It is this deep division in the consciousness, in the whole build-up, and nature, of our beings, which leads to a division of our activities, our thinking and feelings. In this way we divide life, and what we call to live and to die.

Therefore our actions always rest on an idea, a principle, a belief, a conclusion, and therefore on hope or despair, because the thinking has sucked life out of the present,

of our way of life. If you have an idea, an ideal, you adjust yourself after this ideal; you distance yourself from your own action, relate surprised or evaluating to it. Your actions become absent from the world, or you become yourself absent from the action. This disproportion between the ideal and the action is time, the past's and the future's displacement and reflections.

You say: "Some day I will become this ideal". You think, that by identifying yourself with the ideal, then the ideal one fine day will act and there won't be any division between the action and the ideal. But what is it, that in reality happens, when you have this ideal, and the action, which tries to approach the ideal? What happens in this break of time? There is an inner contradiction, which leads to hypocrisy. You are angry and the ideal says: "You must not be angry". Therefore you suppress, control, adjust yourself, in an attempt to approach the ideal, and therefore you all the time are in a condition of conflict, you are pretending. The idealist is a person, who is pretending. In this division there is also conflict.

You can identify yourself with the poor or the rich, with a house, a family, a country, or the whole of the planet – it is one of the tricks Man uses in order to simulate unity. Identity begins with the Ego, the Egocentric person. Then the feeling of identity can expand to family and society, a sociocentric identity. And the identity can expand to embrace the planet – a planetarian identity.

Identification with something is one of the most hypocritical conditions. To identify yourself with a group in the name of unity, and still remain alone, is one of the favorite tricks of Man, in order to deceive loneliness. Or you identify yourself with your belief in such extreme degree, that you are this belief. And that is a neurotic condition.

Man identifies himself with the greater in order to get a feeling of safety, unity or power. This greater covers a wide and indefinite area, for instance could a broad spectrum of common human activities and organizations be called the greater: families, parties, state formations, wars, work communities, concerts, clans, tribes and sects, mass psychological phenomena, religious parishioners, fashion streams, group souls.

Such enormous common human undertakings are collective energy- or life-processes, in which there are great powers in action in the form of the collective images in time.

These powers are often used with quite specific intensions, precisely because that the collective world-image - the energies in the object-field - is inseparable connected with the self-image, the subject-field. The forces can then be turned into the Ego, the

images can be used in order to open creative channels, create super egos, create political leaders and popular seducers such as Hitler and Stalin. This is a demonical element. And the archetypical popular seducer is of course Lucifer, who fascinated Milton, Romanticism, Baudelaire, etc. He haunts in figure of Prospero in Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, as Mefistoteles in Goethe's *Faust*, or as Conchis in John Fowles' *The Magus*. (Also see my article *Sympathy for the Devil*, in my book *Dream Yoga*).

As a lifeartist you must push this desire aside, the desire after identifying yourself with a person or an idea or a thing. This doesn't lead to harmony, unity or love. The question then becomes: can you break out of this frame? How this shall take place in philosophy as an art of life, can't be answered with a method, the answer rather consists in a voyage of discovery, which perhaps can open the door; just like Faust, who unwraps himself from Mefistoteles' word-web, by making a journey through it, without knowing where it brings him.

To have your identity in an absence is to have your identity in your country, your furniture, your images, your ambitions, your respectability, your race, your peculiarities and prejudices, your obsessions. Through all this Man wants to discover truth, God, reality. And because Man doesn't know how he shall disentangle from all this, he invents something, an outside power, or he gives life a special meaning. But this is precisely unreality and falsehood.

When you as a lifeartist therefore understand the nature of the thought – not on a linguistical plane, but actually is the thought present in passive listening – and you have a prejudice, then you observe it and feel it. You will then see, that your faith-conceptions, your images of life, are prejudices. That you identify yourself with your country is a prejudice.

Mankind have so many opinions, so many prejudices; what it is about for the lifeartist is to observe only one of them completely, with the whole of your essence, with heart and mind and in love – to be interested in it without seeking to achieve anything with it, observing it without saying yes and no. And then you will see how it is to live without prejudices of any kind. It is only a mind, which is without prejudices and without discord, that can see what truth is.

### ***C. Mortal fear***

That identity has with Man as a natural being to do, is due to, that identity is closely connected with the fact, that we as natural beings shall die.

When we speak about life we usually mean life as a continuation-process, where there happens an identification. When we say life, we often mean I and my house, I and my wife, I and my bank account, I and the experiences I have collected. To live is therefore a process whereby something is continued in memory, conscious as unconscious, with the multifold struggles of the process, all the quarrels, episodes, experiences. It is all this we call life. Opposite is standing death, which means, that all this is being brought to an end. Therefore we create an opposition, life and death. Life is the known, the perspective we have created on the background of the images of time. Death is the unknown, the landscape that can't be mapped.

Identity as some images of life, as experience, belief and knowledge, as a striving after becoming something, a will to power, a will to control, master, frame, no matter on what level, is hard to understand and bring up in the light. We only know continuity, we have no knowledge about non-continuity. We know the experiences, the memories about the continuity of the events, but the condition where there no continuity is, we don't know. We call it death, the unknown, the secretiveness etc., and by giving it a name, we hope to be able to maintain it, which again is the desire after continuity, the permanent.

We are afraid of ending up, physical ending up and becoming separated from the things we have owned, worked for, experienced – our wife or husband, the house, the furniture, the tiny garden, the books, and the poems we have written or hoped to be able to write. We are afraid of letting go of all this, because we have identified ourselves with the furniture, the paintings we own, and if you have a talent for playing violin, then you have identified yourself with the violin. We have identified ourselves with these things in a degree, that it is all we have, nothing more. It is our foundation of life, and therefore this identification process is something philosophical.

As a lifeartist you must look at the problem in this way: you have identified yourself with the house – and also with the shutters, the bedroom, the furniture, which you in years carefully have polished – this is all you are. If it altogether is taken away from you, you are nothing. And this is what you fear – nothing to be: the nihilistic moment.

Is it not highly peculiar, that you in forty years go to the office and work, and when you stop working, you get a heart failure and die? You have identified yourself with the office, the card index, the computer, the director, or the clerk, or whatever your profession is; that is all you are, and nothing more. And you have a lot of ideas about God, goodness, truth, and about how the society should be arranged – that is all. Your thinking is not included in your being, and in your way of life. It is a pure intellectual safety. Therefore there is in this relationship sorrow.



And it is, as a lifeartist, a big sorrow to realize that that is what you are. But not to realize it is the greatest sorrow. And then death becomes terrible, as Tolstoj has depicted it in *Ivan Iljitsch' Death*. Ivan Iljitsch is lying in the deathbed and can't let go of life because of mortal dread. He screams three days and nights through. Not until he realizes, that the life he'd lived, hadn't been an actual life, yes, that he in fact never has lived at all, not until then he can let go of life, and reconcile himself with death.

What it is about, is to see this, and find out what it means to die.

So what is death? How can you find out without that it only is a belief you adopt? Is it possible to be death present in passive listening, not another's death, but your own death? It demands that you don't identify yourself with something, what of course is very difficult. Most of us identify ourselves with our furniture, with our house, with our wife or husband, with our government, with our country, with the image we have of ourselves, and we identify ourselves with something greater – the world-image, which perhaps is a tribal feeling that expands to embrace the nation; or you identify yourself with a special property, a special image.

Not to identify yourself with your furniture, with your knowledge and experiences, with your technical skill and your technological knowledge as scientist or engineer, to bring all identification to an end, is, as the mystics say, a kind of death. If you do that, you will discover what it will say: no bitterness, no hopelessness, no desperation, but a heart that opens itself for a wonderful feeling, and a mind which is completely free so that it can observe without distortion. Only in this condition can Man seriously live in presence and reality, without that there is any opposition between life and death.

#### ***D. About having your identity in a presence***

The way you conceive, is what you are. If you are calculating and evaluating, you have your identity in an absence, your identity has moved outside your surroundings, or outside yourself, in some sense you have the actual outside yourself, because you relate evaluating to it. You are a spectator, a theorist, a doubter, or a dreamer, in relation to your own life. There is sliding emptiness and loss, reflections and darkness, in between the observer and the observed.

But if there no inner spectator, doubter or calculator is, then you put the contradiction between the observer and the observed completely out of the game, and with that you also abolish any kind of will to power. However this does not mean, that you just

accept the problems, or identify yourself with them. Both acceptance and identification are in themselves evaluations, and will to power.

Let us, in order to investigate this question, resume the example with the Taoist monk, who is sitting and is meditating on a tree, which is the most objective thing. He sees it completely, with the heart and the mind, and that will say: without that there is an inner calculator, without any displacement between the observer and the observed. He is one with the observed.

But this doesn't mean, that he identify himself with the tree, he doesn't become the tree, which would be all too absurd. But that he is the tree present in passive listening, means that he is seeing and feeling it, without that there is any displacement, reflections, or outdistances, between him and the tree; the division which is created by the Ego, the inner spectator, with his knowledge, with his thinking, with his preconceived opinion about the tree, with his anger, jealousy, desperation or hope.

When the monk is the tree present, then he sees it as in a mirror without saying yes and no, and feels it incisively without seeking to achieve anything with it. He is self-forgetful open for it, and engaged by it. The tree fills him out in a presence of something, which not is hidden. It is a presence of something obvious, something he has a clear understanding of. It is a presence of something straightforward, a presence in naturalness. In this presence he has his identity. To have your identity in a presence is to exist for real. Reality is a being, which is middle, is fill up, which is lying in light. And in this presence he sees the whole of the tree.

In the same way you can grasp human problems. Insight in our problems only arises when we are the whole of the process of consciousness present in passive listening; that will say: when we are aware of ourselves without saying yes and maintaining, and without pushing away and saying no; without commenting, choosing what is right or wrong, prioritising or sorting, but are allowing the problem to be precisely as it is.

When you are yourself present, you will see, that through this passivity – which not is indolence, which not is sleep, but the utmost awakeness – the problem gets a quite other meaning, or said differently: you no longer identify yourself with the problem through presumption or denial, judgment or comparison, but let go of it. And therefore the problem can begin to reveal its content. If you can do this constantly, continuously, all human problems could be solved, not only superficial, but completely.

But the difficulty is precisely, that most of us are unable to listen in passive presence, unable to let the problem talk for itself, without that we immediately interpret it and thereby distance ourselves from it, and become it absent in evaluations.

We don't know how we unprejudiced can observe a problem. We want to deduce a result of the problem, we want an answer, we have set us a goal when we seek to solve it; and we try to interpret the problem from our joy or pain; or we already have an answer to how the problem can be treated. In this way we begin to tackle with the problem, which always is new, and treat it from an old pattern, our images of life. And in that way we are the problem absent, we are outside it as theorists, and then you have the opposition between the observer and the observed. And this is to have your identity in an absence.

## **5. The body**

The most eye-catching aspect of Man as a natural being is, that we have a body, and that we with the body are a part of the rest of nature. Confronted with this fact many philosophers through the last centuries have claimed a materialistic view on Man; that is to say: they have understood Man purely and simply as a material entity, a part of the bodily nature, inserted in the cause and effect connection of nature, a subject to the laws of nature as everything else that exist.

In this century such a point of view has been presented by for instance Behaviorism, which claims, that both human action, and the mental phenomena, aren't anything else than behaviour, and dispositions to behaviour; that is to say: the movement in, or on, a physical body. Inspired by Darwin it is today also completely normal only to view Man as a biological being.

But that Man also is a natural being doesn't out of hand imply, that materialism is true. As we saw in the beginning you can also establish a communicative view on nature, where nature as a whole is more than the merely causal and mechanical. Moreover we saw in the section about the philosopher Niels Bohr, that quantum mechanics is a scientific break with the pure causal and mechanical view of nature.

### ***A. Euthanasia***

In this book's part one, philosophy as an Art of Life, in the section about human problems, we were looking at, how Man has made life into a battlefield; how each family, each group, each nation are turned against each other.

When you as a lifeartist in this way see the whole of the battlefield of life, not as an image, but as something you are facing, and in fact are observing, then you ask yourself what it all is about. Why do human beings continue in this way until they die, without living or loving, but full of fear and anxiety? Albert Camus opens his book *The Myth of Sisyphus*, with saying, that there only exists one real philosophical question, and that is the question about the suicide. Why do we not commit suicide in a meaningless world devoid of both faith in reason and faith in God?

There are also other questions implied in this question about the suicide. With his body Man is a subject to the laws of nature. This you see in the old age where the body goes in decay, goes in dissolution, often under tragic circumstances.

The topic euthanasia (mercy killing) is unavoidable when you see the tragedy of old age – the physical dissolution, the body's decay – when you see how all actual life in human beings die out when they are getting old.

There are various types of euthanasia, for instance:

- 1) Involuntary euthanasia – when the patient doesn't want to die, but where people don't respect this wish.
- 2) Non-voluntary euthanasia – when the patient is unconscious, or unable, to express a wish.
- 3) Voluntary euthanasia – when the patient wants to die and gives expression of this wish. This is generally speaking a kind of help to suicide.

In the following we will concentrate about the question about voluntary euthanasia, and through this go into the whole question about suicide.

Is there any meaning in lengthening life when you have reached so far, that life is about to die out; is there any meaning in continuing with these wrecks of life? Would it not be reasonable if you understand, when your life no longer serve any useful purpose?

But you can then ask yourself the question, that if it was the reason which was prompting you to make an end of life, would then the same reason not have hindered your body in decaying before time?

But doesn't there come a time where the reason itself can't hinder this weakening? Sooner or later the body is wearied out – how do you know when this moment has arrived?

These questions are implying several things. The body's and the organism's decay, the brain's senility, as well as the complete loss of ability to manage an everyday life, which again grows resistance. Indefinitely we abuse the body after custom and taste, or we neglect it. When this happens the body's natural intelligence is destroyed. In weekly magazines and TV commercials you see all kinds of dishes in beautiful colors, which appeal to your love of lust; what is beneficial for the body is another matter. Right from youth you in this way gradually dull and destroy the instrument, which should be have been outmost sensitive, active, and which could have functioned as a complete organism.

That is one aspect of the question; and then there is the mind, which in twenty, thirty or eighty years has lived in continuously struggle and resistance. It only knows emotional or intellectual discord and conflict. Any kind of conflict not only distorts, it also carries destruction with it. So here we have some of the basic inner and outer factors of weakening: the eternal egocentric activity with its isolating processes.

Beside this unnatural breakdown, the body is of course also physical wearied out. The body's skills are lost, gradually disease begin to dominate. The question is then: should such a person not be helped to commit suicide, if the person wants it – be helped to take some medicine as an ending of it all?

You must make it clear who it is who asks the question: the sick person, who wants help, or those, who wants to give help, those who observe the sickness with sorrow and despair, and in fear of their own bodily deprave?

Add to this question whether you have the right to take your own life (or others) – not only when you are sick or have become aware of, that the sickness approaches, but whether it is morally right to commit suicide (or help others to it) in any soever moment?

Can a reasonable person commit suicide (or help others to it)? Suicide is caused by the utmost despair, developed by deep disappointments, or insoluble anxiety, or by the consciousness about how meaningless a certain way of life is, as Albert Camus is suggesting. But does the human reason allow any kind of suicide? No, definitely not.

But why not? In order to understand this, you have to understand the concept of reason. Is it reasonable to let the body go in decay by following a custom, through

exaggerated greed, by worshipping taste and lust etc.? Is it reason? Is it a reasonable action? And the suicide, which happens on the background of the existential problems connected, either with the sickness, or with a certain way of life, is precisely characterized by these problems' lack of clarity and reason.

Suicide is an irrational action; it is an action which clearly shows that you have reached a point where you are so isolated, where your identity is so fragmented and without wholeness, that you no longer feel that you belong here, where you are shut away from, or shut inside, without belongings, place and living space, and where there seems to be no way out. But does there actually occur anything in life, in any human relationship, which you can't find a way out of?

It is important that we look the facts in the eyes, meet what you are momentarily without theorizing over it. Above all it is important to live reasonable. To live a life which is characterized by the utmost reason, requires that the mind and the body are extraordinary awake and sensitive. But we have destroyed the body's awakeness with unnatural lifeforms. We also destroy the mind, the reason and the clearness, through conflict, through continuous suppressions, and hereupon following explosions and acts of violence.

If you therefore can live a life, which is a denial of all this, then this life, this reason, will act correctly at the very moment you are facing the incurable disease, or whatever it can be.

The question about, whether euthanasia is morally right or wrong, whether it ought to be allowed or forbidden, have to be asked. But it is meaningless to answer it without that the answer is lying in the act of finding out what is lying behind the question, what it is, that drives the questioner.

Many of us have namely already committed suicide, we are living dead, and the question is, whether it is the living dead, who asks the question.

### ***B. Mind and body***

Most people are dull and inclined for being indolent. Therefore they whip themselves in order to be active, and thereby they only become more dull. The more you make resistance against the dullness, the more dull you become.

But let us observe the dullness, for instance in the morning, when you get up and feel terrible indolent, without feeling like doing rather much. Why has the body become dull? Probably you have eaten too much. The last day and night you have probably –

subconscious - done all kinds of stuff in order to make the body worried and lazy. And the body says: "For god's sake, let me be in peace for a while!" But then you will swing the whip over it, force it to be active. But you don't change your way of living, you will rather take a pill in order to become active.

However, if you as a lifeartist are aware, you will see, that the body has its own intelligence. It requires more than a little reason to be the body's intelligence present. You force it, you push around with it. You are used to too much meat, you drink, smoke and all the other things you very well know, but which you do nothing for in order to change. And therefore the body loses its own original organical intelligence. In order to, that the body can act in an intelligent way, the mind must become rational, and it must not intervene and disturb the body. If you are the body present in passive listening, you will see how the dullness altogether changes.

But you must furthermore try to understand this deep problem about how the human nature – which after all includes the brain, the mind and the heart – through centuries has become historical limited by propaganda, anxiety, and other influences. And you must ask yourself, whether this nature can be changed from the ground, and Man in that way can live peacefully everywhere in the world, in great compassion and delight, and in realization of that which can't be measured.

It requires that the body is extremely sensitive; but this is something of the most difficult, because we have spoiled the body's intelligence through drink, smoke, through exaggerated lust. We have coarsened the body. If you observe your body – which should be extremely living and sensitive - you will easily be able to see how we have diminished it.

The body influences the mind, and the mind influences the body, and for that reason the sensitivity of the body and the organism is of crucial importance. This sensitivity is not obtained through fasting, through using all kinds of tricks. The mind must quietly observe it without saying yes and no. The mind and the brain and the body in complete harmony must be absolutely silent.

So there is needed a great harmony between the mind, the heart and the body, if you altogether can make such a division. It is the philosophical harmony, which Plato talked about. It is obvious that there must be complete harmony, because if there is any inner contradiction, any displacements, frictions, tensions, then there is conflict. Conflict is in its nature waste of energy; it is the element where the life-urge, or the vitality, is reduced, crumbled, dissolved. And you need an immensely energy, urge to live, and vitality, in order to be able to go on philosophical discovery. Harmony is in

that way necessary so that the mind, the reason, the organism and the heart, in their foundation, are whole, not divided in fragments.

As a lifeartist you can see this for yourself, no one need to learn you that. But how this harmony shall be provided is an entirely other matter. Complete harmony means that the mind, as well as the organism, must be extremely sensitive. Therefore you must investigate the whole question about the right food, exercises, and a reasonable conduct of life.

### *C. Body exercises*

Hatha yoga is normally understood as a kind of yoga where you practise some stretching exercises, which are necessary in order to keep the body healthy, strong, sensitive – but in addition to this you must also take in consideration the right food and not food, which is filled with a lot of meat and suchlike.

Furthermore: yoga is much more than this. The word yoga has many meanings. Yoga for instance means skill in action. Skill in action admittedly requires the utmost sensitivity of the body, an own agility, and that you get the right food, not what the tongue dictates or what you are used to. But yoga also presupposes a conduct of life in which there is no contradiction, and therefore no conflict. Yoga is in its original form a philosophical life-teaching and practice.

The quality of compassion and love must also come to expression in different kinds of bodily activity. Already from we are quite young we ought to work in the garden, learn to do carpentry, paint, write poems, weave, take care of an animal etc. And through the senses – we must observe the trees, the mountains, the richness of the Earth, the poverty humans have created in the world. And we must listen to classical music, bird song, the murmur from a stream.

So it is not only the clarity of the mind, the reason, and the emotional sensitivity, we must develop, also a complete development of the body is a necessity; a thing, we all the time must lay us in mind. Because if the body isn't healthy and strong, it will inevitably distort the thought, and contribute to insensibility. This is beyond any doubt, wherefore we don't have to discuss it in details. It is absolutely required that the body is healthy, that it gets the right food and enough rest. If the senses aren't awake, then the body will hinder the complete development of Man.

Different kinds of exercises, dance and sport will make our movements graceful and give us control over our muscles. The body which isn't clean, which is careless and which is lacking attitude, doesn't promote the sensitivity of the mind and the senses.



The body is not the instrument of the mind; but body, feelings and mind are together the human being, and unless they live together in harmony, conflicts will be inevitable. And conflicts create insensibility.

This is also implying, that the mind not should seek to control the body. The mind can perhaps control the body, and suppress the senses, but thereby the mind makes the body insensitive; and an insensitive body becomes a hindrance for the own full unfolding of the mind. To restrain the body certainly doesn't serve the investigation of the deeper layers of consciousness. This is only possible when there doesn't exist a conflict between the mind, the feelings and the body. It is only possible when they are complete, and in mutual harmony, and are this in an effortless way, without becoming drifted to it by some specific images of life, a particular conception, belief or ideal.

To understand the relationship between the mind, the feelings and the body, is also closely connected with the understanding of your relationship with the surrounding world, to nature, humans and ideas; that is: to the understanding of yourself as a communicative being.

## V

### **The lifeartist as a communicative being**

In the view of nature in natural science, nature is reduced to atomic particles, empty space, fields, electromagnetic waves and particles etc., etc. Characteristic is, that nature is explained, and is described, in a way, which is a world away from our immediate sense experiences.

The support of a natural scientific view of nature has almost always led the supporters forward to combine it with an instrumental (technological) view of nature. This conception of nature is seeing it as pure material, or alone as a means for the unfolding of Man.

The instrumental view of nature rests on a sharp division between Man and everything else; that is to say: between inner and outer nature. Man is by force of his inner nature radical different from, and is standing over, the outer nature. This is,

among other things, due to, that he, with reason and science, is in the position to master nature.

By the way, this thought characterizes almost all traditional Western philosophy, where that to philosophize is due to thinking alone, even though the theories within this tradition in other crucial points are highly contradictory. You find it in Christianity, in Descartes' view of Man as a self-dependant being, in the Enlightenment philosophers, in Romanticism's view of Man as a historical being, in Kierkegaard, Karl Marx and Auguste Comte, who respectively founded existentialism, Marxism and positivism.

In opposition to this, and under impression of the discussion about the damage, which we have caused nature, there has in the later years been worked out conceptions, which claims, that nature has a value in itself. It is not only a means, but ought to be respected for its beauty and richness. It is by the way a point of view, which also is well known from older times. In lack of better you could call it a communicative view of nature, since it is implying, that we in some sense have a community with nature.

And as the above shows, then these two views of nature are inseparable connected with a view of, what a human being is. The discussions about Man, which have been outlined so far, have been about the status of reason in relation to desires and sensuous nature, as well as the relationship between naturalism and self-production.

As we already have investigated, then the German philosopher Jürgen Habermas has sought to create a synthesis of the many viewpoints. He claims, that the development of reason, as well as the division, and the alienation, in the modern world, and the many out-specializations of areas of knowledge, have led to, that there in today's society rules a radical opposition between two kinds of reason: the instrumental and the communicative.

The instrumental, or technical, reason, is about how to find given means to given goals. It is for instance a necessary goal for Man to get his necessities of life satisfied by cultivating nature. The means is technology, which today builds on the extensive knowledge of natural science. To cut a long story short: thanks to the instrumental reason we get control over nature. In technical competence we have gone far. The whole of that part of our lives has developed into extensive systems, such as the economy, the bureaucracy, the market and the market forces.

The communicative reason and competence is the reason we use in all relationships, where it is about coming to an understanding with each other. It presupposes that we

know our life-world. Among other things Habermas understands the life-world as the horizon of linguistic ability, cultural knowledge and individual skills, which is the condition in order to understand both the family jargon, as well as the tone between children, and in all the many communities. By the way Habermas argues for, that the difference between instrumental and communicative reason is given with fundamental structures in language, with different types of speech acts.

The core in Habermas' critique of culture is, as earlier mentioned, that the instrumental reason has conquered terrain from the communicative reason. The systems (the market and the bureaucracy) have colonized the lifeworld. This means, among other things, that political and philosophical questions are being made into technical questions, as when an election campaign is about details in the economical planning, as well as it leads to, that we treat each other as means, or as items, which have come on a wrong course (the treatment society).

The instrumental reason is controlling and gets control. In accordance with Habermas there is nothing wrong in this in technical respect. The problem arises, when this attitude come to characterize ordinary relationships between humans and areas, where values should be crucial; that is: in philosophical respect. It is also this attitude, which has caused, that we, with reference to human problems, always shall hear what the specialists think, for instance economists, sociologists, historians, psychologists, biologists, etc. etc.

The philosopher, as philosophical counselor, has in short vanished, and therewith also the art of life, which could create unity and coherence in life. Many will perhaps against this object, that the New Age movement advocates a new kind of wholeness-thinking. But, as we already have examined several times, there are a number of misunderstandings in this. Philosophy is by definition wholeness-thinking. You can therefore say, that the New Age movement is an abortive attempt to re-create philosophy as an art of life. The attempt goes wrong already in the lack of ability to understand itself as precisely philosophy. Personally I think, that this is due to the many uneducated people we see within this environment, who have got all their knowledge by reading self-help books, or other New Age books.

This main failure is, as mentioned, due to, that the New Age movement in extreme way is characterized by the instrumental reason, and the treatment society, despite, that it should be a showdown with this. That which should have been art of life becomes reduced to treatment, especially psychotherapy, and New Age magazines are abundantly characterized by alternative treatment offers, rather than offers on counseling in art of life.

Another failure, where the wholeness-thinking is lost, is due to the psychologizing of philosophy, where it, in contradiction to its own claims, shuts itself away from the wholeness, or the Otherness, and locks itself inside the individual psyche. We investigated this as The 666 Conspiracy, in the section about the brain.

That was Habermas. Another communicative thinker is the Jewish philosopher Martin Buber. Central in Buber's thinking is the thought about two fundamental relationships: I-THOU and I-IT. He has investigated this in his wonderful poetic book *I and Thou*.

The I-Thou relationship is characterised by freedom, co-operation and a deep feeling of personal involvement. The I confronts its Thou, not as something, which can be studied, be measured or manipulated, but as an unique presence, which is answering the I in its individuality. This corresponds to the communicative view of Man and nature.

The I-It relationship is characterised by a tendency to treat something as an impersonal object controlled by causal, social or economical powers. This corresponds to the instrumental view of Man and nature.

Buber refuses the idea about that humans are isolated, autonomous beings, who act from abstract rules. Instead the reality exists between humans as they discover and change each other. Reality is shortly said dialogical in its nature. Buber describes God as the eternal THOU, the Thou, who never can be an IT. In that way you can reach God, not with a derivation or a conclusion (some images of life), but with a readiness to answer the concrete reality of the divine presence.

In accordance with Buber, then Man, in this way, can relate to life in two radical different ways: either as a subject who experiences something, namely an object, an It, which he is standing outside. Or as a person who is in the relationship with another person, a Thou. It is the last, which is fundamental.

The "I" first becomes an "I" in this relationship with a "Thou". There exists no "I" in and with itself. The basic purpose in the human existence is the actual relationship. The spirit, the human reality, is not in the "I" (as New Age and personal development claim), but between I and Thou. First in this *between* is Man's way of being constituted. The relationship with the Thou is in this way the mirror in which the "I" can discover itself. The relationship is a philosophical sparring partner.

In accordance with Buber, then the whole of the human existence goes off in the tension between challenge and reaction, which dialogical seen can be seen as

questions and answers. Man becomes spoken to by the eternal Thou, God, through challenges and what happens to him. But through his reactions and actions he is conversely able to answer this question of the challenge; that is to say: to take the responsibility for his destiny, to answer individually.

So in any challenge you can - if you open yourself for it, and, in complete silence listen to the call of the Thou - hear the eternal Thou ask: "Where are you in thy life?" And by observing your reaction - that is to say: see your destiny in the eyes and discover yourself - you can answer: "Here I am in my life, this is what I am!"

Buber has herewith shown an important philosophical exercise, namely that to see the relationship with the surrounding world as a philosophical sparring partner. Precisely like this functioned also Socrates' method of philosophical dialogue, the so-called Socratic Pedagogy, where Socrates, through his questions, became a mirror in which his dialogue partners could discover themselves through their answers.

Let us now look into, how the inspiration from the above-mentioned communicative views of Man and nature, can come to expression in philosophy as an art of life.

## **1. Challenge and reaction**

An aspect of Man as a natural being is, as the behaviorism says, that it is a subject to an influence-reaction relationship. The psychological behaviourism, for instance J.f.Skinner, considers the behaviour of Man for the true object of psychology, and regards it as the task of psychology to state regular connections between outer influences (stimulations) and behavioural reactions (responses). Also called methodological behaviourism, because the direction refuses any kind of introspection and empathy as psychological method. They argue for, that only the study – after guidelines of natural science – of the outer, public observable behaviour, gives the possibility for a scientific psychology with objective methods and results.

The philosophical behaviourism is developed by, among others, Gilbert Ryle, who in his book *The Concept of Mind*, claims, that that to speak about the mental life of the person, is the same as referring to the person's more or less complex dispositions to behaviour – act and speech – in specific ways, and in situations with relevant influences. According to Ryle, then the belief in inner, private consciousness phenomena, is an expression of a misunderstanding of the logic of the concept of mind.

The psychological behaviourism's way of thinking is in fact not at all far from the way of thinking within philosophy as an art of life, where you also refuse introspective dissection (or empathy, when based on images) as a path to self-discovery. You can, as Buber claimed, only discover yourself in the relationship with the surrounding world. But the psychological behaviourism is, despite its strong confession to natural science, an expression of a reductionism, and is therefore not a scientific viewpoint, but a philosophical viewpoint. In this connection you can say that the difference between behaviourism and philosophy as an art of life is, that the last-mentioned doesn't see Man as a result of a single influence. Man is much more composite, and to accentuate one influence at the same time as you understate others, is to provoke a lack of balance, which will lead to a lack of unity and coherence, and therefore to even larger confusion.

In philosophy as an art of life Man is seen as a complete process. The lifeartist as a communicative being seeks to understand the wholeness, and not only a part of it, regardless how important this sometimes can be. At the same time it is the lifeartist himself, who discovers his own behaviour. The lifeartist is not an object of study for others, in the way as it always must be in behaviorism. The lifeartist is a unity of experience and being.

In addition to this there is the communicative view of nature, which does, that if you open yourself for it, then nature contains great richness and beauty, which not are of mechanical and causal character. Finally you can, as a lifeartist, yourself influence the world, you can be one with the creative source of life, the new.

### *A. The mirror*

Humans are rarely putting attention to, how they react to challenges. Humans are admittedly highly focused on, how they ought to react, how they would like to be in accordance with one or the other ideal, but not on how they as a matter of fact are. They rarely look their destiny in the eyes.

But how do you react if you see the challenges as a THOU, as something highly seriously, a question, and not only something, which you brush aside? How do you react if you see the challenges as something vital and immensely important in your life? These are the questions of the lifeartist.

As a lifeartist you must begin to understand yourself by becoming yourself present in passive listening. But what is this "yourself"? "Yourself" is, as the Buddhists say, the different reactions to different challenges from the surroundings; that is to say: your relationship with everything and everybody. So in order to understand yourself you

must observe this relationship neutral, as in a mirror, without saying yes and no, and feel it deeply and incisively without seeking to achieve anything with it. The relationship is this mirror. The mirror of self-knowledge.

Self-knowledge arises when there momentarily is awareness on the reactions of the movement of life. The will normally shuts these spontaneous reactions away, but only they can expose the structure of the Ego. So introspection is not a path to self-knowledge.

Over the temple in Delphi was written: "Know thyself". And the intention with Socrates' dialogues on the town square in Athens was, that they should function as a medium of self-exposure. Socrates was a philosophical sparring partner, a mirror in which his dialogue partners were able to learn to know themselves.

So the exercise *Philosophical Sparring Partners* is, just like the philosophical diary, an exercise, which is about learning to know yourself. Self-knowledge in the philosophical diary arises by letting your thoughts bloom. Herein is formed a portrait of a lifeartist. In the exercise *Philosophical Sparring Partners*, self-knowledge arises by seeing the relationship with the surrounding world as a mirror. And in this mirror is also formed a portrait of a lifeartist. You can say, that the exercises supplement each other.

Martin Buber said: "By the Thou am I created. As I am created, I say Thou. All real life is meeting". Man is a communicative being.

Our most intense identity-experiences we paradoxically enough have in the experience of life-feeling, spontaneity and self-forgetfulness. This means that a human being who knows himself, who is himself present, at the same time often is self-forgetful open for, and engaged, in life itself. In these experiences you have your identity in a presence, in the feeling of being in the middle of the stream of life.

But in the Ego you have your identity in an absence, in the feeling of standing outside life as a spectator, a theorist or a doubter. The Ego is a constructed identity, the Ego is an ongoing becoming; it is never a being. Therefore the Ego also is a never-ending anxiety of nothing, and the actual attempt to escape this threat by becoming something, leads to a paralysation of the identity. Therefore it is also a never-ending identity crisis, an experience of constraint, of not belonging in the relationships with the surrounding world. Read for instance Paul Auster's *The New York Trilogy* about people who exclusively are constructed identities, who exclusively are a kind of emptiness, holes in the material of things, which they fill with stories, and where one story can fill these holes just as well as another.

So true identity is not connected with the Ego, but with being, or life as such. In this being you are safe in existential sense. Safety is a relationship, a feeling of being home in the relationships with the surrounding world, in being open and free in these relationships; it is trust and self-confidence in one, a being familiar with life.

So the relationship is in connection with identity the mirror, in which you can discover yourself. Without the relationship you are nothing. To be is to be in relationship, which is the actual life. You only live in relationship, otherwise you don't live, then life is without meaning. So it is not because you construct your identity that you live. You live, and have your identity, in the ability to be self-forgetful engaged in the relationship, and it is the lack of ability to understand this, which causes conflict. The reason why, that there no understanding is of the relationship, is, that you use relationships to achieve something, become something, to be remoulded, to be something else than what you are. You use, as Habermas expresses it, the instrumental reason on human relations, where it only should be used on technical relations. Precisely as we see it unfolded in the personal development movement, most extremely in NLP.

But relations can also be seen as a philosophical sparring partner. And this will be to use the communicative reason. The relationship is namely a medium of self-exposure, because the relationship is to be. It is the actual life. Without relationships we don't live. In order to be able to understand yourself you must therefore understand the relationship. You must become aware of how you react to the challenges of life, and for instance write it down in the philosophical diary.

The relationship is therefore a mirror in which you can see yourself. This mirror can either distort or expose the truth about yourself. Most of us see in the relationship, in the mirror, what we preferably want to see, but we don't see that, which is real. We like to condemn, justify, compare, or escape, and rather live in the past or the future, than to see the relations in which we are in the moment. In this way the present, as Pascal said, only becomes used by the past as a passage to the future, and therefore the relationship – which is something that is in the moment, and not in past and future – becomes meaningless, wherefore there arises unreality and absence.

The absence, and the following conflicts, worries and problems, arises because we use the present as a passage to the future, instrumentally. Read for instance about the problem of time in Marcel Proust's *In Search of Lost Time*, or in Thomas Mann's *Magic Mountain* (see the section about the mind)



The Ego is a result of the past; without past there is no self-producing thought-activity. Without the historical background, without this limitation, there is no such thinking. But the thinking, which is a result of the past, can, as Kierkegaard said, not understand the present, since it only uses the present as a passage to the future.

The future is always a becoming. The present is therefore never seized, though the understanding exclusively is lying herein. You can't be present in the Now through the thinking's past and future. This you only can meditative-existential; that is: when you are yourself, and the surroundings, present in passive listening. As long as there is a becoming something, there is conflict and anxiety, and becoming is always the past, which uses the present to become something, to control and form: an expression of the will to power. In this process of becoming Man becomes caught in the net of time. And time will not be able to solve human problems, because such precisely originate from time.

Use therefore the relationship as a mirror, as a philosophical sparring partner. Get for instance help in art, literature and philosophy, which also can function as such mirrors. In my books I have mentioned a lot of literature and works of fiction, which you can use.

### ***B. The new***

What is, after all, life? Is it not all the time something new? It is something, which constantly is changed and is creating a new feeling. Today is never the same as yesterday, and that is the beauty of life. This "new" is the unique in life, a unique presence, which Buber called The Eternal Thou.

Another Jewish philosopher, Emmanuel Levinas, worked, with inspiration from Buber, also with such a communicative thinking. He calls the unique presence in life *The Otherness* (God). The Otherness manifests itself as The Other, or as The Thou. Man can't be understood isolated, but always in a relation with, or in a meeting with "The Other". In the other's face, in thy neighbour's appearance, you meet an unfounded (metaphysical understood) demand about responsibility, which you can't ignore, but of course very well try to drive out.

In Levinas' philosophy it is impossible to remain a spectator to the world. Man, and also language, is constituted by the indispensable connection with the Otherness - (as we remember, then also Niels Bohr said, that it is not us, who are putting reality in order, it is reality which is putting us in order). - The Otherness manifests itself in the other's face. The face calls for you. Your reaction to the face is an answer, and it shows who you are. So it requires the responsibility, that you listen to this call.

So, can you, as a lifeartist, meet any problem in a new way? Can you meet your wife and your child in a new way, meet the challenge in a new way? You are not able to do it if you are burdened with the memory from yesterday, the past, which is based on the experiences, the images in time, which manifest themselves as ideas, viewpoints and prejudices. This is only an expression of the eternal recurrence of the same.

The human being who doesn't require anything, who doesn't strive after goals, who doesn't seek a result with all what this is implying, such a human being is in an ongoing condition of experience. Since everything is in movement, everything has meaning; nothing is old, nothing is charred, nothing is recurrence, because reality is never old.

The challenge is always new. It is only the reaction to the challenge, which is a recurrence of the past. The old leaves more and more dregs; that will say memory, and it is in this accumulation that the spectator, the theorist, the doubter, divides himself from himself and the surroundings, from the challenge, from the experienced.

So the experience is not a sufficient answer to the challenges of life. The challenge has to be met again and again in a new way, because the challenge is always new. It is this, which Buber means, when he says, that you in your answer to the question of life, shall say Thou and not It. The challenge requires action, not explanations in words. Explanations in words are thinking, which are manifestations of the images in time. The word, the symbol, delays the action, and the idea is the word, just like the memory is the word. Only where there are symbols and words there are memory. Memory is words and thinking, and can the thought be the true answer to the challenge? Is the challenge an idea? No, the challenge is always new, something quite new and unique; and the thought, the idea, can never be new. Therefore the reaction is, when it is the thought, which meets the challenge, a product of the old, a recurrence of the past, which is based on the images in time as such.

Levinas criticizes the traditional effort of philosophy in building up philosophical systems, because precisely the Otherness (the new) opposes the system (the old). That, which is really something else, or different, is in accordance with Levinas The Other, whom you are standing face-to-face with, the other person. This relationship is the foundation of ethics, and not a system. So just like in Buber there also in Levinas is a disposition to a philosophical life-practice.

The new is never there, because you always meet the new with the old. Since we meet any challenge from the past's conditions – and because the challenge always is

new – our reaction to the challenge will each time be utterly insufficient, and from this comes the contradiction, the conflict, and all the sorrow, distress and misery, we have inherited.

And in this half living, half dead, way of being, which is within the area of time, you observe, as a spectator, the fear, the jealousy, the war, the family, and seek to solve the problem of the experienced; the experienced, which is the challenge, the new. Always you interpret the new on the bases of the old, and therefore you are constantly in conflict.

So can you, as a lifeartist, without interpreting the present reality on the bases of the past's conditions, observe the reaction in a new way, with an open mind? Can something else than the old react? Can there be a space between the old and the new reality? Can the old be awaiting, and in this way make it possible for the new to occur? This is the problem of the lifeartist.

Freedom from your perspective, the old, is in this way truly an ethical life. It means that you have discrimination, and don't pull your perspective down over others. But it doesn't mean, that the old is deleted, but that there is introduced a completely new dimension, where you are the old present in passive listening, where the old so to speak is made transparent in being and openness.

You can also say, that where the old before was characterized by personal and collective images, which worked in sequences in past and future, then the old now is characterized by universal images, which work in synchronism with the Now. It was this Karen Blixen was describing as the ancient, the original, and which she always was seeking as authenticity, autonomy, possibility, freedom and adventure. It is a return to the Now, to the timeless eternity. As Rabindranath Tagore said: "The light is young, the eternal ancient light; the shadows are a brief moment's matter, they are born aged."

The space between the old and the new is the same as the space between the thoughts, the passive listening presence. In this space of silence there is renewal; here the new creation happens. Only when the mind is new, creative empty, it can meet the new. It is first when the mind no longer is tied to the old, to its images of life, that it can meet everything in a new way. And therein is lying the joy of life, the source, which rises from life itself.

### *C. Life itself*

It is not possible to live isolated. To be is to be in connection with something, and without such a connection there is no life. What do we mean with the close connection? It is a mutual active challenge and reaction between two humans, between an I and a Thou, the challenge which the Thou gives from itself, and which the "I" takes up, or whereon the "I" reacts, and also the challenge which the "I" gives from itself to the Thou, the challenge from the I to the Thou. The challenge and the reaction give themselves expression in language as question and answer. In this way life gets in language a dialogical character.

The challenge never ends, because every moment in life is a challenge. Challenge and reaction is life itself. Life is, and must be, a line of challenges and reactions. The challenge doesn't direct itself after the desires and dislikes of Man, or after his special wishes, but it takes different forms to different times. And if Man had the ability to meet a challenge completely and directly, there would no problems be.

But the problems arise because Man doesn't have this ability. The challenges of life don't meet us in a single area. Life doesn't take place only in, for instance the economical and political area. Life is relationships within different areas, where it gives itself multifold expressions. Happy is the one, who is able to meet life completely and directly in all fields. Such a meeting can be characterized as that, which the Danish life-philosopher Løgstrup, calls a sovereign life-expression. The sovereign life-expressions are among other things: love, mercifulness, trust and the openness of the speech. Being together breaks down without trust, the speech is being distorted without openness, and becomes superficial or dishonest.

These life-expressions are spontaneous in the sense, that they are unforced and without ulterior motives. They can't be given reasons for, and not be made into means for something else. They are sovereign in the sense, that the actions of the life-expressions not are determinated reactions, but precisely actions, where you intervene actively in, and change the situation. You become yourself the challenge and the new.

They are also sovereign in the sense, that in them you are directly in compliance with yourself. In love for instance, you fill yourself completely out. The expressions of life are moreover characterized as definitive; that is to say: they have an explicit character. To this belongs that they are good in the sense that they always are aimed at taking care of the other's life. Moreover Løgstrup says, that the sovereign life-expressions are anonymous. They are nobody's; that is to say: no one can make them into hers or his, and use them against others in power struggles. Nobody has any privileges in relation with them. We are all equal for the expression of life.

Another type of life-possibilities is the circling life-expressions. These expressions are for instance wrong, envy, hate, jealousy, insincerity, mercilessness and so on. Løgstrup calls them circling, because you in them are locked inside yourself, are circling around yourself and your negative or destructive feeling towards the other. The circling life-expressions are also spontaneous in the sense that they surprise us. But they are full of ulterior motives. They are not sovereign, they are on the contrary reactive, and they don't bring the individual in compliance with himself. But they are definitive in the sense, that they are evil.

The human being who observes and meets life, as if it for instance only is limited by the economical, or intellectual relationship, is not a Man of wholeness, and his conflicts are countless, because life is the connection with everything; with things, humans and ideas, and unless we meet these relationships completely, correctly, there arise conflicts in the meeting with the challenge. Our life-expressions become self-circling.

The two types of life-expressions are, in accordance with Løgstrup, given with the human life. If we want to understand ourselves, then we must take starting point in them. The expressions of life are given with *life itself*. You can say, that they belong to our nature, if you thereby mean the metaphysical nature (seen from a communicative view of nature). As earlier mentioned you can call it naturalism, but it is a metaphysical naturalism. The sovereign life-expressions are a direct goodness in our life. In them we are both spontaneous and ethical. Ethics are standing solid by force of these given life-possibilities, not by force of our choices, as the existence-philosophers think. As mentioned it is a critique of the self-production thesis. Løgstrup is a mediator between metaphysical naturalism and the self-production thesis; that is: a mediator between nature and history.

In the sovereign life-expressions we clearly meet something, which arises as richness, gift or grace in our life, something we have not created ourselves, and which at the same time is the actual and carrying in all being together between humans. Løgstrup says, that the spontaneous life-expressions come from the universe, and that Man therefore not is the universe irrelevant, not is self-dependant, but is connected with the universe. So Løgstrup claims, that we must interpret the universe, and the sovereign life-expressions, as created.

Life itself is both challenge and reaction. It is not only challenge or only reaction. But as mentioned I don't speak about scientific facts, I don't refer to scientific results, but to human experience and being. Life is experience, experience in relationship; that is: a unity of experience and being. You can't live in isolation, life is relationship and relationship is action. Life is relationship, which shows itself through this deep

contact with things, humans and ideas. In the understanding of this deep contact we will get the ability to meet life fully and correctly.

#### *D. The insufficient meeting*

The whole of life is contained in each moment. As Kierkegaard said, then the moment is the atom of eternity. Every moment is a challenge, something new, a unique presence, an eternal Thou, who speaks to us, and calls for us. There is a crisis in the human life, when it meets the challenge in an incomplete way, when it doesn't listen. It is absent in its historical background. But we don't want to see this as a crisis, and we close our eyes in order to escape from it. That way we progressively become blind, and the crisis increases.

So as a lifeartist you must discover, that you in fact are historical limited. And the only way you can do this, is to observe your reaction to a challenge. You react to any challenge in compliance with your historical limitation, and since your historical background is unsatisfactory, the reaction will always be unsatisfactory.

Regardless in what level we act, then the action is a product of our historical limitation; and our reaction to the challenge must necessarily, because it is insufficient and incomplete, create conflict, and conflict is the problem. Conflict is in itself the structure of the Ego.

When the old meets the new, then this meeting will inevitably be incomplete. The desire, the will to power, is the insufficient reaction to the challenge, this, that you in the lived loss of despair are seeking to become something, control, achieve something, in your meeting with the challenge.

The will to power can very well be that to live after high ideals, for instance love and mercifulness. But as an ideal it is standing in opposition to what you are. And the question is, whether there in fact exists such an opposition? We know, that it only is the real, which exists. An opposition is in that way only a negative reaction to what you are. It has no divided existence from what you are. That will say: you are arrogant, that is a fact, and the negative reaction to this is humility. You are accepting humility as an opposition, because you have let yourself be told that arrogance is wrong, or you have discovered, that it brings suffering, or that it is a religious, moral and ethical taboo. Humility is an ideal, not a reality. The reality consists in, that you seek to become this ideal, and are controlled by the will to power, and that you are yourself absent in this process. This is the fact about what you are. And this movement emanates from the past, the ideal, and uses the present as a means to the future. That is: an instrumental relationship.

Problems therefore only exist in time; that will say: when we meet a challenge in an incomplete way. This incomplete meeting with the challenge creates the problem. When we meet a challenge partly, fragmented, or try to escape it – that will say: when we meet it without being present – then we create a problem. And the problem continues exactly as long as we are the problem absent in past or future, as long as we, on the background of an idea from the past, are hoping to solve it in the future.

When I speak about time, I don't mean time as you see it on your watch, the chronological time, nor any scientific conception about time, but the philosophical time, the time, where you seek to produce yourself by becoming something; that is: where you seek to create meaning and foundation of life through the thinking.

Time is the displacement between idea and action, the disproportion, which is created by emptiness and loss. The purpose with an idea is of course that you want to protect yourself; it is an idea about safety and secureness. But the action is always immediately; it doesn't originate from the past or the future. You can only act in the Now, but the action is so dangerous, so insecure, that we arrange ourselves after an idea, which we hope will give us a certain secureness.

The idea is the manifestation of the past, which uses the present as a means to the future. You are therefore absent either in the past time or in the coming time. The past sucks life out of the present. Memories and hopes are transformed into reality, while reality becomes emptiness. The unreality in this consists in, that you only really exist in the hope about a richer future, or in the dream about a lost past.

### *E. The experience of the meeting*

What do we understand by an experience? Is there something new or original in the experience? Usually the experience is a bunch of memories, which react to a challenge, and it can only react from a certain historical background, some specific images of life, or a certain perspective. The more capable you are in interpreting the experience, the stronger the reactions become.

As a lifeartist you must therefore be critical, not only towards another's experience, but also towards your own. If you don't recognize an experience, everything will be new as in the dawn of creation. But any experience is usually already experienced, otherwise you would not recognize it. It is this, which is meant by, that everything is an eternal recurrence of the same. You recognize an experience as good, evil, beautiful, holy etc., in accordance with your historical limited background, and therefore the recognition of an experience inevitably must be old, brought in pattern

by the common human structure of belief and knowledge, the personal and collective images in time.

The observer is a perspective, and the observed is his own perspective, otherwise he would not recognize the experience, and would not call it a certain type of experience. The experience is already in him before he recognizes it. The past, which is based on the self-image and the world-image, is in this way incessantly active, and it recognizes itself; the new is swallowed by the old. Likewise it is the reaction, which is determinating the challenge. The challenge is the reaction, just like the observed is the perspective. The perspective is created by the reactions. If there were no reaction the challenge would be new, or rather: there would not at all be any challenge and reaction, but only a state of creation, middle and fulfilment.

That, which the experiencer is experiencing - or the reaction to the challenge, which is coming from the experiencer - is an eternal recurrence of the same, because it is determined by the experiencer, and his images of life.

We constantly have many experiences. Either we are conscious about it, or we are not aware about it. Each experience leaves a mark; these marks are accumulating day by day, and they become the images in time. The images in time are weaved by the reactions. They are answers to the challenges and questions of existence. Someone offends you, and at that very moment you have created an image of this other person. He is evil. Or a person is flattering you, and again an image is created. He is good. In this way any reaction inevitably creates an image. The question of the lifeartist becomes whether it is possible to erase it, after it has been created?

In order to be able to get an image to disappear, you must first find out how it arises; and you see, that if you don't react sufficient to any challenge, it will leave an image. This is because that emptiness and loss slide in between the challenge and the reaction. The emptiness and the loss have to do with, that you are absent in past and future, and compare the challenge with earlier, and hope, desire or fear something else. Therewith you have made the challenge into a problem. And it is the problem, which creates the image.

So: because of the emptiness and the loss, the reaction to the challenge produces an image in order to weave secureness and meaning, but the problem is, that the image, instead of secureness and meaning, creates reflections, displacement and darkness.

If another person calls you a fool, then this other immediately becomes your enemy, or you do not like the person. But when another calls you a fool, you must as a lifeartist, in that very moment, be present in passive listening, observe neutral as in a



mirror, without saying yes and no, and feel it without seeking to achieve anything; you shall just listen to what the other says. If the other's comment doesn't awake an emotional reaction, you will discover, that there not is formed any image. You have neutralized the image-creating mechanism. This is in fact the sufficient reaction, or action, in the meeting with the other.

To look your destiny in the eyes means that you are the reactions present and don't give them time to take root; because as soon as the reaction takes root, it has created an image, and therefore created destiny. Can you do that?

In order to be able to do that you must be yourself present – not only wander absent through life – but be present in that very moment, where there is a challenge, present with the whole of your being, as you listen passively with the heart and with the mind, so that you clearly see and feel what there is said – regardless of whether it is an abuse, or flattery, or an opinion about you. You will then discover, that there not at all is any image.

Always the image originates from that, which has happened in the past. If it is a pleasant image, we cling to it. If it is a painful image, we want to get rid of it. In this way the desire arises, the will to power: the one image we want to keep, the other we want to reject. All this brings along conflict. But if you are all this present, you can observe it clearly without keeping it or pushing it away, without commenting, prioritising or sorting, only observing and feeling, and then you yourself can find out what it is all about, then you don't live as shown by some psychotherapist, priest or politician.

In order to discover truth you must, as a lifeartist, be free from all this, so that you can be alone. And to be alone is to reject the moral of society, not to adapt yourself to it. The lifeartist is also always a philosophical rebel, a spiritual anarchist.

If you are yourself present you will see, that a part of your intellect, which has evolved through millennia, is the past – and the past is partly memory, partly a common human structure of belief and knowledge – the personal and collective images in time. In this past there is a certain safety, a certain feeling of meaning and coherence. All this you must observe and feel in yourself.

The past always reacts immediately; and to postpone the past's reaction – when you are facing a challenge - so that there is a space between the challenge and the reaction - is to make an end of the image; in the same way, that there no images are in the space between the thoughts.

If this doesn't happen, we will always live in the past. We are the past, and there is no freedom in the past. We have our identity in an absence. This is consequently the way of our lives, a constant struggle, the past which, modified by the present, moves into the future – and that will say that it still is the past, the self-image and the world-image, which is moving, though modified. As long as this movement takes place, Man can never be free, he must always live in conflict, in sorrow and confusion, in wretchedness and misery. The question becomes whether the past's reaction can be delayed, so that there not immediately is formed an image?

Time and thinking are one and the same movement. The thought is a reaction from the memory, from conscious, or subconscious, historical limited conclusions. This memory dictates the action in accordance with the lust or pain it gives. In this way it is the idea, which controls the action, and therefore there is a discord between action and idea.

The thought is a reaction, that emanates from the memory, which is based on a common human structure of belief and knowledge – the personal and collective images in time - what will say: the brain, which is the seat of memory. When there is asked about something, the brain answers with a reaction, which is memory and recognition. The brain is a result of thousand of years evolution and historical limitation – the thought is the eternal recurrence of the same, the thought is never free, the thought is the whole of the historical limited background's reaction, the reaction of the idea.

Man – the body, the nerves, the mind – is limited by the climate he lives in, by the whole of his social, religious and economical environment, by his experiences, the education he has got, by family influences and the demands, which have been given to him. All these are factors, which limit Man historical. Our conscious and subconscious reactions to all the influences of the environment – intellectual, emotional, outside and inner – these reactions are, each and every one, actions, which emanate from our historical limitation. Language is historical limitation; all thought-activity is the historical limitation's action and reaction.

Just like, that time and thinking are one and the same movement, in the same way the thought and the consciousness also usually are one and the same. What do you understand by consciousness? When are you conscious? Also the consciousness is, as Gilbert Ryle said, a reaction to an influence, to lustful or painful stimulations. This reaction to the challenge is the experience. The experience names, describes, connects, in the way Kant has made account of. There would not at all be any experience unless the experience got a name. The whole of this process – influence,

reaction, naming, experience – are, usually, what you call consciousness. Consciousness is therefore always a process, which emanates from the past. Usually.

What about the subconscious, then? Why do we attribute the subconscious so great importance and meaning? In the end it is as insignificant as the conscious. If the conscious mind - on the background of a passion, which doesn't seek to achieve anything - observes neutral as in a mirror, without saying yes and no, then the conscious mind becomes much more important than the subconscious. In this state all what the subconscious contains, are being brought into daylight; the displacements between the many layers disappear.

If you are your reactions present when you for instance are sitting in a bus, when you speak with your wife, your husband, when you are on the office, are writing, are alone – then this presence - this action of seeing and feeling with the whole of your being - brings the inner contradiction to cessation; then there no longer is any division between the observer and the observed, there is no inner spectator, doubter or calculator; likewise there isn't any disproportion between challenge and reaction, between the action and its occasion.

Where the experience of the meeting in the unreal life is characterized by, that emptiness and loss slide in between, and create reflections, displacement and darkness, then the experience of the meeting in the real life is characterised by fulfilment, middle and light. Shortly said: by creation itself.

### *F. The sufficient meeting*

So if you as a lifeartist are your reactions present in passive listening, and not at all interpret them, but only give them your full awareness and feeling, you will discover, that there no spectator, doubter or calculator are within you, and therefore no displacement or distortions between the observer and the observed, the thinker and the thought. You are one with the observed and the thought. You react to a challenge, not with the old brain, but in a completely new way characterized by middle and fulfilment.

When you in this way react completely, whole hearted, to a thing, there is hardly any memory. It is only when you don't react to a challenge with the whole of your being, that there arises a conflict, a struggle, and this creates confusion, lust or pain.

Art of life is meditation, and meditation is the passive listening presence, which originates, partly from a mind, which is seeing the facts without becoming entangled in the past, partly from a heart, which doesn't seek to become something. This action is

not a reaction to any challenge, but is the action of creation itself, in which there isn't any doubleness. Only in this way the meeting can be sufficient.

## 2. The dialogue in philosophical counseling

As mentioned in the section *conscious and unconscious*, then philosophical practice is a rebirth of something very old, perhaps close to the authentic origin of philosophy, for instance Socrates' philosophical dialogues at the town square in Athens, or the philosophers in ancient India and China, who ordinary people could come and consult regarding their daily problems.

Philosophical practice is therefore a rebirth of that kind of dialogue, which is not based on religious/political doctrines, ideologies, myths or conceptions (or as today: psychological theories/management theories), but on realization and inner transformation, and which has been used by great masters such as Socrates, Epicurus, Confucius, Ramana Maharshi, Krishnamurti, Dalai Lama and Eckhart Tolle.

It is the central form of dialogue within all spiritual traditions.

And, as mentioned, then philosophical practice is a unifying term of two different basic methods: philosophical counseling and the philosophical café. Where philosophical counseling mainly is connected to dialogues face to face, then the philosophical café of course is used in groups. Both methods are however common in that way, that they, through dialogue, involve the participants in a self-inquiring practice, where it is about asking philosophical questions.

In the following I will concentrate about philosophical counseling, and just mention, that the philosophical café includes the same elements on group-level.

In the spiritual traditions the dialogue goes off as a dialogue between a master and a disciple/or a group of disciples. In the modern form of philosophical counseling it goes off as a dialogue between an educated philosopher and a so-called guest; that is: we are not talking about a treatment-situation between a therapist and a client.

Important is it though, that the philosopher is, and lives, what he thinks and teaches. He must be a true teacher, who's thinking has been made transparent in being. Shortly said: the philosophical counselor must live what he teaches.

But at the same time it is important, that he has an education in philosophy, or history of ideas, because of the fount of incompetent teachers in the personal development movement, and New Age.

So the dialogue in philosophical counseling is a dialogue between a philosopher and a guest, who wants a dialogue about something which absorbs him, a human problem, an interest, or purely and simply the art of living. The dialogue will be characterized by the pedagogy of art of life, the philosophical life-teaching and practice.

In the introduction to part one, **Philosophy as an Art of Life**, I have put up six steps in the lifeartist's journey into himself. The second step is about religion and supporting exercises. Usually I introductory ask my guests to consider finding a religion. In the spiritual traditions one or the other religion namely always forms the frame of reference around spirituality (see my article *The Value of Religion and Supporting Exercises* in my book *Dream Yoga*). And the critical articles in my book *Dream Yoga* can also be seen as such frames of references, and supporting exercises.

So my three books as a whole constitute both the meditation texts and supporting exercises, which are an integrated part of the philosophical counseling course. As mentioned then the spiritual practice can be seen as containing three important concepts:

- 1) Critical thinking (spotting thought-distortions, created by dualistic unbalance)
- 2) Investigating the shadow (ignorance, the unconscious, the painbody, the cause of suffering, your own dark side, the Ego)
- 3) The spiritual practice (going beyond all ideas and images)

My three books, as frames of reference, and supporting exercises, are about step 1 and 2.

However the actual, concrete, dialogue in philosophical counseling, directs itself towards step 3, and will in this way seek to go beyond all images. It is here the thought about, that truth is a pathless land, comes in.

Realization can, with help from the Source, only come from within, never from outside. You therefore can't find truth through any organization, any faith, any doctrine, any priest, clairvoyant, medium, or any ritual, nor through philosophical knowledge or psychological methods. You can *only* find it through the philosophical questions' self-inquiring practice, through the realization of the nature of the Ego,

and therefore of the nature of thinking and time. This understanding gives on the other hand a gradually growing feeling of, that you are spiritual safe on your journey towards this source.

Therefore the following account isn't a contradiction in relation to what I earlier have been writing about. All these things ought to be in place, both religion, texts and exercises, before an actual philosophical counseling practice can take its beginning. This means at the same time, that I hardly will be able to guide a guest, who doesn't want to open himself towards the possibility of spirituality. It also means, that the following neither must be taken as a method you ought to follow as a slave, only as a frame of reference. Personally I actual don't have any idea about how a certain philosophical counseling session has to go off. The whole thing is about seeing problems from all kinds of different viewpoints, as if seen through a diamond with many facets. You can say, that my three books, and the following account, form such a diamond, which shall be used as a whole.

### *A. The voyage of discovery*

Therefore: philosophical counseling is not based on any images of life, any faith, cosmology or ideology, and it uses no ritual or scientific theory and method, as a path to reality. Philosophical counseling is a voyage of discovery.

Why do humans assume so many things? In philosophical counseling you seek to make a voyage of discovery, and investigate without knowing anything; a voyage of discovery into yourself without knowing what is good or evil, right or wrong, what there ought to be, or what there should be, only making this journey without any pack.

Of course it is difficult to travel into yourself without feeling, that you are carrying something, but you seek to discover while you travel, without immediately saying: "Like this it must not be, like that it ought to be."

In philosophical counseling there is nobody, who gives the guest answers to the questions of existence. Regarding such answers there is nobody the guest can trust, and the counselor asks directly the guest not to trust anybody. There is no authority who will tell the guest what there has been, and what there ought to be, which direction he shall go and not shall go, and nobody marks out the pitfalls for him – in that sense he is making his journey alone. And yet the counselor nevertheless is with him, they make together the voyage of discovery. But none of them knows anything.

Some of the first the counselor asks the guest is whether he can do this: make his journey alone. If he is answering: "I can't, because I am afraid", then the counselor can grip this anxiety, inquire into it, together with the guest, and seek to understand it entirely and completely.

He can ask the guest to forget all about the authority, and investigate the whole of this area, which is called anxiety – the anxiety because you nobody have, who can support you, nobody who will tell you what you shall do; the anxiety because you can make a mistake. However the counselor can draw attention to - when you commit the mistake - then to be the mistake present in passive listening, to see it completely with the mind and the heart, watch it neutral as in a mirror, without saying yes and no, feel it deeply and incisively, without seeking to achieve anything with it. Then you immediately will be able to jump out of it.

In fact you are now already in progress with the philosophical voyage of discovery. The counselor's task is to support the guest in making discoveries as they both go forward. In that, to make such discoveries, is lying a greater creativity than in painting a painting, writing a book, going on the scene. Herein there is a greater tension, a greater feeling of adventure.

If the daily life is lived self-forgetful, without that there is any inner spectator, doubter or calculator, there is nothing, which can disturb the silence. That is the whole of the problem. But this inner calculator all the time plays his game, throws all the time his shadow, and creates thereby several problems. The counselor can now ask, whether the guest and he can make such a journey inwards, in philosophical sense, without knowing anything, and on the journey discover the guest's images of life, the views, attitudes, conceptions, wills to power and ideals, which are manifestations of these images. That is a mighty adventurous journey, much greater than travelling to Mars. You are in company with Dante, Faust, Odysseus, Frodo in *The Lord of The Rings*, the heroes in the fairy-tales.

The journey to the Moon, or to Mars, is an objective journey, you know where you are going. But in philosophical counseling, where the journey goes inwards, you don't know where you are going. Therefore there is uncertainty and fear. If you know where you are going, you will never enter the unknown, and you will therefore never be the real human, who discovers what the timeless is.

Man wants to hold on to the things he knows. And with all this he wants to go travelling. He wants to drag everything he knows with him – the ideas, the insults, the various forms of resistance, the stupidity, the happiness, the inspirations, everything

he has experienced, all the reactions, which emanate from his historical limited perspective on himself and the world.

When you say: "I will go travelling with all these things", it is after all another place you travel to, and not into what you carry. Such a journey would happen in the imagination, it is unreal. But in philosophical counseling the journey into the unknown is a paradox. Because what you do, are, that you travel into the things you are carrying, the known, your images of life – not into the unknown – but into the area you already know: the perspective in which all your lusts, joys, misery and sorrows, move around. Into this you can travel, it is everything you have. But in the understanding of all this is the unknown.

And in order to be able to go on discovery in that way, which the guest and the counselor in community do, there must be freedom, not when they have reached the end of the road, but from the very outset.

Unless you are free you can't go on discovery, you can't investigate and inquire. In order get to the bottom of something, not only freedom is necessary, but also the discipline, which makes it possible to be yourself present in passive listening. Freedom and discipline belong together.

### ***B. The question of the possibility or impossibility of freedom***

The philosophical counseling session begins with formulating a so-called order. The order summarizes the guest's wishes and expectations, and indicates what theme shall stand in the centre for the further dialogues.

When you address a philosophical counselor, then it is the counselor's first job to ensure himself, that your expectations are consistent with the offered. If there first of all is a need of comfort, healing, or pain management, then you at once will be send forth to a priest, doctor, or psychologist. After this the question is, whether you as a matter of fact wish to philosophize, to make this journey. This you will find out through the question of the possibility or impossibility of freedom.

Some of the first the philosophical counselor will suggest the guest, after he has presented his theme, is, whether they both, from the start, can leave out those images of life, which the guest is carrying in his baggage; that is to say: whether they can leave out all theoretical and ideological concepts of freedom, so that they in community can inquire into, whether the mind, the guest's and the counselor's, ever can be really free, free and independently, without fear and anxiety, and the countless



problems, both the conscious as the subconscious, which origin from the deeper lying layers of the mind.

To leave out your images of life doesn't mean, that you throw them totally away, but that you see the relative in them. This also means, that you not just shall give answers to them, but that you go into an investigation of these images themselves.

We are used to give answers, to analyze, to argue, to express our opinions, but we rarely investigate the images of life, from which we give these answers. However it is precisely this the philosophical counselor introductory will do, by putting them into question, to show the relative in them, the historical limitation, the problem with time, its consequences for our existential unhappiness and happiness, the discrepancy between idea and conduct of life.

In many of Plato's dialogues Socrates ends the dialogue with a fundamental question, which puts into question the whole basic perspective of the dialogue partner. Implicit in this Socrates is saying, that any image of life is relative, and that it eventually is about going from having some images of life, to having a philosophical life-practice. This is a nihilistic moment, but not an expression of nihilism.

As mentioned in the beginning of this book, then a part of Albert Camus' philosophy was about, that we usually live in two dimensions: a superficial dominated by conventions, norms and moral – but under this, life shows its true face in form of the meaningless, absurd and cruel. Camus' little novel *The Fall* is for instance about a man, Jean-Baptiste Clamence, who, when he was a lawyer, from end to end had order in his life. One evening in Amsterdam he sees a young woman jumping into the river. Without trying to help. Then he suddenly remembers a parallel occurrence in Paris. And these two events become the triggering factor for, that his existence breaks down.

The problem for him is, that he hasn't got any philosophical life-practice. He ends in nihilism, a condition he therefore has to accept. When the reader meets him, he is a kind of philosophical rebel or spiritual anarchist; that is: he has been thrown out in an intense rebellion against himself and the whole of society. Now he refuses to judge people, not as neutral observance, but as a choice, a last judgment, a life-principle created by his conscience, because, as he says: "because who among us is innocent?"

A condition he in the end is accepting, because he hasn't got any philosophical life-practice. It is a nihilistic moment that reminds about the moment in spiritual practice, where all images and ideas are leaving the mind, the creative emptiness. And in this accept he therefore experiences some kind of happiness, but it is not the spiritual

happiness, it is without realization and compassion. It reminds about it, but it is not the same. In spiritual respect it is still unhappiness, illusion, the separation of the observer and the observed.

Whereas Meursault, in Camus' novel *The Stranger* (see part one: *Philosophy as an Art of Life*), experiences the existential fall as a spectator to his own life and the world, then Clamence experiences it as a calculator. So they act differently, but they both experience the meaningless and absurd in the world, because of the separation of the observer and the observed, and which they have to accept, because they don't have any philosophical life-practice.

It is also the nihilistic moment the main character in Proust's *In Search of Lost Time*, experiences when the objects for his falling-in-love-projects disappear, and he discovers the arbitrariness, or meaninglessness, nothingness, in his project-determined lifesituation. It is a break in his constant becoming something; this becoming, that has a past and a future, which so far have formed an unbroken continuum, but which reality necessarily, from time to time, is breaking down, unless you are very out of balance. The breakdown shows itself in the anxiety. And it is this, which does, that we immediately start with a new project. We do this, because we don't have any philosophical life-practice.

However in philosophical counseling this nihilistic moment is a very important moment. Therefore I also often ask my own guests to read Albert Camus' two small novels *The Stranger*, and *The Fall*, as ways of getting the counseling practice started. The nihilistic moment is a so-called Bardo state, a possibility for spiritual practice, a possibility for opening yourself in towards the Source. It namely also implies the question of, whether there can be a complete philosophical freedom, wherein the human mind is facing something, which not is of time, not is pieced together by thoughts, and which still not is an escape from the facts of the daily existence: the timeless, the absolute, truth or reality.

After having examined the guest's images of life the counselor will, if the guest is prepared for it, go from questioning the guest's images of life, to a more active instruction in art of life.

In order to, that you in philosophical counseling can investigate something, there must be freedom so that you can see; that is to say: there must be freedom from prejudices, conclusions, concepts, ideals, preconceived opinions. Only then you can really see, wherein your question, or problem, consists.

A central theme in the philosophical life-practice is namely, whether there at all is any problem when you are the problem present in passive listening; that is to say: when you observe it incisively, very closely. That will say: you can only observe the problem closely, incisively see wherein it consists, when you in self-forgetful way are one with the problem, when the observer is one with the observed. And then there no longer is any problem, because then there is no reflections, displacements and darkness between the observer and the observed, but on the contrary a presence of something, which not is hidden, a presence of something apparently, something the individual has a clear understanding of. It is a presence of something straightforward, a presence in naturalness.

Can the mind in this way be free, completely free from its images of life, its preconceived viewpoints, by seeing them as something relative? Here is coming a point where the guest often will claim that it is impossible. And here the counselor must go into an investigation of the possibility or impossibility of freedom. If the guest says that it is impossible, then the counselor can ask, wherefrom he knows this, whether he speaks of experience, or just has an idea about it, as well as that the answer is one of the ways in which the mind makes itself without abilities, makes itself distorted, and unable to be completely silent, in peace. It is as a mind, which seeks light in the darkness, and never will find it. Therefore it constructs an image of life, a "light" of words, concepts, theories.

When we say that it is impossible, then there is several reasons for it. One of them can be, that it is because we not just can choose to do it, that we can't control it with our will to power. Another reason is that it is a question of ourselves and our self-images. We are quick at seeing the relative and dangerous in *others'* ideas, prejudices, as well as the necessity of, that *they* must change, but when it is a matter of ourselves it is almost an instinctive answer, that it is impossible. We therefore owe an answer to, how we then can think, that it is possible, for instance through warfare, to bring about democracy in countries, where the human mind has another historical background? Is it not just as impossible for *them* to change? And is our own mind in this process at all democratic? Or shall we just let the others navigate their own loch?

When you say, that it is impossible to change human beings, who have been as they are through thousands of years, you have already blocked for yourself, you will not go ahead, you will not ask and investigate. But of course it can also be problematic purely and simply to say, that it is possible, so that you only live in the world of possibilities, and not in the world of facts.

Unreality can both consist in being absent in, on the one hand, possibilities, on the other hand, in necessities. In relation to possibilities, and what you are, unreality

consists in absence from the given, for instance that you deny, or expel, the conditions of existence, wrapping yourself in illusions, in idealizing or romanticizing life. In relation to necessities unreality consists in absence from that which could be different, for instance a denial of potentials. Possibility without necessity leads out in the world of fantasy. Necessity without possibility, or necessity, which spoils possibilities, leads to, for instance, fatalism, philistine narrow-mindedness.

The philosophical counselor must therefore suggest that they face these questions without saying whether the change is possible or impossible. They must face it with a healthy mind that is eager after discovering, and so young that it can inquire and investigate.

That, which absorbs the guest and the counselor, is therefore how "impossible" it is to become completely free from anxiety – and in this way you suddenly have another approach to the impossible. The impossible has been made possible.

Is all this too much demanded of the human mind? Unless you demand that which perhaps seems impossible, you fall in the trap, you become historical limited by what you think is impossible. It is immensely easy to fall in this trap. You must demand the utmost of the mind and the heart, or else they remain within the borders of the impossible, in the convenient and comfortable.

The paradox is lying in, that if the counselor has helped the guest to a little self-knowledge, a realization of "what he is", yes, then the guest knows, that this is the fact. He is jealous, hot-tempered, violent, arrogant etc. And then he arrives at the conclusion, that there isn't anything to do about it, that nothing can be changed. How can this fragmented life be made whole? The guest has realized, that in order to live a harmonic, orderly, rational and healthy life, then the displacements, the reflections, and the darkness, between the observer and the observed, must be brought to cessation. But he has concluded that this isn't possible – and that is the dead-weight in what he is.

But the emptiness in this unreal life you can't live in. It is suffering. It creates panic. Therefore the unreal life will succumb for a constant inclination to fill it up. Everything can be used. The emptiness just has to be camouflaged, covered, forced out. We therefore construct some images of life, we invent theories, we consider ourselves as being Christians, Jews or Muslims, we await that "the grace" from something divine – whatever you call it: God, Jahve, Allah – will arrive, and miraculously liberate us. Unfortunately this doesn't happen. Or we live as a Hindu in an illusion; we invent some myth about the higher self, Atman. Thereby we have created a possibility of escape.

We easily let ourselves be persuaded to escape, because we don't know how the displacements between ourselves and the others can be healed.

How can this historical limited background be broken down? If this is not possible our way of life will to eternal time be uniformity. Even though there exists a new pattern, a new social order, new doctrines, new dogmas, and new kinds of propaganda, then it is still uniformity. If we cling to another person, we limit our energy, our urge to live, our vitality, because then we ask, whether it is possible or not possible. If we say it is impossible, we suck life out of the present. Fatalistic ideas and philistine narrow-mindedness are transformed into reality, whilst reality becomes emptiness. If we say it is possible, on the bases of what we already know, from our perspective on ourselves and the world, then we use daydreams and romantic conceptions to empty out life for reality. In both cases our urge to live and our vitality are reduced, they crumble and dissolve.

Far most humans only know two answers to the question about whether the mind can be completely free. Either they say that it is impossible; they say, that the human mind under any circumstance must let itself be limited historical. Or else they begin to dream from one or the other romantic image. In both cases it is the thought, which is the answer.

Philosophical counseling offers a third option, the art of life, the existential training of the mind and the heart, where Man as a lifeartist begins to experiment, to investigate, to discover his existence as a whole. If you from the start claim that it is impossible, you have of course not any chance of breaking through. That you claim this can be due to, that your experience is very small or very large, or it can just be a faith, which you are accepting. But when you claim this, then it means that you deny that you at all can seek anything, that you at all can investigate, inquire or discover anything. You deny the actual possibility of philosophy, and then it is a question of whether the guest and the counselor at all can meet.

In order to find out whether it is possible for the mind completely to disentangle itself from any historical limitation, you must have the freedom to inquire and discover. That will say that you must see your images of life as relative, and thereby disentangle from them. And this also means freedom from romantic possibility-images, which are just as relative and limited as the necessity-images.

The mind can in other words not be free, as long as it remains historical formed and limited. And most humans think, that they never can release the mind from its historical limitation, that it must remain being limited. They say, that you must have a

certain way of thinking, some prejudices, and that a liberation of the mind is unthinkable. Add to this, that the older the civilisation is, the larger is the weight on the mind of tradition, authority and discipline. Humans who belong to an old race, as for instance in India, are often more historical limited than humans, who for instance live in the United States, where there is larger social and economical freedom, and where people for not so many years ago were pioneers.

But as mentioned, then the minds of these humans are not free in philosophical sense neither, and therefore in genuine sense democratic, and the outside freedom can be laid in ruins from one day to the other.

Far most humans think, that it is unavoidably that you become historical limited. Against this you can put the question about, whether there at all is something, which is unavoidably – except death, perhaps; whether the inevitable process not is a thought-process. In philosophical counseling there is neither answered yes or no. On the contrary the guest is being encouraged to be this inevitable process present in passive listening. And this presence is not mechanical. But if the mind on the contrary is the thoughtprocess absent, either conscious distancing itself from it, or unconscious being absent in it, yes, then it becomes mechanical.

To be the process present in passive listening, is to see it completely with the heart and the mind, to observe it neutral as in a mirror, without saying yes and no, and feel it deeply and incisively, without seeking to achieve anything with it. And this presence is not itself such a thought-process. The presence is always something new, young and spontaneous. The thought is the eternal recurrence of the same, and therefore never new. The passive listening presence and the active evaluating thinking are two completely different things, and they can never meet. But the habitual in our surroundings dulls us, so we shrug our shoulders and say: "What is the use of it? That is the way of life". Thereby we spoil our sensitivity, so that we never act, when we are facing hideousness, exploitation, cruelty and suffering. Also our admiration and deep joy over all beauty are destroyed. In this way our life of feelings slowly and imperceptibly withers away.

The habitual also gradually puts the thought out of function. If we put attention to our thoughts, we will see how they gradually stiffen in habits. That which before was conscious becomes unconscious, and the habitual makes us hard and insensitive. We let ourselves be disciplined by anxiety, our lives become poor and sterile.

The clarification of the concepts of possibility and necessity also has as intention to show, that there not is any method, any system, no theories, no teacher, nothing in the

world at all, which will help you, neither with answers to the questions of existence, or how you can become silent.

But precisely when the guest realizes the truth, that it is only the silent mind, which is seeing, yes, then the mind strangely enough becomes silent. It is as seeing a danger and avoiding it. Because when it is seen, that the mind *must* be completely silent, then the mind actually becomes silent. And if it then can listen without interpretations, without that your prejudices intervene in order to distort – listens as you perhaps listen to a bird, which sings, without commenting and giving a name.

Let us presume that the guest has put a question of violence, and thinks that violence is an unavoidably part of human nature. In the philosophical counseling practice you can then seek to enter all the way down to the root of the problem, and thereby, perhaps surprisingly, get rid of violence.

Otherwise we will forever and ever live in struggle with each other. The counselor could then ask the guest if he wishes to live in this way – and apparently most humans do – and the guest then answers: "I am sorry, but violence there will always be", yes, then the counselor and the guest have no possibility for intercommunicating. The guest has blocked for himself. But if the guest says, that there perhaps exists another way, in which we can live, then they can speak together.

Instead of just concluding that Man is violent, and that there nothing is to do about it, you will in philosophical counseling instead seek to investigate why we are violent, why the mind is stunted, why our thoughts are limited, small-minded, petty. And if you thereby can reach to see, that our thoughts are historical limited, relative, see the truth in this, then the liberation will arise in this discovery of truth. When the guest in this way asks a question, then the counselor will ask him not to answer it, but only to listen to the question, so that he himself can investigate it.

### ***C. The guest and the counselor must be equal***

When a guest goes to see a philosopher in order to get philosophical counseling, there are some things, which must be made clear right from the beginning. The philosopher is not a specialist, who has a special knowledge about a special area of life. He is no authority in any area. Everyone must be a light for himself. Therefore there is in philosophical counseling no teacher and no pupil, no therapist and no client, no priest and no community, no guru and no disciple. This must be understood clearly right from the beginning, otherwise you are under influence, and you will become a slave of propaganda and life-views.

Whatever the philosophical counselor says, is in this way not a doctrine, a creed, a therapy, or an attempt of persuasion. Either the guest and the philosopher meet in an understanding of this, or they don't meet at all. And as mentioned, if the guest doesn't wish to put questions to his images of life, to his preconceived conclusions, yes, then the person neither is suitable for philosophical counseling.

This also implies, that the philosophical counselor must be a light for himself. It is obvious, that the philosophical counselor must be a university-educated philosopher. But in order to, that he is competent as philosophical counselor, he must also be a human who lives his thinking and teaching. The philosopher's thoughts must have been made transparent in being; what he is teaching must be expressed in his conduct of life. The philosopher must have made his own discoveries, and must have had experiences in connection with an actual philosophical life-practice, and therefore, in a wide degree, the ability of being his own source. This is nothing you can achieve a certificate in, and no certificate guarantees such a competence. I therefore disagree with the many societies of philosophical practice, that today seek to earn money by educating people in philosophical counseling, and giving them certificates. They are introducing an authority, and there must not be any authority in philosophical counseling. Many of these societies remind more about the Sophists, than about Socrates, who should be the actual inspiration.

A philosophical counselor must be independent of any kind of organization, whether it is of philosophical, religious, or political kind!

When the philosopher is trying to help his guests in becoming lights for themselves - and therefore not be philosophical indebted to any human, or to any kind of organization - then this of course also must apply for the philosopher himself. However this doesn't mean, that you can't learn anything from others. An important philosophical exercise is precisely the philosophical sparring partner, or the whole communicative aspect of the lifeartist. The difference is whether you in your learning process are set free in philosophical sense, or whether you become dependent.

The philosophical counselor doesn't require of the guest, that he shall believe in anything, and doesn't set himself up as an authority. The german philosopher Gerd B. Achenbach, who was the first who opened a philosophical counseling practice, calls his method for a "beyond-method" method.

A method, whether it is a religious ritual, or a scientific technique, is always based on a theory, an image of life. The philosophical counselor has nothing to teach the guest, if you thereby think about a method as a path to reality. In philosophical counseling there is no path to reality, no more than there is a path to truth.



On a genuine voyage of discovery everything is new, and there hasn't been made any roads. If you follow a path, you don't discover the unknown and new, only the known. Any kind of authority, especially in the area of thinking and understanding, is therefore in philosophical counseling of evil, and can only destroy in philosophical sense. The counselor would destroy the guest in philosophical sense, just like the guest, as disciple, would destroy the counselor in philosophical sense. The guest must be his own teacher and his own pupil. He has to be critical to everything mankind has accepted as valuable and necessary. The counselor's job is only to draw attention to this.

The counselor must also suggest the guest not just to accept what he himself says, since he is no authority, no teacher or guru. If he was a guru, then the guest would be his disciple, and in his quality of disciple the guest would, in philosophical sense, destroy both himself and the counselor.

The guest and the philosophical counselor must together try to discover the truth in the human problem, or in the interest, which the guest has presented as theme for the conversation. They must try to discover it so completely, that the guest becomes free in the mind, and in this way free from all dependence of other people; that is: in philosophical sense. None other than yourself can be an expert concerning yourself, when you speak about a philosophical life-practice.

In the spirit of Socrates you will in philosophical counseling claim, that the man, who says he knows, doesn't know. And that perhaps especially apply in a time, where one after the other place themselves on a pedestal, and are claiming they have clairvoyant abilities, can read thoughts, talk with the dead, or have other abilities and religious experiences. All this has nothing with the unknown to do (see my article *A Map of the Spiritual Journey* in my book *Dream Yoga*).

In all these so-called religious, or occult, experiences, the process of experience is a process of recognition. You can only recognize something you have known before, therefore it is a projection of the past, either from personal memories, or even deeper, from the collective images of time. And therefore it is tied by time, and not timeless, it is historical limited by tradition and civilization, inclinations, predisposition and wishes.

When you in philosophical counseling are critical to these things as truth and reality, then this is because it leads to self-deceit and illusion, when taking it for something absolute.

The philosophical counselor doesn't try to influence the guest to act, to think something particular, to do one thing or the other – that would be propaganda. The only thing the counselor does, is, like Kierkegaard said, to encourage to awareness. But awareness, or passive listening presence, is a troublesome task, and because most of us prefer the easy path, the illusion, we produce the authority, which gives our existence an image of life, a form and a pattern to follow. This authority is perhaps the collective, the state or a group; it can also be the personal, the guru. But authority of any kind makes blind, it leads to thoughtlessness, and because most of us find it painful to think, then we surrender to the control of the authority.

However the philosophical counselor can draw attention to this fact, that we let us lead, that we are lacking the ability ourselves to think, the ability ourselves to live right. We are dependent of, that someone tells us how we shall act, and what we shall think. The whole of our system of upbringing is based on, what we shall think, and not how we shall think, and therefore we need leaders. But the existent postmodern chaos, which we call freedom and democracy, doesn't need new leaders. It demands something completely different; that will say: any person must himself become a light, not being dependent on any other, in philosophical sense. And, as mentioned, that doesn't mean, that he should not be a communicative being, on the contrary. It is necessary in order to become a true communicative being, as the rest of this book will be about.

When a guest goes to see a philosopher, then the guest is presenting a topic, a life-question of one or the other kind; it might be a human problem or an interest. The philosophical counselor will then seize the topic by pointing out, that there only is one answer to the question: the guest must himself look at the topic, observe and feel the question in an entirely new way, not absent by seeking an answer through evaluations – that is the old way – but present in passive listening, just like when you listen to the birds, to classical music, or to a child. Only in this way you may create the wonder, the mix of critical investigation and unprejudiced freedom, which in philosophy is a necessity, if you shall learn how you, yourself, can think, and discover something new. And by seeing the things as they are, then the answer perhaps will come to you.

Usually the guest will expect an answer when he has presented a question. The philosophical counselor could then ask him about who he expects should answer this question. The only thing the counselor will do is to help the guest to see which factors are active when you seek an answer to a question, as well as showing the guest how he himself can observe the question. In many ways the whole process of counseling is an investigation of the nature of experience.

The guest and the counselor must together try to find the answer. If the counselor gives an answer, it would not be the guest's discovery; it would only be on the verbal plane, and therefore altogether useless. The guest must be guided in how he himself can find it, and that will say that he must experience it; it is this, which is so important. To discover is to experience, and the guest and the counselor must discover it together.

A central theme in philosophical counseling is that truth not is something, which can be communicated linguistically to another. A human must be able to receive it, and nobody can help him by giving answers. He must come to the truth, openly, free and unexpected. In order to find an answer to one or the other question, the guest must therefore be guided to understand the question itself, rather than just giving an answer to the question. If the question for instance is about anxiety, the guest must be guided to understand anxiety; that is to say: the guest must understand the one who is anxious, the human who has created the anxiety, and that is himself.

The philosophical counselor doesn't give courses or talks in usual sense, but is thinking aloud together with the guest (or guests, if there are more, as in the philosophical café). The guest is therefore not the counselor's pupil, but the counselor thinks aloud together with the guest, so that they both can understand the extraordinary meaning of living and suffering. Therefore the counselor doesn't give courses in usual sense, nor does he try to get the guest, or guests, to listen one-sided, but they try, together, to find out, what is true, and that requires another kind of understanding than only listening to words.

In this way the counselor will all the time urge to, that they together make an investigation of the Ego; that is: the guest's images of life, the self-image and the world-image.

The difficulty for most people is, that they usually are spectators to life instead of taking part in life. We would rather be spectators, be audience, instead of participating in the game of life. The counselor must therefore encourage the guest to play the game of life, to be creative, and not only look at how another person thinks, feels, lives.

The difficulty for most people is lying in, that we have forgotten, how to play the game of life, participate in the game, and how we ourselves can make the discoveries. We are accustomed to be told, what we shall do, what we shall think, and what the right action is. We are so unfamiliar with, that it is ourselves, who are discovering our own process of thinking, the discovery from where action alone can take place.

The counselor must in this way urge the guest not only to be a spectator, but really to take part in what is being discussed, what means, that there must be full contact between the guest and the counselor.

#### ***D. The counselor is a philosophical sparring partner***

The theme in the philosophical counseling session can, as mentioned, be a human problem or an interest, usually formed as a question. The philosophical counselor looks at any question of life as a very extensive question, and will, by seeing it as a medium of self-discovery, investigate it, not in order to discover the answer, but as a medium to understand ourselves.

So in order to discover the right answer to a question, you must in philosophical counseling study the problem without formulating an answer. Life is not seen as a line of conclusions, of one or the other explanation. Life is seen dialogical as a line of challenges and reactions, or a line of questions and answers, and it is up to yourself, how you are answering. This requires an immensely self-knowledge, which isn't gained through tricks or gurus, but through yourself, in your own daily actions and thoughts.

The answers the philosophical counselor gives, are investigations of concepts, examinations of what the question is implying and meaning. These investigations of concepts function as instructions in self-exposure. So if the guest awaits a conclusion, or an assurance, from the counselor, he is getting disappointed. But if the guest and the counselor together study the problem, they will see and understand its many meanings. So the counselor must from the start draw attention to, that by answering the guest's question, he offers him no conclusions, because that, which is concluded, is not the truth.

Life is movement, not continuity and stagnation, and if we seek a conclusion, or an answer, we make life very limited. We want answers and conclusions because our mind is historical limited. Our mind precisely consists of such conclusions and answers, and knows nothing else. When it is bored it therefore seeks new kinds of answers and conclusions, and therefore a new limitation. It is the eternal recurrence of the same. But if we, in our minds, realize this historical limitation, we can progress. To reach to see the relative as relative, and not as absolute, is a centre of rotation in the conversation.

As mentioned then philosophical counseling doesn't consist in a talk, a course or a lecture, where the guest just listens superficial, for thereafter to leave again. The guest is on the contrary being encouraged to listen to himself. If the guest has ears

which can hear what is being said, he can't agree or disagree – it is there as a fact. That will say that the guest and the counselor are together in it; they communicate to each other, they work together. Herein there is great freedom, great tenderness, passion, and after all, from that arises understanding.

The guest must from the start be encouraged not to accept or deny what the philosophical counselor says, but only to investigate it. The counselor is of no importance at all. The guest shall not obey, there is no authority, but the guest must be encouraged to try to listen. If the guest listens carefully, then there is herein a friendly attitude, not agreement or disagreement, but a frame of mind which says: "Let us try to see what you are talking about, let us see whether it at all has any value, let us see what is true and what is false".

The guest is being encouraged not to accept or deny anything, but to be present in passive listening, to observe and listen, not only to what is being said, but also to his own reactions and distortions, while he listens, seeing his prejudices, his views, his images, his experiences; see how they will prevent him in listening. And as mentioned in the start, then this of course also is something the philosophical counselor himself must practise, and be a living example on.

The counselor proposes the guest that he not only listens to the words, but is himself present in passive listening, observes himself as in a mirror, without analysing, and feels his reactions without seeking to achieve anything with it. That is to say: the guest uses the counselor as a philosophical sparring partner, a mirror in which he can see himself as he is for real, so that he is being aware about how the mind and the heart function - while he is looking in this mirror.

Meister Eckhart's art of life consisted in training himself to perceive everything, which happened to him, as a gift of God, both the unhappy incidents, and the happy incidents. However this is first possible when you are enough open for it. When you are open you will discover the almost miraculous fact, that there is endless help to be found in everything, in a bird's song, in a person's voice, in a single blade of grass, or in the endless sky. Eckhart's art of life can, just like Buber's, be said to consist in seeing all relations of life as philosophical sparring partners, as mirrors in which you can discover yourself.

Poison and prejudice begin when you look up to a certain person as your authority, your guru, teacher or ideal. To make yourself independent of other people, bearing this in mind, is precisely to become a true communicative being.

There is not at all anything mystical in seeing, that there is wisdom in everything. And, after all, we know it very well. Everybody has tried to listen to the song of the birds in the morning. Here we have no problem with being present in passive listening. We never compare the bird's song with yesterday's song. It is new, it is so delightful, because your mind is fresh, uninfluenced by the day's activity, and in this way you are able to hear it, as if it was the first time, though the song is ancient as the mountains.

Here we have a touch of that creative emptiness, which Eckhart called The Virgin Mary Condition, where the mind is empty, innocent and pure. So close is it to us each and every day. And the philosophical counselor can use this as an example on, how the guest can listen to everything, which is being said in the conversation, as if he heard it for the first time. Then he will see something unusual happen in him, because happiness is not something old, happiness is something, which continuously renews itself. In this there is a solidarity, a communication, which isn't of linguistic kind, and to learn is a part of this. It is not from the philosophical counselor the guest learns something, on the contrary he learns by being present in passive listening, by using the counselor as a mirror, in which he can observe how his own thoughts and feelings - his own mind, his own images of life - are in movement. There is no authority in this at all.

If the guest listens in this way, there is a connection between the counselor's words, and what the guest listens to in himself. And therefore he is not only listening to the counselor.

So the guest is being encouraged not to let himself be content with hearing a lot of words and ideas – which in the end are relative – but on the contrary, by investigating - while he observes his own state of mind, both on a linguistic and a non-linguistic plane - whether the mind ever can be free, can stop subjecting itself to the anxiety, or escaping from it by saying: "I must become more brave, I must make resistance", and instead be the anxiety present in an incisively listening.

The anxiety is the trap in which you are caught. Unless you are free from anxiety and everything it implies, you can't see and feel clearly and deeply; and it is obvious that where there is anxiety there is a closed attitude, and therefore no freedom and love.

### ***E. Linguistic and non-linguistic communication***

It is important - especially in the beginning of the philosophical counseling session - to begin to understand the meanings words have. The word, the symbol, has become extremely distorting for most people, and most often they are not aware of this fact.

The symbol is the shadow of truth, something relative. A CD for instance is not the real voice; but the voice has become recorded on the CD, and it is the CD we listen to. The word, the symbol, the image, the idea, is not the truth; but we worship the image as if it was something absolute.

We hold the symbol in honour and attribute the word the greatest importance, and to do this is highly distorting. There namely happens that, that the word, the symbol, the image, becomes the most important. It is in this way, that temples, churches and the many different organized religions and ideologies, with their symbols, doctrines and dogmas, become factors, which hinder the mind in reaching forth, and discover truth. The philosophical counselor must therefore all the time remind the guest about not letting him be caught by words, by symbols, which automatically create habits. Habits are the most stagnating factor, because they hinder us in thinking in a creative way.

Maybe the guest doesn't completely understand how big importance this has; but he will understand it if he thinks about it. The counselor can for instance request him to go for a walk alone now and then, and think about all these things; to find out the meaning with words such as "life", "God", "necessity", "duty", "co-operation", - all these words and concepts, which are used indiscriminately. He could for instance ask himself, what the word "duty" means?

Duty towards what? Duty towards the old, towards the commandments of the tradition: "You shall be devoted towards your parents, your country, your gods"? This word "duty" has got a special place in our consciousness. It is crowded to bursting point with meanings, which are forced on us. We learn, that we have duties towards our country, towards our gods, towards our neighbour. But central in a philosophical life-practice is, that more important than "duty", is that you yourself find out, what truth is. Our parents and the society use the word "duty" as a means to form us, shape us in compliance with their special idiosyncrasies, their thought-habits, their likes and dislikes, in the hope thereby to create a guarantee for their own safety.

In philosophical counseling the guest therefore is being encouraged to use the time, which is necessary, to be patient and investigative, so that he himself can enter into everything and find out, what is true. Above all, don't acquiesce with the word "duty", because where there is "duty" there is no love.

In the same way you could for instance look at the word "co-operation". The state wants, that you shall co-operate with it. But if you co-operate with something, without understanding it, you are only imitating and copying. If you however

understand - if you find the truth in something - then you live and co-operate with it, your feelings are included in it – it is a part of yourself.

It is therefore extremely necessary to be aware of the words, the symbols, the images, which paralyse our thoughts. To be aware of them and find out, whether you can reach beyond them, is of great importance, if you shall live in a creative way, without stagnating.

Therefore the philosophical counselor must gently bring the guest forward to realize, that language, and therewith the guest's images of life, his concepts, opinions, ideas and images, are relative and not absolute. He must be brought forward to the realization, that any description is not the described; you can't talk about the truth or the things in themselves. But what you can do is to point at the door, the voyage of discovery, the philosophical life-practice. And if the guest is willing to break up, to move towards that door, then it becomes his own task to go out on the other side. Therefore Plato also choosed to let his dialogues stop here.

Before the guest and the counselor seriously can begin to investigate the guest's question, the guest must be so completely aware about, that the word is not the thing in itself, that the description is not the described, because regardless how many explanations you give, regardless how subtle and wise they are, they can't open the heart for love, which is endless. This must the guest be brought forward to understand, and not be content with sticking to some words; words are usefull when you shall communicate yourself to others, but when you speak about something in actual fact non-linguistic, then the guest and the counselor must establish an intimately community between them, so that they both feel and understand the same at the same time, with a fullness of the mind and the heart. Otherwise it all becomes a play with words.

Therefore the philosophical counselor also must use words, which are simple, and not technical, because no technical wording can help solving human problems. Therefore the counselor should not use specialized jargon or technical terms, neither from philosophy or science. The counselor wants to communicate things of the deepest importance, but with the regular words we use in the daily life.

It is very important in philosophical counseling - unless you will be content with communicating linguistically - that you also make use of another kind of communication. This is first possible when the guest has realized the relative in his images of life, and is ready to go from having some images of life, to having a philosophical life-practice. In the counseling you make a very profound and serious research, and therefore the guest and the counselor must be connected, both in and



beyond the linguistic communication. There must be solidarity, what implies that the topic of discussion is of great importance for both the guest and the counselor, that it concerns them both, and that they study it with love; that is to say: with a passion for understanding it.

So it is not enough that a linguistic communication takes place, there must also be a profound solidarity, in which there neither is talk about agreement or disagreement. Questions about agreement or disagreement should never arise, because it is not ideas, opinions, conceptions or ideals, which are sought to be passed on. What concerns the guest and the counselor is the problem about, whether Man can change. And neither the guest's, nor the counselor's, opinions, have any value in this question at all.

Something of the most difficult is to communicate with another person. We must linguistically communicate to each other, that is obvious, but it is for instance Martin Buber's intention to show, that we can communicate on a much deeper plane; that is: not only linguistically, but in solidarity, where two parts meet on the same plane with the same intensity, with the same passion; only then there is real solidarity, and that is much more important than sheer communication.

And since you in philosophical counseling speak about something, which is rather complicated, something which intervenes deep into our daily existence, then it is not enough that we linguistically communicate, there must moreover be solidarity, what you could call an investigative community. What is central in philosophical counseling is a radical revolution on the philosophical plane, not far out in the future, but in fact today, now.

So you must all the time take into consideration - when you discuss such rather complicated questions - that linguistic connection between the guest and the counselor is rather difficult; if they don't listen carefully enough to each other, they can't possible intercommunicate. If the guest thinks about one thing, and the counselor speaks about something else, then the connection of course stops. If the guest is busy with his own special ideas, and his awareness concentrates about these special ideas, then there neither will be any linguistic connection between the guest and the counselor. In order to, that they linguistically can intercommunicate, there must be a quality of passive listening presence, a pure reflecting observation, which includes loving interest, an intensity, a burning longing after understanding the question the guest has presented. This is the foundation for the philosophical wonder, and for the beginning of philosophy.

More important than the linguistic communication is the solidarity. Solidarity is contrary to communication not linguistic. Two humans who know each other very well can, without saying anything, understand each other completely, instantly, because there has been made a special connection between them. And when you, as in philosophical counseling, treat complicated human problems, there must be both solidarity as well as linguistic connection; those two must all the time go together, otherwise the guest and the counselor will not be able to work together. First when all this is made clear – and that is necessary – they can begin to investigate the guest's presented question.

In his essay *Healing through Meeting* Buber claims, that in the spontaneity, which is present when one human is facing another, the reserve, which characterizes an isolated ego, is being broken and changed. A healing relationship can function opening on humans, who are sick in their relationship with the Otherness. But there is no knowledge about, or method, for the true meeting in Buber's dialogical relationship; it happens, it is something, which is coming by itself. True dialogue and meeting are not dependent on a certain routine, time or location. The solidarity it creates, you can also call the spirit in the human reality.

The question about the spirit as the integral power in Man, has found different answers in philosophy. Plato called it eros. Through the Christian tradition faith takes the place, eros had in Plato. Faith is understood as love of God, and is called Agapé. With the secularization it was often the reason, which was put in the place of faith, as an integral power in Man. It finds a grandiose framing in Hegel's system, where syntheses between all kinds of phenomena are established through reflection and reason.

In Habermas the communicative reason is the integral power in the formation of the social identity. In Løgstrup the fundamental integral power in life is the spontaneity in the sovereign life-expressions.

In the philosophical life-practice the spirit purely and simply is the silence. The non-linguistic silence is intimately connected with the passive listening presence, which both is reason and feeling, awareness and love. In the passive listening presence Man enters into a silence, which he hasn't created himself.

Silence is a peculiar phenomenon. Thought-activity can neither create, nor construct, silence. Silence is not something, which can be put together, and nor can this condition arise through an act of the will. The memory about silence is not silence.

When a philosophical counseling session is able to create solidarity there is such a silence present, a pulsating peace, and the conversation doesn't disturb it. On the contrary the conversation gets meaning in this silence, yes, the silence is the background of the word. The silence endows the thought with expression, but the thought is not the silence. In the passive listening presence there is silence, and the silence goes through everything, is gathering the threads, is speaking. The thought can never penetrate anything, but in the silence there is solidarity, a non-linguistic communication.

The silence is spirit, an integral power between humans. Kierkegaard defined it as certainty or intensity. It is a passion of intensity, which also is characterized by understanding. It is also an aspect of life-unfolding, namely a spiritual way of life, which is gathering all intensity in itself.

Silence, or spirit, is an intense gathering of all powers about something certain, namely the healing of Man.

### **3. Being**

#### ***A. What you are***

What you are is your existence as a whole. If you are tormented by for instance anxiety (it could be any other human problem) then it is about, that you, as a lifeartist, see this anxiety as a whole. You are the anxiety, anxiety is purely and simply what you are. It is only the thought, which divides itself from the anxiety, places itself outside as the inner thinker, theorist or doubter. The thought places itself outside the anxiety, because it doesn't know what it shall do with it; because it makes resistance. By placing itself outside the anxiety the thought experiences itself as a spectator, a theorist or a doubter in relation to the individual's existence. It comes to be outside the existence by perfecting itself, observing itself, entrenching itself, and defending itself in inner isolation. You become yourself absent. But the inner observer, doubter or calculator, which makes resistance, is also anxiety.

But to be the anxiety present in passive listening without that any division takes place, without that there is any inner calculator - to see and feel the structure of limitation, of faith, of opinions, of prejudices as a whole - is to see what you are, and that will say reality. But when you begin to evaluate it, and there arises division, then you say: "It is impossible to change, Man has lived in this way in millenniums". And then you still live like that. To say "it is not possible", is to allow this conclusion to

suck life out of the present, and change its opinions to reality, whilst reality becomes emptiness. Herein your vitality and life-power is reduced, it crumbles and dissolves. Only when you see what is possible in the highest form, you give life back to the present, and are filling your being with vitality and urge to live.

To see what is possible in the highest form implies that you must find out, what it will say to see something as a whole. You can't see completely as long as you observe life on the bases of a certain viewpoint, or on the bases of a special experience, which you place very high, or on the bases of some acquired knowledge, which is your historical background, the Ego.

On an intellectual, a linguistic plane, through analyse, you have perhaps discovered the cause of, that you in philosophical sense are dependent of ideas, people and things, in order to be able to feel happy, and to justify your existence. But everything the thought explores is inevitably divided in different parts. You can therefore only see something as a whole when the thought doesn't intervene; that is to say: meditative-existential.

Then you see your dependency as a fact; you really see what you are. You see it without sympathy or antipathy; you don't want to get rid of this dependency, or to be released from the cause of it. You are it present in passive listening, and when there is such a presence, you see the whole of the image, not a fragment, and when the mind is seeing the whole of the image there is freedom. You have discovered, that the separation of the observer and the observed - through the thought - means reduction of vitality and urge to live. You have discovered the source of this reduction itself.

Why are you dependent in philosophical sense? Your being is itself a relationship with the surrounding world, but when every relationship with the surrounding world rests on this dependency there is will to power, will to become something, and therefore violence, resistance and bossiness; the instrumental reason applied on human relationships. That is what we have made the whole world into. The systems have colonized the lifeworld. If we own something, we must rule over it. We meet beauty, suddenly there is love, and immediately it is transformed into an ownership; the same closed character and misery begins, and love has fallen out of the window.

It is immensely important to see all this as it is, and to return to ourselves as we are. From there we can go onwards. Then it will be relatively easy to throw off the known, which is our specific perspective on the world. When the mind is quiet, when it no longer projects itself out in the future, because it wants something, when the mind really is quiet, and seriously peaceful, the unknown reveals itself. You don't

have to search for it. You can't invite it. You can only invite that which you know; that, which you have an idea about.

So the problem of the lifeartist is not how you can search that which can't be known, but to understand the accumulating processes of the mind, which always will be the known, the production of the self-image and the world-image. This is the difficult task of the lifeartist: to this is needed an incessantly passive listening presence, an incessantly awareness, which isn't interrupted by disruptive feelings, which doesn't say yes and maintains, which doesn't push away and say no, which doesn't comment, choose, prioritize or sort out, but which is allowing everything to be what it is. That will say: a being with what you are. Only then the mind is able to be in peace.

As a lifeartist you must try to find a process, which can help you to understand yourself, and it is not a process, which will isolate you. You shall not renounce the world, because you can't live in isolation. To be is to be in connection with others, and it is neither possible, nor required, to live in isolation. The reason why there are conflicts, distress and misery, is that our relationship with the surrounding world is not right; our world might be very narrow, but if we can change our relationship with others, precisely in this narrow world, we will start a process, which spreads like rings in water.

In order to be able to discover something, you must observe yourself, but not on the bases of a certain image of life, or a certain thought-system, nor from some certain religious viewpoint. You must completely reject all this, so that the mind is free and is able to be aware of itself in relation with the society, in relation with ourselves, with our families, with our neighbour. When you are the situations present it is possible to reach beyond them.

In order to create a fundamental philosophical revolution in yourself, you must understand the processes of the thoughts, and of the feelings, as they reflect themselves in the relationship with others. This is the only solution to all our problems – not to subject us more kinds of discipline, more kinds of beliefs or ideologies, or to find more spiritual teachers. If we understand ourselves as we are momentarily, without collecting experiences - that is to say: meditative-existential - then you can experience a peace, which is not a thought-product, a peace that neither is fantasy or a condition we grow; and only in the condition of peace there can be creation.

To understand yourself is not a result, a culmination; to understand yourself means to see yourself momentarily in the mirror of the relationship – your relationship with property, with things, with people and ideas. The mirror of relationship is a

philosophical sparring partner. To know yourself means to know your relationship with the world – not only with the world of ideas and of human beings, but also with the things we own, with nature, with the wholeness. That is our life – because life is our relationship with the wholeness. So it is not necessary that we specialize in order to understand this relationship. However it is necessary that we are ourselves present so that we can meet life as a whole.

If you understand what the known is - that is to say: your perspective on yourself and the world, your self-image and world-image, and all the symbols, ideas, opinions and conceptions which are manifestations of these images – if you understand this, you will experience this unusual peace, which is not caused, which is not forced, the creative emptiness in which only reality is able to enter, the emptiness which Eckhart called The Virgin Mary State, the state in which God is able to give birth to the Son.

But reality can't come to that, which will become something, which strive after something, the will to power, the absent. It is only able to come to that, which is being, that, which understand what you are, the present. Then you will see that reality is not something afar, the unknown is not far away, it is in what you are. Just like the solution to a problem is lying in the problem itself, thus is reality to find in what you are. If you can understand this, you will know truth.

### ***B. The absent and the present***

The relationship is the mirror, in which you can discover yourself. Without the relationship you are nothing. To be is to be in relationship, which is the actual life. You only live in relationship, otherwise you don't live, life is then without meaning. So it is not because you - as Descartes says: "*I think, therefore I am!*" - that you live. Nor do you live because you produce yourself, as Nietzsche, Sartre, Rorty and Foucault say. You live because you are in the relationship, and it is the lack of ability to understand this, which causes conflict.

The reason why, that there is no understanding of the relationship, is, that we use the relationship to achieve something, become something, to be remoulded. We use the instrumental reason on human relationships, where it only should be used on technical relationships. It is the thinking's dangerous course, the course of the will to power. The communicative reason has vanished.

But the relationship is the means to expose yourself, because the relationship is to be. It is the actual life. Without the relationship you don't live. In order to be able to understand yourself you must understand the relationship. The relationship is therefore a philosophical sparring partner, a mirror in which you can see yourself. To

understand this is to use the communicative reason, which in the context of art of life is a meditative-existential reason.

The mirror of the relationship can either distort or expose the truth about yourself. Most of us see in the relationship, in the mirror, that, we preferably want to see, but we don't see that which is real. We will preferably idealize or escape, and rather live in the future than seeing the relationship in which we are in the moment.

In section 168 in Pascal's *Pensées*, Pascal makes account for, how the present only is used by the past as a passage to the future, and therefore the relationship – which is something, which is in the moment, and not in past and future – becomes meaningless, wherefore there arises conflict. Conflict arises because we use the present as a passage to the future or the past.

The mind is a result of the past, which is based on time and its images. Without the past there is no thought. But the thought, which is a result of the past, can't understand the present, since it only uses the present as a passage to the future. The future is in this way always a becoming. As Pascal claims, then the present is therefore never seized, though the understanding exclusively is lying herein.

As long as there is becoming there is conflict, and becoming is always the past, which uses the present to achieve something, to control, remould, and acquire; that is: the will to power. Becoming is purely and simply the thoughtprocess, which goes in a wrong course. Time and the thoughtprocess are therefore also, as Pascal proposes, one and the same.

This becoming is the absent. You can either be absent in the bygone or the coming time. The past or the future sucks life out of the present. Memories, plans or projects are transformed into reality, while reality becomes emptiness. The thought makes itself independent in relation with your reality, and it becomes the whole of reality. The unreality in this consists in, that you then only really exists in the hope about a richer future, or in the dream about a lost past.

Time will in other words not be able to solve our problems. On the contrary time creates problems. In the Now there is no problems. A problem arises because the thought removes itself from the Now. You compare with earlier, or you hope and desire something else. The thought slides off from the Now's facts, the existential condition. And the Now's facts, seen from the thinking's past or future, can become a problem.

Thinking never belongs in the Now. To think is to remove the mind from the Now, the present. The thinking is therefore the absent. Only meditative-existential you can be in the Now. You can say, that meditation is a quality of the Now. In meditation - the passive listening presence - there therefore doesn't exist any problems, only facts. You only understand in the Now – not tomorrow and not yesterday – always in the Now. In this way understanding is timeless. You can't understand the next life and next year. To think is to remove the mind from the Now.

If you choose to be in the thoughts you either are ahead in the future or behind in the past. You either think about the past in memories, sorrows, traumatic bindings, bad conscience, associations etc., or you think about the future in plans, hopes, longings, wishes, conjectures, worries. Totally seen then the thinking's past and future produces the images in time, a perspective on yourself and the world, the source of unreality and absence. The essence in being outside time is eternal present and is not able to be thought. As Kierkegaard says:

"When that to exist not is able to be thought, and the existing person yet is thinking, what does this mean then? It means, that he thinks momentarily, he thinks ahead and he thinks behind. The absolute continuity can his thinking not achieve". (*Finishing Unscientific Postscript*)

Only meditative-existential you can be in the Now. The passive listening presence is meditation. Meditation is to see completely with the heart and the mind; that is to say: with the whole of your essence. The human essence is therefore meditation. Meditation is the self-forgetful openness for, and absorption in life itself. The meaning of life is therefore to express the human essence. Human essence is therefore an appearance-form of the Now. Why? Because the essence in the human life is meditation. Total existential presence in the Now is meditation. The essence is therefore one and the same with the existence; and this realized oneness is precisely meditation, or the wholeness of the observer and the observed.

So becoming and being is two altogether different conditions. Becoming is continuous, and that which is continuous is always binding, clutching, stagnating. Interrelations are binding if they are continuous and habitual. If a relationship only is satisfaction, then it only is a habitual relationship. In the moment it ceases being a habitual relationship, then there is a new quality in such a relationship, and if you enter deeper into it, you will see, that where there is continuance, habit or stagnation, there is a thought-process, which is moving from continuance to continuance, and in this process there is always friction and pain. If you as a lifeartist doesn't understand this continuance, which is becoming, the absent, then there is no being. Being can only be understood when becoming ceases.



Self-assertion in any form (vanity, ambition, arrogance, joy of power) – whether it is for the sake of the group, the individual salvation, or the spiritual realization – is the same as delayed action. The desire, or the will to power, is always aimed at the future. The desire after becoming something else than what you are, is absent in the Now. Becoming is the absent.

But the present, the Now, is of greater meaning than tomorrow. In the Now all time is present, and to understand the Now is to be free from time. Time and sorrow is continued in becoming something. There is no being in becoming something. To be is always now, and to be is the highest form of transformation. Becoming is nothing else than modified continuation of the past, it is the eternal recurrence of the old, and this recurrence is the absent.

A radical transformation only takes place in the present, in that to be in the Now. But there is no being if there is a struggle for becoming something. The struggle for becoming something, the will to power, is the absent, and herein there is resistance and denial, desire and resignation.

Becoming is the thoughtprocess, and both Nietzsche, Foucault and Rorty are seeing this in the image of art, as a creative process, but they don't come out of the intellect, and confuse the thinking, the intellectual training, with the whole of the human unfolding and life itself. They see the whole of the human unfolding as a creative process, which by will can be controlled; that is: controlled by the thinking. Life is seen as a work of art, which Man, by will, can model as he wants to.

When you as a lifeartist understand the question about the creative activity, you will perhaps be able to understand what people mean by striving after something. Is the creative action a result of an effort, and are we aware about the moments where we create? Or is the creative action a feeling of complete self-forgetfulness, a feeling, which arises when nothing intervenes disruptive, when you not at all feel the movement of the thought, when there only is an altogether rich and complete being? Is the creative condition a result of drudgery, of struggle, of conflict, of an effort? We have all noticed that when we do something with great ease and quickly, then it costs no effort, then there not at all is talk about any struggle; but because our existence in the main consists of a line of conflicts and struggles, we can't imagine a condition, a being, where all conflict have ended.

In order to, that you as lifeartist, can understand this being - where there isn't any conflict, this condition of creative existence – it is absolutely necessary to understand the whole problem of your own effort. By effort I understand a human being's

striving after becoming something; that is: the will to power, the philosophical will to control and form truth, reality and happiness.

So action as we know it, is in reality a reaction, it is an incessantly effort with the purpose of becoming something; that is to say: a denial of, an effort of avoiding what you are. When you try to avoid what you are, then this is because you confuse the Now's fact with that problem, which the thinking's past and future thinks the fact is. This is an unreal condition, a feeling of loss and emptiness, of insufficiency. And that is precisely what you are, the lived despair. But when you are the emptiness present without choosing, without condemning or justifying, then the understanding of what you are will imply action, and this action is the creative being.

To stop becoming something is to stop accumulating in philosophical sense. Not to accumulate, but to die every day, minutely, is timeless being. The mystics call it a kind of death. The Stoics trained themselves in being present in the Now by philosophizing over the meaning of death in their lives. To philosophize became in that way, in the Stoics, a way of learning how to die. An example of this is the Stoic Horace, the man behind the expression "Carpe diem!" (Seize the day!).

We have no more right to interpret this as an obsession with death, or morbid complacency, than when, in the movie *Dead Poets Society*, Robin Williams makes his students study a picture of the school's old boys. Williams' character is trying to make his charges understand the meaning of carpe diem, the irreplaceable value of each instant of life, and it is with this goal in mind that he emphasizes that all the faces in the class photography, so young and alive, are now long dead. In that way he is a kind of art of life-teacher, a teaching, which unfortunately the school's ideological instrumental reason later succeeded in getting spoiled.

As long as there is a desire after achieving something, and the conflicts, which are a result of this, there will always be anxiety of death.

To be the facts, the existential condition in the Now, present in passive listening, is precisely to be, and this is reality. The passive listening presence is meditation, and in meditation there flows life and energy back from past and future, back to the Now. The energy, the life, which was invested in sorrows and bindings, plans and problems, flows into, and fills the Now, increases the intensity and the consciousness in the Now.

In the happy reality being and reality coincide with each other, essence and existence is an oneness. In reality Man is himself in his being. His being embraces and carries him, and he embraces and fills his being. Reality is an existence, which lives itself.

This being is wisdom, what will say the Now, and therefore the fact. It is a being that has a naturalness in itself. It is a being, which opens itself in and for itself. It is the existential openness as being, the openness for the relationship; that is to say: for own being, and therewith also for the being of everything else.

Reality can't come to that, which is becoming, the absent which strives; it can only come to that, which is being, to that, which understands what you are, the present. As Kierkegaard says, then the present is the timeless, or the eternal, and also the fullness.

### *C. Alonebeing*

When you see the thoughtprocess, the process it is to become something, the will to power, when you really are it present, without feeling tempted, without making resistance, without justifying or condemning it, then you discover that the presence is able to receive the new, and that the new never is a sense impression; therefore it can never be recognized or re-experienced. When Dante - after his laborious journey through Hell and the Purgatory finally has reached Paradise and is looking into the light-wealth of eternity - then his sight is rising so high that language can't contain it, nor is the memory able to maintain the observed. Dante compares it with the one who has a sight in his dreams and later doesn't remember anything: only an imprint of the feeling in the dream is left, a dripping of the sight's sweetness in the heart.

It is a condition, a being where the creative is coming unrequested and without the help of memory; and this is the reality. This condition of experience is the wholeness of the observer and the observed.

The tree, the flowers and the stars can't be experienced by an inner observer; they are the actual movement of the experience when there no inner observer is, when you in self-forgetful way are open for, and engaged by the observed, when the experience is characterised by fulfilment and middle. Then there doesn't exist any discrepancy, any displacement and reflections between the observer and the observed; there is no time, no emptiness and loss, in which the thought can give rise to itself. The thought is there never, but there is being. This condition of being can't be made into an object of thinking; it is nothing you can achieve. The inner thinker and calculator must stop evaluating. Only when this happens, there is being. And in this movement of silence does the timeless exist.

The timeless is freedom. Freedom is the absolute good, and freedom is the beauty of the daily existence. To be alive is be alive in this freedom, and without it there can't be love, because it is openness itself. Everything exists, everything has its being in this freedom. It is everywhere and nowhere. It has no limits. It demands that you as a

lifeartist die from everything you know; that is to say: die from your perspective on life, and don't wait until tomorrow. This freedom is the timelessness, happiness and love.

The mind, which is silent, and not made silent, always experiences this silence. Then the thought, the word, is within the silence and not outside it. The mind is in this silence completely in peace, and it is a silence, which isn't shaped. Since silence isn't saleable, doesn't have any value on the market, and isn't usable, it has a quality of purity and alonebeing. This being alone is not the unhappy loneliness.

To be alone is not about isolating yourself in your relationships, on the contrary. But to be alone is to reject the moral of society, of ideologies of all kinds, not to adapt yourself to such. It is - in your opinion formation, and in your identity formation - to reject striving towards being something else than what you are, to reject imitating others, and being a slave of their ideas, where your actions are characterized by irresoluteness and doubt.

Only in this rejection, in this alonebeing, you can be in a true relationship. It is the alonebeing in the I-Thou relationship; the I-Thou relationship between you and the Otherness, which is something carrying, something granted, something, which is greater than yourself; something, which you can characterize as an absolute Otherness in relation to the created world. It is this instance, which leads you out to the things in an opening, self-forgetful and involving way, like in a painting by Chagall. This power exists in the Now's relationship with everything. It is life itself.

So the self-forgetful alonebeing is spiritual because the lifefulment, which life itself contains, is so absolute, so complete, that there herein is something eternal and endless.

So if you are present in the Now, actively and involved from the awareness, the innermost in yourself, and from the heartfulness - that is to say: totally, with the whole of yourself, and therefore in self-forgetful freedom and world absorption - then you will experience eternity and infinity. You will experience the true essence of nature, which is the Otherness.

Only in this relationship you can be yourself in your opinion formation and identity formation, live in compliance with your own essence, and thereby achieve authenticity, autonomy, decisiveness and power of action.

It is the loneliness, which is absolute being; it is innocent, rich, complete. The oak tree has no existence apart from being itself. In the same way is this being alone, and

only in this alonebeing Man can be himself. You are alone, as the star, as the flowers, and there doesn't happen any evaluation of the purity of the condition, no evaluation of its immensity. You can only truly contact the surrounding world when there is alonebeing. To be alone is not to deny yourself this or that, or to fence the Ego. Alonebeing means purification of all motives, of all the huntings of the will to power, of all goals. Alonebeing is not produced by the thought. You can't wish to be alone. Such a wish is only an escape from the pain over not being able to co-operate with life itself.

The unhappy loneliness, with its anxiety and pain, is isolation, the Ego's inevitable act. This isolationprocess develops, whether it is extensive or narrow, confusion, conflicts and sorrow. Isolation can never give rise to alonebeing; the one condition must give way for the other. The unhappy loneliness is isolation, whereas the happy loneliness is complete self-forgetful openness for, and absorption in life itself. Only this is freedom.

That which is alone is flexible and therefore persistent. Only those who are alone can co-operate with that which is without cause, the immense. In the one who is alone, life is timeless; in the one who is alone, there is no death. The one who is alone can never cease with being, because alonebeing is life itself, the eternal flowing alonebeing of life.