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DREAM
YOGA

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Dedication:

Soli Deo Gloria

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Introduction

The Good, the True and the Beautiful, is the Source, which rays in all religions, though often faint, through countless thought-distortions. But through history there have always existed rare individuals, who experienced an inner transformation, and therewith realized that in themselves, which all religions aim towards. The various descriptions of this, basically same, indescribable ground-realization, could, in a spiritual practice, be:

- Oneness with the divine
- The ultimate fulfilment
- The essence of consciousness
- The naked consciousness
- The enlightened consciousness
- The Source of love

But in order to describe this non-conceptual truth in a more broad sense, they thereafter used their own religions as frame of reference.

Through some of these men and women there has in all great religions arisen a spiritual practice, which represented, not only a rediscovery, but in some cases an intensification of the light of an original teaching, universal and common to all mankind. Thus Gnosticism and Mysticism arised in the early and medieval Christianity, Sufism in Islam, Hasidism and Cabbala in Judaism, Advaita Vedanta in Hinduism, Zen and Dzogchen in Buddhism.

Unlike the established religions their teaching was laying its emphasis on realization and inner transformation. And it is this, which constitute the philosophical element in the spiritual practice.

In this book I will, like in my previous book, **Meditation as an Art of Life**, make much of involving the concept of philosophy, for thereby to explain the essential role this concept has in the meditative process. This is because, that the concept of meditation, with the progress of psychology in the Western countries, far too often is being psychologized, with a lot of distortions, and misleadings as result. The psychologizing of the meditation-concept itself - that is to say: the psychologizing of the philosophical aspects of the meditation-concept - is namely a reductionism; that is: a distortion of human nature.

Philosophy has in this way often been spoiled, or oftentimes people simply no longer understand its importance.

So where philosophy is implicit in the teachings of the great meditation-masters, then I will in this book make it quite explicit, and explain what it consists in.

The spiritual practice, regardless what religion it has as frame of reference, is, as Eckhart Tolle emphasizes, in its nature iconoclastic. It is about eliminating the countless layers of distorting conceptualizations and mental belief-structures (thought-distortions), and therefore it also were, in most cases, looked on with suspicion, and often hostility, by the established religious hierarchies.

There is namely a difference between spirituality and religion. You are not becoming spiritual by having a system of faith – a set of thoughts, which people see as the absolute truth – regardless the nature of these dogmas. Yes, the more we identify ourselves with our thoughts (time and dogmas), the more we cut ourselves off from our inner spiritual dimension, which lies in the Now. The identification with the thoughts creates a veil, or rather many veils and dreams, illusions and self-deceits. Altogether a kind of dream-labyrinth of ignorance and suffering. Many "religious" people are fixed on this plane. They put equality sign between truth and idea. They have created an ideology.

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 example 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 lay out in the

future, and that the end therefore justifies the means. 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.

So the spiritual practice is about eliminating the countless layers of distorting conceptualizations and mental belief-structures (thought-distortions), which cut people off from their inner spiritual dimension, and throw them into a dream-labyrinth of ignorance and suffering. And this is precisely what philosophy is all about. A spiritual practice will altogether seem deeply anarchistic and provocative to any kind of common accepted thinking and ideology.

A spiritual practice is about going out on a journey, a journey from the land of sleep, through the dream-labyrinth of life, yes, even of death, towards the land of awakening.

The spiritual practice can be said to consist partially of meditation, partially of Dream Yoga, though this is not explicitly explained in the different spiritual practices. I have decided to call this book Dream Yoga in order to explain, that the most important aspect of meditation is also to practise in states where people normally would say meditation is not possible, for example in dreams, crises, during illness, psychosis, in relation to problems of society, and during the death process.

Meditation and Dream Yoga are two sides of the same thing. If you nevertheless should try to discriminate, then you about meditation can say, that the three aspects of meditation are relaxfullness, awareness and heartfullness. These three aspects are trained through supporting exercises such as relaxation, Hara practice, as well as Tonglen practice.

In Dream Yoga you can say, that the day practice of Dream Yoga consists - besides the continuous exercises of meditation - in understanding the nature of thought-distortions; in seeing their illusory nature, in seeing how they create your reality; that is: to realize, that a lot of your waking life also has character of a dream (the night practice of Dream Yoga is about writing your dreams down, and practising in conditions of lucidity, as well as astrality, if such states should occur).

Dream Yoga is in short about practising meditation in so-called Bardo-states, intermediate states such as dreams, illness, psychosis, crises, illusions, thought-distortions, unreality, death. The Wisdom-traditions (specially in the Tibetan tradition) say, that if you are able to meditate in such states, then this will raise your spiritual development much more than meditation in “normal” states.

Realizing the illusory aspect of the waking life is also to realize the illusory nature of the collective Zeitgeist; that is: the ruling ideology, which today is spreading globally. The most common words for this ideology are relativism and subjectivism. I will therefore also investigate this ruling ideology, and its collective manifestations in for example Consumer-Capitalism, management theory, coaching, science and New Age.

In this book I will try to draw a map over the spiritual journey through the dreamlabyrinth of life and death. In this map I will show both dangers and pitfalls, as well as pathfinders and trail markers. The map is in that way intended to function as a help, so that people can find the dreamtracks and songlines in the artwork of their own spiritual lives.

This book is the second in a series of three about my teaching, which I call *Meditation as an Art of Life*. The first was called **Meditation as an Art of Life – a basic reader**. The third will be called **A Portrait of a Lifeartist**.

I will emphasize, that I am writing about these issues as a philosopher (a lover of wisdom, one who seeks wisdom, but who has not yet found it) – and *not* a sage (guru/enlightened master). I have experiences with a spiritual crisis though, and it is this, combined with intense studies of what the wisdomtraditions have to say about these issues, that inspire me to write. My writings are also part of my philosophical diary, and therefore my own realizationwork.

I will also emphasize, that my teaching is supposed to help people develop their own teaching, to become a light for themselves, where they now happens to stand. My teaching should therefore not be treated as an authority/conclusion, but only as “a finger pointing at the moon.”

The book consists of articles, which are written independtly of each other. There will therefore come some repetitions of the same themes. There will also come some repetitions from my first book. I have chosen not to change this, partly because the repetitions (shown in different contexts) can work as support for understanding, partly because this book then can function independently of my first book.

Finally I will, below, show some examples of the most common thought-distortions, because the elimination of thought-distortions, as mentioned, is the primary goal in Dream Yoga.

Examples of the most common thought-distortions

Dichotom thinking: which means that you arrange the surrounding world in a pair of opposites (for example life and death, past and future, subject and object, good and evil, justification and condemnation, love and hate, power and powerlessness, perfect and fiasco). This is a degraded and one-sided division, which happens when the Ego, through evaluations, splits the more universal images of time in pieces. These images are in themselves a kind of syntheses, because they always include the opposite pole. But the dichotomous thinking expels the opposite pole, removes it, and by doing so you are coming to live on postulates, without asking or searching for contra-conceptions and alternatives. Dichotom thinking – or thinking in opposites – is the central thought-distortion. All the below thought-distortions arise on the background of dichotom thinking.

Selective abstraction: selections and exclusions - which means that you, usually unconscious, choose to perceive special parts of reality and leave out other.

Generalization: which means that you expect, that something, which has taken place in one situation, also takes place in other situations, without asking or searching for contra-conceptions and alternatives.

Personalizing: which means that you see independent incidents, which happen in the surrounding world, as related to yourself. It is to take something personally, without asking or searching for contra-conceptions and alternatives.

Enlargement and reduction of elements in the surrounding world: To make a problem much larger than it is in reality, or to make the number of your life-possibilities much lesser than they are in reality. You overestimate or understate - exaggerate or understate, without asking or searching for contra-conceptions and alternatives.

Catastrophe-thinking: Unrealistic thoughts that are being connected with a harmless fact. For example when you under a dizziness-attack think: "I am going to die", "I am going mad". Or when you receive a bill a bit larger than expected and you think: "Everything is lost". Catastrophe-thinking is out of proportions with reality, and you don't ask, or seek for contra-conceptions and alternatives. Follows often from black and white thinking, and is closely connected with anxiety-development.

Attribution: Misleading way to explain incidents. One-sided ascribing the reason for, or the responsibility for, negative incidents, to yourself, or to other people or circumstances, without including other elements in the situation. Is closely connected with sense of guilt or anger.

Black and white thinking: To classify all situations, incidents or things, as an example of one of two extremes, when the facts actual are, that there between the two extremes exists a complete spectrum of other possible viewpoints. Black and white thinking is a variation of false dichotomy. Black and white thinking arises when you try to get the world to fit into very simple prejudiced categories. Words characterized by black and white thinking are words such as *must, shall, never, always*, as for example "all of it is hopeless", "it cannot possibly succeed", "I have to be better than the others", "nobody likes me". Often the most basic assumptions about yourself and the world, are based on black and white thinking. Black and white thinking is thinking in extremes, and leads to a false and imbalanced way of life. You come to live on postulates, without asking or searching for contra-conceptions and alternatives.

False dichotomy: A misleading conception of possible alternatives. A dichotomy is a division in two alternatives. Often seen in the expressions Either/or – If/then, as for example: "Either you are with us, or you are against us" – "if I'm not always a success, then I'm a fiasco". A false dichotomy appears when somebody sets up a dichotomy in such a way, that it looks like, that there only are two possible conclusions, when the facts actual are, that there are many other alternatives which not are being mentioned. Many inappropriate rules of living and life-strategies are based on false dichotomy. False dichotomy is thinking in extremes, and leads to a false and imbalanced way of life.

Arbitrary inference: which means, that you make a causal linking of factors, which is accidental and misleading.

Thought reading: You are convinced, that you know, what others think about you. You don't investigate if you are right by asking or searching for contra-conceptions and alternatives. Without deeper reflection you just conclude, that others for example are critical.

Rhetoric or subjective argumentation: an unethical way to convince others about your opinions, because it doesn't show, what in reel sense is appropriate or inappropriate about a case, but manipulates with it. Contains some of the following elements: innuendoes, distortions, generalizations, over-/understatements, sarcasm, satire, irony, postulates, emotional affections, coloured diction, choices and exclusions, subjective style. - **objective argumentation** is therefore a more ethical way to convince others about your opinions, because it actually shows, what in reel sense is appropriate or inappropriate about a case. Contains some of the following

elements: summary or abstract, information, description, reasons, concrete diction, nuanced objective statement.

Wishful thinking : To think, that because it would be nice, if something was true, then it actual must be true. This thoughtpattern is very common, and very seductive because it allows us to avoid unpleasant truths. But it is a form of self-deceit. Wishful thinking for example often ignores the possibility of plausible alternative explanations on exactly the same observations.

Prejudice: a belief held without good reason or consideration of the evidence for or against its being true. Philosophy – that is: rationality and critical thinking – 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 (see wishful thinking); however, even making small inroads into prejudice can transform the world for the better.

Ad hominem move: A Latin phrase meaning “to the person”. The devious move in debate, where you shift attention from the point in question to some non-relevant aspect of the person making it. Calling someone’s statement *ad hominem* is always a reproach. This reproach involves the claim that the aspects of the arguer’s personality or behaviour, which have become the focus of discussion, are irrelevant to the point being discussed. Often ad hominem move is simply based on prejudice. It can also be a rhetorical move. Ad hominem move is a very widespread, and problematic, move among psychologists and psychotherapists, who can’t limit their theories to clients, wherefore it can be very difficult to have a normal discussion with these people.

Philosophical Practice

Philosophical Practice is a new alternative form of counseling to 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.

It is a rebirth of something very old, perhaps close to the authentic origin of philosophy, for example 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.

The idea about Philosophical Practice, in its current form, originally came from the German philosopher Gerd B. Achenbach. The first of May 1981 he opened, as the first, a Philosophical Counseling-practice. In 1982 he founded the German Society of Philosophical Practice, and ever since the phenomenon has spread all over the world.

In 2002 the Danish Society of Philosophical Practice was founded and established by a circle of philosophers, psychologists, idea-historians and people of education, with the purpose to create a professional forum in Denmark for development, research and information about the Philosophical Practice. This happens through lectures, courses, network, and others activities, which can promote the understanding and interest in Philosophical Practice, as well as the society has plans about continuing education and certification of philosophical practitioners in Denmark.

However there doesn't exist an *actual* education to philosophical practitioner. But in order to ensure the professional competence, and not to become mixed with the fount of educations, which is found in the alternative therapy market, most philosophical practitioners agree, that a minimum requirement to a philosophical practitioner is a MA in philosophy or history of ideas.

In addition to this it is possible to take an education as *Master in counseling*, where Philosophical Counseling is included as one of the modules. This education is offered by Denmark's Pedagogical University. One of the pioneers of this education is associate professor at DPU, Finn Thorbjørn Hansen, who also is the first in Denmark who has involved Philosophical Counseling in an academical treatise: *Det filosofiske Liv – et dannelsesideal for eksistenspædagogikken* (Gyldendal 2002)

The relationship between science and alternative health care/consultation is a subject, which is very popular for the time being. In this connection Philosophical Practice is an extremely interesting phenomenon, partially because it features many of the elements which the educations in the alternative therapy market also seek to implicate, partially because there at the universities (especially at DPU) are being worked with developing Philosophical Practice as a serious and scientifically well-founded way of counseling. However this still happens in a rather academical way, and in Denmark there are still very few practising philosophical practitioners.

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 show differences and similarities in relation to psychotherapy and religious counseling. I will then end the article with a description of The Philosophical Café, which includes the same elements on group-level.

Philosophy as an art of life

In Philosophical Counseling philosophy is understood as a way of life, where you strive after wisdom and happiness; that is to say: where you practise a certain realized and clarified way of life. In this it differs from the academical philosophy, where the work with philosophy is a purely theoretical activity, included the so-called practical philosophy.

Traditions where the concept of philosophy slides in one with a certain existential form of training and therapy, is both found in the East and in the West. From the East can be mentioned Indian and Buddhist philosophy, Taoism and Zen Buddhism. From the West can be mentioned Greek and Roman philosophy, and the whole tradition of mysticism within Christianity, Judaism and Islam.

A good introduction to this is Aldous Huxley's book *The Perennial Philosophy*. A more academical introduction to the understanding of philosophy as a way of life, is found in Pierre Hadot's *Philosophy as a Way of Life - Spiritual Exercises from Socrates to Foucault*.

Even though the modern concept of Philosophical Counseling primarily goes back to the Stoics and Socrates, then the great philosophers within all the different wisdomtraditions always have sought to pass on an art of life of a more or less philosophical kind. They namely asked philosophical questions - that is: *not* in an intellectual way as in the academical philosophy, and *not* as that to repeat a mantra - no, they asked philosophical questions in a meditative-existential way, as the wordless silence within a strong, existential wonder. As Aristotle said, then philosophy begins with wonder. We all know the wonder we can feel when we look at the stars, or when we are confronted with all the suffering in the world. This wonder fills us with a silence, in which all thoughts, explanations and interpretations withers away. It is in this silence we ask ourselves the great, philosophical questions, open inwards and outwards, without words, without evaluations.

The wordless silence within the existential wonder is the same as asking philosophical questions in a meditative-existential way. And it is this philosophical questioning which can be the beginning of a deep examination of Man and reality – a lifelong, philosophical voyage of discovery towards the Source of life: the Good, the True and the Beautiful.

However most people lose this silence, and get satisfied with explanations and interpretations. That is the difference between the great philosophers and ordinary people. The great philosophers had a strong longing after something inexpressible, after something which couldn't be satisfied by explanations and interpretations – perhaps a longing after awakening – or after realization. With the whole of the body, with life and blood, with soul and spirit, with brain and with heart, they asked into, and were investigating themselves and life. They asked questions to everything, and were investigating it in a meditative way, as if it was something completely new. Simply because this philosophical questioning and inquiry itself constitutes an absolute central meditation technique, which opens the consciousness in towards the Source. In other words they used philosophical questions as universal coans. All other spiritual exercises were in fact only used to support this.

The counseling course

Through dialogues, meditation texts on philosophical questions, and supporting exercises, Philosophical Counseling helps the guest to ask philosophical questions in this meditative-existential way (in Philosophical Counseling people are seen as *guests*, not *clients*).

Examples of philosophical questions and supporting exercises:

Philosophical questions:

1. Who am I?
2. Why do I exist?
3. What can I know?
4. What do I ought to do or not to do?
5. What can I hope for?
6. How ought my attitude to war be?
7. How ought we live in community?
8. What makes it possible for us to understand each other without language and with language both to agree and disagree?
9. What is a human being?
10. What is the relationship between falling in love and love itself?
11. What are feelings?

12. What are suffering and happiness?
13. Why is there altogether anything?
14. Is there a meaning of life?
15. What are dreams?
16. What do supernatural experiences consist in, and how ought my attitude to the supernatural be?
17. Is there a God?
18. Is there a life before or after death?

Supporting exercises:

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

The supporting exercises are only meant to give the guest the calmness, which is necessary so that he or she can acquire the ideas and concepts of the philosophical questions in an every day self-inquiring practice. The exercises shall therefore only be seen as a support to the central meditation technique: to ask philosophical questions.

A longer Philosophical Counseling course is a specific way (and the best way) to pass on philosophy as an art of life. This gradually builds up the guest's deeper understanding, both by repeated dialogues, by repeated meditative readings of texts on philosophical questions, and by repeated work with supporting exercises. This gives the guest a larger and larger insight into the possibilities of deepening his outlook on life and of the splendour of flowing with the stream of life.

The two central concepts in Philosophical Counseling are ignorance and suffering. An important part of the opening in towards the Source, is the realization of what basically hinders this opening. Unless the guest knows, for example the Ego's, fundamental *nature*, he will not be able to recognize it, and it will deceive him to identify himself with it again and again. But when the guest realizes the hindrances in himself (the ignorance), it is the Source itself - the Good, the True and the Beautiful – which makes the realization possible.

The counseling is not guru-centric and can't succeed without the guest's own active participation. The insights are the guest's own, as well as the relief from false conceptions and restrictive assumptions.

Philosophical Counseling is in other words 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.

Even though these masters give answers to questions, then these answers therefore are not conclusions to anything, as you for example see it in politics or religion. The answers are only tools for the questioner's own self-inquiry. That will say, that they are a help discovering the questions'/problems' implicit *philosophical* questions, and investigating them in a meditative-existential way. And this is the central about Philosophical Counseling. This also means, that Philosophical Counseling is not a philosophy-class (teaching history of philosophy). And if there are involved answers, which other philosophers or theories have given, then it is only with the purpose of the self-inquiring practice.

You may say, that Philosophical Counseling follows the teaching that *Truth is a pathless land*. In that way Philosophical Counseling helps the guest to develop spiritual by developing his own teaching - to become a light for himself, to become his own teacher where he happens to stand – and at the same time has the philosophical aspects of the spiritual practice with him, as it is the core in all wisdom traditions.

The method

Within Philosophical Counseling there is used a lot of different methods. To get a survey over the arsenal of these methods Finn Thorbjørn Hansen divides the theories into three main groups:

- 1) A *rationalistic* method, which borders up to Cognitive Psychology. This method is for example used by the Dutch philosopher and philosophical counselor A.P. Veening.
- 2) A *life-philosophical* method, which borders up to Zen Buddhism and Transpersonal Psychology. This method is for example used by the Israelian philosophers and philosophical counselors Ran Lahav and Rachel B. Blass.
- 3) A *life-aesthetic* method, which borders up to Existential Psychology. This method is for example used by the Israelian philosopher Shlomit C. Schuster.

Personally I work with what I call the 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 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.
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 to the ignorance about the Source of life. Ignorance is again the cause of suffering. In this way Philosophical Counseling is a practice, which helps the guest to correct this malfunction.

In that way you can conversely, when you have helped the guest in progress with asking philosophical questions, 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.

Coherently I call my method *Meditation as an Art of Life*.

Philosophical Counseling as an alternative to psychotherapy

It is especially Shlomit C. Schuster, who has adopted the characteristic viewpoint, that Philosophical Counseling also - and perhaps even better – can manage and help people with psychological problems.

Wherein is then the difference?

The Stoics saw philosophy as a therapy for the soul, a therapy, which cures us for our illnesses by teaching us a radical new way of life. You must namely start where you are, and pass through a considerable quantum of existential stuff, which is the cause of suffering. All wisdomtraditions start with suffering as a fundamental condition common to all mankind, as for example in the Four Holy Truths in Buddhism: 1) suffering 2) the cause of suffering (the ignorance) 3) the end of suffering 4) the Eightfold Path (the spiritual practice). And all wisdomtraditions use philosophical questions as central meditation technique. A kind of philosophical therapy.

To ask questions in this way has nothing to do with the enquire techniques they use within psychotherapy and coaching. It is absolutely central, that Philosophical Counseling is using *philosophical* questions, because such questions ask for what is common to all mankind, the universal – what you could call the *essence* of Man and reality. This is because that the Source, the essential in Man and reality, precisely is something common to all mankind, or universal. Psychotherapy and coaching are only able to ask after the personal (or after content), and can therefore never open the consciousness in towards the Source (the essence), and answer the problems of lifeviews and views of values.

In Philosophical Counseling you neither try, as in psychotherapy, to encourage to express – and hereby live over again - negative feelings. Firstly this is because, that Philosophical Counseling believes, that negative feelings have a thought-created background, which you in psychotherapy therefore not is coming to terms with. Secondly it is due to, that both the prompting to express your negative feelings, and that to express them, is ethical questionable.

This doesn't mean, that the importance of the feelings is neglected in Philosophical Counseling. On the contrary. But you ask in another way: What *are* feelings? What is the *essence* of the feelings?

And, as mentioned, it neither means that you don't have to confront this dark, existential stuff. On the contrary. But Philosophical Counseling doesn't open up for *the contents* of this stuff. This is because, that Philosophical Counseling considers this stuff as rooted in time, and therefore not only in the personal history, but also in the collective and universal history. To open up for this content would be as opening

up for an endless deep of suffering, and create a spiritual crisis. No, what Philosophical Counseling confronts, is *the essence* of this content.

According to Philosophical Counseling, then psychotherapy shortly said doesn't come to terms with the actual causes of the problems. In that way Philosophical Counseling seeks to completely transform the negative feelings, partially by, through realization work, restructuring the thought-created background, partially by, for example the practise of the heart meditation (ethical practice). Focus is in other words not on the feelings, but on realization and ethics. In this lies the philosophical element.

Philosophical Counseling is shortly said not a treating discipline, but a pedagogic discipline, where the guest is an active participant, not a passive patient. If the guest is in need of treatment, and doesn't have that necessary energy, which Philosophical Counseling requires, then he is referred to doctors or psychologists, who have a qualifying education behind them. There is for example not referred to psychotherapists, who are not educated psychologists.

However this will not be able to heal the fundamental existential causes behind the problems. To this Philosophical Counseling is needed.

Of this follows, that the therapeutic element in Philosophical Counseling refers to the guest's own effort, the guest's own work with the philosophical question's self-inquiring practice. In Philosophical Counseling the guest is his own therapist.

Philosophical Counseling as an alternative to religious counseling

In this way Philosophical Counseling therefore more reminds about religious counseling. They both have focus on the guest's convictions and ideas, and see these as a *condition* for feelings, not as a *result* of feelings. They are both engaged in the moral and ethical aspects of the guest's convictions, and specially in the guest's understanding of *the meaning of life*. Moreover they both involve the spiritual area.

What is then the difference between Philosophical Counseling and religious counseling?

If you for example take the great religions, then there within these religions arised what I call *philosophical* oriented therapy-forms. Thus Gnosticism and Mysticism arised in the early and Medieval Christianity, Sufism in Islam, Hasidism and Cabbala in Judaism, Advaita Vedanta in Hinduism, and Zen and Dzogchen in Buddhism.

Unlike the established religions then these philosophical therapies presuppose no religious doctrine, ideology, myth or conception (or psychological theory/management theory). They put their emphasis on realization and inner transformation. And the masters within these philosophical therapies are precisely using a philosophical kind of counseling, rather than a traditional religious counseling.

That means, that the silent assumptions, things that are taken for granted, and premises within the religions, themselves are facing examination in Philosophical Counseling. Is there coherence in it? It is self-contradictory? What about one's way of being, is it self-circling or self-forgetful? And what about the autonomy and the power of action? Are you yourself or dependent on others, etc.

The answers in Philosophical Counseling are after all, as mentioned, not conclusions to anything (as they are within the established religions), but only tools for the guest's own self-inquiry. As the philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein says in his Tractatus, then the words only are a ladder, which you can use to rise up above them with. Afterwards you throw it away. In the same way they say in Zen, that the words only are a finger pointing at the moon. You must never confuse the finger with the moon. That, whereof you cannot speak, about that you must be silent.

And then you have stepped into the wordless silence.

The Philosophical Café

As mentioned in the start, then The Philosophical Café includes the same elements as Philosophical Counseling, but on group-level. So The Philosophical Café is a workshop also based on that concept of philosophy which in particularly the Stoics and Socrates had, namely that philosophy is an Art of Life, or a lifetransforming exercise - an idea also to be found in other wisdom traditions, however more known under what traditionally is understood as meditation.

In this way The Philosophical Café has a great relevance in a time with a lot of stress, but also because it is a time where people more and more asks for meaning and coherence in life. This does not only apply for the individual. Within the education- and health sector, as well as within company- and organization development they progressively talk about ethics, value clarification and value based management, and focus are directed towards issues of more existential, ethical and philosophical character.

The Philosophical Café is a common term for the various forms of social gathering around the philosophical, which Socrates' Symposium was a precedent for. It can be used both by private persons in form of an event, as well as by organizations in form of teambuilding.

Traditionally a Philosophical Café is held in an ordinary café room, and is open for all, but it is also possible to organize such a café in an "alternative café", for instance by creating such a café in an organization, a bookshop or in private homes. To be mentioned there is the Philosophical Dinner in which a group of people, over a dinner, get themselves a philosophical conversation in a couple of hours. Or a Philosophical Salon, in which you start and co-ordinate running salons of philosophical character (also with other introductory speakers than the philosophical counselor himself). Furthermore you can create running cafés over specific topics.

The Philosophical Café can shortly said be arranged anywhere, where you can talk about a social gathering around the philosophical, on a mountain-top, in a wood, on journeys, holidays, spiritual retreats.

The participants suggest the topics themselves, and the function of the philosophical counselor, is only to function as a facilitator for the participant's own self-inquiry. This means that the philosopher functions as a help finding the topics' implicit *philosophical* questions, and investigating them in a meditative-existential way. The participants need in that way no philosophical skills.

The Café is an exercise in developing the philosophical self-understanding and value clarification on group level. It trains the participants in inquiring and listening in a more existential way, and it develops an ethical conversation culture. The Café is in other words brilliant in connection with teambuilding, but can be used in all kinds of connections, in which a group of people want to look at things from a deeper perspective.

A map of the spiritual journey

Your thinking takes place in time. Your thoughts are words and images, which work in this stream. It is Heraklit's River, 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 is 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 example life and death, success and fiasco, joy and sorrow) – all this which lie behind the law of karma and rebirth. This universe is for example considered to be a reincarnation of a past universe, the same way as a human being is considered to be a reincarnation of a past existence.

So the images in the movement of time is 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 example 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 example images of the powerful, 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 implies, 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 implies, 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 nothing can say 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.

Experiences of the collective aspects of these areas are experiences, which lie outside the Ego's area, or outside the dimension of the ordinary consciousness. Experiences from here are experiences such as kundalini, clairvoyance, astral travels, mythological visions, miracles, channeling, UFOs, memories from past lifes, Near-Death Experiences, possession states.

In spiritual respect the task is to inquire into the nature of these dimensions of consciousness. Wherein consists the structure of these experiences? Does there exist a map over these areas, which can lead you on the right path? Experiences of these areas belong namely to the journey from the sleep of the wholeness, over the dreams

of the wholeness, to the awake moments of the wholeness. And these phenomena are out of the horizon of the ordinary Ego-consciousness.

If you continue being identified with your personal time and lifesituation, and therefore use the consciousness in a self-circling way (words, images, feelings, moods, thoughts), then the wholeness remains asleep. If you choose to begin to awake (through spiritual practice; that is to say: meditation and Dream Yoga), then your consciousness, like a flower, will uncover and open up its own divine dimensions. Everybody has this inner pure awareness. It is a quality of the Now and therefore of life itself. And therefore it is also love, self-forgetful openness.

To be yourself is determined by the way you relate to everything. Whether you are attentive or inattentive. Being *without* attitude is to drive away the mind in inattention. To *have* attitude is to focus the mind in awareness, in the neutral attitude to the mind's content. Having attitude is therefore the core in being yourself. This core is at the same time the selfforgetfulness in the Now, love. The oneness of awareness and love is the essence in the experience of reality.

To exist from your inner thinker means that you seek to master life from a power you can dispose over. This power is the will, and the will is the motivating power in the thoughts. The inner thinker, or the thinking's past and future, the Janus Face, is the instance, which evaluates and chooses. The will is therefore energy, which is taken from the Now and invested in the past and the future. To exist from the past and the future is to be absent and inattentive in the Now. It is the experience of unreality. Here you are *not* yourself, although there is a peculiar tendency in the modern society to acclaim the life style of the will and of the choice.

To exist from your innermost means that you are *liberated* to be yourself. Then you live in an atmosphere of free and unstrained life-unfolding, of fullness and movement. Then you live from a richness in the Now, a power, which you have not produced yourself, a power, which you could call the Source of life. When you live from this power, then you are in the middle of the stream of life.

The powerfulness in the Now *is* life. This power 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.

To be yourself, free and unforced, is only possible if you are in contact with the power of the Otherness. The Otherness is the instance, that leads you out to the things in an opening and involving way. This power exists in the Now's relations to everything.

Life itself is the life in the Now, where you are present and active from awareness, the innermost in you, and from heartfulness, which is the whole of yourself. Life itself is therefore the self-forgetful life.

The self-forgetful life is spiritual because the lifefulfilment, which life itself contains, is so absolute, so complete, that there herein is something eternal and endless.

If you are present in the Now, actively and involved from awareness, the innermost in yourself, and from heartfulness; that is to say: totally, with the whole of yourself, and therefore in self-forgetful openness and world absorption, then you will experience eternity and infinity. You will experience the true essence of nature, which is the Otherness.

When your consciousness is identified with your personal time, then this essence will be hidden by thoughts and images, and then the awareness is sleeping, the innermost in you is sleeping. And therewith the wholeness is sleeping. When the contents of the consciousness fall silent, the consciousness itself begins to light and awake.

In the spiritual development there exist some existential conditions - as well as some growing conditions and growth levels common to all mankind - which indicates a map of the inner journey towards awakening, which is known in all wisdomtraditions. The following description of this map is inspired by the Danish spiritual teacher Jes Bertelsen.

In Zen it is for example said about this process of awakening: "In the beginning mountains are mountains, and woods are woods. Then mountains no longer are mountains and woods are no longer woods. Finally mountains are again mountains, woods are again woods."

This refers to the three forms of states the wholeness can be in: sleep, dream, awake. When the wholeness is sleeping, mountains are mountains and woods are woods. This is the reality of the ordinary consciousness (the Ego-consciousness). The ordinary consciousness can sleep in three ways: 1) the dark sleep which is the Ego's deep nightly sleep; 2) the grey sleep, which is the Ego's nightly dreams and other dreams; 3) the light sleep, where the Ego is awake.

The three forms of states the wholeness can be in, can also be described as the personal time, the collective time and the universal time. These three states can further more - when we talk about going through them in a spiritual development process - be said to reflect the structure of the education novel. The education novel

is especially known from Romanticism. With concepts collected from Goldschmidt's "The Homeless" (1853-57) the development process of the education novel can be characterized in this way: *at home – the homeless – home*. Although great parts of the course of the education novel, are about *the homeless* phase, we know, that the person very probably shall arrive "*home*" again. A more or less pronounced model for all the education novels of Romanticism is Goethe's "Wilhelm Meister" (1795-1829) – and which actually, in very symbol satiated form, describes a spiritual development process. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings* is another example on a description of the spiritual development process.

When the wholeness begins to dream – and this happens only, if you set yourself existentially into the process of awakening – then the Ego, or the inner thinker, experiences himself as a flower, which begins to open itself towards the collective time: the thoughts will be lit through, whereby their collective components – sound, symbol, color, structure – will be visible and make themselves current in the image of reality. The clearness from your dissolved and evaporated thoughts and content, will expand the consciousness out towards the borders, behind which the collective common human structures exist.

The thoughts become in other words less personal, more common, more collective, deeper, more philosophical. And these, common deep thoughts of mankind, your consciousness can *see*, by force of its increased clarity, as visions (primordial images, religious images, symbols, teachers, higher worlds, other dimensions etc.). Your consciousness then observes a worldaspect of vibrant, soundfilled energyfields, which shimmer in symbols and colours. It observes a world of auric colours, archetypical symbols and yantric or other energetical structures. It begins to sense karmacially phenomena.

Reality expands itself, all things seem different than before, people shine as transparent onions; plants and animals vibrates, cosmos is alive: mountains are no longer mountains, woods are no longer woods. This is the opening of the collective time, which lies on a so-called astral plane.

But in a spiritual practice it is the form of the dreamconsciousness it is about, not its content.

On the plane of the universal images, and therefore on the Now's plane, the central is the form of the consciousness - the actual consciousness and its clarity and openness. Not the content of the consciousness. In spiritual practice the spiritual, and spiritual active, is the consciousness' course towards its source (the Now, the Otherness).

What the consciousness and the mind and the senses are filled by, is of less crucial importance.

But the collective time is a very dangerous intermediate area. The temptation to here, either to become afraid, or to experiment with various possibilities (astral travels, clairvoyance, telepathy etc. etc.) is great. It is a very forceful state. Goethe and Dante write about the collective time in "Faust" and in "The Divine Comedy". Tolkien about it in "The Lord of the Rings", Ursula Le Guin in "The Wizard of Earthsea". The shamans had to dare the journey to the underground kingdoms with their shadow-inhabitants, demons and dead. And they had to handle the journey to the heavenly regions, where gods and goddesses, heroes and heroines, accommodated. The mystics had to experience the descent to hell with its belonging devils, fire and sulphur and torment and suffering. And they had to handle get off to heavenly hosts of angels and light-creatures, if the temptation was as difficult to resist as the sexual impact of the devil.

The creativity, and the reality-creating ability, is in the collective time set free in fascinating degree. However you are, in this astral state, still on the plane of the collective images of time, which work in sequences in past and future, and you are in danger ending up in a spiritual crisis. A spiritual crisis is an expression of, that you have gone out in the collective time with your Ego, without having done the philosophical preliminary work; that is to say: the realization-work and the ethical training. The Ego will then make you lose your way in the collective time.

A spiritual crisis can be expressed in two ways: 1): as suffering, often called The Dark Night of the Soul, or 2) as Ego-inflation (inflammatio).

1) If the borders to the collective time is broken down or being exceeded out of hand, for example through LSD or through one-sided development techniques, or in shock, the consciousness and the personality will slide crucial out of balance and therefore suffer. The Ego will sideways with its personal identity and lifesituation, suddenly experience break in of tremendous astral energies, clairvoyant abilities, visions of mythological beings, good and evil forces, various demons and angels, death and themes of rebirth, unusual light phenomena, messages from supernatural beings, memories from past lives. These experiences will, because that the Ego's nature has not been realized, be characterized by unreality and division, anxiety of going mad and anxiety of death, or the experience of a total meaningless and dark extinct world.

2) The personality can receive informations through the break in of astral and collective energies, images and symbols: information about, what approaches human beings from outside (from other people, from chance, destiny, life etc.). However

informations through collective images are contradictional and split. Many have therefore been seduced by these colourful experiences and have remained there, with the ability to see the aura, with the ability to create images, to create in reality. When the collective time is used spiritual in genuine sense, then the Ego, in its egoistic isolating and self affirmative function, steps aside. However the same forces can be used for other intensions. It can be creative, Ego affirmative, political, demonical and so on. The forces which in spirituality are given to others' disposal in healing, energy transmission and spiritual information exchange, the same forces can themselves be turned in through the Ego-structures and open creative channels, create super Egos, create political leaders and popular seducers. The problem, or the danger, does not consist in using creativity or auric abilities. It is actually a good idea to formulate the experiences creatively; the danger is, whether the Ego grows and becomes swollen on the world's positive responses. And if the Ego gains strength, takes the honour, or blows itself up, the transformationprocess of consciousness stops, the growth forward towards the goal: illumination and later enlightenment.

The most appropriate in spiritual practice is in other words to use the dreaming state of the wholeness, to begin to practice the supporting exercises.

If you as a practitioner remember to use such an opening in the wholeness spiritual seen correct, then this can give your total development a considerably lift forward.

It is in other words very important that you do not move accent from awake everyday life (for example a good earth-bound job, ordinary people and family) to dreams and sleep, not use drugs or one-sided development techniques which promise you great experiences and abilities.

You have to have patience. Even for people with a regular and well ordered practice (2-3 hours every day) there can pass weeks, months or years between the reflections into the awake state of the wholeness. However if practice is appropriate, the spiritual consciousness will with time automatically penetrate the dreaming wholeness.

And if moments of actual awakenness are coming, then everything is simple, intensive, present, in the right place: mountains are again mountains, woods are again woods, but without longings, without wishes and desires, without the past, without the future. The mountains are. The woods are. The consciousness is. The Now is. You are at home again, at home in genuine sense.

So the Ego's partial consciousness is part of a greater wholeness, which is the Now, life itself. And life itself is the life in the Now, where you are present and active using the pure awareness, the innermost in you, and using the heartfullness, which is the

whole of yourself; what we could call your spiritual essence, because the life itself, which life itself contains is so absolute, so complete, that there herein is something eternal and endless.

The concept of karma has therefore primarily to do with the development process of your spiritual essence - and only secondary and indirectly with the Ego's process; that is: with your personal time and life situation. Admittedly it is the Ego's actions out on the scene, which leaves karmically tracks. Karma is the subconscious consequences of the Ego's actions. Each time the Ego acts - and thereby changes the balance in the wholeness - then the structures and power lines in your spiritual essence changes, in the subconscious.

When your spiritual essence is sleeping, karma is automatic. The Ego's pendulum swings in one life out in an extreme. Hereby gathers in the wholeness, in your spiritual essence, momentum to, that the pendulum in a future life will swing out in the opposite compensatory extreme. This is the automatic compensatory karma. In one life ascetic, in the next libertine, then inhibited and expelled, thereupon sybarite etc. with no end, because the Ego has freedom continual to give new momentum and new course - within the karmical possible; that is to say: heredity and environment - to the Ego's pendulum.

However when the Ego decides to use its free energy, its existential option to begin to awake, then the karma structures changes. Then you begin to use and work with your spiritual dimension. This dimension is not subject to the karmical structure, it *is* it, or it is over it. The wholeness is over, is transcendent, in relation to the laws and mechanisms, which regulate the infrastructures of the wholeness. The wholeness is not subject to the laws and energy transformations, which rule between the constitutive parts of the wholeness.

When your spiritual essence begins to dream, when the Ego-consciousness begins to bloom, to open itself, you discover the karmical lawfulnesses and can therefore relate to them. When your consciousness in extended state begins to sense the karmical structures, which after all not only rule between the many life's of your spiritual essence, but all the same are known psychological mirrored from the Ego's dreams and the Ego's life - then you can change attitude.

Instead of swinging with the laws you can choose to observe. Instead of identifying yourself with impulses and incentives, emotions and thought tendencies, you can separate yourself, become a witness, become alert. And hereby you can break the karmical automatism.

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.

Human beings are in that way, seen from the point of view of the ordinary ego-consciousness, inserted in two dimensions: a continuum, which streams are subject to laws; a discontinuum, for which leaps laws not seem to be effective. The wholeness, your spiritual essence, is normally the discontinuous aspect; normally, because this is of course seen from the point of view of the ego-continuum. Seen from the point of view of your spiritual essence, then the ego-continuum, with its sleep and awake, life and death, is the discontinuous aspect, and the spiritual essence the continuous aspect. But the parts, the Ego and its evaluations, is normally the continuous aspect.

When your spiritual essence begins to dream and the continuum of the Ego-consciousness breaks and expands in a discontinuum (into the superior continuum of the wholeness – or your spiritual essence), then the cosmic structur-pattern changes. Instead of mere compensatory karma, a progressive karma will now be effective. That, which you through existential achievement have reached of spiritual contact in one life, will form a progressive karma.

The process of your spiritual essence, your process of awakening, will leave progressive karma along through the various incarnations. What you spiritual have reached to realize in one life, will in the spiritual energy be there in the next life, or in the dimension of your spiritual essence.

If your spiritual essence is sleeping, the spiritual energy is quiet. Without traceable activity. A human being can live a whole life, yes, life after life, in absolute sleep.

If you however existentially begin to seek, to seek the spiritual, the divine, to seek love, if you choose to use your energy and your life in that way, then the spiritual energy will begin to vibrate, to become active. Only the images, which have achieved to imprint themselves in the spiritual energy, will be transferred as progressive karma. Your spiritual essence will remember its dreams from life to life. And your spiritual essence will remember and accumulate the glimpses of being awake, it might have experienced. These, the dreams and awake moments of your spiritual essence, are the progressive karma.

This is what is meant with, that people are born with different levels of spiritual development.

Concerning the progressive karma it applies, that each new life, in a quintessence, repeats the crucial stations on the development path of the spiritual essence. The place, where you can find your own progressive karma, if such is available, is therefore in the life, you have lived, in the history of your present life. It lies as an invisible script underneath the history of your actual life. It is the dream-tracks and songlines in the artwork of your life.

In the inexplicable events in your life, in the rows of moments of spiritual longing, in the fateful incidents and actions - in them are contained the progressive karma. In your spiritual history there is a map. This map shows the dream-tracks and the songlines in your spiritual work of art. This map is an universal image.

There is no doubt about, that Karen Blixen, though not fully conscious, had a sense of this map. All her books are about destiny seen in this way; they are about people who either live in accordance with this map, or in discordance with it. This map, this universal image was, what she referred to as the "ancient", the "original", and which she always was seeking as authenticity, autonomy, possibility, freedom and adventure. And an universal image is of a holographic nature, therefore it contains all other images, personal, collective and universal, and therefore it contains the dream-tracks and songlines in the artwork of your life.

You can live a whole life with this key lying in your own actual, spiritual biography. It requires work to find it. If you through development, through training, expand your consciousness to the spiritual dimension, then this invisible script will be made visible, the dream-tracks and the songlines in the progressive karma will be found.

Alaya-vijnana is a term used within Yogacara Buddhism to indicate the store-house consciousness, or the great vision, which consists of universal images. It is also called the Akasha Chronicles. As mentioned, then these universal images are a kind of energetical mandala-structures or yantra-fields. They have a linguistic nature, but it is of a visionary kind. These images are composite by sound and color, symbol and structure. You could also say, that they are what the philosophers call unmoved matter, a worldaspect of sound-colours and symbol-structures, an ocean of vibrant, soundfilled energyfields, which shimmer in symbols and colours. Altogether filled with information about life. Together the great vision, an information-ocean of holographic nature.

We have historical records about this vision. For example there within Tibetan Buddhism exists a peculiar doctrine about the so-called Tertöns (tib. Gter-bston - the

unearthers of the hidden books), people who are born with a special karmacial connection to a long ago deceased master, and who, because of the connection to this master's oneness-consciousness with the universal vision, now can collect treasures of information in from the vision, or the universal images, which after all work in synchronism with the Now, and which therefore lie in the wholeness, in the continuum of eternity. The master was hiding and storing holy "texts" various places in the universal images with that purpose, that a future "Tertön" would be able to find this knowledge again, decipher and publish it.

The Tibetan Book of the Dead (Bardo Thödol) is in that way one of the Tibetan texts, which is considered for having been hidden in the universal vision by the founder of Tibetan Buddhism, Padma Sambhava, and which was found again by a Tertön with the name Rigzin Karma Ling-pa. Padma Sambhava is considered for having hidden many holy texts, whereafter he gave some of his disciples the yoga ability to become reincarnated in the right time - which were determinated astrologically - for here to find the scriptures again.

After an estimated judgment, the spiritual texts, which already have been taken out by Tertöns in the run of the centuries, would form a cyclopedia on around sixtyfive volumes with average around four hundred pages in each volume.

I can see no reason to deny the doctrin of the Tertöns. You can't just deny people's experiences written down through centuries. This would in itself be unscientific, irrational, and besides, deeply arrogant. It is important though, to remember the philosophical aspects of the spiritual journey; that is: the use of rationality and critical thinking, which actually also is a central part of the training of the Tibetan monks. The problem with the alternative environment within the New Age movement, is namely, that precisely because the above mentioned, normal inaccessible, areas, in principle lie outside the area of the Ego-consciousness, yes, then they are open for all sorts of fantasies.

Within the New Age movement there are countless people today, who work egoistic with karmacially experiences – that is to say: they earn money as clairvoyants, regression therapists etc. Some of them live on pure make believe, others are direct frauds, but some of them have actually the ability to see into the collective time and its images, and tell about a past and a future which lies outside the area of the personality. But usually they have no philosophical training, no realization training and ethical practice. Therefore they basically do not know what they are doing. They are lost in the area of time where mountains no longer are mountains, and woods no longer are woods. There is in this area of the collective time and its images, with all its experts and clients, the possibility for a lot of waffle, a lot of imprecisely guesses and imagination, fiction and speculation.

There are therefore some philosophical principles you ought to hold on to, on the whole of this enormous, and growing market. The so-called compensatory karma will by these experts and clients normal be misunderstood and abused as a kind of legitimation of, that we are as we are or do, as we do. He or she becomes obliged to do this or that, in order to equalize old karma. This is spiritual seen nonsense. Usually the whole thing is about escaping from reality or excuses. It all origin from the collective time, which work in sequences in past and future, and therefore, in deeper sense, not karmacial and not in the least spiritual.

If a human being in genuine sense experiences compensatory karma, then this will precisely cause a separation, a break in relation to the automatical identification with tendencies and circumstances. A human being, who actual realizes its karmacially conditions, will precisely, by force of realization, break the automatic process.

Another philosophical principle is to examine, whether the karmacially talk and experiences of the experts and clients remove their energy-investments in the actual reality. If focus is displaced backwards, then the collective time has taken over and spiritual seen there therefore happens an escape. Such an escape is seen both in Freud, Rank, Grof, Janov, rebirthing, regression. None of these people and theories can therefore be said to work spiritual. And if they use the karma idea in that way, it is no longer a spiritual help, it is a collective displacement of the focus backwards in time and therewith out of reality and into the unreality of the collective time.

And this area is inexhaustible. Regardless whether you make use of psychotherapy, clairvoyance, healing, body therapy, regression, dreaminterpretation, chakras, then there will always be more. You can continue and continue, you almost become dependent of it like drugs or sex, because the actual magnet, which attract the whole of this area with its energy – the Ego - has not been realized. The Ego will with its evaluations create new problems, new content, new longings, new dreams - which again is in need of therapy, consultation etc., indefinitely. The spiritual development stops, it leaves the rails and ends up blind.

The genuine karmacially structures do not lie in the collective time, but in the universal time, which work in synchronism with the Now. If the karma idea is used spiritual seen correctly, then the focus, instead of being projected out in something afar (past lifes, a guru, birth, the future), will be present in something very near, namely only in the most intensive experiences of this actual life, and after that: in this actual Now with its possibility of realizing your innermost.

So the universal images lie as a kind of dream-tracks and song-lines in your actual life here and now. Only here and now they can be discovered. They can manifest themselves in symbols, which contain informations about the development process of your spiritual essence. Informations from the universal images are, contrary to informations from the collective images, not contradiction-filled and split, but healing and synthesizing. They are the map, which shows the path from the Ego to your spiritual essence. When they have been discovered, the Ego knows the way to the pure awareness and love of its spiritual essence – the home of the spiritual essence.

Only Man himself can find the progressive karma. The consciousness has the key in its life. It helps nothing, what clairvoyants may be able to see in the collective time, or fantasize about another person's karmacially experiences. Many of these experiences (for example about past lifes) – and which have a certain reality for either the clairvoyant or the client – are collective fantasies.

Collective fantasies have two aspects. The one aspect of the fantasies is a kind of archetypical, mythologically symbolizings of more personally, unclarified matter. The second aspect of the fantasies is relatively valid information about incidents, for example in other centuries. The misguiding happens because the two aspects are blended together. The clairvoyant, or the client himself, can remember, that he has lived in a past incarnation (often very romantic, for example as a pharaoh), and he can even travel to the places, where he had been incarnated and find things which "proofs" his assertion. There has been made many examinations of things of that kind. But regardless how fascinating it is, then it proofs nothing about past lifes. And therefore it is deceptive and dangerous to occupy oneself with.

Nobody can tell you about your karmacially structures. All people - clairvoyants, regression therapists, shamans etc. etc. - who are claiming they can help you karmacial, are cognitional and ethical delusional and deceptive.

Only your own realization opens. Whether another person even was able to read the whole of the karmacially course and tell the seeker about it, it would not help. On the contrary it would harm. Only your own inner experience and realization can open the spiritual dimension. Karma in other ways is nonsense. And by the way, that's the same with all spiritual.

In all briefness you can say, that genuine spiritual practice tries to guide people, who wish to learn, to go round the states, which have to do with the collective time, or at least, to shorten the passage through these areas. And if you are lost in them, to lead you back on the right track.

The spiritual crisis

The Czech-american psychiatrist Stanislav Grof has made a pioneering work mapping different types of spiritual crises, which I below, on the background of my own experiences, present in a slightly reworded version:

- **The awakening of kundalini.** Described as a snake-like energy, which in spiralform moves itself from the foot of the spiral column up in the head, while it opens a line of psychological centers, called chakras. The phenomenon is especially known in connection with the Indian Tantrism.
- **Para-psychic opening.** Visual, auditory or emotive knowledge about a past and a future, which lies outside your own personality. Is especially known in connection with different types of clairvoyance. Also known in connection with astral travel or astral projection (out-of-body experiences).
- **Spiritual crises as a hero's journey.** The experience of yourself as a hero who travels through a mythological and fantastic empire, filled with good and evil forces, as well as a fount of other sharply marked opposites. It often culminates in the meeting with death and the following rebirth. Such death-rebirth themes are known from ancient schools of mystery, as well as in the transition rites of scriptless peoples' religions.
- **The shamanic crisis.** At the beginning of his career the shaman often goes through heavy ordeals, the so-called initiation crisis. The initiation often includes a journey to the underworld, where the shaman aspirant goes through terrible ordeals with diverse demons and other mythological creatures. As in the hero's journey the initiation often culminates in the experience of death, dismemberment and extinction. Typical the extinction then is followed by resurrection, rebirth and ascension into heavenly regions.
- **Channeling.** The ability to make contact with divine creatures and levels of consciousness, which is thought to possess informations of spiritual value for people, and through the body mediate communication from these levels.
- **Close encounters with UFO's.** Experiences of unusual light phenomena, communication with aliens, or experiences of being abducted by aliens, or of travelling with them to other worlds.

- **Breakthrough of memories from past life's.** Sequences of experiences, which take place in other historical periods and/or other countries/planets – or in connection with karmacial experiences.
- **Near-death experiences.** Experiences, which are connected with death or the death process. This can be experiences of anxiety or existential guilt, but also experiences of a peaceful, harmonic condition after death.
- **Possession states.** An experience of, that your mind and body (it can also be things or places) have become invaded and are controlled by a being, or an alien energy, which can be of divine or, most known, demonic kind. Often with inexplicable bodily manifestations.
- **Oneness-consciousness.** Experiences of oneness between inner and outer, strong positive feelings, transcendence of time and space, feeling of holiness and paradoxical nature.
- **Alcohol and drug abuse.** The strong longing after alcohol or drugs corresponds on a low level to our own being's spiritual longing after wholeness: the unification with God. The important role of the Ego-death under the above mentioned types of spiritual crises is a direct parallel to the abuser's experience of "hitting the bottom." Can for example be seen reflected in the "Beat Generation", and the works of the Beat writers. Another aspect of alcohol and drug abuse as spiritual crisis, is that alcohol, and some kind of drugs, can relieve the intense stress from other kind of spiritual crises.

Spiritual crises are not due to mental disease, but are manifestations of time and its more collective images. These manifestations are often accompanied by some deep and powerful energies (or forms of energy), which penetrate the whole of your being. And this can, in the meeting with the painbody (the thought's negative energyfield in the body), be heavy filled with suffering. Therefore such crises often in the psychiatric system are misdiagnosed as mental disease, due to a lack of knowledge about, or rejection of, such forms of energy. This often makes the crisis even worse.

Experiences of the above mentioned phenomena are not a reliable criterion for, that you are in a crisis, though. You can experience them without being in a crisis. When it is a matter of a crisis, the phenomena should be followed by the following symptoms:

1. Burning hot or ice-cold streams, which move up through the back.

2. Excitation in the abdomen, along the spine, and up in the head.
3. Vibrations, restlessness or cramps in legs and other places in the body.
4. Pains, tensions or stiffness in the back of the neck, as well as headpains.
5. Fast pulse and increased metabolism.
6. Sensitivity to sounds, people's presence and other influences.
7. Sense of orgasms different places in the body, or total, cosmic orgasms.
8. Mystical/religious experiences, revelations and/or cosmic glimpses.
9. Para-psychic abilities, light phenomena.
10. Problematic balance between sexual impulses and spiritual urge.
11. Problematic balance (contradiction) between living a temporal life and a spiritual life.
12. Anxiety because of uncertainty about the process.
13. Weakened concentration power and lapses of memory.
14. Sleeplessness, manic exaltation alternate with depression and lack of energy.
15. Total isolation because the inner experiences can't be communicated out.

The presence of the mentioned symptoms is however still not a reliable criterion for, that it is a matter of a spiritual crisis. The criterion is also, among other things, that the physical symptoms can't be explained through medical science, as well as that you, in psychological sense, are able to discriminate between your own inner experiences and the outer surroundings.

The crucial criterion is however, that the experiences are accompanied by one, or more, of the following existential conditions: unreality, division, stagnation, anxiety or meaninglessness.

Unreality consists in, that the Ego constantly compares the Now with earlier and hopes, desires or fears something else. In this way the Ego makes the Now (the existential facts), into a problem. Hereby there is created resistance. The Ego places itself outside life itself. Unreality is in this way the experience of, that what happens around you, and with you, does not concern you, that you are not in it, not involved. You are not here, nor other places, but outside, in the meaning absent. A condition filled with negativity.

Division consists in, that the Ego, through evaluations of the images of time, splits the world up in opposites (good and evil, power and powerlessness, perfect and fiasco, love and hate). Thereby is created a line of one-sided and extreme basic assumptions (for example "I always have to be perfect!") and rules of living (for example "unless I always am perfect, then I am a fiasco!"). But the energy laws of life will seek to balance these imbalances, for example through contrabalances (perfect

becomes fiasco). Hereby there arise negative automatic thoughts, and then you have the anxiety, the depression, the destructivity.

Stagnation has to do with being identified with the past. This identification forms an image of itself in the body, a negative energyfield; that which Tolle calls the emotional painbody. The painbody contains all the pain you have accumulated in the past, and when it is activated there arise negative feelings, and your actions will be a never-ending repetition of the same.

Anxiety has to do with that you are too much in the future, in your plans and projects. You constantly formshape energy, whereby the energy runs up in your head. It forms a creative, spiral-like up-tension of the whole of your being, so that you loose contact with reality. You become paralysed, the world becomes a threat to you, the space narrows, and there arises dizziness. You become constrained, captured and characterized by lack of lifecourage.

Meaninglessness is created by, that your mind removes itself from the Now and invests the Now's energy in the past and the future. The mind is getting absent-minded and forms a negative and self-circling absence, characterized by ennui. Regardless how much meaning you in this way seek to find in the past or the future, then it will not be real meaning, because the loss of the Now always will lie behind in the form of emptiness.

This means, that your consciousness and personality, when it is a matter of a spiritual crisis, has slipped fundamentally out of balance, but in most cases not so much that you can be diagnosed as having a mental disease.

Spiritual crises often appear as unintended consequences of yoga, one-sided meditationtechniques, bodyoriented- and experiential psychotherapy, healing, energy transmission (for example Deeksha/Shaktipat), different types of rituals. The problem is - besides using one-sided techniques - that many experiential psychotherapists, meditationteachers, or other spiritual teachers, are completely ignorant about the nature of spiritual crises. There are far too many people today, who teach spiritual techniques without having the necessary experience and philosophical knowledge.

A special problem is in this connection, that many meditationteachers are psychologists or psychotherapists, who, with the best intentions, want to use meditation as a therapy based on a scientific approach; that is: without religious/spiritual/philosophical undertones. In other words, they cut the philosophical aspects of meditation off, and that's of course a problem, because

meditation traditionally is meant to open up into the dimensions of the human mind, which actually are of a philosophical nature.

Among other factors of release can be mentioned: births, unhappy love, celibacy, deep sorrow, high fever and intake of drugs. But a spiritual crisis can also come suddenly without traceable cause. You can suddenly be thrown out in such a crisis.

The wisdomtraditions have always claimed, that the above-mentioned phenomena come from the more collective imageworld of time, which consists of highly abstract form-formations of energy. This imageworld has 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 Akasha Chronicles, the collective subconscious, the dreamtime of the aboriginals etc. etc.

This imageworld has a relative validity, because it lies outside the area of the personality, and seems to have a paranormal character. It lies on a so-called astral plane. The deceitful (relative) about it is, that it lies in time, which means: in the past and the future. If you therefore identify yourself with it (the above-mentioned phenomena), then you relate absolute to the relative, and remove your consciousness from the Now, which is the actual reality and being. The Now is left empty and meaningless, the absolute has vanished. Furthermore you become a helpless victim of the swings of the energy-laws, and then you have the spiritual crisis. As mentioned this can result in deep suffering (often called *The Dark Night of the Soul*), but it can also result in Egoinflation.

In the following I will focus on two types of spiritual crises, namely the awakening of Kundalini, and alcohol and drug abuse. There are primarily three reasons:

Firstly because I myself have had experiences of a combination of the two kind of crises. So the following is a kind of confession of my own experiences, realizations, and finding of ways out.

(Stanislav Grof's wife, Christina Grof, whom he wrote his book about spiritual crises with, actually also had an experience of a combination of these two types of crises).

Secondly because the awakening of kundalini is the most common known type of spirituel crisis, which are spreading more and more – probably because of the power the Tantric traditions has in the New Age invironment.

Thirdly because alcohol and drug abuse as spiritual crisis is the least known, but also because it is a reflection of the collective spiritual crisis the society/world, is in today.

1. The awakening of kundalini

The absolute central supporting exercise in Indian philosophy is of course the practise of yoga. Yoga is an ancient way of life, which already was described in the Vedas. It is therefore an integrated part of Indian philosophy as such, and exists in several different forms. But generally you can say, that yoga is an existential form of training, which therapeutical work through both body, mind and heart.

The word yoga has also many meanings, but usually you say, that it means unification of body, mind and heart. The word therefore not only mean, that you practise some stretching exercises in order to keep yourself young, as most Western people connects it with. Yoga presupposes also a way of life in which there is no conflict. Therefore you can say that yoga is an art of life, a philosophical form of therapy. This can be seen clearly in the Indian philosopher, Patanjali's book *Yoga Sutras* (approx. from between 100 B.C. - 500 A.D.), which is regarded as the basic reader of yoga.

In four chapters it describes the so-called classic yoga, also called Raja-yoga (the king of yoga, implicit the best). Chapter 1 is going through the goal and nature of yoga, chapter 2 explains the means to reach the goal, chapter 3 describes what you achieve on the way towards the goal and at the goal itself, and chapter 4 is dealing deeper with, what the goal is with yoga, namely to free your consciousness from the manifested world and achieve the state of Samadhi. Samadhi consists in, that the consciousness (the self, Atman) unites with its unmanifested source – the Good, the True and the Beautiful (= God, Brahman).

In the book 8 yoga-planes are described. The first five planes are about training the body, and preparing the mind - the last three are methods to develop oneness-consciousness:

1. *Yama*: outer and inner cleanness. Outer cleanness is first of all based on a meticulous body-hygiene. Inner cleanness is building 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 monk- or nun life, but it requires that you simplify your life, so that there is space for silence and afterthought. Can for example be seen reflected in the monastic vows: poverty, chastity and obedience.
3. *Pranayama*: mastery of breathing and thereby 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 letting yourself be distracted.
6. *Dharana*: the ability to lead all thought-energy towards one single point and keep it fixed there. Corresponds to concentration exercises and awareness-training.
7. *Dhyana*: the ability to let your thought flow into an object or a conception and get to the bottom of it. Corresponds to asking philosophical questions in a meditative-existential way.
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 the years 900-1200 A.D. there arise several greater yoga-schools, for example Jnana-yoga (the yoga of realization), Bhakti-yoga (the yoga of love) and Karma-yoga (the yoga of action and retaliation).

In the West the most known yoga-school is Hatha-yoga (the yoga of power), which forms basis for many other yoga-schools, for example Mantra-yoga, which later should become associated with Tantrism.

It is the Hatha-yoga texts, which describe the so-called chakra-system, which is so popular in Western New Age communities – but also cause to a great deal of spiritual misguiding. Characteristic of the New Age-environment is its mixture of Eastern philosophy with Western psychology/psychotherapy, and latest with different management theories, and the herein built-in fount of spiritual educations, where you, in order to sell to so many as possible, conscious or unconscious, neglect the grounding of experience.

An example is the calling to Shaman, which traditionally required that the Shaman aspirant was a person, who went through heavy ordeals, the so-called initiation crisis, or shamanic illness (the Shaman was a chosen human being – a seldom specialist). The modern Shamanism (New Age-shamanism) is a form of Shamanism, which has been accommodated postmodernism (for example Serge Kahlili King's book *Urban Shaman*). This form of Shamanism is standing in overt contrast to classic Shamanism, concerning the demands to the Shaman. Everybody can here, through different types of Shaman educations, learn it, as the phrase goes, regardless of whether you have any experience or not. It is an "user-friendly" form of Shamanism, as they call it - and therefore also saleable in great quantities. A way to create success and wealth.

This is just one example of, how the economical interest in the different New Age educations is able to distort the spiritual practice, and hereby lead people on the wrong track. In the following I will try to correct a couple of dangerous misleadings in connection with the chakra-teaching, which primarily is due to the New Age-environment's psychologizing of the Indian philosophy.

The Chakras

The Hatha-yoga texts describe, how the thoughts reflect themselves in the human body in form of energy-spots, or reflection-spots, which distribute over the body's 6 head zones: 1: the eyebrow-area, 2: the mouth-throat-neck zone, 3: the breast-heart-shoulder zone, whereto often the arms belong 4: the diaphragm and solar plexus, 5: the abdominal middle, 6: the pelvic floor, the sexual organs, thighs, as well as the legs as a wholeness.

The chakra-concept is part of a very worked out and profound system of description, which is developed on the background of thousand of years work with, and experiences of inner and higher states in Man.

The chakras function firstly with the purpose of bodily and energetical balancing and regulation of the energetical swings of the thoughts. This aspect corresponds to the balancing and regulative function of the dreams, which also reflect themselves in the body's reflection-spots and their equal distribution across the body's six head zones (compensatory karma).

Secondly the chakras have a development function, which also reflects itself in the symbol function of the dreams (progressive karma).

As the dreams, the chakras therefore also both have a balancing and a development-specific function. It is in other words the same basic phenomenon, which reflects itself in the dreams and in the chakras (see my article *Dream Yoga*).

In so far as the chakras are related to specific body-areas as an expression of the life energy which functions in and regulates these areas, in so far the chakras are defined as centres in the energyfield of Man, as the focus-spots of the aura, or as energy-whirls in the so-called energy-body of Man. Experiential they appear in the form of feelings.

When the chakras are related to the development-level of Man (the level of realization work and ethical practice), they are described as reflection-spots of the

Source – the Good, the True and the Beautiful. Symbolical this is illustrated in the form of Mandalas.

You can talk about seven chakras. The first six chakras consist of two sides: content and essence. The seventh chakra is the Source itself, the essence without any content.

If we describe them bottom up they look like this:

1) Muladhara-chakra, which is in the body-zone, that includes the pelvic floor, the sexual organs, thighs, as well as the legs as a wholeness. The mandala-symbol consists of a red lotus-flower with four leaves. A yellow square and an elephant symbolize the earth-element. The elephant has seven trunks, which corresponds to the seven chakras. A triangle symbolizes the goddess Shakti's genitalia (yoni). Within this the god Shiva's phallus encircled by the kundalini-snake. At the top to the right the god of creation, Brahma, and the female "doorkeeper" to the kundalini power: Dakini. A gold-letter in the middle is the mantra "Lam". The content-side of the chakra is the manifested. Its essence-side is the unmanifested.

2) Svadhista-chakra, which is in the body-zone, that includes the abdominal middle. The mandala-symbol consists of an orange lotus-flower with six leaves. Within this a lotus with eight leaves, which symbolizes the water-element. Herein a halfmoon and the water-monster Makara. The sanskrit-letter in the middle stands for the mantra "Vam". Over the mantra can Vishnu and Shakti Rakini be seen, gods of blood and body-fluids. The content-side of the chakra is movement. Its essence-side is the unmoved.

3) Manipura-chakra, which is in the body-zone, that includes the diaphragm and solar plexus. The mandala-symbol consists of a lotus-flower with ten leaves. An orange triangle and a ram symbolize the fire-element. Over the triangle Rudra, the god of storms and of tears, as well as the armed goddess Shakti Lakini. A black sanskrit-letter is the mantra "Ram". The color of the leaves is "as a rain-cloud". The content-side of the chakra is the emotions. Its essence-side is being.

4) Anahata-chakra, which is in the body-zone, that includes the breast-heart-shoulder zone, whereto often the arms belong. The mandala-symbol consists of an orange lotus-flower with twelve leaves. In the seedhouse two smoke-colored triangles which form a star: symbol on unification of opposites. An antelope stand for the air-element. At the top the god Vayu Bijar and Shakti Kakini, whose heart is softened by Nectar. The sanskrit-letter in the middle is "Yam". The content-side of the chakra is the opposites. Its essence-side is the oneness.

5) Vishudda-chakra, which is in the body-zone, that includes the mouth-throat-neck area. The mandala-symbol consists of a lotus with 16 leaves in smoke-colored purple. A circle within a triangle is the full moon, which symbolizes the ether-element. In top to the right, Sadashiva, whose five heads represent the five "lower" senses. The sanskrit-letter in the middle is "Ham". The content-side of the chakra is language. Its essence-side is silence.

6) Agna-chakra, which is in the body-zone, that includes the eyebrow-area. The mandala-symbol consists of a lotus-flower with two leaves. In a triangle in the middle can be seen a luminous phallus. To the right the goddess Hakini, whose six heads represent the five "lower" senses + the "sixth sense". The mantra is "Um". The content-side of the chakra is time. Its essence-side is the Now.

7) Sahasrara-chakra, which not is in any body-zone. The mandala-symbol consists of a lotus-flower with thousand leaves. The Source itself, the essence without any content.

The third chapter in Patanjali's Yogasutras describes the paranormal experiences and abilities, you can achieve in connection with yoga-practice. Patanjali is intimately making account of, that you ought to be very careful with - in connection with yoga-practice – to try to achieve paranormal abilities and experiences, since this can be due to (or result in) a so-called spiritual crisis – a debugging in your spiritual development.

It is therefore problematic, that it is the fewest New Age directions, which connect chakras with kundalini and spiritual crises.

The problem in connection with the New Age-movement is as mentioned the attempt to integrate the philosophy of the East (for example chakras) with Western psychology and psychotherapy. Psychology is after all today a science, which works with empirically proofs, or empirical content. But within the spiritual area you are precisely *not* working with content, but with essence, and this has not anything to do with psychology as a science, but with philosophy.

The psychologizing therefore results in, that you direct yourself towards the contents and forget the essence, exactly what also characterizes a spiritual crisis. It is for example my opinion, that Stanislav Grof, despite his pioneering work of mapping spiritual crises, as well as his great knowledge of history of philosophy, ends up in such a psychologizing. Here I am especially thinking about his examinations of the concept of oneness-consciousness, where the touchstone of authenticity has with essence (realization) to do, and not content (experiences). Grof was for example

seeking - first through LSD-therapy, and later, when that was forbidden, through an experiential oriented, body psychotherapeutic technique (holotropic breathwork) - to provoke experiences of the same kind as them you experience in a spiritual crisis – that is: through a so-called upward technique – in the belief that such a crisis always has a healing and transformational potential.

Grofs assertion is in other words, that you through LSD, or a holotropic session, should be able to skip many years of meditation practice and experience the same as the great enlightened masters.

But what he in reality skips are the *philosophical* aspects of the meditationpractice (the philosophical questions' self-inquiring practice), and when these are left out, he creates breeding ground for many different types of spiritual self-deceit. The case is namely, that an important part of the opening in towards the Source is the realization of what basically hinders this opening. Unless you know, for example the Ego's, fundamental *nature*, you will not be able to recognize it, and it will deceive you to identify with it again and again. But when you realize the hindrances in yourself (your ignorance), it is the Source itself - the Good, the True and the Beautiful – which makes the realization possible. The realization can therefore only come from within, never from outside.

When Grof seeks to open up for collective experiences, without having been working with realization of the Ego's nature, he intervenes disruptive in the Ego's self-regulating structures, which are thinking and time. Therewith he also intervenes in the balancing and development-specific function of the chakras. Unknowing he creates heavy energetical swings without understanding, that the karmacially consequences are being equivalent heavy contrabalances and back-swings. Grof seems himself to be in a possession state, a possession of experiences, which is mirrored in the level of fierceness in his methods, which almost seem to be attempts to rape spirituality.

The awakening of kundalini

The manifestations of this form of crisis resemble the descriptions of the awakening of the serpent power, or Kundalini, found in historical Indian literature. According to the yogis, Kundalini is a creative cosmic energy that resides in latent form at the base of the human spine. It can become activated through meditation, specific exercises, the intervention of an "accomplished" spiritual teacher, or sometimes for reasons that are unknown.

The activated Kundalini rises through the channels in the “subtle body”, which is described in the yogic literature as a field of non-physical energy surrounding and infusing the physical body. As it ascends, it clears old traumatic imprints and opens the centers of psychic energy, called chakras. This process, although highly valued and considered beneficial in the yogic traditions, is not without dangers and requires expert guidance by a guru whose Kundalini is fully awakened and stabilized.

The most dramatic signs of Kundalini awakening are the physical and psychological manifestations called *kriyas*. One can experience intense sensations of energy and heat streaming up in the spine, associated with violent shaking, spasms, and twisting movements. Powerful waves of seemingly unmotivated emotions, such as anxiety, anger, sadness, or joy and ecstatic rapture, can surface and temporarily dominate the psyche. Visions of brilliant light or various archetypal beings and a variety of internally perceived sounds, as well as experiences of what seem to be memories from past lives, are very common. Involuntary and often uncontrollable behaviors complete the picture: talking in tongues, chanting unknown songs, assuming yogic postures and gestures, and making a variety of animal sounds and movements.

Recently, unmistakable signs of this process have been observed in thousands of westerners. California psychiatrist and eye doctor Lee Sannella, who first brought the Kundalini syndrome to the attention of Western audiences, single-handedly collected nearly one thousand such cases.

The rising-process

The core-phenomenon in the kundalini-process is some form of rising through the chakra-system, where the sexual, subsidiary the emotional, energy is built up and concentrated in the bottom of the body, for then to flow upwards towards the higher chakras in the transformation-event. Either can then the energy, which before was in the sexual or emotional expression-form, after the transformation, be retrieved as extended love, where focus is in the Anahata-chakra, or as creative energy, where the center is the Vishuddha-chakra, or as intuitive energy, where the key-spot is Ajna-chakra.

Several dimensions can occur at the same time. Finally the transformation can lift the energy, and therewith also the consciousness, if this is meditative well-trained, all the way up to the crown-center and out through the central channel, upwards in the more universal duality-transcendent aspects of experiences of the enlightened consciousness (Sahasrara-chakra).

The Danish spiritual teacher Jes Bertelsen describes three forms of rising:

1. The cross-rising. The rising is experienced and can be seen as a movement from the sexual glands up towards the heart, where the tracks crosses each other, past the nipples up in the two brain hemispheres, where then the flowering-phenomenon unfolds.
2. The fountain-rising. The transformation is described as an up-flow of energy in the central channel (physical the spine, ethereal Sushumna) all the way up and out of the body in the crown-center. Here the energy stream turns – very much like the fountain – and flows down outside the body in the aura on all sides, for then again to unite at the basis of the spine.
3. The melting-rising. Again the energy rises, streaming in a central movement. But when the consciousness – the experience – reaches the brain, or the energy-fields above the top of the head, a quite special occurrence takes place. Something, which is described as a static or frozen connection between the right and left hemisphere of the brain, or as a static pattern of masculine and feminine energy in the fields over the crown center - this static, crystalline or frozen double field is being brought to melting, apparently by force of the up-streaming energy. The energy, which hereby is melted or is melting, flows down through the body and fills it up from below with a feeling of bliss.

These three types of rising should describe the enlightenment-process. And I am not in doubt about, that this also could be the case. The problem is, that you can experience them, exactly as described, without that there happens any transformation, transcendence or enlightenment. You can purely and simply just experience it like energy movements – it can be very pleasant, but also unpleasant. Finally it can result in a spiritual crisis.

As far as I can see, it depends of, whether the energy is turned inwards towards the essence of the mind (of the chakras), or outwards towards the content of the mind (of the chakras). In order to, that it can happen correct, there precisely is needed much meditative training, and with meditation is here meant Meditation as an Art of Life; that to ask philosophical questions in a meditative-existential way. And this aspect of meditation is, as far as I can see, often neglected in the forms of meditation I have met, which not directly is based on the traditional spiritual practices, but have become mixed with psychology and psychotherapy – the New Age-ideology.

It is directly wrong, and very deceptive, to claim, that the unpleasant consequences of a rising-process are due to, that old traumas dissolve, that you are in a transformation-process, and that you just shall go ahead and go the process through. This is a

dangerous form of psychologizing (which originates from the experiential psychotherapy), that you will meet at practically all the meditation teachers you meet within this environment. They are all characterized by the power psychology and psychotherapy has got in our society.

The problem is, that you can't go the process through if you turn yourself towards the contents. The contents is unfathomable, there isn't any end of it. And if you nevertheless do it, the process will grow worse and worse and worse, till you end up in a psychiatric hospital.

The problem is, that unless you are very cognitional and ethical trained, you will still be identified with the painbody and the Ego. This means, that certain challenges will be able to activate the painbody exactly as before the awakening of kundalini - you will in other words give it your energy. And after an awakening of kundalini this means a drastic increase of the volumes of energy an awakening of kundalini implies.

The ridiculous is, that many of those, who advise people in their kundalini-experiences, absolutely no own experience have of it. They have read the whole thing in some self-help books, which are written by people, who neither have any experience. And if you are making them aware of it, they are being furious. They are often intellectual inflated, and would begin to advise Dalai Lama himself, if they could.

What is it that can go wrong in the rising-process? The past and the future is the thinking's time-dimension, which physical reflection-spot therefore is in Agna-chakra - the eyebrow-area. This area is in other words quite central when you start with meditation. When the thoughts therefore are building energy up, this energy runs up in the head. Different said there is being created a spiral-like, creative up-tension of the whole of your being.

When this tension is rising to a certain critical point in the different chakras, it breaks like a wavecrest, and there happens an experience of one or the other kind. The experience is the breakers of the wavecrest. The built-up energy breaks in the content and visions, feelings and symbols of the experience. And if the built-up volume of energy is big enough, you can create an opening wherethrough the contents of time and its images can begin to flow in.

Time is not just the personal history, but also the collective and the universal history, and therefore the contents of time and its images are unfathomable. A completely fascinating perspective, and dangerous, especially in connection with the meeting with the collective time, where the wholeness begins to dream.

In its positive aspect the contents of time and its collective images is sublime and divine, and therefore a source to fascination. Many so-called upward meditation traditions make an effort to build energy up in a wave in order to get an experience of this sublime and divine content. Among other things they do this through concentration – it can be concentration on a chakra, a mantra, an object or something else. But you must all the time remember, that concentration alone is a pure mental thing, and therefore a thought-activity.

The type of rising is completely dependent on the exercises you practise. For example you can practise exercises, which visually imitate one of the three types of rising. There is in other words not anything so ever common necessary in, that spiritual development shall happen through a certain way of rising. To claim this will be to mislead people. All techniques are moreover content, contrary to being in the Now, which direct you towards the form, or the essence. Awakening of kundalini is therefore completely dependent on what technique you are using.

The danger lies in the identification with your thoughts and your painbody – and therewith in the identification with the collective imageworld of time, which is a part of the structure under the thinking. The identification itself is the same as the Ego, and the energy which is built up in the positive aspect of the collective imageworld of time, will be able to blow the Ego up in inflation. And then you have a spiritual crisis, which absolutely *not* has a healing and transformational potential.

The "positive" aspect of a spiritual crisis is the most self-deceptive, because it usually ends up in Ego inflation and total lack of self-realization. When the Ego has embezzled itself energy, which rightly belong to the collective time, there arises inflation. The Ego blows itself up using energy, which not rightly belong to the Ego.

The Kundalini crisis as Ego-Inflation

Jes Bertelsen describes three main forms of inflation: intellectual, identifi- cal and euphoric inflation.

1. Intellectual inflation is extremely widely-spread, especially today where so much knowledge is made common, and where practically everybody goes through one or the other form of theoretical education, or at least get knowledge of it through the medias. Intellectual inflation is in fact one of the fundamental hindrances of the opening in towards the Source, a malfunction in the mind, which is a crucial cause to the ignorance, conflict and sufferings of Man. Intellectual inflation has to do with lack of rationality. You take your assumptions, conceptions and values as absolute

truths, whereby you end up in a contradiction between your thoughts and lived life. It is actually a lack of ground connection.

In general, in intellectual circles, in cultural connections, and in the political life, they have always accepted intellectual inflation – but as mentioned it is one of the most crucial causes to all the conflict, war and violence, which the world is characterized by. People and their opinions and –isms, political directions etc., all of it is as a rule mainly an intellect play characterized by a contradiction between thoughts and lived life. One is idealist, another realist, one is Marxist, atheist, another Christian, charitable, but if you look these people after in their existence, after in their actual life, then you quickly discover the contradictions.

Kierkegaard called it "the litany madness": people can repeat the right doctrines and principles by rote, but when it comes to reality, to their way of living, then you discover all the contradictions.

Within the alternative environment (New Age) intellectual inflation also is extremely widely-spread, and when the game, as here, is about the development of Man, about the depths of the mind, about archetypical powers, about the Source of life, then intellectual inflation can be a hazardous play. When the intellectual knowledge begins to approach religious areas, wisdom of life, therapy, meditation, spirit, then the Ego can misjudge itself by being intoxicated by its intellectual understanding of deep phenomena. It is easy to know and understand the profound in an intellectual way. Everybody can say "meditation is to become silent, without thoughts, without words, images", but try to be silent, try to be awake without thoughts.

It is a widely-spread misunderstanding in meditation-circles, that meditation consists in being completely without thinking (time after time I have been criticized for my emphasizing of the significance of philosophy in the meditationprocess). An enlightened master has admittedly no need for thinking, for philosophy, because he is in a condition of being (though he always uses a philosophical kind of counseling). But a person, who then just repeat this ("I have no need for thinking, for philosophy, because I am in a condition of being"), *without* being enlightened, has a seriously problem with Ego-inflation. Socrates was fully aware of the problem in this, when he consistently called himself philosopher (a lover of wisdom, one who seeks wisdom, but who has not yet found it) – and *not* a sage (guru/enlightened master). It namely gives ground connection. All people, who are not enlightened, are in need of thinking, of contemplation, of reflection – of *philosophy*.

Intellectually the whole thing with development, with dream-understanding, with therapy and chakras, is very easy to understand. And very easy to tell others about –

and get success on. There is incredibly many in the world today, who speaks and talks about energy and chakras without ever really having had experiences with chakras and energy. This is intellectual theft, it is self-deceit, it is inflation – and it will unavoidably lead to misguiding of others.

The tool to be used against intellectual inflation is in other words rationality and critical thinking, therefore philosophical training, where you investigate the validity of your assumptions, conceptions and values, and seek after coherence between your thoughts and your lived life.

2. Identifical inflation is of two kinds. Identification with an outer power, which not belongs to the Ego (an institution, a teacher, others' techniques, meditation-centres, one's role). Identification with an inner power, which nor belong to the Ego (God, master, healing energy, the collective time, collective images etc.)

The tool to be used against this form of inflation is authentic spiritual practice; that is to say: where you understand the difference between the content of consciousness and the form of consciousness - that in neutrality to separate yourself from the content of consciousness, for thereby to direct yourself towards the form of consciousness. Discrimination.

3. The euphorical inflation is mainly due to up-streaming energy. There are then real transformation-processes in the chakra-system, and the transformed or released energy is rising upwards – it feels and is described this way, for then, in the consciousness, to bring about states of ecstasy, spiritual intoxication, exaltation, blissfulness. Oneness-consciousness as a spiritual *crisis* belongs to euphorical inflation. Mystics in the West have called this euphorical inflation "jubilation". It can escalate and completely take the ground connection away from a human being, so that you think, that you can fly, that you will be carried by angels. You fly in Sukavati, in Firdaus, in Paradise, in Elysium, as a balloon in the blue air.

As mentioned, then the euphorical inflation lay behind oneness-consciousness as spiritual crisis; that is to say: it is not about a real experience of enlightenment, but precisely about a crisis. It is doubtless also the euphorical inflation, which lay behind the so-called Deeksha phenomenon (transfer of enlightened energy or oneness-consciousness - see my article *Sympathy for the Devil* about transmission of energy and consciousness). The Deeksha phenomenon is specially connected to the Oneness/Deeksha-movement, which is founded by Amma and Bhagavan, two Indian gurus, a woman and a man, who claim they have created the entire Universe (and are the first 100% Avatars throughout history) and that mankind will get enlightenment if we will cooperate with them.

This movement spreads as a lightning these days, with slogans as: "Become enlightened in 20 days!" (For a huge sum of money of course). Thousands of people walks around and are claiming they are enlightened, and themselves able to give the enlightenment forward to others. After you yourself have become "enlightened" you yourself are becoming a "Deeksha giver", and ready to make money. Why on Earth waste time training yourself cognitional and ethical, when you after all just can have it transferred by a Deeksha-giver?

(In parenthesis remarked, then many of these "enlightened" people never have experienced anything at all, but have become seduced into a web of lies, because the movement functions in that way, that you yourself shall get hold of new members by telling about how your life has been changed after you now have become enlightened – and you will after all prefer to keep a straight face to members you yourself have brought about).

Another type of euphorical inflation has to do with channeling as a spiritual crisis. There are many non-enlightened spiritual teachers – (they might very well have strange paranormal abilities, it doesn't matter in this question) – who get authority by claiming, that their teaching is being channeled from some kind of divine source. If such teachers put their teaching forward in this way, you can be hundred procent sure, that this teacher has a problem with euphorical inflation (if he is not directly a fraud). Why? Because no real enlightened master would argue in this way. True enlightened masters speak from their own source, and are always characterized by humility. Just look at Dalai Lama, who incessantly claims, that he hasn't reached the full Rigpa, and that he is just a beginner.

The mystics (for example Meister Eckhart, Tauler, Seuse) discriminated between "jubiliatio" and "inflammatio", the ecstasy and the inflammation. And the euphorical inflammation is dangerous. Very dangerous.

The tools to be used against this inflation is partially ground connection (Hara, earth bound work, preferably with other people, for example as social- and careworker), partially again realization work, discrimination, humble separation of the Ego and the spirit, between the Ego and the rising, bubbleling, jubilant delight. Moreover ethical practice, training of compassion, for example through Tonglen practice. One of the deep reasons why they in monasteries anywhere in the world are letting the monks work with dirt, cleaning, cooking, taking care of sick people and dying, was in order to, that they never should lose reality and the ground connection of sight. People, who are being caught by inflation, begin, as a rule, to act like kings and queens, they shall not anything practical do, they shall not be adjusted, they fly.

To all three kinds of ego-inflation there are in other words some philosophical principles you ought to hold on to. And generally it is good to have knowledge about the thought distortion called *Truth by Authority*, which is about taking statements to be true simply because an alleged authority (experts, teachers, divine sources, paranormal abilities, etc.) on the matter has said/justified that they are true. A level of scepticism is always appropriate, because the statement may be based on false premises, faulty reasoning, thought-distortions, wishful thinking or vested interests.

People, who in their arguments/teaching, again and again, have to defer to some authority (experts, teachers, divine sources, paranormal abilities) in order to justify their arguments/teaching, are hundred percent on the wrong track, even if they should have some paranormal abilities. Again it is interesting to see, that true enlightened masters never do this. And interesting, that probably most of the many people, who have made a business on being clairvoyant/mediums etc., will fall for *Truth by Authority*.

The Kundalini crisis as suffering

When there in connection with kundalini-awakening is talk about a spiritual crisis, then this is characterized by, that the "positive", like the negative, contains elements of unrealized unreality, division, stagnation, anxiety or meaninglessness. The consequence is, that your spiritual development stops.

The collective images of time will, as *images*, always be defined by their negations. And in its negative aspect the contents of time and its collective images therefore are frighteningly and demonical. The opposites in this structure can't be separated, but define each other. So the more you identify yourself with the one pole in such a pair of opposites, and expels the other pole (as it is the case in the Ego-inflation), the more the abandoned pole will work stronger and stronger on its polar partner. This is because, that energy works as streams within a wholeness. The energy you have build up in the divine pole (which you shall remember only is a collective image) will finally switch over in its opposite demonical pole. Simply in order to balance an imbalance in the wholeness. The problem (the self-deception) lies in, that a contrabalancing don't have to happen in this life, but first in the next. In Indian philosophy you must therefore necessarily see yourself in such large perspective.

However, many in a spiritual crisis have experienced such a contra-balancing development. This is the aspect of suffering, but on the other hand a much better possibility of self-realization.

When you identify yourself with your thoughts and your painbody you lose your being and is being identical with the swings of the energylaws, which within the wholeness work as a universal balancing-system (as for example also in the teaching of Yin and Yang, where too much Yin brings about a swing over in Yang and reverse). In this identification you will in other words become exposed by troughs of the waves, of contrabalances, as well as karmacially back-swings. And these will be very heavy taken in consideration, what volumes of energy you in a spiritual crisis have to do with.

A spiritual crisis in its negative aspect is known under the term *The Dark Night of the Soul*.

2. Alcohol and drug abuse

For many people concerned it is possible, as Stanislav Grof indicates, that there behind the strong longing after alcohol and drugs, is a strong longing after transcendence or wholeness. If this is the case, addiction to alcohol, as well as a variety of other forms of drug abuse, can, in many cases, can be seen as a form for spiritual crisis.

This form of spiritual crisis can especially be seen illustrated in the Beat-generation and in the works of the beat-writers. It was the San Francisco-journalist Herb Caen who in 1958 invented the words *beat* and *beatnik* about the drop-outs, who from the middle of 50's toured around in USA and made themselves down to San Francisco. *To be beat* was to differentiate from the established society by nomadic- and bohemian life, worship of political anarchism, pacifism and non-Western religions, for example Zen Buddhism, life-pleasure, free sex (inspired by the psychoanalyst Wilhelm Reich), drugs etc. Eisenhowers USA was diagnosed as a sick, totalitarian and love-less nightmare, as for example in Allan Ginsberg's *Howl*, Jack Kerouac's *On the Road*, and William Borrough's *Naked lunch*. The artist-mythology was inspired by poets as Rimbaud, Blake and Dostovjevskij – as well as feeded by the contemporary heroes Dylan Thomas and Charlie Parker's desperate way of life, art and death.

In Denmark can be seen a parallel to this. While the young people's revolt was in full run last in the 1960's - accompanied by the rockmusic of the supergroups, there was in the inner of Copenhagen hold classic saloon. It was in Brolæggerstræde, where the classic pianist Klaus Heerfordt lived in an apartment with a grand piano as only furniture of value.

Klaus Heerfordt made his début in 1960 and was considered as an originally talent, but he was not able to create himself a career and live up to his ambitions. The disappointment was given expression through a wild, chaotic way of life together with other bohemians of the time.

He reached only to become 45 years, but he was remembered by the friends, who can tell about all the bizarre and high-flown hours in the small apartment, in the middle of the minefield of Copenhagen, as well as about his tragic decline and death.

The story is being told in a broadcasting. The montage was arranged by Peter Kristiansen, and won Prix Italia in 1989. One of the participants in the broadcasting is the philosopher and classic pianist Jurij Moskvitin, who has described his own creative inspirations and excesses in the self-portrait *The Deaf Saurian* (among other things, about his acquaintance with Karen Blixen). The Deaf Saurian is the snake from the Bible's salms, who don't hear God's voice, but undaunted go his own, sinful paths. Also Jurij Moskvitin has through a long life walked his own – and in the common society's eyes – very sinful paths. Into this self-portrait – autobiography, spiritual development-story and roguish novel in one – we see a human being come into existence: a human being with great ambitions about the brilliant and surprising breakthrough within music, philosophy, mathematics and life as such, but also with inclination for the destructive, the scandal and the grand wreck.

Alcohol and drug abuse differ from other forms of spiritual crises by, that the spiritual dimension often is veiled by the apparently destructive and self-destructive nature of the illness. In other forms of spiritual crises people get problems because of spiritual or mystical states of mind. In contrast to this there arise many difficulties under alcohol and drug abuse, because the search after the deeper dimensions in the inner not are being carried out.

Behind the strong longing after drugs, alcohol or other forms of abuse there is, for many people, a strong longing after the higher self or God.

Many people for example speak about the first drink as their first spiritual experience – a state where the individual borders are melting and everyday pain disappears, what brings them into a state of pseudo-unity.

Alcohol is in Latin "spiritus", and you therefore in fact use the same words, partially for the highest religious experience, partially for the most depraved poison. The strong longing after alcohol correspond on a low plane to our own being's spiritual longing after wholeness: the union with God.

The important role of the Ego-death under the above-mentioned forms of spiritual crises is a direct parallel to the alcoholic's experience of "hitting the bottom."

Under the Ego-death, whether it happens in connection with a spontaneous spiritual awakening, or when the life-course of a drunkard has reached the bottom, everything, what the person are or were, break together – all relationships and fixed points, all rationalizations and precautions – and the person is abandoned naked without anything else than his being's core.

From this state of absolute and appalling surrender you can only move upwards. As a part of rebirth, which follows after this devastating death, you easily open towards a spiritual oriented way of life.

All alcoholics experience an inner loss, a "spiritual bankruptcy", or a "soul-sickness", which cuts them off from their inner resources and from the world around them. They go into the dark night of the soul, and struggle with the same demons of fear, of loneliness, of insanity and of death, which are so common in other forms of spiritual crises.

No matter what the circumstances are, then each alcoholic gradually moves towards a total emotional, bodily and spiritual destruction. As this experience approaches, suicide often occurs to be the only way out of such a desperate dilemma; one, who is helpless caught in the spiral towards destruction, doesn't understand, that this inner death-process, this complete process of surrender, is the turning point, the gate to a new way of living: it is the favourable possibility and the right moment for Ego-suicide, which so often is being confused with physical suicide, the dark night, which comes before the dawn of healing.

Unfortunately many people quite literally play out the death-phase in this elementary process of death-rebirth and are being a part of the already alarming statistics over death in connection with alcohol and drugs.

The physical and psychic addiction chains you to it, as well as to the destructive and self-destructive behaviour, which implicit also is connected to it.

Moreover there are people, who are in one of the other forms of spiritual crises, who have turned themselves to addiction-creating drugs in attempts to relieve this intense period's stress.

When you are in a spiritual crisis, then this is a part of your lifesituation. Like this its intense stress has a past and a future. The past and the future forms an unbroken

continuum, a state of becoming something else than what you are, and where you therefore are without being. Alcohol, and some kind of drugs, can create a break in this continuum, where you get yourself some rest, but this is of course dangerous, because the tendency to misuse, and to become addicted, is great. There is a problematic balance (contradiction) between living a temporal (sinful) life with alcohol, and a spiritual life.

Other dangers are that it can activate the two major hindrances of the opening in towards the Source: the painbody and the Ego. The painbody, which, as an actor, can use all the masks and roles of negativity. The Ego, which can fly on "positivity", on "positive" feelings, on creativity, inspiration, plans, projects etc.

A self-deceit is for example that the energy you get available - if you have neutralized the painbody - hereupon can be turned into the Ego as "positivity". In reality there is talk about, that you, in an intoxication, are circling around your own past or future in an upward spiral, which with time will be contra-balanced as a wave.

Many alcoholics have a highly developed sensitivity, intuition or mystical nature, which other cultures strive after achieving, but which give them difficulties in the modern consumer culture, which therefore is contributive to their drug-abusing behaviour.

Consequences of consumer culture

According to the true spiritual traditions the movement of time is a power, an expression of energy, which follows certain laws. This power moves in wave movements, pendulum movements, in situation-movements, as well as in circulation movements. The universal energylaws in the movement of time are known as Tao, the Dharmalaw, Karma, Destiny, Hubris-nemesis, Logos, the Will of God, etc.

An example: Once your thoughts spread themselves too far out in an extreme, the energysystem 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 example 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 bigger the swing in the opposite direction becomes.

Now, if you test the consumer culture (which are based on management theories, and made propaganda for through coaching) in relation to this law, then it says as follows:

the ideals of 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 taking part in creating a swing over in stress, anxiety and depression.

The modern ideal about being a success, a winner, is, as the Danish life-philosopher Mogens Pahuus says, a perverted ideal. In our society rules a self assertion which has gone over the top, and in our society dominates a self assertion, which is a vice, because it both destroys the life of the self assertive, and the life of those, who the self assertive measures himself in relation to, and who he wants to surpass. It is by the way interesting, that what we today see as virtues (vanity, ambition, pride, joy of power) before was considered as deadly sins.

In a consumer culture everything (the ideals of perfectionism, winner, success) is measured depending on, whether it is interesting or boring, and there is no deeper considerations whether it has any other value than the possibility for making money. Aesthetics has therefore replaced ethics. The Sophists have returned. A consumer culture is in other words also a culture of boredom, a culture where everything is about fighting boredom, without being aware, that boredom is connected with the consumer culture, as the other side of a coin. And stagnation and boredom have been connected with lots of problems in the modern society, as for example drug abuse, alcohol abuse, smoking, anorexia, promiscuity, vandalism, depression, aggression, hostility, violence, suicide, risk behaviour etc. etc.

What apply for the individual person, apply by the way also for the collective and for nature. You can therefore also observe these energylaws in groups, societies, world images, yes in the whole of mankind, as well as in the universe.

Today the Ego-extreme reflects itself 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: all too many people are all too focused on their Ego; they accumulate energy to their Ego, to themselves; or to the family Ego/the company's Ego/the national Ego.

Now, if you look at the energylaw, then this is the energy in its one extremity. With necessity the energy will swing over in the opposite extreme. And this won't happen

in a quiet way, when you consider the enormous momentum which is in the actual extreme, and it will happen quite simple: through pollution of the environment, through diseases (aids, cancer and other) through war, terror, crises, inner mass psychotic collapses, and through natural disasters.

In its nature it is a manifestation of a collective spiritual crisis.

Conclusion

Seen from a spiritual viewpoint it is of vital importance, that you begin to practice Hara, if there, in your meditative practice, should occur phenomena similar to those in a spiritual crisis, no matter if you are in a crisis or not. This consists quite simple in stopping the fascination of the experiences (or the fear of them) and their temptations (the ability to create in reality), and instead focus the awareness in Hara, and therewith lead the awareness into your self. This will take the energy out of the phenomena, which will dissolve, and lead the consciousness towards the most universal images of time, which work in synchronism with the Now – and therefore towards the Source.

If you remain in, or explore the areas of time, which the phenomena gives access to, then you in other words distract your awareness in past or future. This costs awakeness and life energy, and can in addition cause Ego-inflation and other spiritual crises. However if you actually begin to practice Hara under a spiritual crisis then the crisis can have a healing and transformational value, which can give your spiritual development a considerable lift upwards.

Only in connection with, that the aspect of suffering contains a possibility of self-realization, you can speak about, that a spiritual crisis can have a transformational and healing potential. But it requires, that you have the tools to come out of the crisis again, and here can't any upward traditions be used. To this is needed a downward tradition, which you therefore just as well could have used from the beginning, without having wasted, perhaps half of your life.

The downward meditationtradition

All people in an intensive, spiritual training (no matter what tradition it belongs to) runs in a short time through a considerable amount of existential stuff, which is cause to suffering. This existential stuff lies in time and its images. Certainly you awake to a greater presence and a greater life-intensity. But this is also an awakening to your own and others, realized or unrealized, suffering.

However there is big difference between, whether the spiritual training develops into a spiritual crisis or not. The spiritual crisis is intimately tied up with the Ego, and therefore the identification with the thoughts, the painbody and the images of time. In this identification the mind is - when there is talk about a spiritual crisis - so to speak being flooded with experiences of *the contents* of time and its images, and you don't understand what is going on. And therewith you either have the Ego-inflation or the deep suffering.

However this doesn't happen, when the spiritual training goes off correct. And it is my experience, that the so-called downward meditation traditions are a much better securing towards spiritual crises than the upward meditation traditions.

The spiritual practice, which I in this article have described it, must necessarily come within a downward meditation tradition, where all creative up-tensions, through being in the Now, are relaxed away from the images of time. Being in the Now starts in Agna-chakra, with awareness-training (training of neutral observation). But the training of awareness must necessarily begin with focusing or concentration. And at this point there is a lot of pitfalls in meditation, because what shall you focus the consciousness on (a point between the eyes, a inner image, a chakra, an outer object, a mantra or a prayer)?

Through focus and concentration the energy-level is rising, and how do you secure, that this increased energy runs into the Now, and not into the thoughts and up in the head, with the risk of ending in a spiritual crisis? The head is in time, while the body is in the Now. Neutral observation must therefore be connected with the body. My own experiences with a spiritual crisis say me, that Hara-focusing is the best guarantee for, that the energy runs in the right course. And if the energy already circulates wrong (for example if you are in a spiritual crisis), then the training of Hara will correct this.

The energy flows in this practice back from the content-side of the chakras, towards their essence-side. In Agna-chakra the energy flows back from past and future, back from sorrows and bindings, plans and worries, into the Now and therefore down through the head, down into the body, from chakra to chakra, whilst the energy, which is tied in their content-side, is being released, moving inwards towards the essence: therefore from language to silence, from opposites to oneness, from emotions to being, from movement to the unmoved, from the manifested to the unmanifested. The body is being surrounded by the new energy's presence and joy of life. The whole thing happens through a melting, a letting go, a devotion (here the training of love and compassion will help, for example as in bhakti-yoga). And such has the progress for example also been described by the enlightened Indian master Sri

Aurobindo (and also by the enlightened Danish master Martinus). The chakra-process here goes off the other way round – from above and down.

It reminds about the third type of rising, the melting-rising, only the energy is not rising. But what is described as a static or frozen connection between the right and the left hemisphere of the brain, or as a static pattern of masculine and feminine energy in the fields above the crown center, this static, crystalline or frozen double field is being brought to melting, not by force of up-streaming energy, but by force of Relaxationmeditation, Hara meditation and Tonglen meditation jointly. The energy, which hereby is melting, flows down through the body and fills this up from below with a kind of feeling of bliss. The melting of the freezing in the head opens at the same time upwards, so that energy from the spiritual dimension can flow downwards.

When you practise in this way you don't transform your life with the wave movements of the energy. And in this spiritual safety you are present as a calmness, a resting, unaffected being present, who knows about the swings of the energy; who knows that the image doesn't correspond to reality, yes, who relates relatively to the relative and absolute to the absolute (that, which the indian philosopher Shankara called The Crown Jewel of Discrimination). This meditative being sees and accepts the energy-movements, but is not identical with them. It is a stable presence in the middle of the build-ups, breakings, peaks and sinks of the energy-waves (here the practice of karma-yoga can help).

This meditative being lies in a deep understanding and acceptance of time and its images – as well as of the regularity the energy follows. And therewith it finds itself in the middle of the stream of life, and is open for the Source of life.

The confrontation with time and its images - and therewith the existential stuff, that creates suffering - consists therefore in this state not in, that you open up for *the contents* of time and its images. The confrontation consists here in a realization (jnana-yoga) of *the essence/nature* of time and its images. The confrontation has thus a quite other healing and transformational value. You begin to get glimpses of the Source of life – the Good, the True and the Beautiful – because realization in itself is intimately tied up with this source. These glimpses are therefore a kind of gifts of graces from the Source.

Truth is in other words a pathless land. 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 *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.

We saw that the experiences of a spiritual crisis are accompanied by one, or more, of the following existential conditions: unreality, division, stagnation, anxiety or meaninglessness.

In a spiritual crisis these work as a part of your lifesituation. Like this a spiritual crisis has a past and a future. The past and the future in a spiritual crisis form an unbroken continuum, unless the Now's releasing power is activated through your aware presence: the spiritual practice. Behind all the different circumstances which constitute your lifesituation, and which exist in time, there in other words is something deeper, more essential: life itself, your being in the timeless Now itself.

If you activate this deeper dimension you will get the opposite categories: reality, cooperation, movement, safety and meaning.

Reality is middle, is fullness, lies in light. The middle is the quality, which lies in, that you are not decentralized, not apart from yourself, not absent from the actual. On the contrary you are in the middle of the actual.

Cooperation means that you think flexible, that you are capable always to look at the challenges from different viewpoints, for hereby to find a balance.

Movement has to do with, that you don't make resistance, that you transform the painbody's negative energyfield, so that the energy can flow unhindered through you. At the same time you open yourself to the life-source, which is the unmoved mover behind everything. And then you find yourself in the middle of the stream of life.

Safety means that you have found ground connection. The creative up-tension has become relaxed down into the earth through a melting, a letting go, a devotion. The world has become a place where you feel at home. You are free and filled with lifecourage.

Meaning arises when the energy flows backwards from the past and the future, and fills the Now with presence, and therefore with joy of life. You are present in the Now with *the whole of* yourself, in the self-forgetful openness and devotion to the world. The Now is awareness. Life itself is openness and therefore love. The Now and life itself is the same. In this way you discover, that the meaning of life is to

express the awareness and the love which both are the essence in yourself and the essence behind everything else – the Source.

The value of religion and supporting exercises

The essential by the spiritual practice is, that it is a philosophical art of life.

A life, which is without any kind of philosophical teaching and practice, means that you don't have your thinking with you in your conduct 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 seeks 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 rises from some collective and universal images, that flow in the movement of time. They are therefore not just subjective, but also objective. Nonetheless they are connected with the thinking. They are the structure under the thinking, or the ordinary consciousness.

The thinking consists partly of time, partly of opposites.

The production of the reality of the self-image and the world-image is an ongoing attempt to become something else than what you are, a movement in time, from past towards future. It is the eternal recurrence of the same, a stream of images, which manifest themselves as symbols, memories, conceptions, ideas. In these the thinking has its norms and values, ideals and experiences.

And in order to understand, the thinking tends towards division: 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 observer, sceptic or calculator (the Ego), who places himself outside the person or outside 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 is, that it is a form of intellectual secureness or safety, which is created on the background of an escape from anxiety, or from what you are, and this is exactly the cause to the separation of the observer and the observed, which increases the anxiety. It is a vicious circle.

This process, the process of unreality, has been described by different authors, for example in Albert Camus' *The Stranger*, Baudelaire's *The Flowers of Evil*, Dostovjevskij's *Notes from an Underground*, Franz Kafka's *The Castle*. In the art of painting you can see it depicted, for example by Cezanne, Van Gogh, Picasso.

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

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.

It is 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 to persons, things and ideas.

In my book **Meditation as an art of life – a basic reader** (WingSpan Press 2009), I have described five supporting exercises. They are as follows:

1. The Relaxationmeditation
2. The Hameditation
3. The Heartmeditation
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 (this of course demands, that it is a religion, which have a spiritual tradition – see introduction to this book). 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 - (because when being a member you quickly will feel obliged to defend all the human misuse, that always happens within a manmade system). – 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. Can for example be seen reflected in the monastic vows: poverty, chastity and obedience.
3. *Pranayama*: mastery of breathing and through that: 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. Corresponds 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. Corresponds 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.

The supporting exercises of the Stoics consisted in 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.

In all the great wisdomtraditions on Earth they have realized the necessity of stabilizing the spiritual process by having an ongoing religion and some continuous supporting exercises. Especially today - in our postmodernistic, narcissistic society - it is a great lack that the religions have lost their importance as frame for a continuous and ongoing spiritual practice.

The great Tibetan meditation-master Sogyal Rinpoche says in his book *The Tibetan book of Living and Dying*:

"The most important is to avoid to get caught in the "shopping mentality", I see everywhere in the West: to "go shopping" from master to master, from teaching to teaching, without any continuity or ongoing practice. Almost all masters in all traditions agree, that the essential is to master one path to truth, and this you do by following this path to the end with heart and mind, at the same time as you relate open and respectful towards others and others' insights."

Why do the great spiritual training-systems all insist on the necessity of an ongoing religion and some continuous supporting exercises?

There are two main reasons. The one is, that all human beings already practise a kind of Ego-religion and Ego-exercise (the Ego's eternal self-circling thought-activity),

which spiritual seen is inappropriate. The other reason is, that there in us exists an inertia, which opposes the spiritual process of awakening.

Partly religion and supporting exercises shall replace the spiritual seen inappropriate forms of Ego-exercises, partly the inertia has to be cultivated and purified.

What do the Ego-religion and the Ego-exercises consist in? They consist in the Ego's constant circling around all the various inappropriate basic assumptions, rules of living, thought-distortions, negative automatic thoughts, values, ideals and conceptions, which constitute the Ego and the painbody.

This kind of Ego-religion, or Ego-exercises, constitutes especially 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 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.
- 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 to the ignorance about the Source of life. Ignorance is again the cause of suffering. In this way religion and supporting exercises, and later the practice of asking philosophical questions in a meditative-existential way, is a practice, which helps you to correct this malfunction.

In that way you can conversely, when you have started this 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.

The Ego-religion and the Ego-exercises are therefore the Ego's incessant confirmation or denial of the Ego: "it is no use with me!"; or: "wonderful me!". Both, either the denial or confirmation of the Ego, maintain the Ego-process, the Ego-identity and the Ego-centralization. The Ego's religion and exercises are the Ego's needs and longings and will: I want to, I think, I believe, I feel, I wish, I hope, I think, I believe, I feel, I wish, or, in its most common core: I, I, I....

In spite of the fact that a person is sitting quietly and is meditating a hour or two each and every day, then the same person will discover, that all the rest of the 23 or 22 hours in the day and night, on the whole still is being used in a dual Ego-like way of life.

The stream of thoughts itself is a continuous self-producing exercise to maintenance of the dual and fundamentally seen Egocentrically life style (the Ego-religion). The eternal traffic of the thoughts confirms and maintains the dual reality-interpretation of the Ego as substance and center - the reality of the self-image and the world-image, which distorts and twists truth and reality itself.

To ask philosophical questions in a meditative-existential way, silence, or meditation, are phenomena, which first can unfold and bloom, when the mind has learned itself to know that much, that it can begin to control itself.

Religion and supporting exercises are being brought into competition with, and as alternative to, the thought-traffic. It is hopeless to try to fight the mind. You must first find a reasonable living arrangement, where you little by little introduce a spiritual theme in the ordinary busyness and diversity of the mind. Religion and supporting exercises function in that way as a spiritual alternative to the Ego's dual religion and exercises.

Religion, and therewith spiritual directed supporting exercises, replaces quite carefully and slowly the Ego's dual religion and exercises. Long training. Great patience. Many years. Little by little religion and supporting exercises are being brought into the everyday activity. You connect the religion and the supporting exercises – by doing them – with any imaginable modification in your day: when you walk, when you sit, when you lie and stand, on holiday and in danger. When you wake up, when you fall asleep, during dishwashing, in the bathroom, on toilet, when you are cooking, when you are happy, sick, tired, angry; laughing, crying, making love, quarrelling. In all situations you slowly weave the religion and the supporting exercises in. And slowly the spiritual direction and remembrance therefore penetrates your concrete daily life.

The other main reason to, that religion and supporting exercises are a necessity, is our dark, ancient inertia towards waking more up. The West has very precisely called this factor the original sin. The East has called it negative karma. The concepts indicate, that the inertia projects beyond the personal time (growing up conditions, traumatic bindings, painful experiences etc.) and far down into the collective inheritance-backgrounds of time (genes, environment, society-ideals, the archetypes and the primordial images of the dreams, fantasies, fairy-tales, myths, and finally: instincts inherited from the animals). It is a factor, which lies in the evolution itself, in the genes, in the collective subconscious.

Western evolution-hypothetical seen, then life has survived through a line of strategies, which has shown appropriate. For instance our instinctive evaluation of, whether someone is friend or enemy, whether something is a threat or can serve life. An animal knows, whether something in nature is eatable or toxic. A bird can inherit knowledge about, that a certain bird of prey-silhouette is life-threatening, so just a sensed shadow in this form provokes escape. And Man – and the lion and the mouse - has survived by developing and cultivating the focusing-ability.

When therefore spirituality requires a non-evaluating, defocused, open, surrendered consciousness, then the instinctive survival-preparedness in us reacts and protests. Man has survived on willfulness and a consciousness-structure, which mental and psychic sign is Egocentredness. The bigger Ego, the bigger survival chance.

Seen from a spiritual perspective, this instinctive survival strategy (the Ego) appears as a resistance, an invincible inertia: original sin, negative karma.

If a human being for real should have hopes for re-encoding this instinct-anchored (animal-like) behaviour-pattern, then this demands a radical reorganization of the mind and the thoughts. The consciousness have to train the use of its higher functions

(relaxfullness, awareness, heartfullness, asking philosophical questions in a meditative-existential way, silence) by de-teaching the, for the Ego, necessary, and by the evolution, approved functions (evaluation, focusing, action, language-creating). And this is not practical possible without a long-term pedagogy, which uses religion and supporting exercises.

In order to convert or purify the evolutionary inertia, religion and supporting exercises are used. You can't, by therapeutic strategies, free the consciousness for its attachment to this inertia. You can therefore not dissolve or dilute or convert the original sin by therapy. Only the intervention of the Source (God, Christ, the enlightened consciousness) can basically help Man with a transcendence of the negative karma of the original sin. But in order to, that a human being should be able to receive this help from the Source (gift of grace), then this requires an eminently precise and profound preparation. And as part of this preparation religion and supporting exercises serve.

The ordinary Ego-consciousness functions by being identified with the physical world, with instincts, sexuality, emotions and collective ideals. Religion and supporting exercises work through these aspects by means of, for example the core which exists in the basic monastic vows: poverty, chastity and obedience. These promises work with a restructuring of the Ego's ownership to things, food and power, and they re-structure sexuality and emotions. First thereafter the mystical process can begin. No kind of therapy can bring about this.

It is obvious correct, that the Source - God, Christ, the saints, the enlightened on this earth - eliminates original sin and negative karma. But it is just as evident – and we can all see this every day in the media – that this helps nothing at all, unless each person himself helps by doing realization work and ethical practice. In spite of the fact, that this earth has seen a line of enlightened teachers (Rumi, Krishna, Buddha, Christ, Francis, Rabia, Meera, Yeshe Tsogyel, Teresa etc etc.) and in spite of the fact that they all, after capacity and calibre, take upon themselves the original sin and cleanses it for the others of us, then this helps nothing, if each person doesn't help. Only there, where an individual do his part of the work (religion and supporting exercises, realization work and ethical practice) there it again and again shows, that in that moment, when the mystery opens itself, then the Source has already cleaned the negative karma and taken upon itself, and forgiven, the original sin. But this divine function can only be unfolded, when the individual human being has made himself ready through his existential transformation work.

Religion and supporting exercises cleanses and prepares transformation on a collective, unconscious-instinctive, level.

The two main reasons why religion and supporting exercises is a necessity is therefore partly, that the ongoing self-confirmation of the dual consciousness, is replaced by a spiritual remembrance, partly that the collective inertia is purified and prepared, so that the Ego is made transparent along with that original sin and negative karma are transformed and transfigured in the contact with the Source (God, Christ, the enlightened consciousness, the saints etc.) And these two processes mutually fertilize each other.

As the religion and the supporting exercises deepen, the consciousness is transformed, and the different layers and levels of time (personal, collective, and universal), become unveiled in the consciousness' path towards realization of its spiritual essence.

In other words: when you move further into the mystical process, deeper layers of the structure of the consciousness uncover. Deeper and deeper layers, more and more unpersonal and collective – and therefore philosophical. From the sleep of the wholeness, over the dream of the wholeness, until the wholeness is awake. The language is diluted, the images evaporate, the religion and the supporting exercises become more and more word- and imageless. You move beyond the relative and limited concepts of the religion, and are more and more present in silence and openness. And from this open Now compassion and love begin to flow. In this open silence you can begin to receive gifts of grace from the Source. Miracles can occur.

The three aspects of meditation

The three aspects of meditation are relaxfullness, awareness and heartfullness.

Though meditation is a constant process, which takes place all day through, and actual also in the night in the dreams (Dream Yoga), then there are some supporting exercises, which can be limited to some specific moments. You can for example train relaxfullness through a special relaxation exercise. Awareness can be trained through Hara practice, and heartfullness through Tonglen practice.

You can concretely say, that a person, who really wants to experience an existential transformation process, shall reckon in, during a number of years (besides the constant self-inquiring practice in leading the philosophical diary), to practise the supporting exercises about 2 hours a day (The Philosophical Diary is described in my book **Meditation as an Art of Life – a basic reader**)

I myself have good experiences with the following program for the supporting exercises:

Morning: 1½ hour practice. The first hour goes with Hara practice, and the last half hour with Tonglen practice (however the focusing in Hara is continuing during the day no matter what I do).

Evening: Before dinner I practise Hatha-yoga. However I only practise the stretching-exercises, and leave out the special yoga-breathing (Pranayama), because it can be dangerous. But I consider the stretching-exercises in Hatha-yoga to be the very best mean to keep the body flexible and healthy. And that the body is flexible is an absolute necessity in a spiritual practice, where you begin to get an increased flow through of energy. So I can only recommend, that you learn some simple yoga stretching exercises.

After the stretching-exercises I practise relaxation for about 20-30 minutes.

So if you want results it is necessary that you as quickly as possible get the timescale of supporting exercises up to about 2 hours daily. In connection with Meditation as an Art of Life there is nothing that says, that you as a beginner have to start with a lesser timescale. However it is clear, that there will be a period of transition, where you learn to know the exercises, and where you of course can't practise so intensive.

The first aspect of meditation: Relaxfullness

We begin with the relaxation exercise. Relaxfullness is both physical relaxfullness and a relaxed mind. The relaxation begins concrete bodily by allowing loosening of the un-necessary muscular tensions. This happens in the progressive relaxation. But the relaxationprocess continues into the mind, and into the life of the will. This happens in the depth-relaxation.

If you are very stressed, anxious or tense, the exercise can be practised 3-4 times a day. Be sure that the feet are warm. Use for example a hot footbath or a carpet.

Place yourself on the back on a good supporting surface (hard mattress or the floor), with the legs slightly spread and relaxed (you can also sit in a chair and do the exercise). The relaxation begins with *progressive relaxation*. The body is divided into a series of muscle-groups. Each muscle-group is tauten and relaxed by turns.

- Clench the right hand, and feel the tension in the hand and in your forearm. Hold it tighten in 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 seconds, and then relax. Wait 10-15 seconds.
- Clench the left hand, and feel the tension in the hand and your forearm. Hold it tighten in 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 seconds, and then relax. Wait 10-15 seconds.
- Bend the right elbow, and tighten the muscles in the upper arm, while the hand keeps on being relaxed. Hold them tighten in 5 seconds, and hereafter relax in 10-15 seconds.
- Bend the left elbow, and tighten the muscles in the upper arm, while the hand keeps on being relaxed. Hold them tighten in 5 seconds, and hereafter relax in 10-15 seconds.
- Stretch the right leg, and bend the right foot and toes upwards. Hold the muscles in the muscle of the calf tighten in 5 seconds, and hereafter relax in 10-15 seconds.
- Stretch the left leg, and bend the left foot and toes upwards. Hold the muscles in the muscle of the calf tighten in 5 seconds, and hereafter relax in 10-15 seconds.
- Tighten the thigh muscles in the right leg by pressing the knees together, without that they touch each other. Hold the tension in 5 seconds, and relax in 10-15 seconds.
- Tighten the thigh muscles in the left leg by pressing the knees together, without that they touch each other. Hold the tension in 5 seconds, and relax in 10-15 sec.
- Take a deep inhalation, and pull the stomach completely in. Tight at the same time the muscles in the bottom of the back. Hold the tension in 5 seconds, and relax in 10-15 seconds.
- Hold the breathing, and tighten hereby the muscles in the chest. Hold the tension in 5 seconds, and relax in 10-15 seconds.
- Shake the shoulders, and pull hereafter the shoulders all the way up to the ears, so that the shoulder- and neckmuscles are tauten. Hold the tension in 5 seconds, and hereafter relax in 10-15 seconds.
- Press the back of the neck against the floor, and tighten hereby the neckmuscles. Hold the tension in 5 seconds, and hereafter relax in 10-15 seconds.
- Press the lips together, and bite the teeth together, so that the jawmusculature is tauten. Hold the tension, while you are breathing silent and calmly in 5 seconds. Let go, and relax in 10-15 seconds.
- Pinch the eyes together in 5 seconds. Relax in 10-15 seconds.
- Furrow the forehead by lifting the eyebrows. Hold the tension in 5 seconds, and hereafter relax in 10-15 seconds.

- Pull the eyebrows together down over the eyes. Hold the tension in 5 seconds, and hereafter relax in 10-15 seconds.

If there is a special part of the body, which gives you problems, you can repeat the tension and the relaxation there.

Hereafter you depth-relax the whole the body. Let the arms lie comfortably in a natural distance from the body and down along it with the palms upwards. But if you don't think this is comfortably, just place the arms in a different way, or move their position from time to time. If the awareness on your tensions leads to more tension, then try to lie and move the arms back-and-forth, shake them, hold them for example a few seconds over your head, stroke them with your hands, massage the face, change their position with regular interval. This helps you to lead focus away from tensions. Finally you will be able to relax completely.

Let the head rest comfortably, where it feels best, for example on a soft underlay. Let the breathing become silent by itself, and then begin to breathe from Hara (explained later). Let the diaphragm steer the breathing-rythm.

Also let the mind become silent, and be neutral observing. Now let this awareness relax each and every part of the body, from feet to head. Be especially aware on the face, the eyes, the mouth, the tongue and the throat. Let the lower jaw droop a bit. Let a pleasant weight descend over the bodyparts, which the awareness is directed towards. Imagine that the bodyparts become so heavy that they sink down into the floor. Now let go of the exertion of your will.

Every exertion of the will (ambition, project, concentration) is in the meditative art of life inappropriate. It is therefore the wisdomtraditions always have recommended the simple life. And it is in connection with this, that you probably will meet the first big obstacle in your meditative quest. The simple life is namely a life, which our consumer-society will sneer of. In a consumer-society the ideal life is a constant growing consume-capacity, and therefore a life where you all the time have to be future-oriented and in progress with new projects. So if you seriously want to go in depth with the meditative art of life, but don't feel you have the time for it, that your life don't allow you to relax your will and your projects, yes, then it is necessary that you take your life up to consideration. Either you begin to simplify your life – which can imply big changes – or else you continue as always.

Back to the relaxation-exercise. When you register performance, when your mind wants to make an effort, then it is about, that you loosen off the tension of the will. This letting go, in relation to tension, refines your ability to perceive and feel more

subtle patterns of tension. You discover, that also thoughts and images are due to tension. And you discover that thoughts and images lie in time, that they arise whenever you are absent in the past or the future.

Thoughts and images (both personal and collective) are form-formations of energy. And form-formations are creative up-tensions. They both exist around you in fascinating mandala-structures, and in your body. These form-up-tensions you have to permit to loosen up during the training.

Now stay lying in the Relaxationmeditation for about 20-30 minutes.

The second aspect of meditation: Awareness

The best way to train awareness is through Hara practice. Hara practice consists in two parts:

1. The sitting Hara practice
2. The walking Hara practice

The sitting Hara practice

To be practised each morning, preferable right from the very moment you open the eyes, because it is here your absent-minded thought-activity starts with new strength.

The Chinese philosopher Lao Tzu said, that the wise rules by emptying the mind and filling the stomach. Here he refers to the concept Hara (in Chinese: Tan Tien). A help to carry the awareness with you out in the everyday life, out in action, is Hara. In Taoism and Zen Buddhism, you therefore practise focusing in Hara as basis for maintaining the awareness in action and everyday life.

The training of awareness must necessarily begin with focusing or concentration. And at this point there are a lot of pitfalls in meditation, because what shall you focus your consciousness at (a point between the eyes, an inner image, a chakra, an outer object, a mantra or a prayer)? Through focus and concentration the energy level is rising, and how do you secure, that this increased energy flows into the Now, and not into the thoughts and up in the head, with the risk of ending up in a spiritual crisis? My own experiences with a spiritual crisis tell me, that Hara-focusing is the best guarantee, that the energy flows in the right direction. And if the energy already circulates wrong, then the training of Hara will correct this. Hara is in other words the absolute central entrance to the Now, and therefore an existential necessity for

balance and life-unfolding. This is valid for all people, so therefore you might just as well from the start have Hara with you in your awareness-training.

Hara is your vital centre, an area in the body, a centre of gravity, which main center is situated about 4-5 cm under the navel, inside the front body. In Japanese Hara not only means stomach in anatomically sense, but has existential meaning. Hara is therefore not a chakra (psychic centre). Here I think about *Svadhithana* and/or *Manipura* (see my article *The Spiritual Crisis*). This has to be emphasized, because in a part of the modern time's New age-ideology there rules the idea, that Hara is a bodily focus-spot in line with those Chakras, you find in the Tantric yogis' description of, how the thoughts reflect themselves in the human body in form of energy-spots – that is: the misunderstanding, that Hara just is a centre on the way towards higher lying chakras.

No, Hara neither means anything subjective or objective, but that experience of life-feeling, spontaneity and selfforgetfulness you are in, when you are entirely existentially present in the Now. In Hara you are in the middle of the Now, in the middle of the actual, in the middle of the stream of life, and therefore open for the Source of Life, which is the Good, the True and the Beautiful. Hara is the quintessence of grounding or ground connection, and your natural balancing energy-distributer.

The concept of Hara is also known in the Hesycastic mysticism. The Hesycasts (Omphalos Psychism) is an order at Athos, who with the chin supported at the breast look at their navel, until they see the uncreated light.

Place yourself in a chair where you for example can sit and look out of a window. Keep your eyes open. Be sure that the feet are warm. This is an extremely important point. Under meditation the feet must in no circumstances be refrigerate, just as well as the head never must be warm. The feet *must* be warm, as well as the head *must* be cool. This is some extremely important signals to be aware of, because they signal whether your meditation (energy) goes off correct – and actual quite simple.

Use for example a warm footbath, or a blanket. Regardless whether you suffer from cold feet or not, it is a good idea always to practise the exercise with your feet in a warm footbath, since it improves the ground connection (unless your feet are very warm). A warm footbath is, by the way, also an excellent simple remedy against every kind of stress, anxiety and depression.

It is important, that you are sitting comfortably. You can in other words easily sit well laid-back in an armchair while you are meditating. Yet be sure, as far as possible, that

the spiral column is straight, in the sense that you are not sitting leaned out to one of the sides. You can also very well sit and drink your coffee or tea at the same time. An idea about, that you have to sit in one or the other uncomfortable meditation-position, can in other words directly spoil your meditative development. You can waste several years of meditation by forcing yourself to sit in an uncomfortable meditation-position.

As mentioned, then the eyes have to be open. You can very well shut them from time to time, in order to get into the mood, but generally they have to be open. This is a meditationtradition known from the Tibetan Buddhism (on the sculptures you can see, that Buddha is sitting with open eyes and with a hand placed at Hara). The reason is, that meditation must not be an escape from the world, but an *investigation* of the world. You have to carry meditation with you out into the everyday life, and if you are used to practise with closed eyes, then there is a tendency to create a contradiction between the meditation-state and the everyday life.

To meditate with open eyes moreover hinders, that the awareness-training ends up in a tense focused concentration, which basically closes your consciousness. A real meditative development moves itself from the focused consciousness of the neutral observation towards a relaxed, de-focused awareness which opens your consciousness, both into yourself, but also out towards the world. And it is precisely in this wordless silence, you in wonder begin to philosophize in a meditative-existential way.

Let your awareness rest in Hara. Imagine, that you are breathing from Hara, the point 4-5 cm under the navel. Imagine, that you are inhaling through this point, and that you are expiring through this point. Place for example a hand over Hara in order to feel it. Breathe normally, *not* deeper, slower, or in any other way than normally – again very important to emphasize, because there exists a lot of deceptive literary about breathing-techniques. Just let the mind be neutral observing. Let the diaphragm steer the breathing-rythm. Feel the stomach lift and sink at inhalation and exhalation.

Let gradually the breathing become increasingly fine, increasingly silent, - yes, as silent as possible, - until it only is reflexive, and functions "by itself". Try for example to take a short pause in the breathing, for, in this way, to watch how it is getting going by itself. Now observe neutral how the breathing functions "by itself".

It is also a good idea from time to time to take a deep inhalation, where you fill the chest out. Take a deep inhalation on smells, sounds, sensations. Fill the lungs entirely out with these sensations. Feel the Now in the inhalation, and in this way let yourself out from the thoughts.

Let at the same time the mind become silent in neutral observation. Let sensations, thoughts and feelings come and go, but don't evaluate them or follow them into the past or the future. Just be a witness. Become absolutely silent. Put notice to how you can experience the world at the same time as being focused in Hara.

If you are in a difficult problem-situation you can try to vary the awareness-training using *The four Awareness-variants*:

1. *The observation-variant*, which implies to register, what is happening in the moment, without making attempts to change anything or leave the situation. You take a mentally step back and observe yourself and what is happening. You make use of your senses; you listen, watch, feel after, and register smells. You sense, how the feelings increase in strength for hereafter to decrease, whereafter other feelings arise. You notice, that different body-sensations follow these feelings. You register thoughts come and go as clouds drifting past on the sky. You try not to change anything or control anything. Thereby you avoid getting caught by the past and the future in your reactions (because a difficult problem-situation only exists in time).
2. *The description-variant*, which implies putting words on what you observe and sense. When a feeling, idea or body-sensation arise, you give it a designation, for example by saying "I become unhappy", "I tense in the shoulders" or "the thought 'I can't' went through my head". You name a feeling or call a thought a thought. You try to avoid to get caught by the contents in what you feel and think. In this way you remain in the observing role. Thoughts are not facts, nor feelings. A feeling of fear doesn't necessarily mean, that the situation is dangerous, and a feeling of being rejected is not a proof, that someone doesn't like you.
3. *The openness-variant*, which implies, that you omit judging yourself or others as good or bad. You don't judge. You wait forming yourself a certain opinion and instead you direct the awareness towards the consequences of what is happening. You have for example made a mistake, but instead of branding yourself because of what you have made, you examine the consequences of the mistake, and what can be done to reduce the adverse effects. Don't think about, what you "ought" or "not ought" to do, what is "right" or "wrong", "just" or "unjust". You rather ought, as well as you can, to concentrate about doing what the situation actual requires, use the existent possibilities and act in a way, which feels natural.

4. *The de-centrering variant*, which is forwarded by training yourself in seeing the situation through the eyes of others. The intention is to strengthen the ability to discriminate between incident and reaction and to experience, how you contribute in creating your own reality: How could a friend or girlfriend have described this situation? How could a spiritual teacher (for example Dalai Lama) have described it? How could a film director or journalist have depicted what is happening right now? Or, as we all know, to see it through humoristic eyes – think about Peter Sellers or John Cleese!

In the start the awareness-training will be characterized by, that you again and again discover, that you already long ago have absented in your thoughts by evaluating, comparing, hoping and worrying, that you again and again are being distracted by the thoughts. Don't get impatient because of this tendency, for it is an important part of the realization-aspect of the training. What it is about, is that you become aware of this fact, and sober-minded again and again take yourself out of this already automatically confirmed stream of words and images. It was this practice Shankara called the Crown jewel of Discrimination. Day by day, year out and year in, it is necessary to keep the Crown jewel of Discrimination clear. This is done by discriminating between neutral observation and distraction, again and again.

Since Hara practice in the start still will be a focused, mental activity, and not a being-activity, you also have to be prepared, that the meditationsprocess in the start still will be subject to the energy-laws. You'll for example still experience wavecrests and troughs of the waves in your meditative experiences, good mood and bad mood, etc. Here it is just about remembering the energy-laws, and not letting yourself be carried away by the energy-swings.

In this is also involved, that you begin to wake up to your own, and others, realized or unrealized suffering, which can be experienced as increased suffering – you might very well be close to a breakthrough, and at the same time seen as unstable in the eyes of others (an example is the beginning of Francis of Assisi's life.)

If you under the meditation become dull and drowsy, then try to look straight out in the room in front of you. You can also very well stand up and walk around a bit, as long as you maintain the neutral observation. Be also aware, if you have had enough sleep. If you are troubled, then try to look down at the floor two meters in front of you, or look directly at Hara and the stomach. You can for example try to shut the eyes. Yet remember, that you most of the time should keep the eyes open.

If the thoughts can't be silent at all, then write them down. Have a block of paper and a pen lying beside you when you are meditating. This is an old technique to finish the

stream of thoughts, which for example also Krishnamurti recommended. Just let the thoughts bloom as they will, but write them down in time with, that they arise in your mind. Don't evaluate what you write. Write all thoughts down, regardless how trivial, incoherent or foolish they occur to you. Continue until they fall to calmness.

Later in your meditation practice you will probably discover, that this writing exercise, because of returning negative feelings, necessarily must develop into an actual philosophical investigation! As your meditation practice proceeds forward your personally thoughts will begin to open themselves for the original images, yes, your thoughts will also become characterized by more common and universal questions: How does Man preserve peace of mind and balance in all the relationships of life? How do we learn to appreciate the true goods and flout all transient and vain goals? Is the destiny of Man part in a larger plan?

The walking Hara practice

The English author Bruce Chatwin had an intuitive feeling of the spirituality of walking, which he again and again described in his books, for example in the book *The Songlines*. And of course the spirituality of walking also is known from the pilgrimage.

All kind of action, work and everyday life can namely be done meditative. It can be done with love and awareness in the Now. It can be supplied with a new quality, where it goes from something you have to get over, to a possibility of finding inner calmness and energy. Children are natural centered in Hara, the body's reservoir of energy and life-joy. It is therefore they do things with an incredible lot of joy and vitality. To work with centring in Hara means that you become like a child again.

There are two fundamentally different ways of using the body. The one is performance-oriented, where you in a certain physical activity have to achieve something or acquire something. The second is about being physical active with a meditative mind. Here you also can achieve something, but rather than being focused on the goal, you are present in the moment of action. You *are* your activity.

By focusing the awareness in Hara, by letting the consciousness rest in this point when you are standing, moving, working and functioning in the everyday life, the body will by itself go into another balance, and existentially you will be more present and real in the Now.

The walking Hara practice is as follows: When you for example is out going for a walk, then let your consciousness rest in Hara. Let the mind be neutral observing. Let

sensations, thoughts and feelings come and go, but don't evaluate them or follow them into the past or the future. Just be a witness.

Whenever broodings over the past, or worries over the future, automates your awareness, gently bring the full awareness back to the Now. Again and again. Use smells, sounds and visual impressions as entrances to the Now. Take a deep inhalation from time to time, where you fill the whole of the breast out. Let all the negative thoughts out in the expiration.

The following five points can be used as a kind of memory-rules for Hara practice in connection with pain management; a so-called "pain-mantra":

1. To be able to do one thing at a time
2. To be able to focus the full awareness on what you do
3. To be able to bring the full awareness back to the Now, when broodings over the past, or worries for the future, automate your awareness, and make you vulnerable for pressure.
4. To be able to focus the awareness more intensively and long in Hara, the more difficult it occur you to bring the awareness back to the Now.
5. To be able to recognize the origin of the suffering in the past and the future, and know, that full awareness in the Now gives you degrees of freedom under pressure.

The third aspect of meditation: Heartfulness

Heartfulness can be trained through the Tonglen practice.

Awareness seems to be a quality of the Now, but since the complete existential presence in the Now is equivalent with self-forgetful openness and absorption in life itself, then love *also* is a quality of the Now. It is the heart's cooperation and spontaneous openness, which give practice the right direction. The emphatic feelings: gratitude, compassion, faith, and devotion - are the steering, which – combined with Hara's grounding - secure, that the awareness-training do not end up in the head and becomes an intellectual or mental thing. And the heartfeelings are the instance, that leads the released energy away from the relaxationprocess, away from sleep and away from the Ego, towards compassionated openness in the Now.

Again it ought to be emphasized, that the heart in this connection has nothing to do with a chakra (psychical centre). Here I think of *Anahata* (see my article *the Spiritual Crisis*). This shall again be emphasized, because there also in a part of the temporal New age ideology rules the idea, that the heart is a bodily focus-spot in line with those Chakras, which you find in the Tantric yogis' description of, how the thoughts reflect themselves in the human body in form of energy-spots.

This would mean, that the heart should be a centre on the way towards something even higher? No, the heart has existential-ethical meaning, and functions, in cooperation with the relaxfullness and the awareness, as a tool, which opens your consciousness in towards the Source, and therefore also out towards life itself.

Where the Hara meditation is about creating an entrance into the Now through concentrating and focusing the consciousness in Hara, then the Heartmeditation briefly is about training the self-forgetful openness in the Now itself. This self-forgetful openness is the same as a consciousness, which is completely de-focused – a pure awareness, which seems to be a quality of the Now, and therefore of life itself. And this is precisely love. Awareness and love flows in this way into each other in an essential *being*.

The actual spontaneous appearance and stream of heartfeelings is therefore the crucial indication, that your training-intention has become *existential* reality. Heartfeelings are in other words not an entrance into the Now, as Hara is. The heartfeelings are coming from the Now, or rather, from the actual Source, because the consciousness is open. When the consciousness is open it is de-focused, and this is again connected with, that it both is directed into yourself, and out towards the world. It has become *spacious*, all-inclusive. And this spaciousness is the same as silence. And it is in this wordless silence that the great wonder arises; the wonder in which you ask the philosophical questions in a meditative-existential way.

In connection with the Heartmeditation you can in this way talk about wordless prayer. The wordless prayer is a philosophical questioning after the Source of the heartfeelings. In the heartfeeling you open yourself in wonder and silence, not only out towards the heartfeeling and its object, but also in towards the Source of the heartfeeling. You are therefore not only wordless open in the direction the heartfeeling flows (towards the object, the suffering person, the love-partner, God), but also wordless open towards the Source from where the heartfeeling is coming. It can all briefly be described as silence. You can't understand it by analysing or thinking. Don't do that! You have to experience it.

It is a bit misleading to call heartfeelings feelings, because they rather have something to do with space, being and clarity. This is necessary to emphasize because you must never confuse heartfeelings with sentimentality, daydream, excitability etc. These things namely often rise direct from thought-distortions. In my philosophical practice I have met incredibly many people, whose spirituality has become distorted by such things. People, who contrary to their ideas about themselves, can be a direct nuisance to their surroundings.

One of the most common traits in our idea- and mentality-history, is a constant change between a priority of the rational, the harmonical well-arranged, the controlled, and, on the other hand, the emphasize on the value and right of the feelings: Rationalism and the Age of Enlightenment are followed by the sensitive time and by Sturm und Drang (1700-1800). Realism, positivism and faith in the rational improvement are followed by symbolism and irrationalism (1870-1900).

As the Danish philosopher 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 in our culture-history has met this idea. Already in ancient Greece was formulated the thought about a combination of the Apollonian and the Dionysian – a thought which came into expression in the organization of the Apollon temple in Delphi, which – under impression of the Dionysian fertility cult, that victorious forced itself forward from Asia Minor – was changed into a temple, which one half of the year was devoted to Apollo, the god of sun, light, order, control, and the other half of the year to Dionysus, the god of wine and fertility.

Such a synthesis of reason and feeling is precisely to be found in Meditation as an Art of Life, where you, by combining the philosophical question's self-inquiring practice with supporting exercises, gradually achieve to see complete with the mind and the heart; which means: where awareness and passion constitute an oneness.

Such a synthesis you can also find in Herman Hesse's novel *Guldmund and Narcissus*, where Hesse pictures two friends which are pure examples of a man of reason, and a man of feelings respectively: Narcissus and Guldmund, the theorist and the dreamer, the thinker and the artist. Two human beings, whose lives without each other are characterized by absence and unreality; the one of them conscious evaluating, the other of them unconscious dreaming. The one of them conscious by experiencing himself as a theorist in relation to his own life. The other of them unconscious by being beside himself in experiences and intoxication. Only in synthesis they can become real and present, by learning something of each other.

So heartfeelings are not feelings in ordinary sense. They are rather, as the Danish philosopher Løgstrup says, sovereign and spontaneous life-expressions. The sovereign life-expressions are, among other things: love, mercifulness, trust and the openness of the speech. Being together breaks without trust, speech is being distorted without openness and becomes superficial or insincere.

The sovereign life-expressions are, according to Løgstrup, spontaneous in the sense, that they are unforced and without ulterior motives. There can't be given reasons for them and they can't be made into means for something else. They are sovereign in the sense, that the actions of the life-expression are not determined reactions, but precisely actions where you intervene actively in, and change the situation. They are also sovereign in the sense, that in them you are spontaneous in accordance with yourself. In love you fill yourself in full.

Moreover Løgstrup characterizes the sovereign life-expressions as definitive, which means: they have an explicit character. Furthermore should be added, that they are good in the sense, that they always are aimed at taking care of the other's life. Moreover he says, that they are anonymous. They are nobodys, which means: no one can make them into theirs, and use them towards others in power struggles. No one has privileges in relation to them. We are all equal for the expression of life.

The sovereign life-expressions are, according to Løgstrup, given with the human life. If we want to understand ourselves, then we must start with them. The expressions of life are given with *life itself*. You may say, that they belong to our nature, if you thereby mean the metaphysical nature.

The sovereign life-expressions are a direct goodness in our life. In them we both are spontaneous and ethical. The ethics are standing firm by force of these given life-possibilities, not by force of our choices, as for example Sartre believed.

In the sovereign life-expressions you clearly meet something, which arises as richness, gift or mercy in your life, something you have not created yourself, but which at the same time are the actual and carrying in all kinds of being together. Løgstrup says, that the sovereign life-expressions are coming from the Universe, and that Man therefore not is the Universe irrelevant, not is self-dependant, but is connected with the Universe. Løgstrup claims in this way, that we must interpret the Universe and the sovereign life-expressions as created.

So the training of the heartfeelings is actual not about training the heartfeelings in themselves (because you don't have them in your control), but about training the

openness for them, and this is what the Heartmeditation is about. In this openness they then come by themselves as gifts of grace.

It is a good idea letting the exercise coincide with the Hara meditation. If you practise for example 1½ hour each morning, then use the first hour to the Hara meditation, and the last half hour to the Heartmeditation. But let it come natural, don't force anything. Use for example a lesser number of minutes in the start.

You have to be completely relaxed. In the start most people will have trouble with the exercise, because in most people the heart is closed by tensions, blockages, sorrow, traumas etc. If the heartfeelings are not coming spontaneous (or if the thoughts start to wander), then return to the Hara meditation, and practise it until the heartfeelings start to arise by themselves. Some need years before the heart begins to open itself. But use this text for meditative reading. This often makes the exercise easier.

The main practice of the Heartmeditation is the so-called Tonglen practice, which originates from the Tibetan Buddhism. The same elements can however be retrieved in different forms in all great wisdom traditions. However it is my experience, that Tonglen, which in Tibetan means "give and receive", is one of the most useful and strong heartmeditations that exists. When you feel closed inside yourself, Tonglen opens you for others' sufferings. When the heart is blocked, Tonglen spoils the powers, which causes this. And when you feel alienated towards the person, who suffers in front of your eyes, or are bitter or agonized, Tonglen helps you to find, and lay bare, your true nature's loving, expansive emanation. No other exercise is equally effective in destroying the Ego's self-assertion, which is the root to all our suffering and hard-heartedness. Therefore there also are a lot of stories about Tonglen's miraculous ability to heal.

Before you can practise Tonglen, you must be able to evoke compassion in yourself. This is more difficult than we often think, because the Source of love and compassion mostly is hidden for us, and we might perhaps not at first have access to it.

Heartfeelings is in my context a spectrum, which includes gratitude, compassion, trust, love, care, gentleness, openness, devotion and affection. You have to be able to feel them as a concrete influence in the heartregion; in the beginning often as a pang in the heart, or as a contract in the breast. If there come tears, just let them come.

Below are shown some simple techniques, that can help you:

- When you have negative feelings for other people (or life itself), then try to think about people, who really have shown *you* love, your mother and father,

your grandmother or grandfather. Then let the heartfeeling arise in your heart, so that you are being filled with gratitude. Open your heart and let the love flow out and expand towards people whom you have negative feelings for, or towards life itself.

- When you have negative feelings for other people, then try to think about, that they are as yourself, have the same feelings as yourself, the same wish about happiness, the same fear of suffering. Then let your heart open itself towards them.
- When you experience, that you are indifferent towards others' suffering, or direct experience malicious pleasure when someone is suffering, then unhesitatingly put yourself in the place of the person concerned, try to imagine, how *you* would feel. Then let your care unfold and set free the heart's compassion.
- When you see someone suffer, and you are indifferent, then try to imagine, that it is someone you really love, a brother, a daughter, a mother, a best friend. Let the compassion, which your heart now has set free, flow out towards the person.

Also use the everyday life to evoke the heartfeelings: a person in the street, something you see on TV etc.

When you are in contact with the heartfeelings, you can begin the actual Tonglen practice, where you train yourself in using your personal suffering to increase the compassion – which means: where you mentally receive and give.

The exercise is usually about, that you receive *others'* suffering in your heart. Here you let it dissolve in the light of compassion, whereon you give the compassion on to these others.

Call up for your inner eye, as living and intensively as possible, someone you are worried for, and who is suffering. Think of the person, and imagine the suffering of the person concerned. See the situations in which the suffering person is. Then imagine the suffering of the person concerned, as a black flowing tar, which you receive and let absorb in your heart. In the heart you imagine the black mass as a fuel for the healing light of compassion. Then you let the compassion flame up, and spread out from your heart. Now you give the compassion to the person, or those, who are suffering, by letting it radiate out to them, embrace them, fill them and clean them.

It is a good idea to use the breathing as medium for the exercise. You receive the suffering in an inhalation, and in the pause between in- and exhalation you let the compassion swell up. In an exhalation you now give the compassion to those who are suffering. If you can't evoke the heartfeeling (this is namely necessary for the exercise to work) you return to the Hara meditation. Sit for a while in passive awareness with focus in Hara. Use for example the above-mentioned help-techniques. Then repeat the exercise. Continue until you feel that peace comes over you. You don't have to imagine, that you use every single of your breathings to keep the process going on; it is enough for example to use each fourth or fifth breathing – as long as you make the exercise with regular interval. In the pauses you return to the Hara meditation, so that you alternate between Hara and Heart.

In the start the exercise probably will feel artificial, sluggish, unpleasant; you'll also maybe experience soreness in the muscles around the heart. This is because, that you in Tonglen directly are confronting and transforming the Ego, and the pain-body's negative feelings. Therefore keep on doing the exercise, it is a natural purification process. Don't be afraid, that the exercise hurts you. The only thing you can be sure of, is, that there only is *one* thing Tonglen can damage, namely the thing which also has hurt *you* the most: your own Ego, your own self-assertive and self-centred mind, which is the root to all suffering.

Once Tonglen has become natural to you, it will fill you with amazement. Then you only need to receive the suffering in your heart with a simple breathing, and the heartfeeling will spontaneous fill you with release and joy.

In the beginning it is perhaps a good idea to use the exercise on yourself. To create a compassionated mind in relation to yourself has not anything to do with self-pity, as long as the exercise evokes heartfeelings. However your own suffering will much easier could be transformed, if you use the exercise on others. Then your own suffering becomes a kind of substitute for others' suffering.

The complete unique about the exercise's healing effect on yourself is namely, that it gains strength, the more self-forgetful open you are towards, and engaged in, other people than yourself. The openness namely opens the whole of your being, and therewith also all tensions, knots, and wounds. Moreover it also works healing on these *other* people. You will not only experience inner fulfilment, you'll also experience, that you receive help from outside, that things in strange ways begin to succeed for you, that your problems are solved one after one. However, not in a way that your Ego perhaps wants it.

How is that? As the Buddhist philosopher Nagarjuna said, then the Now's regularity concerning 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 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 implies, that each part comes to appear as part of a polarization-pair or a pair of opposites – as in the teaching of Yin and Yang. Secondly it implies, that each part only can be understood in relation to *everything* else; which means: in relation to the Wholeness.

So the more you, through the Ego's evaluations, isolate these parts from each other, the more the left parts will act stronger and stronger on their polar partners. Therefore these polar partners in their extremes finally will switch over in the opposite extreme. 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 actually 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 rather explicit purpose: the neutralization of all the dogmas, theories and viewpoints which ignorance has created.

Nagarjuna's emptiness is one and the same as what I call the Source.

Said shortly, then the Wholeness works balancing, and the more self-forgetful open for, and engaged in the Wholeness, you are, the more the balance of the Wholeness works cooperative through you. And it is exactly this, which Tonglen promotes. But the more self-circling closed against the Wholeness you are, the more the balance of the Wholeness works divided, and therefore compensatory (suffering-creating), through you.

But try to imagine your own problem (or problem-situation) as an object of suffering (you can also imagine the suffering of life as such). Now receive this suffering in your heart as a black flowing mass. Let the compassion burst into flame, and then give the light of compassion back to the problem, or the problem-situation, regardless if it only is something you purely mentally imagine, for example in the past or the future. It could also be a physical problem.

This holy secret from Tonglen is known by all the masters and saints of the wisdomtraditions. And by living it and incarnating it with the renunciation and glow of true wisdom and compassion, it fills your life with joy.

Briefly: begin the meditation with yourself and your own problems. Then expand it to your nearest. Finalize with people, or situations, which at first seems irrelevant to you, yes, which you perhaps direct feel dislike towards.

Though you primarily practise the Heartmeditation in the morning, it is important that you bring it out into your everyday life as such. Practise it at any time.

Conclusion

We have now looked at the three fundamental aspects of the meditationprocess, the relaxfullness, the awareness and the heartfullness.

The refinement of the consciousness and attention you train in relaxation, slides imperceptible over in neutral observation. You discover the uniformity concerning tension in so different phenomena as muscle-tension, will, thoughts and form-formations in more collective patterns. The relaxfullness creates a neutrality in your attitude to all the different expressions of tension. This neutrality is refined in the Hara practice, where you train awareness.

The Hara practice's neutrality in relation to the different expressions of tension, will more and more lead into a melting, a letting go, a devotion. And the absorption, which takes place in such a relaxfull melting and letting go, leads by itself in towards your heart. This is refined through the Tonglen practice.

Finally the Now opens itself and the three fundamental aspects (relaxfullness, awareness and heartfullness) are melting together in an open, all-embracing silence. This silence is what you in reel sense can call Meditation as an Art of Life, because it is in this silence you in wonder begin to philosophize in a meditative-existential way, open both inwards and outwards, listening and observing, without words, without evaluations.

Dream Yoga

The spiritual process (meditation and Dream Yoga) is a slow awakening. The consciousness about the universal images of time, which work in synchronism with the Now, penetrates little by little everyday life. You gather time around you in transparent presence. Investments in the past and the future, whether it is the personal or collective time, becomes undramatized and uninteresting in relation to the Now's open intensity.

Meditation and Dream Yoga are two sides of the same thing. If one however should try to discriminate, then you about meditation can say, that the three aspects of meditation are relaxfullness, awareness and heartfullness. These three aspects are practised through supporting exercises such as relaxation, Hara practice, as well as Tonglen practice.

About Dream Yoga you can say, that the day practice of Dream Yoga consists in, besides the continuous supporting exercises of meditation, understanding the nature of thought distortions; in seeing their illusory nature; that is: that a lot of your awaken life also has character of a dream. In addition to this Dream Yoga consists in understanding the self-regulating system of the energylaws, which tries to balance the imbalances of the thought distortions, as well as, through art of life, helping the energy laws with this.

The night practice of Dream Yoga consists in the beginning firstly in writing your dreams down at the very moment you wake up. Otherwise there is a tendency to forget them again. This is the first step in making the dreams conscious.

Secondly it consists in understanding 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 awake 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 do 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.

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 shortened, condensed modes of expression from a subordinate, vague, diffuse and imprecise time unit, which moves in

sequences in past and future. The collective time lies 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. We return to this in connection with astral travels.

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 for example 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 telescopying, a representing quintessence of the information quantities, which the wholeness in an 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.

From the above you can see, that Dream Yoga, in spiritual sense, haven't so much to do with dreaminterpretation. It is more about understanding the nature of the dreams. Let us try to look deeper into this.

The nature of language

In Dream Yoga it is important to understand the nature of language. And this happens more easily through dreams.

In your innermost there exists a pure awareness, which also seems to be a quality of the Now, and therefore a quality of life itself. And life itself is to be present in the Now with *the whole of* yourself, in the self-forgetful openness and devotion to the world. Life itself therefore is love. Your innermost, the awareness, is in this way one with life itself, love.

This oneness is the Source, and in this source there is a non-linguistic, universal understanding, which all people are parts of: the wisdom – the Good, the True and the Beautiful. The Source is the unmoved mover of life – the Otherness, the unmanifested. We meet this source in the deep, dreamless sleep state – but unconscious.

The inner thinker is the instance in the awaken state, which places itself outside life itself. The inner thinker does this by evaluating life itself, either from time, or from opposites. Under the inner thinker lie namely time and its images. These images are both personal, collective and universal, and therefore they are found both *in* us and *around* us in the movement of nature. They are energy-formations (though highly abstract), and therefore also a kind of matter. Nethermost lie the universal images.

Each of the universal images is made up by opposites as for example light and darkness, sound and silence, time and space, subject and object, identity and difference, heavy and light, long and short, high and low, masculine and feminine, good and evil, life and death. Each image includes in other words both a pole and the antipole of this pole.

These images are language which no longer is verbal, but superior, visionary syntheses and wholes. From these images the most universal models originate: philosophical, scientific, religious-spiritual and cosmic world-images. These images are close to what Plato called the world of forms, which means, that they are images in a great vision of creation. They are the models behind creation, that which makes possible, that we altogether can make concepts of life itself.

This imageworld has 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 Alchemists, the Akasha Chronicles, the collective subconscious, the dreamtime of the aboriginals etc. etc.

Often this universal vision is compared with the Holy Script. Johannes Scotus Eriúgena for example said, that the Holy Script is a text, which contains an endless number of meanings and which can be compared with the shimmering feathering of the Peacock.

For example the Koran is considered to be such a holy script. It is a book, which is said to be older than the Arabic language; you can neither study it historical or philological, because it is older than language, older than the Universe.

The Pentateuch, or the Torah, is also such a holy book. An inexhaustible intelligence is claimed to have condescended itself to compose a book. The Holy Spirit has condescended itself to literature, what is as equally amazing, as to suppose, that God has condescended himself to a human being. In such a book there can not be anything accidentally, contrary to, that there in all human scripts are something accidentally.

This has affected the Kabbalah, the Jewish mysticism. Biblical seen, then it is the common opinion, that the words of God were the tools, he executed his work with. God created the world by using words; God said, that there should be light and there became light. In the Kabbalah they presume, that it were the letters, which came first; that the letters were God's tools, not the words, which the letters were standing for. In other words they believe, that the holy script came before the spoken words. Therefore nothing in the Holy Script is accidentally. Jewish mysticists therefore treat the holy script, as if it had been a cryptogram: cryptographical.

For example the thesis is, that if you can find God's name in four letters – and can pronounce it correct, then you will be able to create a world and will also be able to create a Golem, a human being. Within the Kabbalah there is, in that way, found legends of Rabbis, who have discovered this name, and who have created Golem's to serve them. Thus also described in Gustav Meyrink's novel *The Golem*. This novel starts in the known myth from Prague about the artificial human being, a Golem, created by a Rabbi. The novel has something of Prag's oddity about it, and is about dreams, which forfeits themselves in other dreams.

In the same way the persons in Herman Hesse's utopian future novel *The Glass Bead Game*, have created a Glass Bead Game, which language of symbols and grammar together forms a kind of high developed code, in which several sciences, but notably mathematics and music (or the science of music) have part, and which is able to express nearly all sciences and bring them in relation to each other. The Glass Bead Game is accordingly a game with all the content and values of human cultures, and one can play with them in the same way, as a painter play with his palette colours.

Herman Hesse says in the novel: "What mankind in its creative epoques have produced of realization, high thinking and works of art, what the scholar's contemplation of the following periods has put on conceptual form and made into intellectual property – the whole of this enormous material of spiritual values the Glass Bead Player plays on as the organist on the organ, and this organ is of a perfection, which hardly can be grasped, its manuals and pedals reconnoitre the whole of the spiritual cosmos, its registers are nearly countless, and theoretical seen it would in the game, with this instrument, be possible to reproduce the entire intellectual world content."

Our language, all our fictional productions, is, as the above examples show, reflections of the universal images in the great vision of the creation. As Ralph Waldo Emerson said, then a library therefore is a magical room with a lot of bewitched spirits. They wake up when we call them, and this happens more easily in dreams, because the inner thinker here is weakened. To fall asleep is like opening a magical

book. When we open this book an esthetic occurrence is happening. Because we are parts of the movement of time - which with its images both flows through us, and around us in nature - then the same book changes, as we changes. The text itself is after all also the River of Time, or Heraklit's River. Language is in that way an esthetical creation. And therefore also the dreams.

The philosopher Francis Herbert Bradley said, that one of the effects of poetry is to give us the impression, not to discover something new, but to remember something forgotten. When they for example wanted to make a portrait of the philosopher Plotin, he said no with the following reason: "I myself is a shadow, a shadow of the archetype which is in heaven. How can you make a shadow of that shadow?" According to Plotin art was nothing but a shine of a second class, a reflection of the eternal images.

The argentine writer Enrique Banchs said: "If human beings are fragile, how can an image of a human being then be delightful?" Banchs felt in this - in accordance with Jorge Luis Borges - the ghostly nature of the mirror - the reflection of one of the universal images of time. In the same way it is said in an Iranian poem, that the moon is the Mirror of Time. The fragility of the moon is also its eternity. Time is, as Plato said, the movable image of eternity. Anything fragile is movable images of eternity. Eternity is found in the universal images. But with the negationpower - the negation of the oneness in the Source, in the Now - and the outgoing movement of time, the universal images become split in collective and personal images, and become progressively perishable, material. The world is manifested.

As Borges says, then we in that way, in the mirror, see the doppelgänger, or the negation, the reflection of an image from another world. It is the strange and magical about the mirror: "as a moonlight in the dark."

In The Gospel of Thomas Jesus says: "When you see your reflected image, you are pleased; but when you see your images which existed before yourselves, that they neither die or reveal themselves, how much can't you bear then?"

The universal images of time are, like mandalas or yantra fields, a kind of syntheses, which work more in synchronism with the Now, rather than in sequences in past and future. They seek to put together, to synthesize, to join. In that way they constitute a common human consensus. We can all agree about them.

But in the consciousness' identification with thinking and time, the inner thinker is, as mentioned, created. And the inner thinker uses, in the awaken state, the negationpower of time to make resistance. The resistance consists in problematizing

life itself by comparing with earlier and hoping, desiring or fearing something else. And in this evaluation-process the inner thinker splits up the universal images. It identifies itself with one pole in a pair of opposites, for which reason the polar partner is expelled. In this dividing process the collective and personal images arise, and herewith all the disagreements.

Consequently the universal language, and the movement of time, reflect themselves in your thinking, but because of the inner thinker's evaluations the images are divided in words and analysis; what you could call thinking in opposites (subject as divided from object, good as divided from evil, love as divided from hate, perfect as divided from fiasco) - words and sentences which work in sequences in past and future, extremes, or analyses. And hereby you have both a collective and a personal language.

In other words the inner thinker, in its identification with opposites, tends to debate, to work against other people, and seeks to demonstrate their flaws.

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. This wholeness is the wholeness of the images, as Henri Bergson could have put it. It is an universal vision, wherein the universal images have a holographic nature.

Because the wholeness is a reality, each part (each collective and personal image) will always fit into a correspondent part/image. This means, that each part, each image, only can be understood in relation to its negation; that is: what the image *not* is. Firstly this implies, that each image comes to appear as part of a polarization-pair, or a pair of opposites – like in the teaching of Yin and Yang. Secondly it implies, that each image 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 images from each other, the more the abandoned images 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, a lawfulness, which works as wave movements and pendulum movements.

Dream Yoga is to move backwards through the whole of this structure of language, which is created by the outgoing movement of time. Dream Yoga is therefore, as

Plato made it clear, to remember the outgoing movement's negation, namely the backmovement of time, the memory of the universal vision and the universal images.

In accordance with Plotin then *The One* (the Source), in its eternal and continual radiation, first of all manifests itself as thought, which in its individualized form shows itself in the soul, which again find its way to the body, the lowest and the most random expression of being. The purpose of life for the individual therefore is to move the opposite way: from the low to the high, from the random body and all its lust to *The One* and all its light. In Dream Yoga this consists in practising neutral observation rather than evaluating; it is to be in the Now rather than in the past or the future; it is to think between the opposites, rather than to think in extremes; it is to use dialogue rather than debate; it is to, together with other people, to work one's way towards a mutual understanding; it is to use language from the universal images of time, rather than the personal or collective images of time.

And finally it is also to let go of the backmovement of time. In physical sense this means death. But within mysticism they also describe enlightenment (*Unio Mystica*) as a kind of death. This death consists in dying from time and its images, for hereby to step into the Now and be made transparent by the Now's non-linguistic oneness, the Source from where awareness and love flow, and in which we all have a mutual understanding of the Good, the True and the Beautiful.

The nature of dreams

In accordance with this understanding of the nature of language, it is more easy to understand the nature of dreams.

Borges namely claims, that dreams are fictions, fictional productions, which means: productions of language (the thoughts). He quotes Addison, who notice, that we in the dream both are the theatre, the spectators, the actors, the topic and the words we hear.

The structure of thinking lies in time and its images. The thinking, and therefore the dreams, reflects in that way the double movement of time. On some deep level the dreams reflect the outgoing movement of time, which in the dawn of time took its beginning on the background of a great vision of the Universe, the future. The dreams reflect this outgoing movement's negation of the starting point, the Now's unmanifested being, the Source itself: the Good, the True and the Beautiful. And they reflect the negationpower, which shattered the great vision in a multitude of images, which in this way came to work as kind of memories of the vision, now the past. Finally they reflect the backmovement, the longing after the great vision.

So the images in the movement of time are shattered reflections of the great vision of the Universe. They are shadows, dreams, masks, fables, fairy tales, fictions, and they flow in the movement of nature itself – they are, as the Tibetan Buddhism says, relatively valid dreams.

In the scriptless peoples' religions, or in the world of the child, the dreams are episodes under the awoken state. To the poets and to the mystics it is not impossible, that the whole of the awoken state is a dream. As Shakespeare says it in his play *the Tempest*: "We are of the same substance as our dreams; our short life is encircled by a sleep." This is not totally wrong, when you consider, that the images of time flow in the actual movement of the matter.

As Borges says, then it is not impossible that we in the dreams are in Heaven, or that we are in Hell. What does the nightmare consist in? The nightmare has to do with the contradiction and split that lies in, that the expulsion of the images' polar partners logical seen not is possible. All images imply the negation. But the more extreme you are thinking, the more you expel the negation, and therefore your contradiction and split are so much larger. The dreams - or the energy-laws in the dreams - will seek to contra-balance this contradiction, or finish a complicated unfinished situation. This can result in a dream which can be nightmarish unpleasant.

The nightmare can be illustrated in the following way. In Dante's *Divine Comedy* it is said, that there somewhere in Hell lies a noble castle, *Nobile Castello*. Here the shadows live, the negations of human beings. Here rules God's absence, which is the negations themselves. The castle is eternal - eternal and dignified - but it is a horrible castle. Everything is horrible here, here rules a nightmarish atmosphere, episodes with physical discomfort, a feeling of persecution, a terror element, an element of the supernatural. And Dante is forced to talk with all these shadows. He is forced to confront the negations.

When you in a nightmare are forced to confront the negations, but at the same time don't practise realizationwork and ethical practice in your awoken life, the nightmare will be characterized by contradiction and split. It is this doubleness, which creates the terror in the nightmare.

The paths and the locations in a nightmare imply two types of terror. The one terror lies in the paths. Each point on a path is determined by the negation of the point, which itself is determined by a third negation etc. The path constitutes in other words a serie of points with no end. The points themselves are limited extents. This means, that there never will come a time, where you will get out over the limited points. On

the path you become forced from point to point without ever being able to reach the unlimited, this endless, which would bring the path to finish. And yet the path is endless.

The second terror lies in the locations. When each location is determined by the negation of it, this means, that it might well be, that the location is divided from its negation, but nonetheless identical with it. This means, that each location is an endless number of locations, an abyss of worlds, countless, swarming, branching off to all sides in labyrinths, yet without that the worlds ever become mixed together.

You can see this terror illustrated by Borges himself in all his stories. You can also see it in M.C Escher's works, or in the films by David Lynch.

In fact it is the same type of split you can experience, when you are looking up towards the stars and become captured by this wonder over the infinity. How can it just go on and go on? But it is due to, that something, which by nature is limitary, namely the thought, seeks to grasp the unlimited. Something, which by nature is expelling, seeks to grasp the all-inclusive. It results in a feeling of endless split, which again results in a lot of logical anomalies, paradoxes and problems. And it is these logical problems which lies underneath the thought-distortions, for example Dichotom Thinking and Catastrophe-thinking, and therefore underneath a lot of inappropriate assumptions and rules of living.

It also has to be said, that if you are ill, have eaten or drunken too much, then this, mixed with just a little Catastrophe-thinking, also can result in nightmares. Such dreams you don't have to take into further consideration.

In order to make real changes in your dreams, or nightmares, it is necessary, firstly that you in your awoken life change your thinking through meditation, and secondly, through Dream Yoga, support the work of the energy-laws in the dreams.

If you therefore begin to practise meditation and Dream Yoga, you can exempt the dreams from their structure, and having to contra-balance imbalances and finish unfinished situations, what will give an ever increasing feeling of freedom. You'll progressively experience dreamless sleep. Dreams are, as Borges says, a work of fiction we can improve. In dreams we not only need to be in hell, we can also be in heaven. We can accompany Dante on his ascent through the Purgatory towards Paradise.

So in dreams time and its images flow through your mind, much more easily than in the awoken state. And time is not just the personal history, but also the collective and

the universal history, and therefore the contents of time and its images are unfathomable. An absolute fascinating perspective. With Borges you could try to illustrate this fascination by comparing it with the fascination the Western nations got, when they discovered the Orient. As Borges says, then you, in this connection, can talk about "the Consciousness of the Orient". And in this way you can compare the fascination of time and its unfathomableness, with the fascination of a sapphire from the Orient. That is: an oriental sapphire filled up by Thousand and one Night. Something magical, something enchanting.

In Italo Calvino's book *the Invisible Cities* Marco Polo sits and tells Kublai Khan about all the cities he has visited during his journeys in the Orient. However the whole thing is one big fantasy-game, one big play with time and its images, which endless content can flow out everywhere, for example in the labyrinths of Venice – because all the invisible cities Marco Polo is telling about, is a description of one only, complete, city: Venice. A description, which, because of the limitation of language, ends in an endless description of the negations of Venice, the invisible cities within Venice.

When Borges uses the concept Thousand and one Night, then he often refers to the circumstance, that the word "thousand" almost is synonymous with "endless many". To say thousand nights is to say endless many nights, the many nights, the countless nights. To say "Thousand and one Night" is to indulge one more to the endless many. The conception about something endless is similar in nature with Thousand and one Night.

When dreams create an opening where time and its images can begin to flow in, it is like opening an endless book. But the thought's fascination of this can transform itself into something nightmarish, because the thought - which by nature is limited - is seeking to play with the unlimited. The thought, which by nature is expelling, is seeking to understand the all-inclusive.

It ends up in a feeling of endless split. Everything has a negation which itself has another negation, etc. You open up for an endless book - or you can try to think about these Chinese balls within which there are other balls - or of the Russian dolls.

In Thousand and one Night Sheherazade is putting the Sultan off with stories, which never have any ending. With stories, which are inside other stories, she produces a mighty effect, almost of something endless, which gives a kind of dizziness.

Thus also in Lewis Carroll's books about Alice in Wonderland, or his novel *Sylvia and Bruno*, where there are dreams inside other dreams, which branch and multiply themselves.

As Borges said one evening under a talk, then Thousand and one Night is such a mighty book, that it is not necessary to have read it, because it is a part of our memory, which already exists, and also was a part of that evening, where he said those words. Thousand and one Night's endless time is still going on – it continues to grow, or reproduce itself. It is created by both the personal, collective and universal time, which we all are parts of through our thinking, through our minds.

It seems to lie in the nature of human beings, that they want to experience the forbidden, the impossible, without making deeper considerations over it, wherefore they again and again become exposed for suffering. Thus also captain Ahab in Herman Melville's novel *Moby Dick*, who doesn't realize the madness in wanting to revenge himself on the white whale, which after all is not a whale, but an image of the cold (demonic) emptiness of the Universe, which Ahab try to fill with meaning.

It is therefore important that you, in your fascination of the dreamcontent, and the possibilities that lies in dreams, don't begin to use drugs or one-sided developmental techniques within therapy or meditation, because these can't heal the thought-distortions. The danger is, that your mind and personality slides fundamental out of balance, and you will therefore experience incredible suffering. It is called a spiritual crisis.

Another important thing is, that you avoid trying to interpret the content of your dreams, but instead direct yourself towards understanding their nature.

The meditative process is a slow and organical growth-proces that requires your own realization-work through the continual supporting exercises. You can't receive realization from any outer source, whether it is through organizations, faith, dogmas, priests, rituals, drugs, therapy, theories of dream interpretation, philosophical knowledge or psychological methods. You must remember that all such systems are build on the thought-constructions of man, and they will make you into a slave. Only your own realizationwork can, step by step, year after year, clean the consciousness, increase the energy level in the consciousness, and gradually expand it out into the fascinating areas of the dreams.

Another aspect of understanding the nature of dreams, is to understand the actual sleep state. Each time you fall asleep, you in fact move through the three aspects of meditation, namely relaxfullness, awareness and heartfullness – until you finally

arrive in the Source, the Otherness. The great spiritual masters have been aware of this since the dawn of time. Already in the Upanishads you can find it described in the principle: the enlightened state is akin to deep, dreamless sleep.

Furthermore it is claimed, that you go through the same planes in the moment of death (see my article *The Death Process*). Dreams are reflections, not only of your personal thoughts, but also of past lives, of both compensatory and progressive karma, and finally the states you experience after death.

The first condition, in order to fall asleep, is that you can relax in the body and in the mind. The relaxation process creates a neutrality in your attitude to all the various expressions of tension (the awareness). This again brings about a melting, a letting go, a devotion (the heartfulness). In this letting go the fall into the Source happens. Unlike meditation meanwhile, then this fall implies that the awakeness is lost, and that sleep happens. Some times people experience this opening inwards as a shivering fall, which you with a jump again wake up from.

But the actual fact that you in the deep dreamless sleep are in the Source (the wholeness), is the main reason why the sleep is so healing. It is actually a satisfactory and happy state. It is the same state, an enlightened person is in, for example Jesus or Buddha. The sleeper doesn't know it under the sleep. That is the whole of the difference. And after all it is quite fascinating to think about, that you at least one time a day are in the Source to everything.

When the spiritual practice penetrates dream and sleep

First after many years of spiritual practice the continuous supporting exercises begin by themselves to penetrate, first the dream life, and later the deep, dreamless sleep.

The important in spiritual practice is the dreamconsciousness' form, not its content.

On the plane of the universal images, and therefore on the Now's plane, the central is the consciousness' form, the consciousness itself and its clarity and openness. Not the consciousness' content. In spiritual practice the spiritual and spiritual active, is the consciousness' direction towards its source (the Now, the Otherness). What the consciousness and the mind and the senses are filled of, is of lesser crucial importance.

The development concerning the Now and the universal images shows itself in the dreams' consciousness in three ways:

1. In the dreams you begin to practise the continuous supporting exercises the same way as in the awoken daily life.
2. Dreams, which become lucid and the, to this responding, most suitable practice.
3. The dreams' consciousness becomes astral and the, in relation to this, most suitable practice.

1): That your spiritual practice at all reflects itself in the dream life, is a beneficial sign in your total effort. In the moment of falling asleep you simply begin to train relaxation, Hara practice – eventually also Tonglen. Moreover you remember to write the dreams down when you wake up. Later you can experience, that you in a dream suddenly begin to practise.

2): Lucid dreams are dreams, in which you know, that you are dreaming. There are many different causes to, that there can arise lucidity in dreams, for example stress conditions or illogical circumstances, or that you watch yourself in a mirror, or so-called flying dreams. You discover that you can alter in the dream as you like. To use lucidity to different experiments is therefore an understandable temptation, but basically without spiritual content.

When you know that you are dreaming, while you are dreaming, the dream is called lucid. The word lucid means luminous, and the name refers to the unusual clarity, which is in such dreams.

The lucid dream is a little more awake, a degree more awake, than an ordinary dream. Such dreams can therefore be said to be a state between dream and awake, however still more akin to dream.

Normally the Dream Self is not distanced from the dream scenario. To know that you are dreaming is due to, that a part of the Dream Consciousness separates you from the immediate identity with the scenario and content of the dream. The phenomenon is analogous with meditation, or neutral observation. In neutral observation there are two functions. The one is the observer, who separates himself from the stream of thoughts. The second is the neutrality that neither says yes or no, considers or comments.

When dreams become lucid, then it is analogous with the activating of the first function: the segregation of a Dream Witness, an instance, which knows that this is a dream. As a rule the mind in this situation then gets caught by the new, creative possibilities, which lies in the lucidity. You can transform dreams as you want and

have fantasy to. You can fly through walls, walk on water and wish yourself to other planets etc., etc.

Dream Yoga is about, that if a dream becomes lucid, you add – from the habit with meditation in the waking practice – the second function, namely the neutrality, that just – in dreams – to observe and not control, intervene or in other way interfere in the dream's own stream. If both factors are active in dreams, there is no functional difference between awake neutral observation and dreaming neutral lucidity.

According to experience there are a couple of dream situations, or elements, which favour the rise of lucidity, for example stress, illogical situations, etc. Furthermore it is possible to train lucidity in dreams; there both exists ancient Tibetan ways, Shamanistic ways and new American ways.

In spiritual practice however, you neither ought to train or worship lucidity. What on the other hand is appropriate is to use the lucidity for Hara practice; that is, that you in the lucid dream focus your awareness in Hara, and therewith looks into your self, at the same time as your are observing the dream. In this way the dreaming awareness changes accent from the dream production, from the content of the dream to the dreaming awareness itself.

The most suitable training in lucid dreams is therefore to begin to practice the continuous supporting exercises. Second best, but however still excellent, is to seek towards light, which brings you closer the lucidity and thereby the Source. Alternatively to seek towards a spiritual teacher, or in lack of a such, to seek towards a person of wisdom, archetypical understood. But best is to begin to practice the supporting exercises.

3): The astral "dream state" can evolve spontaneous, or evolve out of the lucid dream. In an astral "dream state" you know, that you lie in the bed in this chamber and are sleeping, alternatively dreaming. In the lucid state you know, that you are dreaming, while you are dreaming. But you dont know, that this happens, while you in fact lie sleeping in your bed. However in the astral state you also know, that you lie in your bed sleeping. The sleeping body, the bed and the room is included in the astral "dream state". The consciousness is often located outside the body, observing the sleeping body from outside.

The temptation to here, either to become afraid, or experiment with various possibilities (astral travels, clairvoyance, telepathy etc. etc.) is huge. You are suddenly Peter Pan. It is a very forceful state. The creativity and the reality creating ability are much more free than in the lucid dream state. However you are still on the

plane of the collective images of time, which work in sequences in past and future, and there is danger for, either that you remain here, in the fascination and the enthusiasm, whereby your spiritual development stops, or that you directly end up in a spiritual crisis.

In spiritual practice the most appropriate is again to use the astral state to begin to practice the continuous supporting exercises. For example you can centre the astral consciousness in the Hara centre of the sleeping body, or in the heart centre.

If you as a sleeper remember to use such an opening spiritual seen correct, this can give your total development a considerably lift forward.

But in order to do this it is of vital important that you examine the nature of astral states. Let's therefore look a bit further into it.

Another aspect of lucid dreams is as mentioned the astral state: astral travel or astral projection (out-of-body experiences). In both ordinary and lucid dreams the dreamer, in the vast majority of cases, is not aware that, and where, the body lies and is sleeping. The astral state is characterized by, that the consciousness knows that the body is sleeping and can watch the sleeping body. The consciousness is here located outside the body, floating over the body in a not all too long distance. This consciousness is called the dream body.

Dalai Lama has this to say about awakening our dream body and using it for spiritual progress and development: "There is said to be a relationship between dreaming, on the one hand, and the gross and subdue levels of the body on the other. But it is also said that there is a 'special dream state.' In that state, the special dream body (the astral body) is created from the mind and from vital energy (*prana*) within the body. It looks like the physical body, but is of a finer and transparent substance. Through training it is possible to learn to send the dream body out of the body; it then works completely as an extension of the physical body, because the senses and the consciousness of the body seems to follow".

This special dream body is in other words able to dissociate entirely from the gross physical body and travel elsewhere, and experience the astral worlds of the collective time.

One way of developing this special dream body is first of all to recognize a dream as a dream when it occurs. Then you find that the dream is malleable, and you make efforts to gain control over it. Gradually you become very skilled in this, increasing your ability to control the contents of the dream so that it accords to your own

desires. Eventually it is possible to dissociate your dream body from your gross physical body. In contrast, in the normal dream state, dreaming occurs within the body. But as a result of specific training, the dream body can go elsewhere.

So, these not quite ordinary states, are caused either by goaloriented conscious training, or for example by Near-death experiences, threatening psychosis, shock, high fever or similar dramatic circumstances. In rare cases they can occur undramatically and spontaneous.

In the astral state the creativity of the consciousness is, as mentioned, set even more free than in the lucid dream state. Controlled astral states give, among other things, access to clairvoyance, telepathy and astral travel (astral projection). This has to do with, that time and its images still work in sequences in past and future, though on a much more fascinating collective/astral level.

But in spiritual practice it is of vital importance, that you begin to practice Hara, if there should occur an astral state. This consists quite simple in stopping the fascination of the experiences and their temptations, and instead focus the awareness in Hara, and therewith lead the awareness into your self. This will lead the consciousness towards the more universal images of time, which work in synchronism with the Now.

If you remain in, or explore the astral worlds of the collective time, which the astral state gives access to, then you in other words distract your awareness in past or future. This can cost awakeness and life energy, if you are not under guidance of an enlightened master, and can in addition cause Ego-inflation and other spiritual crises.

It is in other words very important that you do not move accent from awake day to dreams and sleep, do not use drugs or one-sided development techniques, which promise you great experiences concerning either lucidity or astrality.

You have to have patience. Even for people with a regular and well ordered practice (2-3 hours every day) there can pass weeks, months or years between the reflections into the processes of dreams and sleep. However if practice is appropriate, the spiritual consciousness will with time automatically penetrate the nightlife's vegetative forms of consciousness.

Is life a dream?

We almost all have an experience of, how our senses and thoughts can deceive us. Therefore the question about, whether life could be a dream or an illusion, also always has occupied Man.

In the scriptless people's religions, or in the world of the child, the dreams are episodes in the waking condition. To the poets - and in the various wisdomtraditions in Western mysticism and in Eastern philosophy - it is not impossible, that the whole of the waking condition is a dream. As Shakespeare says in his play the Tempest: "We are of the same matter as our dreams; our short life is encircled by a sleep."

The spiritual practice can be said to consist partially of meditation, partially of Dream Yoga (read more about in my article *Dream Yoga*). Meditation and Dream Yoga are two sides of the same thing. If you nevertheless should try to discriminate, then you about meditation can say, that the three aspects of meditation are relaxfullness, awareness and heartfullness. These three aspects are trained through supporting exercises such as relaxation, Hara practice, as well as Tonglen practice.

In Dream Yoga you can say, that the day practice of Dream Yoga consists - besides the continuous exercises of meditation - in understanding the nature of thought distortions; in seeing their illusory nature, in seeing how they create your reality; that is: to realize, that a lot of your waking life also has character of a dream (the night practice of Dream Yoga is about writing your dreams down, and practising in conditions of lucidity, as well as astrality, if such states should occur).

A lot of philosophers within European philosophy have also claimed, that life is a dream, or that the whole world is our own construction, created either by sensation or thinking. The best known examples are probably George Berkeley and René Descartes.

In European philosophy there is namely a strong tradition for only reckoning with two forms of cognition: sensation and thinking. Berkeley reckoned with sensation, whilst Descartes reckoned with thinking. Berkeley is famous for the sentence *Esse est percipi*, which means that being, or reality, consists in being perceived (to be is to be experienced). The absurdity in Berkeley's assertion is swiftly seen: If a thing, or a human being for that matter, is not being perceived by the senses, then it does not exist. In accordance with Berkeley there therefore does not exist any sense-independent world. He ends in the so-called solipsism. That we will return to.

Descartes was also very dubious concerning how much we can trust our senses. Therefore also he took up the question *Is life a dream?* However his intention with this was in his *Meditations* to develop a confident cognition-argument.

In his *Meditations* Descartes presents the problem approximately like this: I frequently dream during the night, and while I dream, I am convinced, that what I dream is real. But then it always happens, that I wake up and realize, that everything I dreamt was not real, but only an illusion. And then is it I think: is it possible, that what I now, while I am awake, believe is real, also is something, which only is being dreamt by me right now? If it is not the case, how shall I then determinate it?

Precisely because Descartes not even in dreams can doubt, that 2 plus 3 is 5, he leaves the dream-argument in his *Meditations* and goes in tackle with the question, whether he could be cheated by an evil demon concerning all cognition, also the mathematics. This radical scepticism leads him forward to the cogito-argument: *Cogito ergo Sum* (I think, therefore I exist).

In modern discussions about the reliability of our cognition you often meet a variation of Descartes' argument of the evil demon. The argument is: 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 putting it in a jar with some nutrient substratum. At that time computer research perhaps will have reached so far, that you will be able to connect a computer with such a brain and feed it with all possible data – that is: supply us with an experiential "virtual reality", so that we think that we have a body, that we have a life and walk around in the world believing, that we can perceive our surroundings, whilst we in reality only is a brain laying in a jar. It is this thesis the movie *The Matrix* is based on.

A lot of so-called reductionists believe, that it is possible. There are computer scientists, who believe, that you can understand consciousness as "soft-ware" and the brain as a "hard disc", and that you in a very few years will be able to decode a human being for the whole of its content of consciousness, immediately before it dies, and therewith ensure its soul an eternal life – admittedly on a discette, but what the hell, it is after all certainly always better than to pass into nothingness, and the discette will after all could be played again and again.

The brain-in-jar hypothesis says it in this way: existence, that which I, Morten Tolboll, calls reality, is an illusion, because the fact of the matter is this, that I haven't got any body or any sense organs, but only are my brain, which is in a jar with a nutrient substratum, and which is connected to a computer, which provides me with experiences.

The problem is exactly the same as in Descartes' dream-thesis: existence, that which I, Morten Tolboll, calls reality, is a period, which after its end (that is to say: when I

wake up from it) will be realized as illusory, in the same way as I realize a dream as illusory, when I wake up from it. That is to say: that, which I call "reality", is a dream, and that, which I call "dream" (that is: the thing I am dealing with, when I am sleeping) is a dreamt dream.

Let us try to look at three logical problems, which the dream-thesis runs into: The infinite regress, the solipsism, as well as the polarization-problem.

First the infinite regress:

I presuppose, that I - with the assertion about, that what, I now call reality, is a dream - believe, that it in principle is possible, that I wake up from it and realize, that it only was a dream. In that case I shall after all find myself situated in a new reality, which relate itself to what I now call reality, as this relate itself to my nightly dreams. This "new reality" you could then term "the R-reality".

When I wake up to the R-reality, I realize, that what, I till then called reality, only was a dream. But using the dream-thesis (whatever argument I might have for it) I must already now conclude, that the R-reality also could be a dream, which I, if I some day wake up from it, shows itself to be contained in a R-R-R-reality – and in this way I can keep on.

If i say, that reality is a dream, and therefore ought to be called "dreamt reality", yes then I can not find any argument against, that it is a "dreamt dreamt reality" or a "dreamt dreamt dreamt reality" etc., indefinitely.

If you then take the solipsism:

Solipsism (of lat. *Solus ipse*, I alone), is the opinion, that I alone, and my states of consciousness, exist, or that I, and my states of consciousness, are the only things, which really can be realized. Everything else, for example other people's consciousnesses and material things which are claimed to be outside my consciousness, are problematic things.

The dream-thesis can for example only be stated in first person. There is not two persons who can agree about it, because all other persons than the person, which put forward the dream-hypothesis, ex hypothesi are dream phenomena in his dream. When I – in first person – analyzes the eventual arguments *against* the dream-thesis, I realize, that I don't need to take them seriously, because they ex hypothesi only are dream phenomena, which can't be compelling. But at the same time I realize, that all

my arguments *for* the dream-thesis for the same reason nor can be considered compelling. I have ended up in a self-contradiction.

And if you then finally take the polarization-problem:

Reality seems to be an Otherness, which determines and defines the world – that is: a negation-principle. Any concept, any thing, is defined by its negation; that is to say: what it not is. A dream can in other words only be defined from what it not is. It is for example not reality. This logic seems to be impossible to get around. How can you altogether assert that life, or reality, is a dream, unless you know what a dream not is?

The brain-in-jar hypothesis runs into exactly the same logical problems.

To the common consciousness, or the common cognition - that is to say: sensation and thinking - life could very well be thought to be a dream. The wholeness could possible be sleeping. You could here very well imagine the validity of the above problems, but you end up in the three logical problems. It is precisely these logical anomalies, paradoxes and problems, which create Samsara's wheel of eternal repeating up-cycles which is followed by eternal repeating down-cycles and vice versa (for example life and death, success and fiasco, joy and sorrow) – as well as the ignorance and the suffering when you are caught into this wheel, for example in the experience of nightmare and anxiety. All Jorge Luis Borges' small stories are about these logical and philosophical problems. His stories are filled with mirrors, masks, infinite regresses, labyrinths, doppelgängers, time, solipsisms and dreams.

As mentioned there is also within the wisdom traditions a lot of talk about, that life is a dream. The Chinese philosopher Chuang Tsi wrote for example:

"One time I dreamt, that I was a butter-fly. Pleased with my fortune I flew around and wasn't thinking about anything else than being a butter-fly. About Chuang Tsi's existence I suspected nothing. Then suddenly I awoked, and it stood clear to me, that I was Chuang Tsi. But now I just don't know, whether I was Chuang Tsi, which dreamt that I was a butter-fly, or whether I am a butter-fly, which dreams, that it is Chuang Tsi. There is necessarily a difference in being Chuang Tsi and in being a butter-fly."

At first Chuang Tsi's text seems to be even more radical than Descartes. But what you can say, is, that there is a radical difference between Chuang Tsi and Descartes. Descartes and Berkeley reckoned namely, as before mentioned, only with two forms of cognition, sensation and thinking.

Chuang Tsi, as well as Medieval philosophers and a lot of Catholic philosophers in the present day, however speak about revelation as a third cognition-form. Some of our temporal existentialists speak about a type of being-cognition, which neither is due to sensation or thinking. And finally a couple of European mysticists, as for example Plotin, Meister Eckehart and William Blake, have spoke about an occult cognition of God and higher powers, which reaches far beyond the areas of sensation and thinking. You could term it the wholeness-cognition. And in the East (for example Chuang Tsi) such a third cognition is well known.

To this third form of cognition, life is *not* a dream, but the Good, the True and the Beautiful itself – reality. The path to this can be described as in the education novel: at home – the homeless - home. In the start, at home (if you not, through meditation and Dream Yoga, are working with the third cognition-form), the wholeness is sleeping. If you however start to work with this cognition, the education journey out in the world begins. The wholeness starts to dream. But the more realization trained, the more you realize the illusory of the dream of the wholeness, and then the journey home starts. The wholeness begins to wake up, for finally, in the revelation, to be completely awake.

The truth in this awakenness - and which of course also is there hidden, both when the wholeness is dreaming and sleeping - is precisely the instance which creates the logical, and insoluble problems with theories which only work with two forms of cognition, sensation and thinking.

This truth is reality, or the Otherness.

The dark side of science

Along with the development of the sciences the so-called reductionisms have got status of whole research programmes. After Darwin many thought, that everything could be explained biological. In Logical Empiricism materialism lived onwards in the form of Physicalism, which was about, that all sciences eventually can be reduced to classical physics – or eventually to "the intersubjective controllable language of things". Psychologism was one of the other ravaging reductionisms in the twentieth century. Freud and Jung thought separately, that they had the key to the understanding of diverse cultural phenomena because of the storeroom of the unconsciousness. Moreover there was Historicism, which followers thought that they could generalize hermeneutics also to include the exact sciences. The latest craze in reductionism is Social Constructivism.

Surely – many are the people, who become seduced by the reductionisms. Maybe not so strange after all: all reductionisms imply a simplification, a manageable solution to all problems, a key, which saves the supporters for having to think fundamentally over the philosophical questions – which after all only a few are capable to.

What is reductionism? Science can't give answers to the problems of lifeviews and view of values. Single branches of sciences can't out of hand answer questions about values or moral standards.

However this they nevertheless often do, but then it ends in reductionism. And there has not been a lack of trying to understand Man from one or the other single branch of science. They have for example claimed, that Man fully could be described and explained with the methods of natural science. This happens in various forms of Naturalism, Positivism and Behaviourism. Or they have thought, that psychology, sociology or history can give the total and superior understanding of, what a human being is. These viewpoints are described respectively as Psychologism, Sociologism and Historism.

These viewpoints are forms of reductionism; that is to say: they reduce or devaluates Man to a phenomenon of a single type. The problem is then to lead all other sides of Man back to this single type, for example to explain ethics, politics and mathematics as pure historical or psychological phenomena. Here the reductionisms always end in various forms of explaining away, which often is direct absurd.

The reductionisms observe Man from fragmented viewpoints, for example as organism, as physical-chemical system, as society being, as psyche, as producer and user of language and meaning. But what becomes of the wholeness? What unites all this knowledge to a total image of Man?

The reductionisms view themselves as scientific approaches, but they are not. It is here the fundamental invalidity in the reductionistic viewpoints arises, since their basis not is building on argumentation, but on the claim, that they are founded in science. But science is as mentioned not able to answer problems of lifeviews and values. Reductionisms are *philosophical* viewpoints, which under cover of being science seek to answer questions of values or moral standards. No single branch of science gives anything else than a limited perspective on Man or reality. If the reductionisms should be taken seriously, then they shall contain a unifying perspective on all knowledge about Man.

Our wonder over Man becomes philosophy, when it reaches the question of Man as such. Philosophy throws out answers to the question, argues for the answers and investigates their consequences. This happens first of all by reflecting and meditating over the things, not by experience-scientific way.

Philosophy is in that way a deepening of our everyday understanding. It is a reflection over well-known subjects. Its answers lie in continuation of our immediate knowledge and understanding. Similar you can say, that philosophy is a deepening of the forms of understanding, which lie in for example science, art and religion.

Philosophy seeks for *oneness* and *coherence*. This means, that it both ask for the fundamental trait of the essence of Man, and for how all other traits of Man is connected therewith. The answer to, what the essence of Man is, has to throw a light of transfiguration over everything we know about man.

Philosophy asks the most universal question about Man, the *common* or *universal* which all of us have part in, in spite of the fact that we can behave so different and be studied in so many various ways. Here it is about what, we can call the essence of Man, and the question is solved, not by experimenting, collecting systematical observations and from them draw up theories. It is only solved by reflecting and meditating over everything we already know about Man, and by searching for oneness and coherence in it.

The sciences ask limited questions about Man, or questions about specific sides of the human life. Philosophy asks the most universal question about Man. The sciences collect systematical experiences and throw out theories, that can be determined by new experiences. Philosophy uses alone the tool of reflection and meditation.

Reductionisms are philosophical viewpoints, because they seek to answer the question about Man as such, but as philosophical viewpoints they are cognitional and ethical shipwrecks.

Let us first try to look at the cognitional shipwreck. The truth, which philosophy seeks to achieve, is a truth that raises over human views, yes over the whole of the human existence. That something is true means in philosophical sense, that it is true independently of, who claims it, and when it is claimed. And independently of, whether anybody at all have claimed it, thought it, believed it or knows it. Truths are therefore, in philosophical context, both time-independent and idea- and consciousness-independent.

Since *all* philosophical views qua views claim to be true in precisely this sense, then it should be clear, that views, which try to *reduce* or *cause explain* all views, are self-refutating views.

A self-refutating view can't be saved by saying, that it shall apply to all views except itself. For in that case you have to accept, that there exists at least one scientific and/or philosophical doctrine, which are independent of what you seek to reduce everything to, and this is precisely what the understanding itself claims, that there isn't.

It seems to be a common trait of the self-refutating philosophical views, that they pull the carpet away under themselves, because they seek to reduce fundamental concepts such as "meaning", "truth", and "validity" to something factual, for example physical, biological, psychological, social or historical. Herewith they at the same time claim, that if these conditions had been different (because they are changeable), then all our concepts about meaning, truth and validity also had to be different. But therewith they deprive themselves the possibility for being regarded as meaningful, true or valid.

Let us now try to look at the ethical shipwreck, which the reductionisms lead us out in.

When you today ask: what is a human being? Then most people answer, that Man "is a product of heredity and environment". This has become a whole religion in the Western world. But if Man only is a product of heredity and environment, then he has no longer any responsibility for his actions. Even the murderer, who is standing accused in court, is able to defend himself with, that he basically can't help, that he has committed a murder. Firstly he was born with some unfortunate genes, which made, that he wasn't all too clever. Therefore he was bullied in the school, and thereby he was developed to become aggressive and hot tempered. All this caused, that he in a certain situation committed a murder, but this he could not help. Heredity and environment led him precisely to this situation. Guilty? No, many people would say today, he is no more guilty, than a person is to blame, that he came to cough in a place filled with smoke. No, on the whole it is society and environment, which are to blame for the murder.

When you are advocating a reductionism and are claiming, that Man *is nothing else than* for example a product of heredity and environment, then concepts such as responsibility, guilt and duty loose all meaning. And it becomes meaningless to talk about human ideals. Why admire people, who have achieved something great? They

have only good genes and a beneficially environment. Why condemn people, who spoil and break down society? They can't help it.

Typical enough (foolish enough), then heredity and environment also have been used as a political tool. Often with followers on the respective sides of the extremities. In the dispute between heredity and environment it is for example considered political progressively ("*left wing*") to think, that the environment is more or less the sole decisive factor. The environment (upbringing, social conditions) is people themselves in the principle able to control and change through political actions. This is also background for, that *Lamarckism in the form of Lysenkoism* – which almost completely refuses the biological genetic meaning – got monopoly on engaging themselves with heredity in Soviet.

Similar it is regarded as political reactionary ("*right wing*"), if you believe, that the hereditament (genes) of the individual 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 for a lot of benefit: the biological inheritance has so far been a destiny, which you have to tolerate. Right wing politicians have for example claimed, that aggression or competition is inborn in the biological nature of man. Therewith the assertion can be used to justify, that specific social conditions, for example warfare or the capitalistic, economical system, is "natural". Evolutionism "proves" that the unlimited competition is as natural, as the survival of the best fitted. Moreover we know Nazism's use of biological theories.

But it could also be, that it is wrong to say, that Man *only* is a product of heredity and environment. Has science really proven this assertion? No, it hasn't. Firstly science till today has not been able to give any explanation of, that we have a consciousness, that we are conscious about ourselves and are able to reflect and meditate over our own wishes, actions and doings. In natural science all explanations are *quantitative*; that is to say: they are given within the frames of, what can be measured, scaled and counted. It speaks from an outside-and-in perspective on Man. But when we speak about everything, that the word consciousness covers – thoughts, feelings, considerations, pains etc. – then it seems quite clear, that it is not something that is quantitative. When we are using an inside-and-out perspective and describe our states of consciousness and our experiences of, what we think is beautiful, ugly, attractive, repelling etc., - then we use a completely other language than the quantitative language of natural science. So how should one be able to reduce everything to natural science?

The interesting is however, that the more science develops, the more you have to give up backgrounds, which once occurred evident to everyone. In nuclear physics and the

quantum mechanics we have learned, that there exist processes, which is not cause determined, and which do not follow the old rule about, that everything has to be continuous. Brain 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 is not fully a cause determined system. And then you can't up from the ground explain brain processes from genetical and environmental factors (quantum mechanics has not made classical physics totally invalid though; see my article *New Age's abuse of Science*).

Just as inexplicable is it, what an "I" or a "Self" is. I wake up in the morning, and I know, that I am the same as yesterday or ten years ago, in spite of the fact that my body since then has changed look and that the content of my thoughts in many ways has become something else. What is this "Me"?

It is not my body, because then I should each morning go out in the bathroom and look in the mirror, in order to find out who I am. Nor is it the content of my consciousness, my thoughts and my memories, because then I first had to evoke a line of memories each morning, before I knew who I am. The whole of the total science has no explanation of, what a "Self" is, or what personal identity is.

In this there also lies another factor, namely the question about the free will, the possibility of Man consciously to decide on its own present condition and within some limits to make a free choice.

Meanwhile 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 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 lies 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.

The assertion that Man is nothing else than a product of heredity and environment, has become an ideology, a part of the planlessness of our welfare society, where no one is responsible, where no one can help anything, where everything is to blame the genes or the society. However facing this reductionism you can place a more true understanding, which has science on its side: Man is a product of heredity and environment, yes, but also of your own consciousness about yourself.

I am born with some specific genes, which to a high degree put limits for, what I am able to and not able to. In some ways I have had good growing up conditions, in others bad. But I have since my childhood been conscious about myself and my surroundings, and have more or less freely been able to decide on something, rather than something else, within some limits. So therefore I am not only a product of heredity and environment, but also a person, which has become what I am, due to a line of decisions, which I have made through life.

It is a viewpoint between two extremes. On the one hand we have the assertion, that no one can help, that he is as he is. No one is able to change himself. My answer is: yes, you can. You can within some given limits work with yourself, and conscious decide to reflect and meditate over your background, your past, your environment, the whole of your character. You can decide to start a spiritual practice, which you know in longer term will change your outlook and way of being. In a spiritual practice you can change yourself quite considerably.

On the other hand we have Sartre's assertion about, that a person's life is determined alone by all the choices, he makes; that is to say: by the evaluations, which the inner thinker makes by saying yes and no, justifying and condemning, accepting and denying. But this is an overstatement, which sounds a bit too much of "everyone is the architect of his own fortunes". Moreover there is the problem with the Ego and its thought distortions.

It is therefore not true, that freedom lies in choosing to become what you want to. You can for example without guilt become beaten down by an assailant, so that you have to spend the rest of your life in a wheelchair. Here it is so so with being the architect of your own fortunes.

Truth lies in the middle of these extremes. Heredity and environment put some limits for, what we can do and not can do. But our self and our consciousness, which scientifically seen can not be explained alone from heredity and environment, makes us capable running to decide on, how we want to react in a lot of the situations, life puts us in. Therefore you can in some situations talk about a personal responsibility.

The dark side of coaching

In Monty Python's movie *Life of Brian* there is a scene, where Brian is talking to a large crowd of people. He shouts: "You are all individuals!" whereupon the crowd

shouts in chorus: “We are all individuals!” after which one single man is saying, a bit wondering: “Not me!”

This scene illustrates in a brilliant way the self-contradiction in the individualistic ideology put forward by the management and coaching industry.

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 lies behind. It seems more and more to be *the images*, which are real, and not some *behind lying* reality. In that sense all images are equal true - (because there is no objective instance to decide what is more true than something else) - but they are not equal good, for some images are more fascinating than others, some images affect us more than others. Therefore the expression of the image has come in focus. The expression of the image – its *aesthetics* – decides, whether it fascinates us or bores us. What apply for today, is the *intensity* and *seduction* of the expressions. The new truth criterion is, whether something is interesting or boring. Eternal values such as goodness, truth and beauty fall more and more away.

The death of the eternal values doesn't only apply for reality, but also the personality. The individual human being lives in a space without truth, in a time without direction, and with an information flow so huge, that the manageability beforehand has to be given up. How are we to live then? Well, the coaching-industry claims, you do this by creating yourself in a never-ending new production. The personality then becomes a persona (mask), an eternal change of role, because when the role begins to stiffen, it becomes uninteresting and boring. New is good, as these theorists say. What before characterized the personality's relationship to the world, was a *call*. Now the relationship has become a *project* (or as the coaches say: a good story, a good branding, a good *spin*), which is formed, quickly is being carried out and dropped for the benefit of a new project, that can maintain the constant demand for intensity and seduction.

The concept of coaching is created by the so-called management theories.

It is precisely the management theories, which lie behind the companies' much talk about the employees' willingness to personal development, flexibility, innovation and readiness for change. Words, that appear in almost any job advertisement.

And therefore also so much bet on PR; that is: not only concerning consumer goods, but also concerning people, for example politicians. The image of the politician in the

media is today more important for his choice than the politics, he may advocate. Politics becomes, like everything else, a ware, which has to be sold through good stories (branding, spin). Everything becomes a business, which have to be runned economical. The business community of the management culture, with its active leaders, is being transferred to all areas, where everything is being evaluated from if it can be sold, not from the Source of wisdom: the Good, the True and the Beautiful.

These thoughts are of course extremely Ego-fixated. Ego-worship has actual become a common accepted ideology. A whole time-tendency within school, folk high school and continuing education, focus on so-called "personal development". Inspired by for example Sartre and postmodernism you are being encouraged to an unrestrained and Egoistic self expression, where you are letting your choices (story-telling, self-branding) decide everything, in the belief that you through your choices can create a successfull life as it fit you. From the management theorists you hear slogans such as: "It is not facts, but the best story, which wins!"

This story-telling, or self-production, are based on a tendency to exclusively being able to understand the valuable, as what can be measured, counted and weighed. This is of course all right, when it comes to economics, but when we in this way quantify the human life, we end up reifying ourselves; we become dull living deads.

You may call this tendency for 'the CV-culture', 'biographism', 'the coaching-culture' and much more. Human beings become here reduced to automats, which endlessly have to stamp questionnaires, evaluation-schedules, competence-schedules, compose performance-profiles, be send on competence-development courses and teambuilding courses – and finally we have quantified through ourselves in a degree, that we can be reduced to a number on yet a schedule: "I am a number 2, or a number 5!"

The state, the market forces, the company, takes the lifes of humans, and there is no doubt, that it is a question about some kind of totalitarianism, a kind of market fascism, because Man is reduced to a number in an arithmetical problem, which only knows one correct result: profit-maximizing.

Below these tendencies lay in other words a view of human nature, namely the comprehension, that acknowledgement, success, and in last instance, salvation, depend of our own achievements. A human being is shortly said what it achieves, or what we can read out of its CV. While the coaches use many nice words about the individual person's (market)value, the tendencies expose, that the human being herewith looses its dignity. A cost-benefit-ideology, which is about to runaway.

What it is about is the individual's consciousness of competences. It starts already in the preschool class, where the children's competences become written in a kind of servants conduct book, which has to follow them the rest of life. Then evaluations on all levels follow the children and the youngsters up through the school system. What do you want? What are you able to? How will you achieve your personal objectives? Such are the questions to the youngsters. And as an adult it continues: An on-going evaluation, in order to control that you develop your competences.

It becomes a lifelong schooling, a do well-school, an examination-school with the purpose to be able to live up to schedules and consultants. Measurements, tests and plans for you and your life. A never-ending pry into the inner human being, the personality subject to a close, sharply scrutinize.

The consequence of this development is, that people are seen walking around, all the time murmurous on their own biography, for the case, that there should pass an interviewer or a questionnaire.

The problem concerning this development is not, that there is focus on the individual person - it is fine, that we become conscious about ourselves and our possibilities. No, the problem is, that it happens in a cut off space. It becomes an Ego-thinking without a 'Thou' and without a third instance in existence, the Otherness. And without the Other and without the Otherness, your personal biography become an airy fairy CV, namely MY CV, MY competences, MY profile, MY career, MY success, MY choices, MY personality-type, MY values, MY goals.

So within business community (and almost all other areas as well) rules this so-called "coaching-wave". Management theorists believe, that the leader, besides being our leader, also should be our lifecoach, and lead us in how we should live our lives as a whole; that is: also in private. The leader should shortly said be our guru.

Actually coaching origins from the world of elitist sports, where top athletes had personal coaches to get them to do the maximum. This spread to the private business community. And practically all big companies of today use coaching as a part of the continuing education and personal development of the employees. But it all still subscribes on sports metaphors: that you are in action with a world championship every day.

The intention is to help people using their full potential, to help them in having success, both in work and in private life. The management theorists call it a win-win situation: both the private life of the individual, as well as the company, where the individual is employed, get profit by it – as they claim. What it in other words is

about, within these theories, is to become something (be focused on the future), to get success, to conquer a place on the top, *to become a winner*. The virtues are self assertion, storytelling, ambition and will to change.

However - as already mentioned - the urge to personal development (development of winner-mentality), exposes itself as a part of a superior ideology, namely a defence of the market, of Consumer Capitalism and economic competition.

Coaching is by first view individualistic. It is an instruction in, how *I*, - through my will to change (story-telling, self-branding) - get forced through *my* wishes, *my* dreams, *my* desires. However if you investigate it a bit deeper, you discover, that this Egoistic self expression only is okay as long as it is in compliance with the interests a particular company has in it (or in a larger sense: the ideals of Consumer Capitalism). Your privacy (including you personal development) have to be in compliance with the interests of the company and of Consumer Capitalism. And suddenly there creeps, as with all ideologies, a kind of extremely ingenious Stalinism into it. You have to bow for the collective demand.

Moreover it has become an integrated part of the management theories, that they draw on the New Age movement, perhaps because it sounds interesting and seductive. New Age is a name of a spiritual movement, which draws on many different religious traditions: Astrology, Shamanism, Hinduism, Buddhism, different techniques of Prophecy – which all are seeked integrated with Western psychotherapy. You may say, that psychotherapy, in this combinationform, has become a new religion for the modern Western human being – a religion, which the management theories adds the ideals about being a success. In fact the term New Age is today one and the same as a mixture of spirituality, management theory and psychotherapy. If you go into a bookshop, you can often see, how books about spirituality and management theory today stand on the same shelves.

An example: today most people within school, folk high school, continuing education and business community, have met the concept NLP. Both in education, as well as at work, you will almost unavoidably be forced to work with NLP-theories, which is a directly offence of the rights for people, who don't advocate the New Age-ideology. NLP stands for Neuro-linguistic Programming. NLP is a therapeutic method, which picks inspiration from many different directions within psychology: gestalt therapy, hypnosis therapy, body therapy, neurology, shamanism etc. Some NLP-practicians claim, that it is a method, which is based on a scientific way of thinking, and refuse the connection with New Age. But this rejection is paradoxically enough a trait, which is quite typical for the New Age-ideology, where concepts such as research and science all too often become mixed with spiritual concepts. An example of the

lack of ability to understand oneself as philosophy/spirituality/religion, and not science.

For example has there within the New Age-ideology almost gone inflation in the phrase *Research has shown that...* A phrase, which often is used to convince the listener about, that the one who speaks can substantiate what he says with concrete empirical proof. But this could be an example of subjective argumentation, a form of unethical manipulation (often based on wishful thinking), because it is extremely vague to claim that "research has shown" anything, unless you can substantiate the assertion with specific details about the claimed research. Who has carried out this research? Which methods were there used? What exactly did they found out? Have their results been confirmed by others working within the area? (read more about the abuse of science in my articles *New Age's abuse of Science*, and *The Rulers of Newspeak*)

However there are also NLP-practicians, who fully acknowledge the connection with the new spiritual movements. If you look at the NLP-consultants' web pages on the internet, they often present themselves with a spectrum of educations, including astrologers, clairvoyants, shamans and healers.

Today you can almost draw such "spiritual" educations in an automat, if only you have money enough. They are typical taken in a few weekends, after which you get yourself some homemade title as coach, psychotherapist, therapist, shaman, healer, clairvoyant or spiritual teacher of one or the other kind. There almost seem to be speculated in creating new peculiar titles. But such educations can of course not give the sufficient competence, neither spiritual or educational, and there is no doubt about, that there on the grey, alternative market (including the whole of the circus of management theory and coaching) rules a wild growing, uncontrolled market of quackery and scientific/philosophical/spiritual misguiding.

If we for example take the title psychotherapist, then it is very important to be aware, that this title is not a protected title. Anybody can call himself psychotherapist, and one should therefore be on the alert with people who sign themselves psychotherapist. Competent psychotherapeutic treatment is usually in charge of University-educated psychologists and psychiatrists. For both of these groups of experts it is possible to achieve licence as psychotherapist. But on the so-called grey market there exists, as mentioned, a line of alternative forms of treatment with affinity with mysticism and religiousness, which do not live up to the professional demands, which lie in the authorization arrangements. These people also title themselves as psychotherapists, and it is a deep problem that precisely these people

of the grey New Age market practically have patent on personality developing courses in almost all companies.

Coaches make quite a lot out of emphasizing, that their approach is altogether neutral, but underneath it all whispers, as mentioned, the built-in Stalinism of Consumer Capitalism: "Unless you're able to unfold your Ego as much as possible, yes, then there is something wrong with you. You have looser-mentality. Therefore you have to attend a personality developing course!" And such personality developing courses are, as above shown, often one and the same as coming in psychotherapeutic treatment. Psychotherapy's urge to express (live over again) negative feelings, fits namely as hands in glove with the management theories' request for winner-mentality, or Ego-unfolding; that is to say: to the unfolding of an aggressive competitive mentality, where greed and arrogance almost are seen as virtues, and where envy towards them, who are in higher positions, and contempt for them, who are lesser well off, are something completely natural. The Stalinistic element is, that employees often are forced to participate such courses (conversely you can say, that the leaders also is forced to take educations in coaching).

How can this happen, when the coaches themselves say that coaching is a neutral approach, that suits the individual in the best way? Because the whole thing is about how you, with your personality and possibilities, can adapt yourself to society, with the best possibilities for succes. But when you adapt to society, you also adapt to the ideology of society. The coaches don't realize the problematic in this because their approach is an altogether individual approach, that don't have anything to say about the problem of society and ideology itself. They don't have anything to say about criticism of society/ideology. What if this society/ideology is a perverted society/ideology, that creates perverted people? What should one do about that?

As expressed in the book *Selvrealisation – kritiske diskussioner af en grænseløs udviklingskultur* (2005) then the management theories end up in concealing power relations at the workplace, they lead to difficulties assigning responsibility towards children in the schools, they reduce our spouses to means for our personal development, and remove political incitation and social responsibility by disguising social problems as personal problems.

In the following I will focus on the management theories' psychologizing of the spiritual practice within the original wisdomtraditions.

The spiritual practice within the wisdomtraditions

If you for example take the great religions, then there within these religions arised what you could call *philosophical* oriented therapy-forms, or spiritual practices, often just referred to as the spirituality within the religions. Thus Gnosticism and Mysticism arised in the early and medieval Christianity, Sufism in Islam, Hasidism and Cabbala in Judaism, Advaita Vedanta in Hinduism, and Zen and Dzogchen in Buddhism.

Unlike the established religions then these spiritual practices presuppose no religious doctrine, ideology, myth or conception (or psychological theory/management theory). They put their emphasis on realization and inner transformation. Herein the philosophical element. It was precisely these spiritual practices, which Aldous Huxley called *The Perennial Philosophy*.

Now, how do these spiritual practices relate themselves to the management theories' confusion of spirituality, psychotherapy and Ego-unfolding?

The great masters within these spiritual practices ask philosophical questions - that is: *not* in an intellectual way as in the academical philosophy, and *not* as repeating an mantra - no, they ask philosophical questions in a meditative-existential way, as the wordless silence within a strong, existential wonder. They ask into, and are investigating themselves and life with the whole of the body, with life and blood, with soul and spirit, with the brain and with the heart. Simply because this philosophical questioning and inquiry in itself constitute the complete central meditation technique, which opens the consciousness in towards the Source: the Good, the True and the Beautiful. In other words they used philosophical questions as universal coans.

To ask questions in this way has nothing to do with the enquire techniques, they use within psychotherapy and coaching. It is completely central, that the spiritual practices are using *philosophical* questions, because such questions ask after what is common to all mankind, the universal – what you could call the *essence* of Man and of reality. This is because that the Source, the essential in Man and reality, precisely is something common to all mankind, or universal. Psychotherapy and coaching are only able to ask after the personal (or after content), and can therefore never open the consciousness in towards the Source (the essence), and answer the problems of lifeworlds and view of values. Nonetheless this is what they try, especially within the so-called life-coaching. And the answer is the ideals of Consumer Capitalism (even though many coaches don't know, that it is these ideals they coach people in).

In the management cultures' confusion of spirituality, psychotherapy and Ego-unfolding there therefore is a tendency to exclude (psychologize) the philosophical

aspects of spirituality. For example they believe, that if you in a meditation practice just sit long enough and concentrate on one or the other object – or visualize one or the other – and mix the whole thing with a bit of psychotherapy, yes, then everything else comes by itself. Here is of course particularly thought of your success, but they also believe, that realization and ethics come by themselves. This they can believe, because they have psychologized/subjectified both realization and ethics. A turn, which especially origins from the so-called Humanistic Psychology (Carl Rogers, Abraham Maslow), which is a fundamental inspiration for the management theories. It is, according to the Humanistic Psychology, only the individual's own subjective evaluation, based on the Ego, which can provide something with value. There neither exist 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.

Why this Ego-worship? Within the Humanistic Psychology they often call the Ego for the Self. Like the wisdomtraditions they namely have an idea about, that Man has a spiritual/divine core. But when the wisdomtraditions' philosophical element, through the psychologizing, is left out, there is created breeding ground for many different types of spiritual self-deceit. According to the wisdomtraditions the case is namely, that an important part of the opening in towards this divine core/source, is the realization of what basically hinders this opening – and that is precisely the Ego (the inner thinker). Unless you know *the Ego's* fundamental *nature/essence*, you will not be able to recognize it, and it will deceive you to identify yourself with it again and again. And this is precisely what happens within the Humanistic Psychology, because they don't work philosophical; that is: with realization and ethical practice. Because when you realize the hindrances in yourself (the ignorance), it is, according to the wisdomtraditions, the Source itself - the Good, the True and the Beautiful – which makes the realization possible.

A complete impassable self-contradiction within the management theories is therefore the urge to Ego-unfolding ("winner-mentality"). This is completely inconsistent with spirituality, where the Ego precisely is the central *obstacle* for the opening towards the Source (another self-contradiction is the coaching-concept's focus on the future, at the same time as they speak about being in the Now).

In spiritual practice you neither try, as in psychotherapy, to urge to express – and hereby live over again - negative feelings. Firstly this is because, that the spiritual practice believes, that negative feelings have some thought-created conditions, which you therefore in psychotherapy don't come to terms with. Secondly it is due to, that both the prompting to express your negative feelings, as well as expressing them, is ethical questionable. This doesn't mean, that the importance of the feelings is

neglected in spiritual practice. On the contrary. But you ask in another way: What *are* feelings? What is the *nature/essence* of feelings?

The management theories' many personality developing courses are, because of their lack of philosophical insight, filled with examples, both on the ethical problematic in expressing negative feelings, but also on, that people are thrown out in psychic crises, because they don't come to terms with the actual causes to the problems.

Many psychotherapists and coaches will object, that it for sure also is about expressing positive feelings, unfolding what they call sensitivity ethics. The question is however, what it exactly is, the psychotherapists consider as being "positive". The Humanistic Psychology's view of morals is namely not only a subjectifying, which attributes the Source of morals to the subjective itself (the Ego, the inner thinker), 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 experiences) 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.

It is in all briefness important, within these theories, that the unfolding of the Ego's feelings, negative as positive, becomes justified. A therapeutic method to this, is for example the use of the so-called Giraffe language – which I won't hide, that I find completely ridiculous – and which the girls in the Danish comedy serial *Normalerweize* – by the way also make some razzle dazzle at.

The ideal about the Ego-unfolding human being shows itself - as Nina Østby Sæther writes in an article in the book *Sevrealisering* (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 management theorists and the coaching industry:

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. The management theory is an expression of an individualistic way of thinking, where the main focus primarily is aimed on oneself. As the management theorists 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 the management theories 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 the management theory the idea about innovation, development and growth lies 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 the management theory, then the Ego-unfolding human is characterized by "increased spontaneity" and ability to live in the Now. (As mentioned you shall here be aware of the contradiction between the future worship of the management theories – 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 the management theories 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 the management theories 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 the management theories 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 the management theories 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 the management theories in themselves 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).

In his brilliant novel *American Psycho* Bret Easton Ellis mirrors, in an almost comical, reductio ad absurdum way, these connections between the psychopath's traits and the life-ideals of Consumer Capitalism. Here the main character Patrick Bateman (the psychopathic serial killer), precisely lives a life, which is a perfect realization of the life-ideals of Consumer Capitalism.

Ellis cleverly exorcises the zeitgeist of the age of Consumer Capitalism. Written in the first person present tense, the book chronologues the life of a rich New York yuppie, Patrick Bateman, whose existence is dominated by designer clothes, trendy restaurants, tepid pop music, exhausting gym workouts, "hardbody" sex partners, and lesbian porno movies. And did I mention that he is also a mass murderer who tortures and mutilates his (mostly young female) victims in unspeakable ways? Or is he just making this up – telling an interesting story in order not to end up in boredom?

Ellis shows us in this way the innate depersonalization of a consumer culture. Patrick Bateman, although strikingly handsome, atlanteanly fit, and impeccably dressed, is continually mistaken for other people by his acquaintances. Although he repeatedly confesses to his (real or imagined) crimes, he is never taken seriously by his associates, who are much too concerned with their own conceits to even listen to him.

Conclusion

As opposed to the therapies of management theory, coaching, and psychotherapy, then you in a true spiritual practice completely try to transform the Ego's feelings, negative as positive, partially by, through realization work, restructuring their thought-created conditions, partially by the practise of Heartmeditation (ethical practice/training of compassion). In other words, then focus doesn't lie on the feelings, but on realization and ethics. Herein the philosophical element.

New Age's abuse of science

New Age is a name of a spiritual movement, which draws on many different religious traditions: Astrology, Shamanism, Hinduism, Buddhism, different techniques of Prophecy – which all are seeked integrated with Western psychotherapy, coaching and management theory.

New Age wallows itself in the philosophical viewpoints relativism and subjectivism; that is: New Age considers conceptions such as good and evil, true and false, beautiful and ugly, as something we have created ourselves, and which therefore

don't exist objective seen. Therefore such values are rejected as premodern superstition, as an expression of old-thinking. And if truth is something we have created ourselves, then there isn't any objective criterium to decide what is true. All ideas are therefore equal true, and therefore anything goes.

Through this New Age has, as the rest of the society, 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 are directed inwards in a global seen exceptional narcissism.

The paradox is, that New Age is supposed to be based on spirituality, where spirituality traditionally has emphasized, that the Ego is Man's biggest problem. But New Age has precisely not examined the Ego's (the inner thinker's) ingenious ways to use thought-distortions in order to defend itself. Individually we have namely created a large scale self-image, which in a quite high degree is based on assumptions/ideas (within New Age there is a labyrinth of different ideas to choose between – though the ideology has some common traits as we shall see). 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 am Okay, you're Okay! It all run 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."

Within the New Age movement there therefore is a tendency to psychologize/subjectify both realization and ethics. A turn, which especially origins from the so-called Humanistic Psychology (Carl Rogers, Abraham Maslow), which is a fundamental inspiration for coaching and management theory. It is, according to the Humanistic Psychology, only the individual's own subjective evaluation, which can provide something with value. There neither exist 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 subject. "It is not facts, but the best story which wins! You can be anything, what you yourself choose to be! You can, with your thoughts, create in reality like a God"

So, what it is about, within New Age, is to express positive feelings, unfolding what they call sensitivity ethics. The question is however, what it exactly is, they consider as being "positive". The Humanistic Psychology's view of morals is namely not only a subjectifying, which attributes the Source of morals to the subjective itself (the Ego,

the inner thinker), 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 experiences) 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.

It is here New Age uses (abuses) – Einstein's theories of relativity, as well as quantum mechanics, to "prove" its theories. – (you can see this illustrated in New Age movies as *The Secret* and *What the bleep do we (k)now?*) - But these scientific theories are on the worst distorted (in my article *The Rulers of Newspeak* I go into an investigation of the origins of relativism and subjectivism in the Universities, and how they there have caused a collapse in standards of scholarship and intellectual responsibility, which vast sectors of the humanities and social sciences are currently afflicted with, and which therefore also is spreading without the universities).

There are especially two kinds of scientific distortions:

1. That Einstein's theories of relativity, and quantum mechanics, proves that relativism and subjectivism is valid points of views.
2. That Quantum mechanics and Einstein's theories of relativity proves that classical physics (the age of enlightenment, rationalism) is not valid anymore.

1) That Einstein's theories of relativity, and quantum mechanics, proves, that relativism and subjectivism is valid points of views.

It is a sophistication to assert, that Einstein's theories of relativity should imply, that there is no objective or true description of the physical reality. This is a confusion of physical relativity with epistemological relativism, which corresponds to a similar misunderstanding of quantum mechanics as subjectivistic. Quantum mechanics is not subjectivistic in the sense, that it is the human consciousness, which produces the phenomena. It is not the consciousness of the physicist (the subjective), which makes the electron behave as a wave. It is the macrophysical (material) experimental devices, which affects the electron in such a way, so that you unambiguous know, that if you work with this type of apparatus, then the electron will always behave as a wave.

In the same way the theories of relativity, epistemological seen, give no background for any relativism about, that "*everything is relative*". The seen does *not* depend of

the eyes that watch when it comes to physical phenomena, neither in quantum mechanics, nor in relativistic physics.

2) That Quantum Mechanics and Einsteins theories of relativity proves, that classical physics (the age of enlightenment, rationalism) is not valid anymore

The emergence of quantum mechanics has *not* made classical physics invalid; it is still valid, but Planck's constant (the quantum postulate) has given it a limited scope of application.

According to Niels Bohr quantum mechanics is a generalization of classical physics, and the complementarity principle is a generalization of the classical causality principle. In the same way the theory of relativity is a generalization in another direction of the classical physics.

According to Bohr you can't replace classical physics with quantum physics, because the validity of classical physics is a necessary precondition for, that you can describe the quantum mechanical phenomena, and set out for the macroscopical ("classical") experimental arrangement.

But in numerous New Age Books and magazines you can see the two mistakes repeated again and again. This is due to, that New Age worshippers don't bother (or dare) to get an opinion from anyone knowledgeable in quantum physics, solely because they have read it in other New Age books, written by people who neither have any competence in the field.

On the background of such abuses, there has gone inflation in the phrase *Research has shown that...* A phrase, which often is used to convince the listener about, that the one who talks can reason what he says with concrete empirical proof. But this is often just an example of subjective argumentation, a kind of unethical manipulation (often based on wishful thinking), because it is extremely vague to claim that "research has shown" anything, unless you can reason the assertion with specific details about the claimed research. Who has carried out this research? Which methods were there used? What exactly did they found out? Have their results been confirmed by others who work within the area? (Within quantum mechanics the best would be to read the works of Niels Bohr himself).

The thought-distortion *Research has shown that...* is extremely widely-spread within the New Age environment, where concepts such as research and science all too often are being mixed with spiritual concepts. An example of the lack of ability to understand oneself as philosophy/religion, and not science.

Characteristic of the New Age environment is, as mentioned, its combination of Eastern philosophy with Western psychology/psychotherapy, and latest with various management theories and coaching techniques, and the herein built-in fount of “spiritual” educations, where they, in order to sell to so many as possible, conscious or unconscious, neglect the grounding of experience.

An example is the calling to Shaman, which traditionally required that the Shaman aspirant was a person who had went through tremendous ordeals, the so-called Initiation Crisis, or Shamanic Illness (the Shaman was a chosen human being – a rare specialist). The modern Shamanism (New Age Shamanisme) is a form of Shamanism, which has been accommodated postmodernism (for instance Serge Kahlili King’s book *Urban Shaman*). This form of Shamanism is standing in overt contrast to classic Shamanism, as regards the demands to the Shaman. Now everybody can, through various types of Shaman educations, learn it, as the phrase goes, regardless whether you have any experience or not. It is an ”user-friendly” form of Shamanism - and therefore also saleable in massive quantities. A way of creating success and wealth.

The typical scene is the white middle aged American woman, who out of boredom, and who probably never even has met a Native American, take a course (extremely expensive) in a few weekends, whereafter she can call herself Shaman (with a certification, which even true classical Shamans haven’t got), and earn a lot of money taking people as clients.

Relativism and subjectivism justifies it. Anything goes.

Today you can draw all kinds of “spiritual” educations in an automat, if only you have money enough. They are typical taken in a few weekends, after which you get yourself some homemade title as coach, psychotherapist, therapist, shaman, healer, clairvoyant or spiritual teacher of one or the other kind. There almost seem to be speculated in creating new peculiar titles. But such educations can of course not give the sufficient competence, neither spiritual or educational.

But New Age worshippers don’t care, they have relativism and subjectivism as justification. The paradox is that they swear by the concept of science - they call everything they do science, without having the slightest scientific foundation for it. Concepts such as science and scientific, has become mantras within the New Age environment: “When I say it is science, then it is science! That is my truth, and who are you to questioning that?” And they even don’t hesitate making a fool out of

educated scientists (see the typical forms of insults in my article *The Rulers of Newspeak*).

An example is New Age worshippers, who call themselves UFO researchers or Crop circle researchers, without having any philosophical or scientific experience or education. The problem with such people - who for example believe that aliens from another galaxy regularly visit the Earth, occasionally abduct people in order to perform medical experiments on them, buzz unsuspecting airline pilots and so on - usually maintain their exotic beliefs by ignoring the alternative explanations of the phenomena they take to be evidence for their beliefs – and that is highly unphilosophical and unscientific (misuse of the so-called abductive reasoning/inference, which is widely used within true science).

So, for instance - although it is undoubtedly true that strange patterns are sometimes found in cornfields - it doesn't follow that they *must* have been made by extraterrestrials. There is a wide range of far more plausible alternative explanations of the phenomenon, such as that they have been made by pranksters, or are the result of freak weather conditions. There are examples of pranksters, who actually have exposed their work, and even then the crop circle researchers maintain, that it is not true what the pranksters say, because the circles can't be made by human beings.

It is a huge and unwarranted step to move from the fact that such crop circles *could* have been caused by extraterrestrials to the conclusion that they *must* have been. Before reaching that conclusion you have to, if you are scientific in your approach, prove that visits by extraterrestrials are the only possible explanation, or at least the most plausible one, for crop circles. Only when we have eliminated other possible explanations should we believe the improbable. And even then we should be aware of the power of wishful thinking.

There are a lot of other examples within the New Age community, where they talk about their beliefs as scientific proof, and there is no doubt about, that there on the grey, alternative market (including the whole of the circus of management theory and coaching) rules a wild growing, uncontrolled market of quackery and scientific/philosophical/spiritual misguiding.

The most classical example of pseudo-science within New Age is probably Erich von Däniken, who in his book *Chariots of the Gods* (1968) tries to make probable the theory, that ancient Earth had been visited by aliens. Among the facts, which Däniken thinks can be explained out from this theory, he for example mentions the images on the rocks in Peru. But here we again see a misuse of abductive reasoning/inference

(inference to the best explanation), which has been used in many true scientific theories.

Däniken's misuse of abductive reasoning is as follows:

- 1) The inference to a theory, which doesn't explain the facts, that it is claimed to support. In order to infer to a certain theory by the help of inference to the best explanation, this theory must in fact explain the chosen facts. Däniken's facts doesn't do this.
- 2) Selective choice of data. To be acceptable an inference to the best explanation must take in consideration all the known relevant data. Däniken omits to do this. He has made his conclusions in advance, and chooses only the data that support his theory, and leaves out the data that doesn't.
- 3) Ad hoc-hypotheses. Is the traditional name for help-hypotheses, wherewith you seek to explain away a discrepancy between a theory and facts, which, by first view, seem to disprove it, but actually only are explaining away.

It would actually be a good philosophical/scientific training to read some of the "scientific" books written by New Age researchers, and try to find all the examples of misuse of abductive reasoning.

Däniken calls his science Astro-archaeology, but in fact it is an example on pseudoscience. Other examples on pseudoscience include Intelligent Design, Cryptozoology, Dianetics, Eugenics, Graphology, Homeopathy, Morphic Resonance, Perpetual Motion, Astrology, Personology, Phrenology, Theosophy, Physiognomy, Pyramidology, Quantum Mysticism, Radionics, Time Cube, UFOlogy, Vitalism, and many more.

I will emphasize, that my critique of pseudoscience doesn't mean, that I think their theories are wrong. If they had been writing them as pieces of fiction, or as philosophical/religious works, they would have been very interesting. Personal I actually love that kind of stuff. No, the manipulation (and therefore deeply unethical) happens when they claim, that they are science, but in fact are abusing, both scientific methods, and scientists themselves.

It also has to be emphasized, that pseudoscience not only is practised by people, who are uneducated in a certain field. It is for sure also being practised by people, who actually have educations within a certain field. It is therefore not enough to refer to, what people with educations within a certain field, have said about, for example quantum mechanics, in order to proof something. What you have to look at, is their use of scientific methods.

A critique of the “spiritual” movie *The Secret*

The Secret is the latest American produced concept about, how you can exploit spirituality in order to achieve power, money, and success. It is a “spiritual” movie (New Age movie – and now also a book – actually hundreds of books), created with the best modern moviedramatical effects (like the movie over the book *Da Vinci Code* by Dan Brown). The founder of the Secret is Rhonda Byrne, an Australian television talk-show producer. The movie is launched – by the way like a number of other similar New Age products – with that Rhonda Byrne, one day at the end of 2004, discovered the secret laws and principles behind the whole of the universe, and therewith made her able to see through the secret behind everything, that has made the world’s large geniuses so brilliant and successful – including the greatest thinkers, scientists, artists and philosophers. She was surprised, why nobody else had discovered this, and will therefore share the secret with us.

The Secret is both something new and something old. It is something new in the sense, that it is based on management theory. It is something old because it, by first view, talk about ancient spiritual/universal laws. However these laws become distorted to fit together with the management theories.

It is shortly told a giant manipulation-project, which purpose is to scrape so many money to itself as possible. The circulation of the idea happens via multi-level-marketing structures - that is to say: sales networks, which are built up in a pyramid structure – the ideas that also lie behind the illegal pyramid games. Furthermore the movie is being supported by American TV-shows such as Oprah Winfrey Show and Larry King Live.

The central concept in *The Secret* is ”The Law of Attraction” – that is to say: if you think in compliance with this law, then you can attract a successfull life as it fit you. This is because, as the movie says, that your thoughts directly *creates* the world, including the physical world. Everything that happens to you of negative or positive, is in other words due to your own negative or positive thoughts. You therefore have to change these negative thoughts with more positive thoughts. Here the movie, in compliance with the wisdomtraditions, mentions concepts such as love, truth, beauty, freedom etc. But suddenly in the next moment some *quite* other examples on ”positive” thinking are mixed in.

Here is one of Rhonda Byrne 's own examples on positive thinking: If you as a female has a problem with being too fat, then you just have to turn your back to fat people, because then the sight of them will not affect your thoughts. Fat thoughts namely make you fat! The "positive" in Rhonda Byrne's example on positive thinking, is in other words an Egoistic ideal of beauty devoid of any kind of ethics.

The movie is coming with a number of similar examples on, that its *own* concepts of positive thinking are equivalent with pure Egoistic thinking. In addition to this the movie also has some messages to sick, weak and poor people, which is as ethical problematic. Sick, weak and poor people are namely told, that their disease, weakness or poverty are their own guilt, because they think sick, weak and poor thoughts. The examples on, how they instead shall think, are as absurd as Byrne's own example: for example are cancer-sick people told, that they miraculous can heal their disease by watching funny movies in three weeks, or by having send a few *Gratitude-stones* from LA. But not enough with that. In an interview with Newsweek Rhonda Byrne is asked, if the victims of the genocides in Rwanda in 1994, then had attracted this destiny themselves, what she answers on with confirmation. This she must, otherwise the movie's thesis are not valid (today she has stopped with giving interviews).

The thought falls for a *Reductio ad Absurdum* argument. Any psychopath, multiple murderer or tyrannical dictator would namely love the thought. Just try to use the idea on the German mass extermination camps under Second World War. The idea would actual be very useful in order to justify crimes in this style. It is, as mentioned, a way of thinking that is completely devoid of ethical thinking – that is: a psychopathic way of thinking.

All of it reeks of the management theories' coaching preaches about winner- and looser mentality, and therefore about the ideals of consumer capitalism.

The movie/book uses a long line of the greatest geniuses of history to confirm its theories (from Emerson to Shakespeare, from Plato to Lincoln, from Victor Hugo to Newton and Beethoven) – as well as that all wisdomtraditions also are used to confirm them. But these people become – just like the wisdomtraditions - systematic abused by taking their statements out of their right connection, and twisting them in order to mix them with the movie's theories.

The thought distortions, which the authentic spiritual traditions try to explore, change and restructure, are namely in the movie directly used to manipulate with. Meanwhile I don't think the creators of the film do this fully consciously. I actually think that they believe in the idea. They are just extremely uneducated and naive. Without any

philosophical or scientific training. And in this they remind about a lot of other New Age worshippers.

Like many other New Age directions (illustrated in the New Age movie *What the bleep do we (k)now?*) The Secret wallow itself in the philosophical viewpoints relativism/subjectivism – that is to say: philosophical viewpoints, which can justify the management-theoretical idea about, that it is not facts, but the best story, which wins (your thoughts directly *create* the world, including the physical!). Here the movie uses – again like many other New Age directions – Einstein’s theories of relativity, as well as quantum mechanics, to ”prove” its theories. But again like many other New Age directions, these scientific theories are on the worst distorted. For example it is a sophistication to assert, that Einstein’s theories of relativity should imply, that there is no objective or true description of the physical reality. This is a confusion of physical relativity with epistemological relativism, which corresponds to a similar misunderstanding of quantum mechanics as subjectivistic. The quantum mechanics is not subjectivistic in the sense, that it is the human consciousness, which produces the phenomena. It is not the consciousness of the physicist (the subjective), which makes the electron behave as a wave. It is the macrophysical (material) experimental devices, which affects the electron in such a way, so that you unambiguous know, that if you work with this type of apparatus, then the electron will always behave as a wave.

In the same way the theories of relativity, epistemological seen, give no background for any relativism about, that ”*everything is relative*”. The seen does *not* depend of the eyes, that watch, when it comes to physical phenomena, neither in quantum mechanics or in relativistic physics (read more about abuse of science in my articles *New Age’s abuse of Science* and *The Rulers of Newspeak*).

Furthermore there is the problem with the psychologizing of the wisdomtraditions’ philosophical element. The movie's followers for example meet critique – again like many other New Age directions - with a crying lack of philosophical insight and understanding. Most New Age followers namely have psychology or psychotherapy as background. And this despite, that The Secret’s performers/followers manipulative sign themselves with all kind of titles. Here is some examples from the book (which, by the way, also is quite revealing): “philosopher, lecturer, author and creator of true wealth, prosperity, and human potential programs,” (James Arthur Ray), “moneymaking and business-building expert” (John Assaraf), “philosopher, chiropractor, healer and personal transformation specialist” (John DeMartini), “metaphysician and one of the top marketing specialists in the world” (Joe Vitali), “a nonaligned, trans-religious progressive” (Michael Beckwith).

I would especially like to see their diploma as philosophers. Where philosophers give critique, and meet critique, via objective arguments, the critics of the movie/book usually are met via various forms of psychologizing, and therefore, when you speak about philosophical issues, subjective argumentation.

Philosophy does for example not speak about the contents of the motivations of each individual person for using the movie, but about a common problem. The objections against the critique typically say, that when the individual of good will uses the movie in order to understand, then it is okay. Philosophy will to this answer, that if this "good will" contributes to the circulation of a common problem - then it is of course not ok.

Another, psychologizing, objection against the movie's critics, is, that it - rather than answering the critique via objective arguments - analyzes the personal motives of the critic. Here again is used an arsenal of subjective argumentation, as for example that the critic wishes to offend the freedom of expression, that he will prevent people in expressing their views, that he is intolerant and arrogant, that he is an advocate for a totalitarian ideology, that he has a problem with his feelings etc. etc.; that is: arguments that go after the man and not the case; an old philosophical fallacy (*ad hominem*), because the man's personality is completely irrelevant with reference to the case, which is being discussed (see more about such insults in my article *The Rulers of Newspeak*).

The movie's followers often use examples on, that they, after having started using the movie's principles, have begun to attract money, boyfriends, power etc. – in proof of, that the movie then is right. This is actual more a proof of, that the movie's basic ideal is pure Egoistic thinking - because, after all, black magic also works. And psychopaths also have a peculiar ability to attract power and money.

That you are able to attract, and realize, some Ego-oriented wishes, are in other words *not* a proof of, that you therewith live in compliance with the universal laws. The universal laws are namely ethical in their essence. They are basically about justice. Let us therefore try to look deeper into, what it is for kind of universal laws the movie mentions.

"The Secret," according to the movie/book is, as mentioned "The Law of Attraction." And, defined clearly and simply, this "law," (as certain as the law of gravity) is that our thoughts always attract what they are about and bring them to reality. Think about wealth, and you will become wealthy. Think about that new car you've always wanted, and it will come to you. Think about getting a good parking spot on the lot, and one will open up for you. Think about your ideal weight (really, dwell on that

number, write it on your scale), and you will attract that reality to yourself. (All of these are real examples in the book.) Rhonda Byrne is glad to report that since deciding her “perfect weight” is 116 pounds, she has moved to that mark, and nothing moves her from it, no matter what she does or eats.

Now here is how “the law of attraction” actually works, according to *The Secret*: “Thoughts are magnetic; and thoughts have a frequency. As you think, those thoughts are sent out into the universe and they magnetically attract all like things that are on the same frequency. Everything sent out returns to the Source. And that source is you.”

As Mel Lawrenz says in an article (*The Secret-Revealed*): “Now here’s the bad news: whatever happens in your life is the result of what your thoughts have attracted - the good and the bad. Appendicitis? An auto accident? Poverty? You have brought it on yourself.”

And Bible verses are quoted in the book, as if the book was about something holy. Lisa Nichols, motivational speaker and one of the contributors, notes that: “in Proverbs it talks about “so a man thinketh, he is.” In Matthew, it says “if you ask and you believe in your prayers, then you will receive it.”

And then there is James Arthur Ray, author of *The Science of Success: How to Attract Prosperity and Create Harmonic Wealth Through Proven Principles*, who says, “Here’s the question I want you to consider - do you treat yourself the way that you want other people to treat you?”

Mel Lawrenz continues: “Does that sound familiar? It is a twist, a pretty severe twist, of one of the most universal principles of life called the Golden Rule, which Jesus described as “do to others as you would have them do to you.” So this tried and true egoless principle of life (“do to others...”) becomes the ultimate form of self-centeredness (“treat yourself...”). Oh, and by the way, you can attend James Arthur Ray’s seminar, his “harmonic wealth weekend,” for a seminar fee of a mere \$997. Somebody has figured out how to attract wealth to himself.”

The Secret would lead you to believe that you are entitled to whatever you want, and you have the power within yourself to gain it. The book says: “Begin right now to shout to the universe: life is so easy. Life is so good. All good things come to me.” And “You deserve all good things life has to offer.” “You are the creator of you, and the law of attraction is your magnificent tool to create whatever you want in your life. Welcome to the magic of life and the magnificence of you.”

Very different from the message of Jesus: the first will be last and the last will be first; lose your life and you will find it.

And in this we find the confusion of *The Secret*. It is all about the Ego, for the Ego, obsessed with the Ego. Even Newsweek magazine offers this ethical critique: "On an ethical level, *The Secret* appears deplorable. It concerns itself almost entirely with a narrow range of middle class concerns -- houses, cars, vacations, followed by health and relationships, with the rest of humanity a very distant sixth."

Now, let's look deeper into the proclaimed Law of Attraction. 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 the Buddhist philosopher Nagarjuna said, then 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 implies, 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 implies, 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 (it is this law The Secret calls The Law of Attraction, but which becomes twisted to fit the management theories' ideals of success). And since everything in this way only works correlative, yes, then Nagarjuna claimed, that you actual can say nothing 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.

In accordance with the above universal laws of energy it is correct, that the thoughts and mind of Man are participating in creating the world, even the physical, but not in the way the movie indicates it, yes, the movie actual directly commits Hubris.

You can in short not use these laws as you want to; that is: through 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 Secret here expose 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 bringing itself back to the balance of the middle. The system does this by seeking over towards the opposite extreme (for example 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 management 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 applies for the individual person, also applies 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 else) through warfare, terror, crises, inner mass psychotic collapses, and through natural disasters.

The Ego has always - in accordance with the authentic wisdomtraditions - been the worst *prevention* for the opening in towards the Source. Nobody, who has been studying the wisdomtraditions, can be in doubt about this. It is therefore astounding, that a movie/book as *The Secret*, with its extreme Ego-worship, are able to make spiritual seeking people believe, that it is based on the innermost secret of the spiritual laws. It is the direct opposite. But it is followed by millions of people over the world, and the teachers are worshipped like gurus, though they often are dressed in expensive silk-suits. It is difficult to make a google-search without being confronted with adds for *The Law of Attraction*. And if you haven't met it yet you will for certain, because this movement is only in its beginning, and therefore still has not met much criticism.

I sometimes have to pinch myself in the arm when I see, in what degree this movie/book, under the concept of revealing the secret behind true spirituality, is on the program at most New Age therapists and counsellors, and increasingly also in the whole of the coaching and management industry. As we have seen it with NLP (another New Age product) we will therefore probably soon see the movie/book as fixed curriculum within schools, folk high schools and continuing education.

No, if you want to see a spiritual movie, that shows what true spirituality is, I suggest that you see the Korean filmmaker Kim Ki-duk's masterpiece *Spring, Summer, Fall, Winter...and Spring*

The Rulers of Newspeak

The name *Newspeak* is the name George Orwell gave the language, which the rulers in his dystopian novel *1984*, had created. The intention with it was to control thinking, to make some ideas impossible to think, including concepts such as good and evil, true and false, beautiful and ugly. In this connection they used concepts such as old-thinking and new-thinking.

Today, after having passed 1984, we live in a so-called postmodernistic dystopia, where eternal values such as goodness, truth and beauty fall more and more away – and where we have been invaded by the ideology of relativism, which rulers, in creeping ways, use the same phrases as the rulers in Orwell's novel, as if they had used it as inspiration.

How does relativism show itself? It shows in an ingenious way, which no ideology have shown before – and therefore we don't recognize it. Through schools, folk high schools, universities (especially in the Humanities and the social Sciences), continuing education and business communities – relativism has brainwashed most people to consider conceptions such as good and evil, true and false, beautiful and ugly, as something we have created ourselves, and which therefore don't exist objective seen. Therefore they are rejected as premodern superstition, as an expression of old-thinking. Because if truth is something we have created ourselves, then there isn't any objective criterium to decide what is true. All ideas are therefore equal true, and therefore anything goes.

Relativism shows itself in different forms: subjectivism, social constructivism, pragmatism, nihilism, postmodernism. It is a mishmash of trendy ideas – deconstructive literary theory, New Age fantasies, so-called feminist epistemology, extreme social-constructivist philosophy of science, even Lacanian psychoanalysis, humanistic psychology, experiential psychotherapy, coaching and management theory. And the books and articles written by these people, is also a mishmash of thought-distortions, obscure jargon, political ideology, religious preaching and pseudo-scientific blather.

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 are directed inwards in a global seen exceptional narcissism.

How is that? Isn't narcissism what for example social constructivists try to avoid? Yes, but with the opposite result – they haven't examined the inner thinker's (the Ego's) ingenious ways to use thought-distortions in order to defend itself. 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 am Okay, you're Okay! It all run 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) wanting to utter yourself about, what is good and evil, true and false, beautiful and ugly, at the same time as the rulers

(the relativists) does this themselves in all possible quibbling ways, under cover of concepts such as tolerance or new-thinking.

That relativism is an ideology shows in, that it is a closed system, which is shared by a large group of people – (though these people can disagree in between whether they are subjectivists (individual oriented relativists) or social constructivists (social oriented relativists), or if they are working in universities, or as coaches within the New Age environment, etc, etc).

Such a closed system has especially two distinctive characters: 1) It allows no imaginable circumstance to talk against the ideology. 2) It refuses all critique by analysing the motives in the critique in concepts, which is collected from the ideology itself (an ideology always thinks black and white, and therefore always has an anti-ideology, an enemy image, which it attribute on to everyone, who don't agree).

Relativism has in this way also succeeded in getting philosophy psychologized/spoiled.

I have many times myself been surprised over, in what degree I am being attacked for my relativism-critique – attacks which apparently only directs itself against this, that I, with starting point in the wisdomtraditions, express the necessity of remembering the philosophical aspects of the spiritual work (the realization-work and the ethical practice). This is an absolutely necessity today, because the consequences of relativism will be the counter balancing of the Ego-unfolding.

Now if you use philosophy, you will see, how truth escapes relativism – (because truth does exist objective seen; that is: not in the mind of Man, whether as an idea, an assumption, or a conception) - and returns to relativism as a kind of hubris-nemesis. Two crucial philosophical arguments can namely be put forward against relativism:

1) The argument of self-refutation. Relativism is logically fallacious, because it of course considers itself as being true. But it can precisely, in accordance with its own built-in relativism, not itself be regarded as more true than for example absolutism. For that reason it is followed by a long line of self-contradictions. All ideas, theories, assumptions and conceptions are of course relative. But relativism is itself a theory. The self-contradiction is that relativism makes an exception of its own position: the very assertion of relativism is itself nonrelativistic. It relates absolute to the relative, where the relative here is its own assertion of relativism. The art is of course to relativize oneself, and relate relative to the relative. And to do this you must also be able to relate absolute to the absolute, and acknowledge, that the absolute is an Otherness that transcends us, and therefore all our ideas, assumptions, theories etc.,

and which is the instance that carry us. The Otherness is the instance in reality, which makes it possible that we at all can investigate whether there is contradiction or coherence between our thoughts and our lived lives. It is the instance that makes it possible to discriminate between awareness and inawareness, being yourself or trying to be something else.

2) The *reductio ad absurdum* argument. If you preach relativism and believe, that everything is relative and for that reason equal true, you have thereby accepted, that nazism, fascism, dictatorship, popular murder, terror and violence, are as equally great blessings for mankind as democracy, negotiation and dialogue (it is a fact that many totalitarian ideologies, paradoxically enough, today have begun to use relativism as justification for their business). Then you have no basis in order to criticize, because you haven't got any rational frame to start from. You can't criticize anyone for argumentation bungling, or to replace arguments with machine guns, because this presupposes, that there is a rational foundation in your arguments.

How far out in the absurd will a relativist in other words defend his so-called "tolerance"? What about the child, which has been raped and murdered? Will the relativist go in and defend the murderer against the critique, and say, that it might well be, that we are opposed to the murderer, but basically we can not know, whether it is us who are mistaken, and him who is right?

This there actually are examples on. There are moreover examples on, that relativists have defended religious mass suicide, female circumcision, wife burning etc., etc. So you can yourself figure out, what the ideology can be used to justify.

The relativists' idea of themselves as being mediators are in other words absurd and self-contradictory – go to an Islamic and Jewish fundamentalist - and create peace by telling them, that their faith after all only is something relatively??? It is offensive, to hear this forbearing accent: "It is fine, that you have your viewpoints, but basically there is nothing which is true, so therefore make peace!" (Besides an extremely metaphysical statement, which claims itself to have practically divine insight in truth).

If you observe the built-in energylaws of life, then the collective Ego-unfolding is an expression of energy, which has swung out in its one extremity. With necessity the energy will swing over in the opposite extreme. And this won't happen in a quiet way, when you consider the enormous momentum that is in the actual extreme, and it will happen quite simply: through pollution of the environment, through diseases (aids, cancer and else) through warfare, terror, crises, inner mass psychotic collapses, and through natural disasters.

This is what we very probably will have to face, because the rejection of the realization-work and the ethical practice is exactly what is needed for an ideology to keep its citizens in ignorance, and through ignorance to use them as means for reaching its goals; that is: using them in ways that don't have to take ethics into consideration.

These things were exactly what George Orwell mirrored in his novel, and what he therefore warns us against.

But the defenders of relativism refuses the above mentioned classical arguments against them, because they see it as old thinking. However there is a newer incident though, which has exposed relativism in a nearly comical way: the so-called Sokal Hoax.

In the autumn of 1994, the New York theoretical physicist Alan Sokal submitted an essay to *Social Text*, the leading journal in the field of cultural studies. Entitled "Trangressing the Boundaries: Towards a Transformative Hermeneutics of Quantum Gravity," it purported to be a scholarly article about the "postmodern" philosophical and political implications of twentieth-century physical theories. However, as the author himself later revealed in the journal *Lingua Franca*, his essay was merely a farrago of deliberately solecism, howlers, and non sequiturs, stiched together so as to look good and to flatter the ideological preconceptions of the editors, but which consciously was created as absolutely nonsens, without any meaning at all.

After review by five members of *Social Text*'s board, Sokal's parody was accepted for publication as a serious piece of scholarship. It appeared in April 1996 in a special double issue of the journal devoted to rebutting the charge that cultural studies critiques of science tend to be riddled with incompetence.

Sokal's hoax is today acquiring the status of a classic *succés de scandale*, with extensive press coverage in the United States and, to a growing extent, in Europe and Latin America.

The Sokal Hoax shows three important things. First, that dubiously coherent relativistic views about the concepts of truth and evidence really have gained wide acceptance in the contemporary academy, just as it often seemed. Second, that this onset of relativism has had precisely the sorts of pernicious consequence for standards of scholarship and intellectual responsibility that one would expect it to have. Finally, that neither of the preceding two claims need reflect a particular political point of view, least of all a conservative one.

It is impossible to do justice to the egregiousness of Sokal's essay without making account of some common themes that you find in almost all publications of relativism, no matter of the disagreements they might have in between; that is: what makes it into an ideology shared by the enormous group of people that call themselves relativists.

1) Relativists typically deride scientists for continuing to cling to the "dogma imposed by the long post-Enlightenment hegemony over the Western intellectual outlook, "that there exists an external world whose properties are independent of human beings, and that human beings can obtain reliable, if imperfect and tentative knowledge of these properties "by hewing to the "objective" procedures and epistemological structures prescribed by the so-called scientific method."

2) They typically assert that this "dogma" has already been thoroughly undermined by the theories of general relativity and quantum mechanics and that physical reality has been shown to be "at bottom a social and linguistic construct." In support of this, they adduce nothing more than a couple of pronouncements from physicists as for example Niels Bohr and Werner Heisenberg, pronouncements that have been shown to be naive by discussions in the philosophy of science over the past 50 years (see my article *New Age's abuse of science*).

3) They then typically pick up steam, moving (jumping) to one of their central theses.

According to where they belong within the wildgrowing theories of relativism, they have many different central theses (within New Age one of the more popular is The Law of Attraction – see my article *A critique of the "spiritual" movie The Secret*). But let us take one of the theses with more pseudo-profundity, for example where they move to the thesis, that recent developments in quantum gravity – an emerging and still-speculative physical theory – go much further, substantiating not only postmodern denials of the objectivity of truth but also the beginnings of a kind of physics that would be genuinely "liberatory", of real service to progressive (and also right-wing depending on where they belong) political causes. And here the "reasoning" becomes truly venturesome, as they contrive to generate political and cultural conclusions from the physics of the very, very small.

4) Their inferences are typically mediated by nothing more than a hazy patchwork of puns (especially on the words *linear* and *discontinuous*), strained analogies, bald assertions, and what can be described only as non sequiturs of numbing grossness (to use a phrase that Peter Strawson applied to the far less culpable Immanuel Kant). For example, they move immediately from Bohr's observation that in quantum mechanics "a complete elucidation of one and the same object may require diverse points of view" to imply, that in such a situation, how can a self-perpetuating secular priesthood

of credentialed “scientists” purport to maintain a monopoly on the production of scientific knowledge!...The content and methodology of postmodern science thus provide powerful intellectual support for the progressive (or Capitalistic, if they belong there) political project, understood in its broadest sense: the transgressing of boundaries, the breaking down of barriers, the radical democratization of all aspects of social, economic, political and cultural life.

5) They pepper their works with as many smaller bits of transparent nonsense, as could be made to fit on any given page. Some of these are of purely mathematical or scientific nature, or quotes from spiritual traditions. Others have to do with the alleged philosophical or political implications of basic science – for example that quantum fields theory confirms Lacan’s psychoanalytic speculations about the nature of the neurotic subject, or that it confirms the Law of Attraction, and therefore coaching and management theories about the blessings of unlimited ego-unfolding (political Liberalism/consumer-capitalism). Also that fuzzy logic is better suited to leftist political causes than classical logic is; and that Bell’s theorem, a technical result in the foundations of quantum mechanics, supports a claimed linkage between quantum theory and “industrial discipline in the early bourgeois epoch.”

So the works of these people are often breathtaking in their combination of self-confidence and absurdity.

And this was precisely what Sokal’s Hoax was a parody on. It therefore proves that the editors of *Social Text* were derelict in their intellectual duty, by publishing an article on quantum physics that they admit they could not understand, without bothering to get an opinion from anyone knowledgeable in quantum physics, solely because it came from a “conveniently credentialed ally” (as *social Text* coeditor Bruce Robbins later candidly admitted), flattered the editors’ ideological preconceptions, and attacked their “enemies.”

What Robbins and Co. should have said, is that *Social Text* is a political magazine in a deeper and more radical sense: under appropriate circumstance, it is prepared to let agreement with its ideological orientation trump every other criterion for publication, including something as basic as sheer intelligibility. The prospect of being able to display in their pages a natural scientist – a physicist, no less-throwing the full weight of his authority behind their cause was compelling enough for them to overlook the fact that they didn’t have much of a clue to exactly what sort of support they were being offered.

And this is what is at heart of the issue raised by Sokal’s Hoax: not the mere incompetence in the academy, but rather that specific form of it that arises from allowing ideological criteria to displace standards of scholarship so completely that

not even considerations of intelligibility are seen as relevant to an argument's acceptability. How, given the recent and sorry story of ideologically motivated conceptions of knowledge – Lysenkoism in Stalin's Soviet Union, for example, or Nazi critiques of "Jewish science" – could it again have become acceptable to behave in this way?

But it is not only in *Social Text* you see this. You see it practically everywhere in schools, folk high schools, universities, continuing education and business communities. You are therefore forced to accept it, in order to be able to work and live in our society of today.

The most grotesque form though is within the theory of the Law of Attraction (see my article *A critique of the "spiritual" movie The Secret*). Here you see silk-dressed coaches/gurus earn millions of money on repeatedly abusing scientific ideas totally out of context, without giving the slightest justification – or throwing around scientific jargon in front of their non-scientist audiences and readers without any regard for its relevance or even its meaning – and mixing it with spiritual concepts (also totally out of context, and therefore abusing) in order to give their work some kind of "holy" meaning.

Alan Sokal's Hoax can serve as a flash point for a necessary gathering storm of protest against the collapse in standards of scholarship and intellectual responsibility that vast sectors of the humanities and social sciences are currently afflicted with, and which therefore also is spreading without the universities.

As mentioned I have myself been attacked by these people in very, very insulting ways, when I have shown my critical view on all this. I am especially surprised over the reactions coming from people in the New Age environment (especially from advocates of The Law of Attraction), who, in other contexts, almost is shouting how big their love and tolerance towards other people is.

And, it is always the same way these people react on critique, like if you turned a tape-recorder on. They always use the thought-distortion *Ad hominem move*, no doubt because of the psychologizing aspects of their teachings.

Also Alan Sokal was attacked in these ways. After having revealed his Hoax he wrote a book *Intellectual Impostures*, together with Jean Bricmont, where he examined the canon of French postmodernists – Lacan, Kristeva, Baudrillard, Irigaray, Latour, Virilio, Deleuze and Guattari – and systematically (with the use of objective argumentation) exposed their abuse of science. In the book he also writes about the reactions of the relativists.

As I have mentioned, then George Orwell's novel 1984 seems to be a possible inspiration for these people, Alan Sokal mentions Schopenhauer's *The Art of Always Being Right*: namely, enlarge your opponent's target so as to make him look ridiculous. The relativists support the use of rhetoric, manipulation and even lies in order to force their message through, because, according to them, it is not facts, but the best story, which wins (they have actually written books about this). Relativism justifies it. Anything goes.

Sokal describes the reactions in the following way, which I will repeat below, because the insults are very similar to the insults I have experienced.

Sokal categorizes the reactions in two kinds of Ad Hominem move:

- a. Name-calling.
 - b. Attacking his alleged motivations.
- 1) *Name-calling*. Some of Sokal's opponents seem to think that clever epithets can replace the detailed refutation of his arguments. And the insults are legion: "little school-teacher", "cowboy and pharmacist", "censor", "Francophobe", and "purveyor of disinformation", "gendarmer", and even "a dwarf who resemble teenagers Game Boy all day long." Still more extraordinary, Philippe Sollers asserts, in an interview paradoxically entitled "Answer to imbeciles", that Alan Sokal's private life "merit investigation": "What is Alan Sokal like? What paintings do he have on his walls? What is his wife like? How is his beautiful abstract statements translated in their daily and sexual lives?" So the insults are going on the same themes: that Sokal is an arrogant, mediocre, sexually frustrated scientist, ignorant in postmodernist science, and enslaved by a scientific ideology (neoconservative or hard-line Marxist, take your pick). But Alan Sokal keeps his philosophical integration intact and is calmly answering: "Please tell me what this implies concerning the validity or invalidity of my arguments?"
 - 2) *Attacking his alleged motivations*. Some commentators, instead of examining Sokal's reasoning, attack the motivations, that they attribute to him. For example, Julia Kristeva claims that his book forms part of an American economic and diplomatic campaign against France. Isabelle Stengers sees it as a pure "commercial operation." Vincent Fleury and Yun Sun Limet accuse him of seeking to redistribute research funds from the social sciences to the natural sciences. But Sokal answers: "Again this form of defence is curious: for even if my motivations were as alleged (and they most certainly are not), how could that affect the validity or invalidity of my arguments?"

Yes, we have passed 1984, and now we see, how frightening close to reality George Orwell's novel is.

The Hermeneutics of Suspicion

In the investigation of The Hermeneutics of Suspicion I will focus on two concepts: ideology and anger, which somehow is interrelated.

1. Ideology

What is an ideology?

Ideologies have always been a reflection of time, which manifests itself in the thoughts of human beings, specially the thoughts' direction towards the future. The collective manifestations of the future have either appeared in 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. The goal is an idea, a point out in a future, projected by the mind, where the salvation comes in some form – happiness, satisfaction, equality, liberation, etc. It has not been unusual that the means to get there have been to make people into slaves, or by torturing them and murdering them here and now.

The ideology today is consumerism, or consumer-capitalism, and the supreme good in the future is constant increasing production, constant increasing consumption. The thought-system behind this ideology comes from the so-called management theories, which again build on humanistic psychology, and its relativism and subjectivism, and therefore inavoidable nihilism.

That a thought-system has developed into an ideology shows in, that it is a closed system, which is shared by a large group of people. Such a closed system has especially two distinctive characters: 1) It allows no imaginable circumstance to talk against the ideology. 2) It refuses all critique by analysing the motives in the critique in concepts, which is collected from the ideology itself (an ideology always thinks black and white, and therefore always has an anti-ideology, an enemy image, which it attribute on to everyone, who don't agree).

An ideology is therefore characterized by, that it is not able to contain, or direct refuses, rationality and critical thinking. We all know how dissidents have been killed, jailed and tortured under totalitarian ideologies.

Ideologists can be called Hermeneutics of Suspicion.

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.

The last mentioned is a typical trait of the management theories and their use of coaching and psychotherapy in leadership theories and personality developing courses. In this way they end up in concealing power relations at the workplace, they lead to difficulties assigning responsibility towards children in the schools, they reduce our spouses to means for our personal development, and remove political incitation and social responsibility by disguising social problems as personal/psychological problems.

I myself have time after time been attacked by coaches and psychotherapists for no other reason than being a philosopher; that is: a person who uses rationality and critical thinking (which is old-thinking in their point of view). I have even, several times, been advised to seek psychotherapeutic treatment, in order again to be able to think new, and be flexible and willing to change (to claim that I have psychological problems, without any justification, and without being in a treatment-situation, is actually a very serious insult).

They call it personal development, which again is one and the same as adjustment to society, and therefore to the ruling ideology. An advice that don't differ much from the theories behind the re-education institutions in China. A direct Stalinistic approach, which almost all companies today is using more and more (see other kinds of insults in my article *The Rulers of Newspeak*).

Their approach is to attack the character of the person with whom they are arguing rather than finding fault with his or her argument. But they ought to get some more philosophical training when arguing with a philosopher, because this move is within philosophy well known as arguing *ad hominem* (Latin for “to the person”). It is a technique of Rhetoric (communicative swindle), since discrediting the Source of an argument usually leaves the argument itself intact. Shifting attention from the point in

question to some aspects of the arguer's personality or behaviour are irrelevant to the point being discussed

To try to have a normal conversation with these 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 denies 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. It is pure prejudice. 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 example 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 succes. 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.

But you don't only meet the problem of the hermeneutic of suspicion within high developed theories. You also meet it within the so-called common, mediocre life. For example the whole of Karen Blixen's life is a rebellion against this mediocrity of the common life, which tried to clip her wings in her childhood. I will say that this is probably the biggest wall you will meet on your spiritual journey. But to stand up against these influences, and keep your philosophical integration intact, will for certain create a spirit of greatness. In some cases it is best totally to avoid these people, because they will clip your wings if they get the chance for it.

Do as Epicurus, treat people with friendliness and compassion as long as it is possible, but withdraw to your garden when they try to lure you into the world's noise and political quarrels, because they think that this is a part of being "normal". When you in peace are cultivating your garden you can also keep on cultivating your philosophical integration and the refined pleasure in this. But not without being critical! I will return to this under the concept of anger.

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?

I think it is time for rebellion against this tendency in society, and especially within leadership theories. If we shall save our democracy and welfare society it is absolutely necessary, that we in relation to democracy-parasitic ideologies become philosophical rebels like Socrates, Harry David Thoreau, Gandhi, Martin Luther King or Krishnamurti – a kind of spiritual anarchists.

2. On anger

In that we of course have to deal with the question of anger, not only the anger, which is implicit in an ideology, but also the anger in the critique of an ideology. Because ideology should be critized, but not end up in debate, and eventually violence.

There are three kinds of anger: the philosophical anger, the painfull anger, and the mix between the two.

The philosophical anger

The philosophical anger is the anger over prejudice, hypocrisy, manipulation and injustice, which philosophy is in opposition to. This anger is controlled through objective thinking, critique and argumentation.

Objective argumentation is an ethical way to convince others about your views, because it in reel sense shows what is appropriate or inappropriate about a case. Objective argumentation contains some of the following elements: summary or abstract, informations, description, reason, concrete choice of words, nuanced objective statement.

The hallmark of philosophy is exactly to use objective argumentation, and to show the untenable aspect of painful anger, subjective argumentation and inappropriate assumptions. This is the essence in using philosophical dialogue.

In the philosophical dialogue you focus on, what cooperation 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 example 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 only as a mean, but also as a goal*.

Many psychotherapists, as already mentioned, often misunderstand the philosopher's rationality and critical thinking as a symptom on a problem with anger – on the contrary, it consists in love to wisdom.

Jesus said that anger is a sin, yet himself got angry, for example in the temple. Is he a hypocrite, or is he a man with psychological problems, which have to be solved by a psychotherapist? Of course not. The anger of Jesus is the philosophical anger.

The painfull anger

The painfull anger is coming from the emotional painbody. A thoughtpattern can create an enlarged and energycharged reflection of itself in the form of a feeling. This means, that the whole of the thought's past also can create a reflection of itself in the body. And if this past is filled with pain, then it can show itself as a negative energyfield in the body. It can nearly be seen as an invisible, independent creature.

The painbody is the inner demon, or the devil in the heart. Some painbody's are relatively harmless, some are anxietyfilled or angry, others are directly malicious and demonical. They can be passive or active. Some are passive 90% of the time, others are active 100% of the time.

The painbody is activated in the same moment as specific challenges activate the inappropriate basic assumptions, which have been created by bad experiences in the past. And they are being maintained by the vortex of negative automatic thinking, which follows from these basic assumptions.

This anger is controlled through neutral observation, and flexible thinking.

The mix between philosophical and painfull anger

Often this mix is coming to expression in the culture of debate (*débat*, from *débattre*, struggle, quarrel). The culture of debate is especially seen in politics, but is the common used form of communication in the whole of society.

In debate people all the time work against each other and are seeking to show each other's flaws. They often only listen to each other in order to find flaws and defend their arguments. They more and more harden their own perspectives, because they are so busy judging the positions of others. They defend their own positions as the best solutions and eliminate others' solutions. They fundamentally seem to have a closed attitude, which is due to a fixed decision to be right. They wholeheartedly invest in their own conceptions, and they therefore calculate others' positions, without being aware of feelings or relations, yes, they even often happen to play down and resent the other person.

But is this not exactly what the philosophers' critical thinking and objective argumentation also do? No!

The debating attitude is unethical, and leads to violence and war, where the painbody suddenly also is released. Why? Because it is based on subjective argumentation. Subjective argumentation is an unethical way to convince others about your views, because it doesn't show, what in real sense is appropriate or inappropriate about a case, but manipulates with it.

Subjective argumentation contains some of the following elements: innuendoes, distortions, generalizations, over-/understatements, sarcasm, satire, irony, postulates, emotional affections, coloured choice of words, choices and exclusions, subjective style.

Each and every time you, in this way, feel anger, then remember the virtues of philosophy: objective thinking, critique and argumentation. Avoid subjective thinking, critique and argumentation, because you in that case would be a hypocrite.

If you in your anger all the time remember objectivity, you will discover, that you have to withdraw from, or avoid being involved in, many confrontations.

And a last advice. Always take a night's sleep before you give expression for your anger.

Sympathy for the Devil

In the following I will try to characterize a particular area of the polar relationship of some collective energy-processes, where informations from the Source, through individual persons, are transformed via the mandala-structures of the universal images, through the polarized structures of the collective images, to the personal images. In other words: the phenomenon, which often is called energy- and consciousness-transmission.

My account is inspired by the Danish spiritual teacher Jes Bertelsen.

The images in the universal time include their polar partners, they are a kind of visionary mandala-structures, which work in synchronism with the Now. They therefore function synthesizing and healing. The images in the collective and personal time eliminate their polar partners, and therefore they work separating in polar tensions. Furthermore they work in sequences in past and future.

Images in the collective time are therefore a dangerous intermediate area between the universal and personal time. The collective time lies on a so-called astral plane, and its degree of fascination is known from fairy-tales, myths, archetypes, primordial images, dreams.

When individual people have an opening to the collective time, their creativity, and their reality-creating ability, are set free in fascinating degree. Experiences from here are experiences such as kundalini, clairvoyance, astral travels, mythological visions, miracles, channeling, UFOs, memories from past lives, Near-death experiences, possession states.

However you are, in this astral state, still on the plane of the collective images of time, which work in sequences in past and future, and you are in danger ending up in a spiritual crisis. A spiritual crisis is an expression of, that you have gone out in the collective time with your Ego, without having done the philosophical preliminary work; that is to say: the realization-work and the ethical training. The Ego will then make you loose your way in the collective time. This can happen in two ways: either as suffering (often called The Dark Night of The Soul), or as Ego-inflation.

In the following I will (with the main focus on Karen Blixen) look at three ways of realization, in which individual persons can have an access to the collective time's area of energy, and how this energy can work both constructive and destructive:

1. The realized transmission of energy and consciousness

2. The lesser realized transmission of energy and consciousness
3. The unrealized transmission of energy and consciousness

1. The realized transmission of energy and consciousness

Around ethical highly placed spiritual teachers, there seem to be formed existential mandala-structures, which, as great energy-whirls, canalize highly growth-advancing energy and consciousness-waves from the Source (the Now, life itself). These mandala-structures necessarily have to arrange themselves after the collective images' polarization-patterns in past and future, whereby the lines are formed, which the energy and the transmissions can follow into the personal images, which after all also only work in past and future.

These energy-mandalas are in religious art archetypal portrayed in for example the classic configurations around Christ (the four evangelists and their symbolical power) and Buddha (the Dyani-Buddhas with their esoterical figures).

Such mandala-fields are constelled concretely among the students, who relate to such a teacher. And in these fields, constituted by human beings, the Source manifests itself concretely-existential.

In the former time's spiritual pedagogics the teacher took the central place in these mandalas, whereby the hierarchical structure was able to be unfold (Christ and Buddha in the centre). In the newer time's spiritual pedagogics (maybe because of the Egoextreme in our time, and the many people who end up in Ego-inflation) the development aims towards holding free the center of the circles, whereby an ideally equal spirituality can begin to unfold. This development is especially represented by Krishnamurti, who in this way seeks to make the Source common. In such a mandala-structure is that, which before symbolical was gathered in the centre, now unfolded and made common in the periphery. The aim is completely to avoid the guru-centric. Anybody, who has worked with Krishnamurti's teaching, can recognize this.

When an individual person has a realized access to the collective time's area of energy, we have to do with a spiritual teacher of one or the other kind. The realized transmission of energy and consciousness will always be characterised by a spiritual teacher, who not only has realized the collective time's astral worlds, but in addition to this also the universal time, and therefore truth and reality. This teacher is therefore able to discriminate between the image and the reality, and therefore able to relate relatively to the relative and absolutely to the absolute. The collective forms of energy, are here used for spiritual purposes (where the energy is turned towards the Now, and therefore the Source and the essence).

Such teachers function as energy-distributers and energy-spreaders to individual persons, who are students and disciples of this teacher, a kind of transformation-phenomenon, where the individual persons are lifted into the spiritual dimension with its universal images, insights and experiences of love.

To teach spiritual consists after all in, among other things, in passing on energy (love, information, healing, direct transmission of spiritual consciousness).

The passed on energy from the spiritual dimension, is herein spreading itself like waves outwards to those, who are open, and those, who can learn and receive. This wavevibration-process goes through the mandala-structures of the universal images, which work in synchronism with the Now (the spiritual dimension) to the polar tension-tracks in the collective images, which work in past and future, in order to be able to reproduce itself in the personal images, which after all also only work in past and future. The waves have to be able to travel. The energy has to be able to spread itself from higher levels, via the teacher, and out to those, who can grow in this field.

Around such a teacher there in other words arises an universal image, a kind of mandala-structure.

Most known is as mentioned Jesus and his disciples, or Buddha and his disciples. But it can also happen in a monastery, for example around Francis of Assisi, Hildegard von Bingen, or around Socrates and his students.

In such a group-energetical mandala-structure in the Now, the polar relationship in the collective time is organized in such a way, that energy can be send and received, arise and travel like rings in water.

The greatest source of energy we, via our common Ego-consciousness (the personal images), have at our disposal, lies in our sexuality. All spiritual practice is about transforming sexual energy into spirituality.

In the work of spiritual teachers you can talk about a conscious making use of group-energetical mandala-structures. All such existential manifested mandalas have that in common, that the sexual energy here uses other lines than the usual.

Whether the sexuality is transformed through exercises, prayer, and meditation, or it happens through conscious taken over unhappy fate (illness or the death of the beloved, which we below shall investigate with reference to Karen Blixen), then the conscious turned inwards sexuality opens for knowledge about, and experiences of

the collective images of time. Hereby is released an extensive and common human energy, which can express itself in the existential environment around the concerned energy-sources.

There exist traces of this many places; and there is often offence connected to it. The conditions are not realized for what, they really are. People choose to understand from their own conditions, understandable enough. In addition to this shall be added, that these energetical structures are subtle, they are extremely powerful, and they are in themselves neither good or evil. To a high degree it depends of the participants and their philosophical integration, their realization work and ethical practice, what use there is made of these powers and functions.

One can therefore not blame observers, partially that the phenomena are misjudged, partially that they easily awake suspicions. For sure is it namely, that such energy-phenomena often enough have become used in lesser beneficial situations.

2. The lesser realized transmission of energy and consciousness

The same energy, which can be used unselfish, can namely also be used turned stimulative into the Ego-structures, whereby the Ego can lose balance and expand to a super-Ego, or in another way be demonized. It is this, that happens in the spiritual crisis. You have gone out in the collective time with your Ego.

The lesser realized transmission of energy and consciousness is therefore characterised by people, who admittedly have an opening to the collective time, but not to the universal time (although Karen Blixen, as we shall see, seems to be an aesthetical borderfigure). Such people are often not able to discriminate between the image and the reality, and therefore they relate absolutely to the relative.

The same energy-process and function, which realized spiritual teachers use, can therefore be used for other purposes than spiritual. When the collective time's energy-processes are used spiritual, then the Ego, in its egoistic isolating and self affirmative function, steps aside, and the energy is turned into the Now, and therefore in towards the Source and the spiritual dimension. The people, who around a spiritual teacher, constitute the energy-mandala, are in this way made transparent for a higher common human spirituality.

In the Ego-inflation the contact with, and the ability to manipulate with such collective forms of energy, will be used for other purposes than spiritual. It can be creative, Ego affirmative, political, demonic and so on.

The powers that, by realized spiritual teachers, are given to others' disposal in healing, energy transmission and spiritual information exchange, the same powers can themselves be turned in through the Ego-structures, and therewith into past and future. In this way there can be opened creative channels, created super Egos, created political leaders and popular seducers.

This is a demonical element.

Many gurus seem to have fallen into this temptation. In the story about the temptation in the desert, we can see these possible ways of using the energy pictured in anticipated form. Here you see the possibility of using the freedom and the power, to elevation of the Ego and the consequent power and material glory. But Jesus abstains from this deification of the Ego.

However, many false gurus have fallen for the temptation. And in the present time, where spirituality is blended with coaching and management theory - the belief in, that worship of success and winner-mentality, is the same as being in compliance with the universal laws - we will undoubtedly see an explosion of such super Egos – and experiences show, that the world will follow them (see my article *The Spiritual Crisis* about euphorical ego-inflation in connection with the Deeksha-phenomenon)

In *Doctor Faustus* Thomas Mann describes, how the main character Adrian Leverkühn discovers and releases such collective powers and is using them to intensify his musical creativity to genius heights. He goes deliberately into a demonizing-process by making love with the whore Esmeralda, whereby he consciously catches syphilis, for then to use the inner pole-tension of this disease to heighten his creative capacity.

Afterwards the universal energy-mandala unfolds itself out through a line of genius musical works, where both those, who perform them, and those, who listen, are being caught by the magical circle.

Thomas Mann partially builds his figure on Nietzsche, and the whole of the novel is on a collective plane about, what the Germans did under The Second World War, where demonical polarized energy spread from Hitler and the secret SS-rituals.

In Adrian Leverkühn's dialogues with the Devil haughtiness and superman-feeling are clearly seen as the motives, which control the use of the collective creative energy.

This doesn't mean, that all great art is coming through, because a creative person turns the collective energies in through the Ego-structures. Thomas Mann's musical image, which intuitively and poetical seeks to understand Hitler-Germany, is for example a contra-image to Bach's music, which toned God to honour and mankind to uplifting. To all the great works Bach added "Soli Deo Gloria".

If you get in contact with collective energies it is in fact a good idea to seek to express your abilities artistically, but in a way, that directs them towards the spiritual dimension.

In another, more aesthetic-demonic scenario, you can also see some of these group-energetical polarization-phenomena around Karen Blixen.

As mentioned Karen Blixen seems, in line with the greatest artists, to be an aesthetical borderfigure between the realized and the lesser realized transmission of energy and consciousness. This is especially coming to expression in the oddity, that what she in her letters refers to as the Devil, she in her stories refers to as God. Let us try to investigate it.

Karen Blixen's novel *Out of Africa*, is in short about finding the universal images behind everything, the original, as she calls it, the ancient, where you live in accordance with yourself, with God's plan with you.

The God in Karen Blixen's stories, is the wild God from the Book of Job. The God, which she in her letters calls the Devil, is therefore not the God of the common, mediocre life, which in Blixen's childhood had clipped her wings, and made her live as a slave of others ideas; that is: the ideas of the common, mediocre life.

Out of Africa is about Blixen's rebellion against this mediocrity of the common life, and how she seeks the original images, which she refers to as the ancient; the ancient, both in the wild nature, with its animals and natives, but also in the aristocracy of for example her beloved Denys Finch Hatton - not in the content of aristocracy, but in its form, as an image of originality, nobility, possibilities, freedom and adventure.

Karen Blixen's concept of aristocracy is therefore linked with her concept of the original images, the ancient, and is both directed towards certain people, who she refers to as great travellers, adventures and dreamers, as well as the wild nature and its native people.

When Karen Blixen in 1913 travelled to Africa she was 28 years old. She was at that time lonely and proud as a descendant of great rulers or great dreamers. It was her

youthful longings and dreams she travelled into. The strange, wild and dark world, which she met, she recognized. In the woods of North Zealand, which are high and light and are penetrated by hundreds of roads and paths, like parks or great gardens, she had seen the ancient wood for her inner eye, a flowing world of great passions, which still was untouched by consciousness. In *The Plough*, a small story, which was printed in 1907, she had depicted the ancient wood:

”In the wood there is not safe in the night, the ancient woods are haunting. Though fallen and died for so many thousand years ago, and forgotten in the day-time, they wake up at night again, rise, just like the fallen from their graves on the battle field, and transform the world. Impassable and terrible, with a gnarled and unlimited power, the ancient wood rises. And there are heard booms in the wood from the heavy steps of the great ancient elephants, and in the whoosh of the great tops is another sound, it is the night song of the wood, it is the ghost of the ancient songs, which were sung, when Earth was new. O, it is the voices of the ancient woods and their song about the great free Earth. It is the song of the great rivers and lakes and the great plains and the great changes, the song of the great battles, of loneliness, of freedom, of darkness, the great songs about ancient times, about the youth of the Earth, when it was wild and free, and the woods, the marshes, the great lakes and plains were its thoughts. Mankind was not born and nothing had name...”

Eight years later Karen Blixen was laying sick in a hospital in Copenhagen.

She had lost the dream of Africa, she had lost her coffee farm, had got infected with syphilis from her husband Bror Blixen, and this illness had destroyed her sexuality, her possibilities for being together with men erotical, and for having children. And she had lost her beloved Denys Finch Hatton, who got killed in an airplane crash, etc.

But now she began to realize, that this maybe also was God’s plan with her.

In *Out of Africa* Karen Blixen somewhere retells a small story, she was told as a child. She calls it *The Roads of Life* and gets it placed in such a way, that it tips one of her completely central ideas up in the light. The story, which actually should be drawn at the same time as it is being told, is about a man, who lives in a small round house with a small round window, and with a small triangular garden. Nearby there is a lake with a lot of fish in. One night the man wakes up because of a frightful noise, he gets up and goes out after the sound. It becomes a terrible trip. Twice successive it happens, that he first falls over a stone and after that in three ditches successive. At last it shows, that there has happened a break in the dam of the lake; he then repairs the hole and walks tired home.

At the same time as the story is being told the storyteller draws the lines in the man's route, and if you now follow these lines from the house to the lake and back again, then there is coming a quite nice image of a stork out of it.

Karen Blixen's following comment to the story was:

"I am glad that I have been told this story, and shall remember it in the hour of need. The man in the story was cruelly deceived, and had obstacles put in his way. He must have thought: "What ups and downs! What a run of bad luck!" He must have wondered what was the idea of all his trials, he could not know it was a stork. But through them all he kept his purpose in view, nothing made him turn round and go home, he finished his course, he kept his faith. That man had his reward. In the morning he saw the stork. He must have been laughed out loud then.

The tight place, the dark pit in which I am now lying, of what bird is it the talon? When the design of my life is complete, shall I, shall other people, see a stork?

Infandum, Regina, jubes renovare dolorem. Troy in flames, seven years of exile, thirteen good ships lost. What is to come out of it? "Unsurpassed elegance, majestic stateliness, and sweet tenderness."

So when Karen Blixen was lying in her sickbed and after having realized, that this maybe was God's plan with her - she made a pact with the Devil, that she from now on could change everything into stories. And in her stories, and in her following life as a storyteller, she realized the dreams she had had as a young woman.

All her following stories, for example *Seven Gothic Tales*, are reflections of her own experiences with destiny. They are all about how to find the dream tracks and songlines in the artwork of your life - God's plan with you - and about people who live in accordance with these power lines, and about people who don't live in accordance with them.

These themes continue in Karen Blixen's storytelling ever after.

And Karen Blixen herself became, in her pact with the Devil, an embodiment of the same demonical element, which fascinated Milton, Romanticism, Baudelaire, etc. The Devil haunted in her, and around her, just like he haunted in figure of Prospero in Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, as Mefistoteles in Goethe's *Faust*, or as Conchis in John Fowles' *The Magus*.

He haunts in the change of Karen Blixen's looks, the change of the beautiful, brightly dressed woman, into the blackdressed witch-like woman. Karen Blixen even liked to speak about herself as a witch, since she considered a witch as someone, who has contact with the deep, ancient secrets and powers. And this is not only something symbolical. Karen Blixen's access to the collective time's astral worlds, her transformation into a witch, her paranormal abilities, are something completely real, which several times have been depicted by people, who stood her close.

In the realized transmission of energy and consciousness the sexuality is transformed through exercises, prayer and meditation. In Karen Blixen's case it is happening through conscious taken over unhappy fate, partially her illness, partially the death of the beloved (a theme which by the way is well known and very used in art and literature, for example in Goethe's "Faust"). This conscious turned inwards sexuality, opened her to knowledge about, and experiences of, the collective time and its images – and maybe also about the universal time and its images. Hereby was released an extensive and common human energy, which expressed itself in the existential environment around herself, as the Source of energy.

She created an energy-mandala around herself, a magical circle. You can directly feel the magic just by reading her books. It waves out of her stories, just like it also can be felt in books, which are written about her.

The magical circle of poets and men of letters (among whom Thorkild Bjørnvig, Aage Henriksen, Jørgen Gustava Brandt and Jørgen Kalchar), who moved around Karen Blixen on Rungstedlund, were after own statements, in works and scriptures, grabbed by a strange indefinable magic. They were lovers, but however clearly not lovers in ordinary sense. They were in apprenticeship, but not in apprenticeship in ordinary sense; they were in pact with, and weaved together with Karen Blixen, and at the same time they came deeper inwards into their own creative potentials. They were drawn into the collective time. Both in their being together with Karen Blixen, and in their works, they melted together with a world of archetypes, primordial images, myths and dreams. All of it was changed into stories.

What she referred to as God's plan with you, she also referred to, as that to find your role in the story, and since she herself was the storyteller, she didn't mind forcing the circle around her to find their roles in her story. To adhere to God's plan with you, just like the man in the story about the stork, she could also refer to, as that to keep the author's idea clear. And the author was herself. The roles in this play she referred to as marionettes. The good marionettes are rewarded, not with well being or special happiness, but with a fate, an image that was remembered, for example a stork. They

would get to see the dream-tracks and the songlines in the artwork of their lives – God's, or the author's plan with them.

She could in other words refer to herself as God himself, or the Devil himself. The witch. She could do this, because she apparently was conscious about herself manifesting an universal image. She referred to herself as being 3000 years old and of the same age as the prophet Esajas, whom she had an intensive, conflict-accented relationship to. And all of it, her own fate, the relationship to her students, can be found reflected in her stories in a fount of variations. Reality and stories are melting together.

The initiation ritual into this magical circle was the same for each of them. She told the individual person the story of her disease, and that she in her sickroom had a visit from the Devil, which she entered into the pact with, that she from that moment of, would be able to transform everything, that happened to her, into stories. Furthermore that if they mixed blood with a witch, they would get access to the same ancient, deep secrets and powers, which she herself possessed. They would get an image, they would get to see the dream-tracks and the songlines in the artwork of their lives – God's, or the author's plan with them.

That Karen Blixen herself, through her fate and her distinctive attitude to this fate, opened her mind to the collective time's polar relationships, is without any doubt. That she radiated an enormous witch-like eros and at the same time a dramatic tragic fate, is also without any doubt.

This, not only personal creative power, therefore constellated - in its quality of collective - a circle of highly intelligent and sensitive men, who together with Karen Blixen, constituted this fascinating energy-mandala-phenomenon.

That Karen Blixen wanted to transmit her special knowledge about intensifying of creative energy to her closest relatives in the circle, appears from Aage Henriksen's energy-experience with her in 1958. This experience he describes in *The Irrepressible* on page 146:

"During the Christmas Holidays I had circled mystified around these stories and special around "The Cloak". In this story there happens a transferring of power and soul, from one human being to another, and it happens in that moment, where the old master takes the cloak of his own shoulders and puts it around Angelo's. I now began to talk about the story and weaved Angelo's night in the prison - where he sits as hostage for his teacher, and become torned up from the ground - together with bygone years' events between her and me. "Yes, I don't really understand, what it is,

you are saying,” she answered. Then the conversation silenced, and there went some time, before I sensed, that the room between us somehow had become alive, as in the time with my yogateacher, but now different. There came a radiation from her, which grew in power, until it was as a hard, dare wind, which somehow came inmost from the bones and which caused, that my eyes were watering. When I lifted my head and was looking at her, she was almost hidden in a cloud of scarlet aura, in which the white, whirling phosphorus-light floated as a disc. God must know, how I myself was looking like – as at a deathbed, or as a thief? In this way it lasted for a long time, I don’t know how long, maybe ten minutes. She herself interrupted the mute, intense being together, by dry and short saying: ”Now come!” as if we had entered into an agreement. The situation developed itself and changed itself momentarily. Once again a being together with Karen Blixen had slowly changed itself into an optical instrument, in which the impurity of one’s own heart comes to sight. I knew, that if I went with her now, I would arrive somewhere, which I nothing knew about, but even if the Earth had begun to shake, I would never have got the idea, that I still would be able to break off and say no. I then sat down on the edge of the bed and bent over her, as she wanted to, and at the same time I sent my thoughts miles around for help and protection for both of us. Then she took both her hands up around my throat, and drilled a finger hard and long into the back of my neck, for finally to stroke me over both shoulders. When I was straightening up, she broke the silence with the unexpected request: ”Now say a verse.” The first, which felt into my thoughts, was the beginning lines to Sarastro’s aria in *The Magic Flute*, which also, as it probably was the meaning, contained my understanding of, what this hour was all about, or what I wished, it should be about:

In diesen heil’gen Hallen
 Kennt man die Rache nicht,
 Und ist ein Mensch gefallen,
 Führt Liebe ihn zur Pflicht.

I felt dizzy, when I got up from the uncomfortable position. It was as if the whole of my abdomen pulled itself together in cramp and sent strong streams up in the head. I wanted to say something, but she stopped me: ”You shall go now.”

We get the impression, that Karen Blixen knew – at least intuitively – what she did. According to Aage Henriksen (p. 148) the blockade obstructed the kundalini-stream at the back of the neck, so that the head started to shake. The intensifying of the creative energy necessarily has to do with the throat-chakra, since this centre is focus-spot for creative energy-transformations.

Aage Henriksen, who is acquainted with the spiritual practice, and has an active kundalini, was aware, that she in this way led his consciousness away from the spiritual dimension, and into the area of the collective images. This is the demonical element, which finally forced him to break away from her. He writes, that she would stick at nothing in order to prevent her young friends and acquaintances in exceeding the borders of the earthmoon-kingdom, in which she was queen. A part of the same demonical element caused Thorkild Bjørnvig to break his pact with her.

Did Karen Blixen maybe in the pact with Thorkild Bjørnvig, and in the energy-manipulation with Aage Henriksen, try to transmit the secret of the creative intensifying? Did she, like others, who are initiates in the collective power's nature and ways, try to transmit this existential knowledge? It seems so.

All of Aage Henriksen's books are about how he sees these processes reflected in various fictional works of art. His starting point is that transformation of inhibited sexuality into art, which Freud called sublimation. According to Aage Henriksen, a line of great Danish-Norwegian poets have personally experienced and pondered over this transformation, as for example Grundtvig, Henrik Ibsen and Sophus Claussen. As Aage Henriksen says, then it shows, that their problems for a long time have been known within Europe's so-called esoterical traditions. In their highly extended and strange populated space of consciousness, it is seen, that two streams, which each are surrounded by a respective experience-circle, cross each other in the love of human beings and are the Source of many complications: the direction towards the one and the direction towards the many. It is, according to Henriksen, this knowledge, which Goethe, with his connection to the Masonic Order, has pictured in *The Fairytale* and in *Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship*, and which Rudolf Steiner, who had the theosophical movement as one of his conditions, reproduced in his *Mystery Dramas*.

Furthermore Aage Henriksen tells about Karen Blixen, who in her works, according to him, sovereign managed the strong, ancient secrets. It was, among other things, her who opened the great background world for him.

How demonical was it? It is an open question, because as already mentioned, what she in her letters refers to as the Devil, she in her stories refers to as God. She keeps on being an aesthetic borderfigure between the realized and lesser realized transmission of energy and consciousness. As Kierkegaard says, then God's nature always unites the opposite.

3. The unrealized transmission of energy and consciousness

The energy will tend to dance in a polar mandala around people, who have broken through to the polarity of the collective images. Whether this energy comes into sight as music, as art, as religious love or as wisdom, then the energy will seek to stream out and spread out in polarized circles around the Source. The more knowledge, that exists about this, the larger the pedagogical effect after all can be. But with knowledge follows choices. When these structures become conscious, can people partly themselves decide, which forms and which motives, should be the definitive.

As observations of the great spiritual teachers show, then the possibility for unselfish use constantly seems to be neighbour to the possibility of Ego-reinforcing use. The same energy, which freely can be given to others as growth, the giver himself can take to intensification of his own isolating particularity. The choice seems to be dependent of the level of realization work and ethical practice.

The third type of polarized collective energy-phenomena, is the mainly unrealized transmission of energy and consciousness.

The unrealized transmission of energy and consciousness is, just like the lesser realized, characterised by people, who admittedly have an opening to the collective time, but not to the universal. Such people are often not able to discriminate between the image and the reality, and therefore they relate absolutely to the relative.

The collective time manifests itself in a widely and indefinite area, for example could a broad spectrum of common human activities and organizations be called manifestations of the collective time: parties, state formations, wars, work communities, concerts, clans, tribes and sects, mass psychological phenomena, religious parishioners, fashion streams, group souls.

Such incalculable common human undertakings are manifestations of collective energy– or lifeprocesses, in which there are great powers in play in the form of collective images, which work in opposites. Energy, which originates from sexuality.

In individual persons, who pass on an unrealized transmission of energy and consciousness, the opening to the collective time today often lies around that to be well-known or famous.

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 lies behind. It seems more and more to be *the images*, which are real, and not some *behind lying* reality. In that sense all images are equal

true, but they are not equal good, for some images are more fascinating than others, some images affect us more than others. Therefore the expression of the image has come in focus. The expression of the image – its *aesthetics* – decides, whether it fascinates us or bores us. What apply for today, is the *intensity* and *seduction* of the expressions. The new truth/value criterion is, whether something is interesting or boring. Eternal values such as goodness, truth and beauty fall more and more away.

Around the so-called "celebrities" - rockstars, moviestars, models, royals, - there are therefore today formed energy-mandalas, which transmit the forces from the collective time, powers which release, and manifest, collective images, and therefore behaviour. Just try to notice, in what degree "the celebrities" make people behave, dress, act and believe.

But the energy-mandala can also form itself around ordinary people, who of one or the other reason, through transformed sexuality, have accomplished an opening to the collective time, and who, by turning the energy in through the Ego-structures, develop themselves into super Egos, political leaders and popular seducers such as Hitler and Stalin.

In the wars and collective orgies, which such people bring about, there also are triggered, and manifested, different collective images, which always are polarized in opposites such as for example hate and love, good and evil.

And the energy, which brings about this, builds on transformed sexuality. Ordinary sexuality is saved against, and closed, in relation to the collective time. But not entirely though. Underneath the common sexuality smoulder the depths. Underneath lie the fantasies and the images, all the tabooed and suspected desires.

These backgrounds have, in our time, clearly become visible in pornography, in brothel-activity, in the sex advertisements of the daily newspapers. But the whole of this underlying sexual astrality is precisely characterized by being split from the respectable accepted prescribed sexuality. There are many reasons to this. Anxiety, condemnation, sin-conceptions, society repression.

The Western civilization has from Christianity inherited and taken over a very characteristic religious worldimage. Sex is sin. Sex is in the highest a necessary evil, you in the safe, god-guaranteed and eternal-made institution of marriage have to give way to. And God is good. God is creative.

Therefore the destructive, the subversive, has become overlooked. It doesn't belong to the productive nature of God. But because it is such evident a fact, you have to do

something about it. We have then suitably handed the destructive over to the Devil, who is a fallen angel, an outcast and unhappy, without possibility for salvation and redemption. Unfortunately we have in this religious worldimage got the Devil, the evil, the destructive, *and* the sexual weaved together. And this enormous complex can we basically not do anything about. Of course. Since it after all constitutes half of the world and reality. God maintains the creation every moment. But what or who is then the great power, which every moment breaks down? Is that not created by God? And unless it is created by God, then God is after all not almighty. The whole of this world-image seems insufficient.

Since the destructive (aggression, breakdown, violence) not belongs to God, then it is of evil. But life on our planet is however build up in that way, that all higher forms of life live by destroying, eating and breaking down and digesting other life! So if life itself, in its nature, is of evil, then there is no meaning of life.

In order to rescue this scheme of things you either end up in Manichaeism or heresy. Either there are two worlds and two gods: the one god is good and creative and loving. Opposite this god there then exists a dark, destructive and evil devil. The children of the light, who eternally are fighting and leading wars against the children of darkness. A war-crazy religiousness.

Or you end up, Christian seen, in heresy by being led to believe the following: 1: God is also destructive and is responsible for breakdown, death and dissolution and entropy. 2: The Devil is therefore a repressed, outcast unhappy redemption-needing structure. Sexuality, as the most direct urge of life, is not sin, on the contrary sexuality is a holy and creative activity. This, Christian seen, heretically outlook on life can however rescue the meaning and connection in cosmos and in the inner and outer reality of Man.

Because when the destructive and the sexual also belong under the divine, then Man has the possibility for, in religious spiritual openness, to take the responsibility for his part of the sexual, and his part of the destructive.

The danger is, that when sexuality and destruction are excluded from the divine – and herewith from the spiritual dimension – then people are tempted, in powerlessness, to run away from their responsibility. And that is precisely what mankind do. Wars, torture, anger, atomic bombs, chemical war, plague-weapons. No one have the responsibility. All of it makes it difficult to assign responsibility. And the result is, that no responsible is taking care of destructivity. It rambles restless around, unreleased, demonized. Everybody is afraid of this destructive evil, but no one takes the responsibility for his own anger. Therefore it becomes so, that the opposites in the

collective time (right/wrong, good/evil, light/dark) constantly slide over in each other. They can't be separated. What you believe is good, shows suddenly to have evil consequences. This we learn again and again.

And it all originates from transformed sexuality. Practically all people have contact with some kind of primordial image sexual fantasy. It can shine through in daydreams, masturbation-images, pornographic fascination or similar. It is concealed. Often unspoken. Frequently people play an inner video at the same time as their intercourse. And as a rule these hidden and blacked out fantasies and stimulations are not open, nothing the partners dare to tell each other about. Sometimes these astral images are shining through in the nightly dreams. But the usual is, that these hints are not explored, nor integrated in the partners' normal life together. If they are realized, they live a fantasy-life. These desires and wantings are maybe fulfilled through novel-magazines, through pornography or lived through afar from the daily life in the sexworlds of the large cities, with their specialities and offers.

Hereby the shadowy and wild growing underground of sexuality, are split from the more accepted love-life. The so-called perverted or romantic-fantastic images and desires, are excluded from the space of love. And when these dark fantasies and desires are excluded, they become darker, more distorted, more repressed, more perverted. In the collective image of the good, the right, there is build up energy, and finally the energy will swing over in its opposition, the evil, the wrong, in order to balance an imbalance.

The astral sexuality contains the backside of the Ego and of the desire. This collective shadow is repressed to the sexual subconscious.

The Ego wants. The backside of this Egocentredness is radical Ego-sovereignty. So the Ego, the desire, the violence and the power, are combined in the dark collective primordial images and fantasies: incest, sado-masochism, homosexuality, group sex, cannibalism, sacrifice, death-images – all these archetypes lie underneath the common sexuality, and constitute the dark astral underground in the collective time.

When you in that way bind yourself in the one pole of an opposition, yes, then you create a resistance, and therefore a force to, and a dependence of the opposite pole, which causes, that the mind, the sexuality, is becoming anchored in, and determined by these basic mechanisms.

The magical mean, which can raise the mind's hypnotic fascination of the primordial images of desire, of power game and of Egoism - is religion and supporting exercises, including the monastic vows about poverty, chastity and obedience. Religion and

supporting exercises consist in realizing the collective time, not opening up for it, not living through it, as psychotherapy wants it, but in realizing the nature of the demonic primordial images of desire, violence and Egoism.

Why the vows about poverty, chastity and obedience?

Because falling in love (a sexual relationship) with another human being, depends on images, partially collected from the more collective depths of time, partially from your personal images, and therefore from your growing up conditions. However the original images of falling in love (sexuality) are coming from the deepest and most universal images of time. These images are, like mandalas, composite by opposites, therefore a kind of syntheses. As Aristophanes claims in Plato's Symposium (which is about love itself), then Man in his original mythological state was a double being. However when the Ego is coming in contact with such an image, then the Ego divides it in pieces in order to analyze it, understand it. And by doing so you get all the comparisons with earlier and the hopes/fears of something else, and the separated opposites such as subject and object, love and hate, male and female.

In this way a female gets an inner male image. A man gets an inner female image. Concerning homosexuality, then the circumstances, which constitute the lifesituation of the individual, have created another situation, but the inner image will under any circumstances reflect a longing after unification with an opposite pole, therefore a longing after wholeness. Falling in love (sexual turn on) arises when these images become projected on another human being.

That way falling in love, and sexual turn on, implies a fount of contradictions. Falling in love is for example dependency. The other side of dependency is anger and fear and powerlessness over being so dependent. Furthermore the inner images can themselves be split. This can imply, that you cannot turn on sexually upon types you fall in love with, and vice versa. The man's inner female image can for example be divided up in the madonna/whore type. The woman's inner male image in the hard/soft type.

And since falling in love, and sexual turn on, depends on images, reality will gradually uncover these illusions, and then the alienation and apartness appear, and therefore the mistrust. Concerning sexual turn on, you therefore have to create new, more and more extreme, images, in order to have an ongoing turn on.

All this lies in the collective time as a kind of original sin, and it is therefore almost impossible for the individual person, for the personal time, to dissolve this, at the same time as you are in a sexual relationship. Especially in the Egoextreme of our time.

Within the New Age-ideology the concept of Tantra is admittedly very popular; that is: where you speak about transforming sexual energy into spiritual energy through relations to one or several sexual partners. There is no doubt about, that Tantra in its original form in monasteries in India, has produced enlightened masters, but the Tantra, which I see widely-spread in modern Western forms - often mixed with psychotherapy, and a bit of "wisdom" from the New Age-movie *The Secret* - is, in most cases, thoroughly stupid. Here it is of course the Ego, which invents one of its usual tricks in order to get its primordial image sexual wants/fantasies satisfied: "It is God himself, who justifies my sexual wants/fantasies, and that I have to live them through!"

I have in my philosophical counseling-practice talked with many people, both men and women, who have practised tantra. All the men I have talked with, directly admit that they exclusively did it for, either to have sex with one, or preferably several, beautiful women. When it comes to the women I talked to, then the admission is not so directly. But it is evident, that especially women, in Tantra, gets a justification of being able to get some primordial image sexual fantasies satisfied; that is to say: to practise sophisticated sex, both with one partner, but also with many different men.

Many of these tantra-movements, and their rituals, therefore in a remarkable way remind about the rituals in swinger clubs and sequences from porno movies, where they also seek to get primordial image sexual fantasies satisfied.

But in Tantra the shadowy and wild growing underground of sexuality doesn't become split from the more accepted love-life. The so-called perverted or romantic-fantastic images and desires are not excluded from the space of love. And therefore these dark fantasies and desires don't become darker, more distorted, more repressed, more perverted.

This is because that it becomes justified through the combination with some spiritual concepts, such as meditation. That is of course fine enough, but there is a lot of spiritual self-deceit involved in it, because it is the Ego, which controls the process. Also because of the postmodernity in New Age, where very few people actually have an ongoing and continuous spiritual practice, but go shopping from master to master, teaching to teaching.

The ordinary Ego-consciousness functions by being identified with the physical world, with instincts, sexuality, emotions and collective ideals. Religion and supporting exercises work through these aspects by means of for example the essence, which exists in the basic monastic vows: poverty, chastity and obedience. These promises work with a restructuring of the Ego's ownership to things, food and

power, and they re-structure sexuality and emotions. First thereafter the mystical process can begin. No form of modern Tantra can, as far as I can see, bring about this. On the contrary the Ego uses it as a trick to self assertion.

But it also has to be mentioned, that religion and supporting exercises necessarily must develop into an art of life, where you actually are working with realization and ethical practice – or else you end up as a hypocrite. And that we also have seen many examples on.

In our time, where the Ego-structures are in a maximum, the astral caricatures of Egoism therefore also are in their maximum. In our time, which is characterized by a consumerism, where all deeper values have been split off, and where everything is measured after if it is boring or interesting, sexuality has got an exaggerated big importance, because it maybe is the only experience we have of something deeper. But sexuality works, just like all energy, in wave movements and pendulum movements. In order to be able to get a sexual ignition and experience, it requires that you build sexual energy up in a wave. This wave then breaks in the sexual experience. Hereafter follows a trough of the waves. But in our growth-fanatical consumer culture, we don't accept the valley. We want the peak experiences, the rises, but we complain over the valleys, the falls. Therefore we all the time try to maintain the rise by providing it with new sexual images, fantasies etc. If the energy laws were really understood, we would accept the trough of the waves as well as the wavecrests.

And these, the Ego's images of desire and of sexual pleasure, will, because of, that energy also functions as pendulum movements, gradually begin to switch over in their demonic primordial images, which we have repressed to the collective time - they begin to become more and more extreme and therefore perverted.

And because we have got the Devil, the evil, the destructive *and* the sexual, weaved together, this also begins to appear in a rise of aggression, violence and pollution. The outer pollution corresponds in that way to an equivalent dark collective inner pollution. The outer war-crazy armament, corresponds to an inner astral tension in power, aggression and anxiety. That which caused, that the wise old of the East termed our time Kali Yuga, the dark age.

Most obvious these dark primordial images manifest themselves in acts of war. Beside the actual acts of war, which never can be said to be true, but always distorted and perverted, the sexual energies - which you have got tied together with destructivity - are triggered in the soldiers, who rape and plunder the conquered women and towns.

In acts of war exists the most clear demonical element. There is not so much to misunderstand. No, the misunderstandings take place in the actions, which lie ahead of the war, in which a lot of seduction-art, and therefore thought distortions, are active. And the archetypical popular seducer is, as already suggested, of course Lucifer.

Everywhere we see a tendency to that the images of the Ego-extreme (which is about becoming something, to get success, to conquer a place on the top, to become a winner) have begun to switch over in their demonical primordial images. The dark images in the collective time have begun to manifest themselves. We see it in the medias, in movies and in books.

Behind the whole of this midnightrambler-complex in the individual, a collective image shows itself. The complex exposes itself as an emanation of evil, of the Devil.

In one of Rolling Stones' masterpiece *Sympathy For The Devil* the text goes:

Please allow me to introduce myself
 I'm a man of wealth and taste
 I've been around for many a long, long year
 I've stolen many a man's soul and faith
 I was around when Jesus Christ had his moments of doubt and pain
 I made damn sure that Pilate washed his hands and
 Sealed his fate.

I stuck around St. Petersburg
 When I saw it was time for a change
 I killed the Tzar and his ministers
 Anastasia screamed in vain
 I rode a tank, held a gen'ral's rank
 When the blitzkrieg raged and the bodies stank
 I watched with glee while your kings and queens
 Fought for ten decades for the Gods they made
 I shouted out, "Who killed the Kennedy's?"
 When after all it was you and me.

Just as every cop is criminal
 And all the sinners, Saints
 As heads is tails, just call me Lucifer
 "Cause I'm in need of some restraint."

So if you meet me, have some courtesy
 Have some sympathy and some taste
 Use all your well-learned politesse
 Or I'll lay your soul to waste.

In "Sympathy for the Devil" Mick Jagger seems to have sensed these connections. At some of the concerts, where this tune was played and sung, there was triggered off rape, ordinary sexuality, murder and births. The song is the hell preacher's hint of the only way out. The Ego has to descend down into the deep of evil, has to take it seriously, see it in the eyes, realize and feel, that evil is in there. The Ego has to learn to get on with its complex, instead of avoiding it. The complex is there, it requires a name, it wants voice, time, awareness. If not, it destroys the consciousness and drowns the world in pollution and violence.

Eckhart Tolle and Ramana Maharshi

Until Eckhart Tolle's thirtieth year he lived in a condition of almost constant anxiety, broken by periods of suicidal depression. One night, not long after his twenty-ninth birthday, he awoke in the early morning hours with a feeling of absolute terror. He had often before waked with the feeling, but this time it was more intense than ever before. The silence of the night, the vague silhouette of the furniture in the dark chamber, the remote noise from a train, which were driving past – it all felt so alien, so hostile and so completely meaningless, that it in him developed a deep abhorrence against the world. However the most disgusting of all was his own existence. What was the aim of continuing life with this burden of suffering? Why continue this incessant struggle? He could sense, that a deep longing after extinction, after not to exist, now was becoming much stronger than the instinctive wish to continue living.

"I can not live with myself anymore." This was the thought which all the time was repeating itself in his mind. Then he suddenly became aware, how peculiar this thought was. "Am I one or two? If I cannot live with myself, there must be two of me, namely "I" and that "self", "I" cannot live with." "Perhaps," he thought, "only one of them is real."

Eckhart Tolle was so overwhelmed by this strange insight, that his mind stopped. He was completely conscious, but there was no longer any thoughts. Then his enlightenment happened, and that day he walked around in the town and was immensely amazed over the miracle of life on Earth, as if he just had been born into this world.

The next five months he lived in a condition of continuous deep peace and happiness. At a time he had nothing left on the material level. He had no relation to others, no work, no home, no socially defined identity. He used almost two years on sitting on

benches in parks in a condition of the most intense delight. Hereafter he became a spiritual teacher.

What happened, was that the intense pressure from the suffering had forced his consciousness to withdraw from his identification with the unsatisfied and deeply anxious self, which in the end is the mind's fiction, and which only exists in the past and the future. This withdrawal must have been so complete, that the false, suffering self immediately collapsed, precisely as if a plug had been pulled out of a piece of inflatable toy. That, which then was left, was his true nature as the, in the Now, always present *I am*: consciousness in its pure form before the identification with the world of forms (Eckhart Tolle: *The Power of Now* p. 21-27)

The way Eckhart Tolle's enlightenment happened, is fully in thread with the great masters within the different wisdomtraditions. What is the self? Who am I? How has the self arised?

The great enlightened master Ramana Maharshi used the question, *Who am I?* as his most important meditation technique. When he taught others meditation, he used this question as an almost universal coan. Who am I? This question leads the consciousness inwards towards the Source. It reminds in a remarkable way about the questions Eckhart Tolle quite spontaneous asked himself.

Ramana Maharshi said: "People are afraid that when the Ego or the mind is killed, the result may be a mere blank and not happiness. What really happens is that the thinker, the object of thought and thinking all merge in the one source which is consciousness and Bliss itself, and that the state is neither inert or blank." (*The Teachings of Ramana Maharshi*).

Ramana Maharshi was born in Southern India in good, middle class circumstances. When he was 12, his father died and the family moved to an uncle. When he was 17, he became enlightened, a condition, which lasted ever after. The event broked unprepared and unseeked suddenly in over him; he felt, that he should die. The body became stiff, and Ramana started to inquire – wordless: who dies? Does the consciousness die, what is consciousness? It is not my body, not my feelings, not my thoughts, etc. And in this death marked experience Ramana's investigative consciousness reached, through all veils, to the Source. This source and core he called the Self, Atman, and in consciousness of the immortal self in the Source of consciousness, Ramana lived the rest of his life. He moved from home and settled in a cave on the hallow mountain Arunachala, Tiruvannamalai, where he remained. Gradually there arised an ashram around him, and he started his lifelong teaching practice.

Ramana said: "Realization consists only in getting rid of the false idea that one is not realized. It is not anything new to be acquired. It must already exist or it would not be eternal and only what is eternal is worth striving for." (*The Teachings of Ramana Maharshi*, p. 23).

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?

"Absence of thoughts does not mean a blank. Knowledge and ignorance pertain only to the mind and are in duality, but the Self is beyond them both. It is pure light. There is no need for one Self to see another. There are no two Selves." (*The Teachings of Ramana Maharshi*, p. 25)

As with Eckhart Tolle and Ramana Maharshi, thus also with other enlightened masters within the different wisdomtraditions.

They asked philosophical questions - that is: not in an intellectual way as in the academical philosophy, and not in the sense of repeating a mantra - no, they asked philosophical questions in a meditative-existential way, as the wordless silence within a strong existential wonder. As Aristotle said, then philosophy starts with wonder. You probably know the wonder you can feel when you look at the stars, or when you are confronted with all the suffering in the world. This wonder fills you with a silence in which all thoughts, explanations and interpretations in a moment wither away. It is in this silence you ask the great philosophical questions, open inwards and outwards, listening and observing, without words, without evaluations.

The wordless silence within the existential wonder is the same as asking philosophical questions in a meditative-existential way. And it is this philosophical questioning which can be the beginning of a deep inquiry into Man and reality - a lifelong philosophical voyage of discovery towards the Source of Life: the Good, the True and the Beautiful.

However most people loose this silence, and get satisfied with explanations and interpretations. And that is the difference between the great masters and ordinary people. The great masters had a strong longing after something inexpressible, after something which can't be satisfied by explanations and interpretations - perhaps a longing after awakening - or after realization. With the whole body, with life and blood, with soul and spirit, with brain and heart, they asked and inquired into themselves and into life. They were putting questions into everything, and were

investigating it in a meditative way, as if it was something completely new. Simply because this philosophical questioning and inquiry constitute a central meditation technique, which opens the consciousness in towards the Source. In other words they used philosophical questions as universal coans. All other spiritual exercises were only used to support this.

The central core in using such supporting exercises in the right way is therefore the philosophical questioning and inquiry. It is the philosophical questioning and inquiry that in the end will open the consciousness in towards the Source. In all wisdom traditions you can find descriptions that show that the moment of enlightenment happens in this way, either alone, or in a dialogue with a master.

To ask philosophical questions in a meditative-existential way has nothing to do with those enquire techniques used in psychotherapy and coaching. It is therefore a central move when Tolle skips all meditative and therapeutic “intermediate stages” and instead works with direct being in the Now – identification with the observing consciousness, which is witness to mind, body and feelings. And from Ramana we hear nothing about therapy, shock or other arrangements at the death of the father. Ramana neither became neurotic or psychotic. And the same goes again in all wisdom traditions, whether it is Gnosticism and Mysticism, which arised in the earliest and medieval Christianity, or Sufism in Islam, Hasidism and Kabbalah in Judaism, Advaita Vedanta in Hinduism, and Zen and Dzogchen in Buddhism.

Unlike the established religions, and all psychological and therapeutic traditions, then these spiritual practices presuppose no religious dogmatics, ideology, myth or conception, or psychological techniques and therapy. They put their whole emphasis on realization and inner transformation. Herein the philosophical element.

It is quite central that the masters is using philosophical questions, because such questions ask for what is common to all mankind, the universal - what you could call the essence of Man and reality. This is because that the Source, the essential in Man and in reality, precisely is something common to all mankind, or universal.

In other words: philosophy directs itself towards the essence, and not towards the content. Psychotherapy and coaching are only able to ask for the personal (or the content), and therefore they can never open the consciousness in towards the Source (the essence).

This deeper dimension - the essence, the Source - can namely only be reached when you totally are seperating and dismantling your consciousness' identification with the

content; that is: the thoughts and the world of forms. In short: in a total negation of the content of the mind.

When Ramana Maharshi asked *Who am I?* he answered like this: *I am not...*for example *I am not* my body, *I am not* my feelings, *I am not* my thoughts.

No matter what happens outside you, or inside you, Ramana's meditation technique is to observe neutral, and inquire into it, and realizing that *I am not...*this or that.

The Prince of Philosophy

On a beautiful evening in Greece, for now many years ago, I read the French author Antoine De Saint-Exupéry's small book *The Little Prince*. At that time I was sad and worried, but the book opened my mind, like the sunset opened the evening sky for the stars.

The general theme in the book is humans' ability to wonder, and the loss of this ability. The first part is the short introduction dealing with the narrator and his wondering view of the world when he was a child, and how adults could never understand the real meaning of things or perceive truth in the world - only the superficial and the usual, because they had lost the ability to wonder. This is generally one of the main ideas of the book; "blessed are the children...".

"Wonder made already from the beginning humans philosophizing and still does it". This statement from Aristotle goes back to Plato and apply for today. Philosophy begins with, that humans are wondering. We all know how curious children are. Children want to know something and observe much more, than the adults do; the child catches sight of things, which the adults not even are noticing. Childrens' being is much more watchful, much more curious and eager to learn. It is therefore children have so easy learning maths, geography or any subject. As we become older, our mind progressively become crystalized, it stiffens, become heavy and dull. We stagnate. We begin to have prejudices about everything and everybody. The mind is no longer open; to any problem we are taken position in advance.

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; children are in other words true philosophers. But when we become older, our knowledge just become a handful of information devoid of wonder. We become specialists, we do know a great deal

about one or the other topic, but we do not care much for, what happens around us, for the need and the misery in the world, for the stars and the beauty.

If we as adults want to know, why there are prosperity and poverty in the world, we can find an explanation. There is an explanation on everything, and explanations seem to satisfy most of us. The same is the case when it comes to religion. We are satisfied with explanations. The tendency to explain away everything we call knowledge. But is that what we understand by education? Do we learn how to discover, or do we only educate ourselves in order to look for explanations, definitions, conclusions - in order to dull the mind and stop asking philosophical questions?

In the morning, on the bus on the way to his first tour as airmail pilot, Antoine De Saint-Exupéry said - In his book *Wind, Sand and Stars*:

"For how many of us had this omnibus, I wonder, already been the last refuge before the start? Sixty or eighty? A similar rainy morning, with this same silent chauffeur. I looked around; glowing cigarettes were drawing a dotted line through the dark, and behind each dot there were made broodings. Modest meditations by oldish office workers. For how many of us had these tiny bureaucrats constituted our last cortege?

I also caught some of the remarks, which they low-voiced exchanged. And these remarks, which were about disease, money and domestic worries, were drawing the limits up for the sad prison, in which these human beings had closed themselves within. And suddenly I saw the face of destiny.

Old man clerk, my fellow passenger in this omnibus, never has anyone would help you to a liberated life. You have built yourself your peace, as the termites do, by cementing all ways out against the light. You have hidden yourself in your common safety, in your dull habits, in your provincial, burdensome regulations, you have established this humiliate defence against the wind and the stars. You will not burden yourself with the great problems, you have had enough trouble to forget, that you once was a human being. You are not citizen on a planet, which is circling in space, you ask yourself none of those questions, which can't be answered, you are a small common man from Toulouse. No one has grabbed you in your shoulders, while there still was time. The clay, of which you are formed, has become dry and hard, and no one will ever could awaken the musician, the poet or astronomer, which maybe original have dwelled in you.

I no longer complain over the stormy rains. A magical world opens itself before me, where I before long shall defy the black dragons and the blue lightning's quivering, where I, when the night comes, shall read my path in the stars."

The rest of Saint-Exupéry's book *The Little Prince* is the story of the little prince, whom the narrator discovers in the Sahara when he is trying to fix his downed airplane and is in fear of his life. The narrator and the reader slowly come to know the prince's story. He has travelled from another planet to Earth, where he, with wonder, was watching and questioning the flowers, animals and humans. Through this story the narrator learns about friendship, love and truth in a touching way. It is in other words the little prince, who is the philosopher and not the adult.

So if you as a human being want to awake the musician, the poet, or astronomer, whom maybe originally dwelled in you, you must therefore become like a child once again.

Antoine De Saint-Exupery realized this in *The Little Prince*, and by the way in all his works.

Suffering as an entrance to the Source

In Tibetan Buddhism they see suffering as a so-called "bardo" state in the same way as dreams, lucid dreams, astral states, spiritual crises, and the death process.

The word Bardo is specially known in connection with the Tibetan book of the Dead, which in Tibetan is called Bardo Thödol. Bardo is the Tibetan word for an intermediate state between two crucial states, for example life and death, birth and death, death and rebirth, unreality and reality, sleep and awake, good and evil, love and hate, perfectionism and fiasco. What characterizes the Bardo state is deep uncertainty and doubtfulness. Thödol means liberations through listening (spiritual practice in the intermediate state).

So Bardo can mean the after-death state, the death-nearness state, or a borderline state as such; that is: all kinds of suffering, sorrow, alcoholism, economical bankruptcy, all kinds of illness, physical as psychologically

So if you actually begin to practice spiritual in a Bardo state, then the state can have a healing and transformational value, which can give your spiritual development a considerable lift upwards. This is because that you in this state are more open for change than usually; that is: the Ego is weak.

This gives some stuff for reflection. In the so-called “normal” (healthy) state, we are usually closed to life itself (hopeless Egoistic self-circling), while we in borderline states are more open.

In Shamanism and in ancient schools of mystery, as well as in the transition rites of Scriptless Peoples’ Religions, they work with techniques that can create bardo states.

But in a true spiritual practice you should not seek Bardo states, don’t try to create such states by using drugs or one-sided development techniques, because you can’t know what karmathical seeds you, in this Egoistic quest, plant (unbalances in the universal energy-laws). The most important is the realization and slow inner transformation that happens through the patient daily spiritual practice year after year.

The purpose with spiritual practice in the intermeditate state, is, among other things, that you learn to use meditation in connection with eventual suffering (or all ”bad” that happens in your life), without trying to change anything, without going into panic and without changing behaviour. The method shall hinder catastrophe-thoughts (or other thought-distortions) in arising, and hereby have a neutralizing effect on the suffering-filled about the symptoms.

A lot of people would say, that you should not meditate in such states, but get in some kind of therapeutic treatment. They are right if they with meditation mean a certain mental technique of some kind. But spiritual practice, in its true form, skips all such techniques, and actually sees them as a waste of time. Instead spiritual practice works with direct being in the Now – Hara practice and passive awareness. To go in therapeutic treatment would be to waste the possibility for liberation. Therapeutic treatment would help you to get “normal” again, to be able to function as a good citizen; that is: to get yourself a new role, so that you in your opinion formation and identity formation continue striving towards 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. Thereby you waste the possibility of finding your true essence.

Of course you should seek treatment if you are *seriously* ill, but even then you should try to go on with your spiritual practice.

The following exercise can be used in connection with stress, anxiety, depression, physical illness – yes, in connection with all forms of illness, or whatever occur ”bad” to you in your life.

An illness always has a past and a future. An illness, or rather, the suffering-filled about an illness, is constituted, not so much by the symptoms, as by the thoughts you tighten together with these symptoms.

The thinking's past (memories, knowledge, traumatic bindings) and future (plans, projects, ambitions) is a never-ending self-circling activity. Løgstrup called this activity for the circling life-expressions; that is: as contrast to the sovereign life-expressions. The circling life-expressions are expressions such as wrong, envy, hate, jealousy, insincerity, mercilessness etc.etc. Løgstrup called them circling, because you in them are closed inside yourself, circling around yourself and your negative or destructive feeling. The circling life-expressions are, as the sovereign life-expressions, spontaneous in the sense that they take you by surprise. But they are full of ulterior motives. They are not sovereign, they are on the contrary reactive, and they don't bring you in accordance with yourself. But they are definitive in the sense, that they are evil.

Consequently the sovereign life-expressions are coming from the Now, while the circling life-expressions are coming from time.

Guilt-feelings, regret, anger, complaints, gloom, bitterness and all forms of lack of forgiveness, are created by too much past and too little presence in the Now.

Discomfort, anxiety, tension, stress, worry – all forms of fear – are created by too much future and too little presence in the Now.

It is this self-circling activity, which constitutes the suffering-filled in the illness. It is this activity that gives identity to you, as the one who has an illness. The past and the future of the illness have in this way an unbroken continuum, unless the Now's releasing power is activated through your conscious presence. Behind all the different circumstances, which constitute your lifesituation ("I, who have an illness"), and which exists in time, there exists something deeper, more essential: life itself, your actual being in the timeless Now.

But because you compare the Now's facts with earlier, and hope/desire/fear something else, you make the Now into a problem, and therewith you have the suffering-filled about the illness. But in making the Now into a problem, you in addition to this also make resistance against the Now's lifeunfolding power, and therewith you also are reducing *the life* in yourself.

There are in other words no problems in the Now. And since there are no problems in the Now, there isn't any problem in connection with illness neither. Furthermore there in the Now exists the life-power, which directly is able to heal the illness.

The exercise is therefore about, that you direct the awareness towards this moment and omit to label it mentally. Hereby the suffering-filled in the illness is reduced to one or more of the following factors: physical pain, weakness, discomfort or handicap. Furthermore you let go of your resistance, and hereby the Now's lifeunfolding power, which works healing, is activated. You can in other words heal the illness through meditation.

The procedure is as follows: settle in a good position, or lie down, and, if convenient, close your eyes. Relax completely. Now turn the awareness towards symptoms of anxiety, depression, or any illness, which actual is present. Don't evaluate the symptoms, and don't seek to change them, only register them. Inside yourself you may give them a name.

The more difficult it occurs to you being completely neutral, the more intensively and long you have to focus your awareness in Hara.

Try to understand, that it is not the symptoms in themselves, which constitute the suffering-filled in the illness. They are as such completely neutral. No, it is the *thought-distortions* which you tighten together with the symptoms, that together come to constitute the suffering-filled in the illness – simply because they are distortions of reality. Furthermore the inner thinker, with its comparisons with earlier and fear of something else, makes resistance against the healing power of reality.

Therefore the *neutral* observation. The neutral observation is a surrender to the Now, to the existential facts: the illness. Surrender is an inner acceptance of that, which *is*, without any reservation. This happens through a letting go, a melting, a devotion. And as you surrender to that, which *is*, you surrender to the Now, and therewith to the Now's healing power. And this is the aspect of heartfullness. Therefore use the Tonglen practice as a help.

Continue the exercise until the suffering eases off, or until you achieve relief. However you have to be prepared, that the exercise can take time. It is a slowly-existential transformation work. In return it opens up into the Source: the Good, the True and the Beautiful.

So use your illness in a spiritual practice, and change it into enlightenment. Illness can, because it is a bardo-state, work advancing on a spiritual transformation-

practice. This is because that suffering can be so unbearable, that you finally do not feel up to make resistance against it anymore. But this surrender exactly leads you into the Now. Paradoxically enough it is your resistance against the suffering, which upholds the suffering, while the surrendering of resistance neutralizes the suffering.

All inner resistance is experienced as negativity in some kind. All negativity is resistance. Negativity goes from irritation or impatience to violent anger, from bad mood or sulky reluctance to suicidal despair. Sometimes the resistance activates the painbody, and in such cases even a small situation can create negativity, for example anger, depression or deep sorrow.

The resistance is created by the inner thinker (the Ego), which through evaluations compares the Now with earlier, and hopes, desires or fears something else, whereby the Now (the illness) is being made into a problem. And through negativity the inner thinker then tries to manipulate reality and get what it wants.

Returning negative feelings sometimes contain a message, in the same way as an illness does. A message about, that there is something you have to change. But every outside change is superficial and temporary, unless it is coming from a change in your consciousness. And what that concerns, it can only mean one thing, namely to be more present.

When you have achieved a certain degree of presence, you no longer need the negativity to tell you what you need in your lifesituation. But as long as there is negativity, or illness, then use it as a signal, which reminds you to be more present.

The spiritual teacher Eckhart Tolle talks about the way of the cross. His own enlightenment happened when he was in a state of totally anxiety and depression. He woked up one morning with a feeling of absolute terror, of estrangeness, hostility and complete meaninglessness. He had nothing on the material plane, no relation to others, no work, no home, no socially defined identity. This suffering forced his consciousness inwards, and then the enlightenment happened. He used the next two years on sitting on benches in parks in states of indescribable happiness. Hereafter he became a spiritual teacher.

It is of course not sure, that your practice in your suffering will make you enlightened, but you will for sure be able to experience release and calmness. And you will also for sure be yourself in your following opinion formation and identity formation, live in accordance with your own essence, and thereby achieve authenticity, autonomy, decisiveness and power of action. What is important is, that you keep on to your spiritual practice, when you achieve calmness. Because usually

the Ego then retain force again, your thoughts get lighter, and then the whole thought-patterns begins again.

If you have a serious illness, then use it to be enlightened. All "bad" which happens in your life – use it to be enlightened. Surrender to the existential facts, surrender to the Now.

The deathprocess

World mythology, folklore, and spiritual literature abound with vivid accounts of the experiences associated with death and dying. Special sacred texts have been dedicated solely to descriptions and discussions of the posthumous journey, such as the Tibetan *Book of the Dead*, the Egyptian *Book of the Dead*, and their European counterpart, *Ars Moriendi*, or the *Art of Dying*.

These texts have arisen on the background of the experiences with death, which highly spiritual trained persons have had, and which they have transmitted.

The following article is not a scientific article, but a philosophical article; that is: a life-philosophical article. In this way it is neither psychological nor biological oriented. Science can't give a real answer to the problems of lifeviews and views of values. It can, as science, not out of hand answer questions about values or moral standards, even though it is clear, that it must consult, and be used, in connection with solutions to the questions of life-philosophy.

The following article must therefore not be seen as an attempt to produce evidence, but as a philosophical statement for that experience-foundation, which the above mentioned texts contain. There is therefore no talk about religious preaching of faith, myths, dogmas or fantasies. There is talk about experiences, which human beings from widely different cultures have had through millennia.

From newer time my article is primarily inspired by the Tibetan meditationmaster Sogyal Rinpoche and the Danish spiritual teacher Jes Bertelsen.

The article will be characterized by the fact, that there is a connection between spiritual practice and the deathprocess.

In the following I will in this way show, how the spiritual practice can, and will, penetrate and spiritualize the deathprocess.

The way you live in, and the habits you have learned yourself, will namely be one of the essential participating factors for the way you die in. The ordinary consciousness almost only lives in the personal time. When you are identified with your personal time, you are closed for the collective and the universal time, as well as for the Now. You are circling around your own past and future, and through life you are creating a number of unfinished situations.

Unfinished situations create existential guilt. The more unfinished situations, the more existential guilt. Existential guilt comes from regrets over unlived life and unrealized life possibilities. It is a guilt, people feel, or have, over themselves and their own life. Nearly all people carry a certain lot of existential guilt. A person, who has had a quite undeveloped or unlived life, will often carry a lot of existential guilt. It can show as bitterness, narrowness, introversion, dryness, psychical sterility and a thorough frustration of the soul. A person in this condition will often feel it difficult to look death in the eyes and to have to leave earth life; he or she feels incomplete, not used.

Examples can be a person with a great desire to be an artist, or to get a literary education, but who has never got this realized. It can be a person, who too late discovers, that he or she would liked to have had children. Or a person, who all his life have had a wrong job, who have missed his vocation. Or a person, who in many years has lived in repressive or wrong family relations, without being able to straighten on it, or to break out of it.

And then death becomes terrible, as Tolstoj has described it in *the Death of Ivan Iljitsch*. Ivan Iljitsch lies on 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 has lived has not been a real life, yes, that he actual never has lived, not until then he can let go of life and reconcile himself with death.

Existential guilt can also be about, that you have used other people in an unreasonable way, by living too much from your own ideas or needs – or said in another way: that you have reacted inappropriate on other people's challenges. And the guilt can imply your relationship to nature: Have I showed reciprocity towards the nature, which has been my source?

In this way death looks very different, depending on, whether it is experienced by the ordinary consciousness, or whether it is experienced by a consciousness which – by through life having trained itself meditative-existential - also penetrates the collective and the universal time, and herewith the Now.

Death understood as end, termination and disappearance, is reel for the ordinary consciousness. The personal time namely disappears. The physical body dies, rots away and disappears. The material enters into new cycles. The vital energy in the personal life also vanishes away in death. On the whole the personal life ends with the last expiration. Your feelings, your personal memories, images, dreams - all of it disappear in death. Yet the collective time, which exists on an astral plane, including the astral consciousness, remains, but on a collective unconscious and impersonal plane.

In the personal mental area the contents of consciousness disappear. The cloud of words, conceptions and personal thoughts, which you have spoken, heard and thought in your life, spreads and dissolves in death. The un-personal form of consciousness, the consciousness itself, that remains. And the consciousness in itself is precisely the path to the universal images, the Now and the Source.

The universal images, the Now and the Source, are normally in a human life relatively latent. They lie as seeds, ready for germination, but often they don't germinate. They are present in all humans, but they are hidden, the consciousness is generally not awake on these planes.

The purpose with spiritual practice is to wake up on these planes. If you have waked up; that is to say: have discovered and realized your spiritual essence, then you experience, what you could call the continuous plane of consciousness. You can not be conscious in the collective or universal time, without experiencing the universal energylaws; you get experiences of, that the consciousness, from a more superior and impersonal plane, again and again incarnate through the universal, collective and personal time, as well as that the spiritual consciousness-continuum, in this process, creates its individuality and limitation.

The advantage with this individual limitation has a cost, namely the individual's death.

But on the plane of the universal images, of the Now and of the Source – when you have waked up to it, and have realized it – death is rather like how a dreamfilled sleep is to the ordinary consciousness. You are going to bed and are falling asleep. There are dreams, and there is the vegetative continuity of the deep sleep. But in the morning you are once again – peculiarly enough – yourself.

To the ordinary consciousness the sleep is a break in the consciousness, but within a superior continuity. The one who however is awake on this superior plane of

continuity, "shall not taste death". In The gospel of Thomas Jesus says: "When you see your images, which were before you, that they neither die nor reveal themselves, how much would you then be able to bear."

If you are awake on the plane of the universal images, which work in synchronism with the Now, then the consciousness-continuity stretches through life, the deathprocess, the Bardo-state (the state between death and rebirth) and out to the conception and into the embryonic state. Life and death wave within an unbroken continuum of consciousness. In the Source itself, in the Otherness, there are neither life nor death.

In principle there in the deathprocess happens something analogous to, what happens in the process of falling asleep. In death the consciousness moves into its source. During the deathprocess itself the physical clothings are thrown off - the veil of the energy and of the feelings are dropped, and the polarized thought-created (linguistic) veil is dropped. It feels like a fall.

Rainer Marie Rilke's poem *Autumn* can be seen as an image of the moment of death:

*The leaves are falling, are swirled far around,
As withered in heaven distant gardens;
They fall, refusing, with large swings.*

*In the night the Earth falls, heavy and mute,
From the stars to the space of loneliness.*

*We all fall. This hand will fall.
Look at the others, look: it is in all.*

*However there is one, and everythings fall ends
Endlessly carefully in his hands.*

In accordance with the wisdom traditions this process looks typical, in the self-experience of the dying, like this: if the consciousness of the dying is very clear, there often will come three experiences successive. When the consciousness let go of the identification with the physical clothings, there is experienced weightiness. The dying wants to be lifted up. When the consciousness let go of the identification with the veil of energy, then the dying experiences frigidity, and wants to be warmed. The drop of the consciousness' identification with the feelings produces thirst. When the consciousness begins to leave, and therewith is letting go of the identification with

the polarized thought-created veil, it is as being dissolved, as floating away in a homoeopathic extendedness.

On an energetical plane the lifeenergy gather around the heart in this process. Feet and hands, arms and legs, become chilly or cold. The warmth and life centralize in the heart. This is the last thing, which happens before the last expiration.

Through this process the consciousness changes itself parallel with the before mentioned psycho-somatic basic experiences, as well as with the energetical heartcentralization-process. The consciousness moves through the three aspects of meditation (relaxfullness, awareness, heartfullness), in towards the naked source of consciousness: first the ordinary polarized consciousness, then more or less clearly – dependent on practice – through relaxfullness onwards to the neutral observation of awareness (the dying loses interest in his surroundings), to the defocused openness of heartfullness.

To a human, who is unfamiliar with meditation, this step is often a confused condition. But a human with much practice can have the possibility for, that this condition is experienced as defocused consciousness; that is: a natural condition of openness in towards the Source. This step is immediately before the last expiration.

An enlightened who dies, will die in a very different way than an ordinary human being. All the way up to our days Tibetan Buddhism has many descriptions of, how an enlightened person's dead body for example, in one moment, suddenly can be dissolved in rainbow-light, or that the body conversely never goes in rot. The first is probably also the phenomenon, which lies behind the story about Jesus' resurrection, as well as the empty grave. The other phenomenon you can see with your own eyes by visiting the places, where bodies of saints, or part of their bodies, is exhibit, without disintegrating, even though they died centuries ago (for example Teresa of Avila and Saint Rosaline).

Back to the deathprocess. The continued process now goes off in widely different ways depending on, how much practice you have, and depending on, which planes of time your consciousness is awake and stable on.

Without spiritual training and without practice, the consciousness will immediately after the last expiration, in a glimpse, fall into the Source. But because the untrained consciousness doesn't know this condition, and therefore cannot orientate or recognize the state, the overwhelming power in this illuminative glimpse of the Source's naked enlightened consciousness, will bring the untrained consciousness to a kind of faint or sleep.

The incredible about death is, that the dying, through a natural uncovering-process, is led into the naked uncovered consciousness. But only by training is it possible to keep the awakeness and navigate on the planes of the universal images, the Now and the otherness, which mutual musical movements are intermediate states between death and the next life.

The archetypical structure of the Near-death experiences (for example tunnel, wisdom-figures, light and bliss), corresponds to the awaken passage from the collective images of time, which work in sequences in past and future, to the more universal images, which work in synchronism with the Now. The characteristic for Near-death is precisely, that you don't die; that is to say: the process, which uncovers the consciousness, stops before the fall into the universal and the Source. As a rule the process stops in the collective time. And the experiences are here as a rule ecstatic positive.

A peculiar phenomenon, which is almost unknown in the West, but well known in Tibet, is the Délok. In Tibetan *dé lok* means "returned back from death", and traditionally Déloks are persons, who apparently "die" as a result of a disease and then travels around in the Bardo. They visit the kingdoms of hell, where they are witnesses to the judgement over the dead, and to the sufferings of hell, and sometimes they are coming to paradises and Buddha-kingdoms. They can be accompanied by a divinity, who guards them and explains what happens. After some time, from some hours to a week, the Délok is send back to the body with a message from the Lord of Death to the living, who urge them to spiritual practice and to live in a beneficial way.

Some of the more famous biographies of Déloks have been written down and are songed by travelling singers over the whole of Tibet.

A line of the characteristic traits of the experiences of the Déloks not only correspond – as you could expect – to the Bardo-teaching as for example in *The Tibetan Book of the Dead*, but also to the Near-death experience. The difference is though, that persons, who have had a Near-death experience, have become inadvertently thrown out in it – while Déloks "die" in particular days in the Buddhist calendar in a number of hours, and that their main function is to serve as messengers between the living and the dead.

Perhaps it is an experience like a Délok, which Dante had, before he wrote *The Divine Comedy*. After all people precisely say about Dante's Divine Comedy, that it is a description of the journey through the after-death state. It is also possible, that it

was this type of experience, which was lying behind the Swedish mystic Emanuel Swedenborg's many scriptures. Swedenborg said, that Jesus had visited him, and instructed him the mission to renew the church, and that it in this connection would be him allowed to visit the other world, the world of the spirits, with its countless heavens and hells.

Just like Dante Swedenborg was not mystic in common sense. If we for example take Saint John of the Cross, then we have plenty of living descriptions of the ecstasy. We have the ecstasy told in expressions drawn from erotical experiences, or with metaphors of wine, like the Sufis. A person has for example lovers meeting with God, and yet God is himself like. There is here a system of metaphors. However in Swedenborg's work there is nothing of this. It is, as in Dante's Divine Comedy, a work of a traveller, written by one, who has travelled through foreign countries. Contrary to Dante though, which is writing in the form of verse, Swedenborg describes it objective, calm and carefully. Like a researcher.

Repeatedly Swedenborg insisted on the facts. He wasn't seeking analogies. He is a traveller who has travelled through a very strange country; who has travelled through countless heavens and hells, not only on Earth, but also on others planets – and who tells about it.

But back to the real death-process. When a human being dies for real, contrary to the Délöks, then the personal anchoring in body, breath, energy, feelings and thoughts - is lost. And then the dismantling-process through the collective time to the universal time, goes very quickly, because the delay from the personal identification, and the anchored connection, with the body, the energy, the feelings and the thoughts, precisely ceases.

A human being without essential spiritual practice can't recognize the meeting with the Source. The rest of the process from the moment of death to the next birth therefore takes place, partially in a faint, partially in a dreamy condition interplaying between blissful and nightmarish dreams, without any possibility for influencing or navigating in this period in namable degree.

If you however have a ballast of training (from 1-3 hours daily in 10-20 years), then this training will automatically penetrate the Bardo-state. And depending on how far your practice is developed, this practice will automatically penetrate the last moments of the deathprocess, and more important than that: the after-death state.

Since the after-death state primarily moves between the collective and universal images, as well as the Now and the Source, then the connection with the physical,

energetical, emotional and thought-created planes, is missing, whereby the centredness and orientation are lost. The individuality-creating contraction, which the physical-energetical basis gives, is gone. In the after-death state the consciousness is endlessly extended and without substance.

However the more you in your lifetime have trained and learned to navigate awake in the Now, and therefore also know the planes of the collective and universal images, the larger is the possibility for being able to navigate in the afterdeath-states. Since a thorough trained practice spontaneous appear in the afterdeath-states, these situations can create basis for the otherwise basis-less consciousness, and start an orientation- and navigating-process. This is exact analogous to, when the continuous supporting exercises become occasion to, that the dreaming (or, as here, the afterdead) consciousness begins the spiritual ascent.

When you have assimilated the spiritual practice so deeply, that the training of the ongoing supporting exercises begins to penetrate both daily life and dream-life, then your practice also will penetrate the deathprocess. This will upgrade and sharpen the progressive karma, and therewith the process of your consciousness from this life to the next.

If you in this life have learned to orientate yourself, not only in the personal area of time, but also in its more collective and universal depths, then the moment of death can be a chance for recognizing the Source, which in any death-process naturally is uncovered in a culminative glimpse. If this moment is recognized, then you will in this moment in fact be able to start the enlightenment-process itself, which will be of inestimable importance both in the after-death state and in your coming life.

The most important fact is however, that when the spiritual practice penetrates the deathprocess, then the dying will, what the experience distinctly shows, die a lesser painful death; the consciousness and the presence will be clearer, the consciousness keeps the awakeness longer on towards the moment of death itself, and death becomes more spiritual, self-responsible and above all, peaceful.

This to die in a spiritual atmosphere, surrounded by persons with spiritual experiences and supported by persons, who pray and are meditating naturally and simply, is a great lack in our time. Such a death-process will, as the experiences clearly show, be both beautiful and meaningful.

In spite of its technological achievements the modern Western society has no real understanding of death or what happens in death or after death. Humans are brought up to reject death, and people are given the idea, that death doesn't mean anything

else than extinction and loss. This means that most people either refuse death or live in fear for it. Just that to talk about death is considered macabre, and many think, that if they mention it by name, they risk to call it out over their own head.

Others look at death with naive, thoughtless cheerfulness. Uncertain why, they believe, that death is not a problem for them, and that there therefore isn't anything to bother about. That is a fine theory until people lie in their deathbed, and the existential guilt begins to report its arrival.

The one of these two attitudes regards death as something, people shall flee, while the other see it as something, which happens completely by itself.

But the importance of death is far more large scale. It includes, as suggested, also the importance of life. The spiritual core within the major spiritual traditions of the world - among these of course Christianity - has clearly and distinctly told us that death is not the end. They have all handed down a vision about a coming life, which supply the life, we now live, with a holy meaning - not as something holy about the dogmas, the myths and the faith within the religion - but as the holy meaning, which lies in the spiritual practice.

Without any reel or authentic spiritual practice, which builds on a life after this, most people live a life deprived an innermost meaning. Regardless what, then the life people live now, is coming to influence the way people are going to die.

But the catastrophic consequences of denying death go far beyond the individual: they affect the whole of our planet. Since modern humans fundamentally think, that the life, they live now, is the only life, they haven't developed a long term perspective, herein included a spiritual practice (realization work and ethical practice). Therefore there isn't anything, which prevent them from plundering the planet in order to satisfy their immediate needs, and from living with a selfishness, which can show fatal in the future.

Jesus', or *The New Testament's*, parable about the rich farmer goes, as well-known, as follows:

There was a rich man, whose field had given well. He thought by himself: What should I do? Because I haven't got room for my harvest. Then he said: I will do this: I tear my barns down and build some, which are larger, and there I will gather all my corn and all my goods. And then I will say to myself: So, my friend, you have plenty of goods lying, enough for many years. Set your heart at rest, eat, drink and be happy! But God said to him: You fool, tonight your life is demanded. Who shall then

have all that, you have gathered? Like this it happens the one, who gather treasures, but not is rich in God.

(Luke, 12)

In the Danish hymn writer Grundtvig's hymn *To Say the World Rightful Goodbye* a verse sounds:

*Come in the last night watch
In one of my dearest's dress.
And set yourself by my side!
And speak to me as friend with friend.
About how we soon shall be seen again.
And forget all our distress.*

Humans who are about to die need love and care, but they also need something deeper. They need to discover the real meaning of death and life. What else than that can eventually give them comfort? And here I again don't speak about faith or religion. I speak about spiritual practice. Whether the dying himself is a spiritual practitioner or not, then it will be of crucial importance, if those people who take care of the dying are spiritual practitioners – not by communicating any faith or knowledge about death, but by being present with that unusual presence a spiritual practitioner has.

Therefore that to take care of the dying, must include the possibility for spiritual care, for it is only with spiritual insight, that we seriously can meet and understand death. And to take care of sick people and dying persons, is in itself a deep spiritual developing work, if you open yourself for it. Therefore it was also originally monks and nuns, who nursed the sick people and dying. In this connection it is thought-provoking, how arrogant and prejudiced people in the West today look at the careworkers in nursing homes.

A few pioneers in the West, whereas Elisabeth Kübler-Ross and Raymond Moody, have in the later years opened the whole of the theme around death and the deathprocess. With a deep insight in the way, we take care of the dying, Elisabeth Kübler-Ross has shown, that with unconditional love and a more enlightened attitude, can this to die be a peaceful, yes, even a transforming experience. And the studies of the many different aspects of the Near-death experience, which followed Raymond Moody's brave work, has lit a living and strong hope for mankind about, that life doesn't end with death, and that there for certain is a "life after life."