

# Frequently Asked Questions: (FAQs)

v.2

by Timothy J. Smith



Path in West Skye, Scotland

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## ASTROLOGY

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### 1. Lights of Angles

#### How do you view the angles in the chart?

The Ascendant, MC, IC, Descendant, and Moon's Nodes are all doorways. Each one is created through the intersection of two different co-ordinate systems. These are: Local (the circle of our horizon and "up"); Global (Latitude and Longitude); Lunar (the orbit of the Moon); and Solar (the ecliptic or Zodiac).

The Ascendant and Descendant are created through the intersection of the horizon (Local) and the Zodiac (Solar). The wisdom of the Solar Deity shines directly into our immediate and personal 'space' through these doorways. In the natal chart, the Ascendant = light of Soul shining into our own Subject; and the Descendant = light of Soul shining through Others.

The Midheaven and Nadir are created through the intersection of Global (Longitude) and the Zodiac (Solar). The Light of Sol Invictus shines down into the state of the World at large, showing us our place in it, and drawing us together with others in our geo-historical environment. In the natal chart, through the Midheaven we can enter into various cultures or world events; at the Nadir, we enter into the world of Nature - which includes the common experiences of our gender, age, and exposure to climate.

The Nodes are created through the intersection of the Lunar and Solar coordinate systems - the orbit of the Moon and the Zodiac. These are the doorways of immortality (North) and mortality (South), for here the entire realm of creatures - the sub-lunar - is given access to the pathways of the Gods - the Zodiac. The Nodes have no link to our immediate experience, and vice-versa; they have to do with the whole of our life or lives. At the North Node we are presented with a Glimpse, a glimpse of our pathway directly into the light, which is renewed and ever-present; more a Now than a Tomorrow. At the South Node we enter the history of our own creation, which is both Yesterday and Tomorrow.

So much Light - and still the ego finds shadows to inhabit!

### 2. The Meaning of the Quadrants

#### What are the basic meanings of the House Quadrants?

Regarding the quadrants: The following are a few brief thoughts of mine regarding the greater divisions of the houses into midnight-to dawn (the first quadrant), sundown to midnight (second); noon to sundown (third) and sunrise to noon (fourth). The counterclockwise numbering is traditional and is based on the fact that planets in the midnight-to-dawn sector will be the FIRST to rise in the moments following the time of the horoscope; those in the sundown to midnight sector will be second, and so forth.

As with any group of astrological definitions, all the descriptions should be internally consistent and work on the same level, which is always an important cross-check for any astrology map (i.e. the meaning of the first quadrant shouldn't be deeper than the meaning of the second etc.). If I have not succeeded in doing so, make your own adjustments.

**Q1: SPIRIT:** Sensitivity to being ruled from within, listening to the wisdom of the body, learning from the simplicity of daily life. Discovering, accepting, developing one's strengths and weakness, one's personality & character, and style or voice. Independence. SELF-reliance; individuality and isolation. Eccentricity or Example.

**Q2: NATURE:** The seasons and the animal wisdom of Nature inform us (how to be pregnant, how to be old, how to be aggressive, how to be timid); listening to the impersonality of the seasons & the arrow of time; assimilating the family patterns; learning to play; learning to work. Becoming Normal, able to live in any century, on any continent by 'carrying water & chopping wood.'

**Q3: SOCIETY:** Cultural heritage, science, art, language and the occult inform us (how to see patterns, how to make rituals, how to be civilized); listening to the integrity of other souls, to the power of the group, to the momentum of history. Learning to be faithful – to spouse, culture, religion. Learning to question and learning to answer. Becoming Civilized but not effete; learning to Belong.

**Q4: HUMANITY:** Attention to the flow of events, awareness of the energy of one's own epoch; knowing when to tune in, when to drop out. Listening to technology, learning from pop-culture, smelling the force of evolution, seeing the fate of nations. Learning to rebel and to accept. Becoming Human, learning to be Modern.

### **3. Transits**

#### **For the novice: How do you view transits?**

Imagine that someone gives you an electronic watch/palm pilot device that will be keeping your appointments & diary. In order to initialize this device you have to fill in the following data: what's happened to you in the last minute, the last hour, the last day, the last month, the last year, the last decade, the last century, and the last 2 centuries (these are analogous to some of the various time-units we use in transits – they are the Ascendant, the Moon, the Sun, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus & Pluto, respectively). Once you've got the thing initialized, it takes off ticking away, beeping you with significant events – every few minutes, every few hours, etc. etc. – except that all the beeps sound the same! A nasty business.

The other image I like is: a clock with ten digits placed randomly on its circumference, with ten corresponding hands all whirring around at the above speeds. Ironic, isn't it, that

astrology is about seeing patterns in our life, and the first thing it does is to demand that we learn to read its own patterns! So why bother? Because the patterns of the planets can be learned, and once we learn to see their cyclic rhythms in our lives, we'll have a tool for penetrating the irrational which need no longer be tied to the language or even data of astrology.

So one needs a rough and ready sense of which planetary cycle is applying to what sorts of rhythms in one's life. I find it helpful to study the full life of a well-known and familiar person first – because they're dead, so whatever their destiny "will be" it either happened or didn't – so no ducking out for saying "well that will be in your future," and because many of the themes of their life will have been highlighted by their biographer. I liked studying Jung's life, because he was an interesting man and so very well documented. The point is, don't try to juggle too many unknowns at once – and our own life is somewhat of an unknown, whereas the life of Jung – or Arthur Ashe, or William Perry, is known as much as a life can be known – so we're then only dealing with adding the astrological layer to it.

Finally here's some 'keywords' for cycles that may (or may not) be useful:

**JUPITER = THE RHYTHM OF THE UNCONSCIOUS.** It is in about the same place every year, and repeats about every 12 years. This cycle recurs 7 times in an normal life span (84 years plus); giving us the traditional measure: "Seven Ages of Man" – childhood, youth, adulthood, middle age, maturity, old age, and dotage. This influence has to do with how we look at family & instincts (money, sex, religion) as we pass through these ages – so the same event (a big expense) may repeat – but may cost \$1.50 when you're 5 and \$15 when you're 17 (the next Jupiter cycle) and \$15,000 when you're 41 (2 Jupiter cycles later).

**SATURN = TRUTH AND CONSEQUENCES.** Saturn moves through a sign in 2 years, takes about 30 years to go around (x3 = one lifespan of 90 or so years). Look for self-created pickles & opinionated evaluations. For example at one time you buy a new car, which is a sound choice at the time. 2 years later you move, and now the thing won't fit in the new garage – pointing out that when you bought the car you weren't thinking about your plans to move as soon as you could. (When Saturn strikes, it is always possible to trace our current limitations back to our own blindness; when the outer planets bring about change, it is less likely that we could or should have anticipated the consequences of their activity.) Saturn keeps teaching us that life is a flow of opportunities and limitations, and if we get stuck on one or the other, we'll become flaky (opportunity) or cynical (limitations). The same holds when it comes from outside – for example, a person will praise us for detail work one time, and 7 years later, we'll be criticized for being too detailed and not seeing the overall picture. This is to show us that the same trait has positive and negative value, depending upon context and attitude.

**URANUS = CHANGE OR EVOLUTION.** Uranus takes about 8 years to go through a sign, and divides our lives into 21-year segments as it goes through its 84-year cycle. These mark

the major epochs of a normal life; they set out our relationship to archetypal consciousness and perfection. From birth to 21 we are within the archetypal mind, and have little real awareness of its existence – our mother is only our Mother and neither woman, wife, worker, or soul; each new area of life (school, sex, work, travel) is wondrous and unlike anything we've done before. From 21 to 42 we are to accept the archetypal role which has been gradually crystallizing in the first 21 years, and seek to perfect it, to exploit it to our utmost ability and opportunity. Some of these roles are: homemaker, executive, healer, student, entrepreneur, artist, and spiritual seeker. Then comes the great mid-life crisis at 42 when the archetype threatens to leave us. From 42 to 63 we can either continue to live inside its exoskeleton with increasingly weaker personal development or we can set aside its charms, with increasingly less excitement and accomplishments. Then, in the final phase, from 64 through 84, we are either rewarded for our detachment – by becoming something of an archetype in our own right (like Johnny Cash); or we are consumed by it and become a stereotype (like Tom Jones). As Uranus activates each of our planets, it will precipitate archetypal, 'once-in-a-lifetime' events (duh: -- it only goes around once for us). Getting married, getting divorced, starting a career path, learning to meditate. How we approach the expected and unexpected major transitions is colored by our relationship to archetypal consciousness, and offers us the chance to become hysterical or evolve an impersonal point of view.

**NEPTUNE = MYTH AND MYSTICISM.** Neptune takes about 13 years to go through a sign (or 165 years for a full circuit), and thus is often interlaced with Jupiter's cycle. Neptune governs the gradual transformation of humankind through the gradual and non-linear refinement of society, religion, and the inter-weaving of different cultures. Because no one can live through a full Neptune cycle, each person affected by it has only a partial exposure to its meaning and purpose – both of which have little to do with the person and much to do with humankind. Consequently the impact on the individual is often inexplicable and even traumatic. Sometimes it can inspire a person to behave, believe or create far in advance of their peers – like Jules Verne; other times it can delude a person into meaningless by-ways or transient concerns that will be lost on the tides of time, and, worst of all, it can expose a person into atavistic behavior from a more primitive time in human history. Thus Neptune is hard to evaluate, as it can provide one individual with mystic exaltation or worldly foresight, while damning another to the sufferings and brutality seldom encountered by their peers. The best preparation for its influence is a strong link to other peoples and other times, a disciplined comprehension of mythology and culture, and a simple, silent communication with the Soul. It may also help to know one's family history going back a few generations – sometimes Neptune transits will bring old traumas from generations past to fruition (for good or for ill) within ones own life-experience. As the Lord of Dreams, Neptune is awe-ful and awful, magical and deluding, and above all, inexplicable.

**PLUTO = REDUCTION TO THE AUTHENTIC.** Pluto takes 248 years to go around the Sun and spends about 21 years in each sign. Where Neptune spans a time incomprehensible to individuals, Pluto does the same for nations, cultures, and technology. Seldom has the world stood still for two and half centuries: what is commonplace for one epoch (ox carts and vellum manuscripts) are virtually non-existent in another. Through Pluto each epoch is faced with the consequences of its own inventions: Marco Polo sails to China and returns with more than pasta; Columbus discovers the new world, which destroys several dynasties and creates the foundation for a new one. In individual lives, Pluto transits emphasize our own exposure to such historical forces – presenting us with the ills and opportunities unique to the technology of our age and region, for it is the shifting Leviathan of History. On a deeper level, Pluto represents the process of authentication: its activity removes any elements of a person's life unnecessary for their spiritual growth, and introduces circumstances which often have no other value. To one awake to the Great Work of the Soul, Pluto is never truly unkind; to the sleeper soul, there is no greater danger or trial. Absolute self-awareness, honesty, stillness of inner and outer being are the best preparations for an encounter with Pluto.

#### **4. Nodes and Parts**

**GK:** I'm getting a feel for how the Moon's Nodes and Fortuna/spirit represent different ways the Sun, Moon, and Earth come together from outside the ego's limited perspective. The nodes in a more basic or fundamental relationship of the vital energies and mysterious nutritive power that feeds and supports the Earth-Mind, and the Sun/Moon parts as the more immediately creative and directly alive realization of the individual's uniqueness in the context of the whole splay of the life.

**TIMOTHY SMITH:** I agree with your comment about the Nodes (more later) I'm interested in your comment "the Sun/Moon parts as the more immediately creative and directly alive realization of the individual's uniqueness in the context of the whole splay of the life." Isn't that exactly what the Ego is supposed to be??? I think that the Pars Fortuna tells us where to begin building an ego that will neither conflict with the Soul's presence (the Ascendant) nor the workings of Nature (Moon) and destiny (Sun). I'm distinguishing Ego from Egotism and generally sloppy "Me Psyche - You Thing" consciousness which I, for one, am so very fond of. My reason for thinking this is because the Parts, like the ego, have no separate existence of their own – they only show how the Cosmic Soul (Planets) can Exist in the dualistic psyche (hence the pairing of planets) in a way that is relevant to the Individual Soul – whose mark, I believe, is the Ascendant (and therefore the whole angular cross).

**GK:** Jones says the nodes are creatures of the signs and the parts of the houses, which makes a lot of sense. In his Arabian notes, he speaks of bringing the nodes and parts together as a cabbalistic marriage of philosophy and poetry. I'm trying to figure out how the

two work together in this sense. Jones calls the nodes the essential approach and the parts the accidental approach to an infinite symbolization of life.

**TIMOTHY:** "Jones says the nodes are creatures of the signs and the parts of the houses" like you, I agree that this makes a lot of sense. As you know, the parts don't change houses even if the Ascendant is off a little. Then "In his Arabian notes, he speaks of bringing the nodes and parts together as a cabbalistic marriage of philosophy and poetry." Absolutely not! The third comment proves this: Nodes are Essential, and the Parts are Accidental. Marrying the Nodes and Parts is like changing the tires on a horse.

**GK:** I'm also interested in your take on planetary sect and this day and night business with the parts.

**TIMOTHY:** Not only does the differentiation of day and night births make sense, it works. I have been working with the Day/Night Part of Fortune for several years and won't be going back. The In Hayz and Ex Condition designations certainly seem to be significant in terms of the general integration of a planet. When a planet is In Hayz, the individual seems to take it for what it is, without confusing its power with the character of the sign or house. Vice-versa for the Ex Condition.

**GK:** In general, I'm wondering if you have any thoughts about the nodes or how they relate to the parts.

**TIMOTHY:** As far as I can see, the only relationship between the parts and the nodes is that they're both astrological. The parts are all about relationships – between planets and then again to the Ascendant (usually) so they're a relationship to a relationship – and they're entirely private – even twins don't share them. The nodes are all over the chart – every house cusp is a node, as are the solstice points – a node simply is the point of intersection of two different co-ordinate systems. The four great nodes are: Aries: Equator/Ecliptic; East: Equator/Horizon; Ascendant: Horizon/Ecliptic and Moon Node: Moon Orbit/Ecliptic. Lots of food for thought here. I consider each of these nodes as a point of dual perspective. Kind of like a cat in a back door – considering the world within and the world without. The Moons Nodes allow us to consider the inner world as well as the ordinary 'lunar' world. This is huge – just glimpsing the spiritual reality without being able to bring it to our lives (North node) or our life to it (South node) would have no evolutionary value. The north node allows us to start fresh every day, in every relationship, in every meditation, in every meal. The south node allows us to draw on the essence of our experience – and to fall back on tried-and-true behavior when all else fails. Since a lot of our tried-and-true behavior is piss-poor, the South Node gets a bad rap – that's our ego's fault, not innate in the function. The habit pattern of His Holiness is nothing to sneeze at (when the Dalai Lama has a transit to that point He tends to fall back on familiar themes and talk about Tibet, when something

is transiting his North Node he makes an innovative suggestion or undertakes an innovative action).

## 5. Sabian Symbols & Precession

**QUESTION:** There was some talk years ago that the Sabian symbols might actually be affected by the precession of the equinoxes. Since they were received back around 1930, the seventy years since would create an appreciable differential which might suggest reading an adjacent degree. Do you make anything of that? Do you think, in a parallel query, that there is reason to be a little lenient on degree readings in general and to consider also the adjacent degree in a reading? Do you have a preferred symbol system that you use? Do you like Sandbach's work?

**ANSWER:** Yes, I think that the precession does effect the symbols – ultimately each tropical degree will have a chance to contemplate each sidereal degree, so that each degree carries all 360 within itself. Presumably this has already happened many, many times – our own limitations inhibit our ability to penetrate within degrees very far – so we're aware of each degree's most recent history at best. I think that this movement is recorded by the emergence of new sets of symbols.

So next we've got to do some math: The precession is 50.290966" per year. There are 60" in a minute and 60' in a degree, making 3600" per degree.  $3600" \div 50.290966" = 71.58$  years. So, by golly, you're right! By now everything's slid back one degree from where it was when Jones took a look. On the other hand, we need to look at the degree position in the year of birth – so for us, 19 years after the vision, that's 15'54" of shift, meaning (if I got it right) a planet at say 11D 15' of Aries would now be at 10D 59' of Aries, and therefore refer to the 11<sup>th</sup> Sabian Symbol rather than the 12<sup>th</sup>. Certainly this is true for references to fixed stars.

The question is, is it true for the degrees? Are the Sabian symbols, the tropical degrees mere place-holders for sidereal realities, or are they meaningful in their own right, or both? If the first is true, then the precession should always work, if the second is true, then the precessed degrees should never work; if the third is true, then sometimes it'll work one way, and sometimes another, depending on ... the soul of the native? of the astrologer?

So now I'll tell you what I do. First, I use Charubel and Sepharial as the underside of Jones Long form, as meanings that are the karmic source of the process/lesson represented in Jones. Second, I tend to use about a degree and a half orb for a planet (which means that sometimes I look a degree earlier, and sometimes a degree later than the natal degree). I may therefore settle on a degree that's not the "official" Sabian symbol for a given planet, but use the adjacent degree instead. (Of course this throws rectification by degree symbol right out the window.) I find that when a person is very alive, very conscious, that each of their planets/cusps will be lucidly represented by one and only one degree. Conversely, if

a person is very unconscious, out of focus, they'll respond to practically any symbol in the relevant sign. It is this last tendency which makes me delay the introduction of the symbols until I feel that the client is capable of developing and maintaining an internal definition – otherwise, as I'm sure you've seen – the person replaces their own individuality with the mythology of their interpretation of a Sabian symbol. Currently I do not use Sandbach, nor Kozminsky most of the time. Mainly because they don't 'speak' to me.

Since Elsie Wheeler generated the Sabian Symbols the same week that the so-called Waite Tarot deck was designed (by another woman, whom Waite “accidentally” forgot to credit); I regard those two sets of images as siblings, and as very inspired for Americans. I find that people who are strongly European will generally be better represented by Sepharial or Charubel. There are other sets around, a French one I've looked at, and even a Cuniform one, as well as a Hindu one for every second (but that's just a lengthy list of God-names which have no additional characteristics – like God of Gods; Big God, etc.). So, year in, year out, I keep finding my way back to Jones, and to the Brits (big surprise).

Finally, now that you've pointed out the shift from Jones to Now, I'll be looking more closely at the corresponding adjustment in Sabian symbols for young folks.

## 6. The Part of Fortune

There is always a Part of Fortune even when there is not any meaningful aspect between the Sun and Moon. Furthermore the Part of Fortune doesn't care what Houses the Sun and Moon are in – just their signs.

The Sun and Moon have been married for a long time. Their Monthly union and parting dominates calendars and behavior regardless of astrology. The Full Moon is a Meaning-point all its own (and the Part of Fortune is always on the Descendant). How to deal with the ceremony / power / earth-magic of that cycle in one's own person? When the gathering at a New Moon begins, where am I? [The Part of Fortune is at the Ascendant at that moment.]

The Ascendant is the only thing (in my opinion) that dies. I can 'meet' a recently deceased person's life-energy (Sun); his women (Venus), his habits and life station, etc. But I can't meet the person Himself. His Here Self, not his There Self. That's gone. Occasionally I may meet My own Here Self (when my own Ascendant is stimulated); or see it reflected in others (through their Descendant, not mine) and through that mirror see it a bit more clearly.

Example. My Ascendant is 13+ Sagittarius; the Sabian symbol for that degree is: “A vast panorama of sand and time is unfolding; the pyramids and the sphinx in their glory rise before the eye.” When I went to work for PB, he took one look at me and hung a tapestry in his work area – of the Sphinx and Pyramids. He took the Monets and Renoirs down in the office area and put up a couple of Turners. These unexpected unsolicited actions strengthened those particular qualities in my Here Self – I love Turner's work, and the

Sphinx has symbolized my trust / bond with such Ancient Ways as the traditions of India, Greece, China, and lately, even early Egypt.

So how / where / can I find a mirror to see / check in upon my Here Self? How can I differentiate those elements of personality and preference through which light (sunrise) is most likely to shine from those that bind me to the endless repetitions of Nature's compulsions?

In Egypt (and in the movies like the Labyrinth, the 5<sup>th</sup> Element, the Mummy) mirrors were used to reflect the Sun's light deep into underground rooms, solving the problem of cooling vs. light.

The Pars Fortuna is a mirror in which the sorcery of the Sun / Moon Spanda can be housed and placed so we can see the Ascendant. And vice-versa - the PF is a mirror which uses the light of my Here-Self to personalize the Space-Between Sun and Moon (the awareness of the forces of Destiny/Sun and Necessity/Moon).

In my own chart the Moon is pretty tired out - it's a day short of a New Moon - so it's on its last few hours of the lunar cycle. The Moon is Dark, the Sun is dominant. The natural life is dim compared to the purposive life. The dark Moon also moves in Darkness, so that's okay. But the darkness of the Moon, the natural moves are not fused with the light source - nor is the Moon contradicting the Sun, it's just putting in those last few months before retirement, as it were.

My PF is in Scorpio in the 11<sup>th</sup> house. Its position in the 11<sup>th</sup> is fixed for the day - anyone born on that day anywhere in the lower 48 is bound to have their Part of Fortune in the 11<sup>th</sup>, no matter what time of day they were born (and hence no matter what sign is on their Ascendant). On that day both the Sun and Moon were in Virgo; with the Sun near the end of the sign, and the Moon just at the beginning. So for everyone born with the double Virgo Sun Moon, their Part of Fortune is placed in the house of friendship, in the mansion of student-teacher relations. In fact, anyone born on the day before any New Moon in any sign will most probably have their Part of Fortune in the 11<sup>th</sup>.

In my own case, each teacher-student experience I have had, starting with my 4<sup>th</sup> grade teacher who gave me Pilgrim's Progress & Dante, has allowed me to deepen (Scorpio) or ritualize my Sun-Moon dilemma in terms of one being the teacher to the other's student. What kind of teacher/student? A Sagittarius one - the relationship is to bring about spiritual journeys; to bring about fighting cleanly; to bring about pioneering work. This makes the relationship a very private one, with all the attendant advantages and dangers. Furthermore, each of my teachers has disappeared or died = Scorpio; leaving me to find myself through my own self-reliance = Sagittarius.

Conversely, through my own explorations of the ancient spiritual pathways, I've been able to use my relationship, friendship even, with my dead teachers to see more clearly into my own destiny, and to understand, if not accept my own Virgo nature.

So, even when we don't know the birth-time of an individual, we can still know the house of the Part of Fortune, even though its sign, and the rising sign remain unknown. This little piece of information gives that individual a promise - a promise of where to look for light, a light which will illuminate their own inner state, as well as fill the frightening, mysterious space between our daily selves (the Moon) and our larger identity (the Sun).

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## BIOGRAPHY

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### Bits and Pieces

'Randy' (Paul really) Cash and I are the chief editors of the PB Notebook series; a position assigned to us posthumously by PB, and as a result, possibly, of our sojourns with him: we each spent the better part of a year directly working with him in his last years.

I was the secondary editor on the PB Notebook project, and lived with PB as his secretary etc. in the next-to-last year of his life.

My other interests include astrology - which I better like, since that's how I've made my living for 35 years! Anthony Damiani got me started in this direction & I studied with him for 17 years, until his death.

I have been a practicing astrologer for 30 years, and have done personal face-to-face (or phone) readings for 50,000 people (thereabouts). Really. I have taught astrology around Ithaca, NY, and have had the opportunity to discuss astrology with Paul Brunton, Anthony Damiani, and some other luminaries.

I also teach a class on Indian/Hindu philosophy at the Wisdom's Goldenrod Center for Philosophic Studies ([wisdomsgoldenrod.org](http://wisdomsgoldenrod.org)) - translating texts from the Sanskrit as we need them.

I am married to a wonderful woman who likes her privacy; we have the good fortune to share our interests in spiritual and esoteric pursuits, as well as taking delight in the lighter side of life.

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## MISCELLANEOUS

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### 1. 9/11/01

#### **Timothy on the World Trade Center attack 09/25/01:**

What does it mean? Why us? Why didn't we know it was coming? What's going to happen next? Is everything going to be okay after all? Is/did this really happen? What good is astrology anyway?

Such questions fill the mind in the moments and aftermath of great events – personal or global, positive or negative. What follows are a few responses to these questions – not answers, but reflections on their presence in our minds, hearts, and lives.

To the astrology: there are two types of aspects: major (common – like trines) and minor (uncommon – like triseptiles). Major aspects unfold the common and cyclic weather patterns of the world – literally and figuratively. A careful study of the past patterns will provide anyone and everyone with a natural ability to anticipate and interpret the ongoing or upcoming patterns. This includes such events as Pluto changing signs (which has always given birth to a new media: internet, cd-rom, floppy disc, cassette, reel-to-reel, record, for the past 6 signs) or the well-known Saturn-Jupiter cycle of border-disputes – including Kuwait’s invasion, the division and reunion of Germany, &c.

Minor aspects are called minor because they’re hardly ever noticed unless they are gathered into a constellation – a geometric shape such as a triangle or pentangle; perhaps a more civilized humanity will notice them more often – we don’t. In particular the subdivision of the circle into sevenths provides for the arisal of something New in our happily repetitive world. A new flavor of ice cream, a new fashion, sound, or country. These are really minor ‘new’ in that nothing is introduced into existence or cultural awareness that is altogether unlike anything else. Maps, Slavery, Abolition, Electricity, the Telephone, Computers, the United Nations, WMD, STD – these are NEW. They are breaks in the cycles, in the habits. Each gives birth to its own new cycle of dominance or dormancy in our individual and collective lives. Each will eventually go out of existence – monarchy, horsepower, hieroglyphics, to suggest a few – and their final departure is also something new.

Obviously the attack on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon is something new. Not since the formation of the United States has a foreign presence wreaked such direct and visible harm upon our soil and souls. America as haven from the violent, hate-filled unrest of the world has been destroyed. Not only for Americans, but for the world at large. Where now will the Afghan refugees dream of fleeing? Where can the Arab-Americans hope to emigrate to?

The New Astrology was a moment in which the planet Mars, War-God of Old, was bound to Uranus, the Maker of Archetypes and the Unexpected, which was bound to the Sun, who translates lessons into events, which was then rebound to Mars. Thus: an archetypal form of violence encapsulated in one large unimaginably visible event.

I heard a veteran describe his escape from the destruction of the Pentagon. He said: “I heard a bad sound and left the area. There was no moment of disbelief – I knew and acted on what I knew – that something was dropping out of the air into the pentagon. I didn’t wonder or worry – I just left.”

We have had our moment of disbelief – our decades of disbelief. Now Americans are veterans – or at least no longer the virgins of the world.

We wanted one world. Now we have it. The implacable rhythm and reality of dark and light that courses through all creation has come a little closer. The victims of terror and prejudice are no longer safely tucked away in the boring barren hills of Asia; they walk among us, may yet be you or me. Perhaps this will inspire us to look beyond the waving image of the Stars & Stripes and into the killing fields of Central Europe, Africa, and Tibet with different eyes, and with inspired, effective actions.

There is a horrible crack in our experience. A horror made that crack, and what Lies Outside seems first to be nothing but more horror and nasty, dangerous, worthless men. That is all we see now, for the crack is still narrow. If it is patched, another, and another, and another will appear, and America will join the common graveyard of democracies – which seldom last more than 250 years. If we look through that crack, all we will see is the undeniable, disturbingly real world of darkness which is in all ways Un-American, and as much a threat to US as US is to Them. If we walk up to the crack and pass beyond we will STILL see that darkness, but we will also discover a living world, a world of true diversity, of many deep and culturally rich traditions, a world of humans who would rather till the land than pave it, a world of common and uncommon people, languages, creatures – all of whom merit their right to live, and not merely be granted preservation status – a world not made by US or THEM – the world of ongoing Divinely-inspired creation.

Human experience is naturally polarized; this is the Nature of Existence. However, that polarity need not exist in its crudest form – good and evil. The gifts of consciousness and evolution can – must – transmute this polarity into the complementarity of strength and weakness, of giving and receiving, of faith and reason. Spirituality consists of invoking the numbers of Soul, Divinity, or Reality and reshaping phenomena accordingly. When Soul alone is active, the polarity is resolved towards unity; where Divinity is present, there the revelatory Three unbinds the addictive simplicity of GoodBad; to the Real, the two becomes un-two, or zero, or wonderfully many. So pick a number, recognize your own alignment, and set about reshaping the polarity of your world.

To doubt the power of the few is to exchange your Soul for the sure familiarity of the collective mind. Do not doubt. Do not seek the Right Thing. Knowledge without action remains untested and is inevitably false. Action without knowledge is likely to blunder or recreate itself. When mindful of God and Soul, the heart becomes a voice and a guide to action. If this is to be a Land of Freedom, a World of Freedom, we must separately and collectively seek within and engage without. Free will = Do It Yourself! We can learn and imitate others, but we must accept flawed actions and dead-ends if we are to brave the world outside our perfect compound. Let us Do, and trust God, Life, and our kind neighbors to mark the wisdom and effectiveness of our acts.

Experiment means to go out (ex) in to peril (peri). Let us then each, and severally, go forth into peril and partake of creation.

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## 2. Cleaning House and Self

### A. Cleansing Process: For Emotion-Based Negativity

**Purpose of items 1-4:** When we sleep we are particularly more vulnerable to small and large negativities. It is helpful to prepare one's sleeping area to help mitigate the negative energies that may be attracted to you. These are negative forms based in emotion, not in Will, which requires a different type of cleansing.

The negative energies addressed here are ones that can affect the subtle material of the Astral body. For example, if you are traveling and are up against a particularly difficult sales pitch or meeting, and also if you are planning on staying in a hotel room where who knows what type of energies may have been manifesting themselves, then using the following cleansing processes should help clean the atmosphere.

Also, using all of the methods below can be used on a daily basis, around the clock, or as needed in your home, office or other structures that require some freshening.

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#### 1. Candles:

Candles are a passive, but helpful way to annihilate the negative energies floating around your area as they act as a psychic deodorant. It is preferable to choose ones that are either unscented or that also have a traditional Religious Icon of your choice. The spiritual figures depicted will assist no matter what your proclaimed denomination.

**Type:** Best is beeswax, next is paraffin; in a pinch you can use scented candles. The candle needs to burn at least 8 hours (or as long as you sleep) for overnight use. Costs less to buy a large one like the Paschal Candles at [www.dadant.com](http://www.dadant.com) and keep relighting it each night.

**Amount:** One a night or longer and/or everyday all day.

**Directions:** Place a candle in your bedroom at night and let it burn all night. If it is not feasible to do so, due to animals or young children in the room that might knock over the candle, then find a safe place close to the bedroom, such as an adjacent bathroom or such to burn the candle in. Do sleep with the candle on – use the little votive ones, the eight-hour ones, or larger. If you put them on a non-flammable surface (like in a sandbox) below the bed's height (not under the bed!), then all you see at night is a circle of light on the ceiling – so that will keep the bedroom clear at night.

**Function:** You never see butterflies fly into candles, the fliers of the night (moths, etc.) are attracted to the flames and other lights of the night. And thus, fire attracts negative creatures as well as negative energies. It works on the principal that water is to dirt as fire is to air, that is, each element has a cleansing effect on another element, sort of like the rock/scissors/paper ritual one practiced as a child.

- Fire cleans Air
  - Air cleans Water (think of aeration and bubbles)
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- Earth does not so much clean fire, but it does shut it down

The point is that fire works because it is the attraction of opposites, that is, that which is dark goes toward and into the light. When the negative energies are attracted to the flame and not your Astral body, the fire immolates the energies, uses the energies as if they were a fuel and thus destroys them.

Smudging has a similar effect, but it is used in different locations and for a different purpose. Smudging is used as part of a religious ritual and acts by drawing out the bad stuff from you that the open flame then cleans. Smudging is used in ritual areas, such as a sweathouse or during an outdoor ceremony, but it is not used indoors to clean houses or other buildings.

**Frequency:** This type of cleansing does occur slowly so repetitive use on a daily basis is best. If circumstances are particularly bad, burning one 24/7 is reasonable.

**NOTE:** in the FAQ document under Ghosts and Astral Images I address the issue of ghosts and how to keep them from bothering you, using the same principle of flames to attract that which is negative.

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## 2. Camphor:

Camphor also acts as an atmosphere cleanser for your environment. Camphor is the standard house-cleaning tool in India.

**Warning:** Some Homoeopaths state that homeopathic remedies are ruined by camphor fumes. If under the care of a homoeopathist get their approval or get an alternate cleansing substance from those fine folks.

**Type:** Camphor oil or Camphor powder. Burning camphor is best method.

**NOTE:** Camphor burns very, very hot, it can break ceramic, shells, and Pyrex®. So, best to use a camphor brass burner, brass ashtray, or other burner designed for that purpose. Can purchase these from Indian products dealer.

Also, camphor is very sooty, so when using it, be careful of not getting too near to objects (lampshades, furniture, etc.) as well as not getting the soot too close to ceilings and walls.

**Amount:** Start with a 'chunk' the size of two aspirins glued together or smaller. Once you see how much heat/soot it generates you can graduate to 'chicklet' and 'double-chicklet' size. More than that may set off distant smoke alarms...

**NOTE:** Camphor will create as much soot as there is negativity in the atmosphere, so the more negativity, the more soot and also the more camphor you will need to get things really clean.

**Directions for Camphor Powder:** To cleanse your room or house, light the camphor in your brass dish (be sure to use an oven mitt just to be safe). And start in the NE corner of the room and move clockwise. When you come to a door, window or other portal be sure to

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outline the entire four sides or shape of the portal, that is, start at the bottom frame of the door (window), and move up to the top and then down the other side as well as the transom (bottom) and then continue your clockwise direction around the room. If a window (or even a door) is round or octagonal, then start with the section closest/lowest to you and make a complete circumference no matter what the shape.

If there is furniture in the way or if the windows or door tops are too high to feasibly reach (no need to get on a tall ladder and risk life and limb) just get as close as you can without causing damage to your surroundings and self and do the outline as best as possible.

For skylights, do the same thing, hold the dish over your head in the direction of the skylight and aim the smoke in its direction and outline it as best as you can.

**Directions for Camphor Oil:** Acquire an Aromatherapy device such as those fired clay rings that go around light bulbs, the cast iron ones that have a shallow copper dish to hold a candle, or other devices such as those that you can use in your vehicle. Follow the directions for using Aromatherapy oils, such as putting a few drops on the ring and setting the ring on a cool light bulb, turn the light (bulb) on and leave the light on for at about 15 to 30 minutes (or whatever the aromatherapy device suggests).

Another option if you are in a hotel room and do not have your aromatherapy devices with you, is to take a cloth hanky that is disposable, add a few drops to it, and drape it over the lampshade, use caution though, some hotel rooms use halogen bulbs which burn very hot and can set cloth on fire. Only do this method on low-watt incandescent bulbs. If in doubt, better not to use this method.

**Function:** Because it is used by so many people on the planet, it is effective because of a strength in numbers, that is, the cleansing properties are not functional based on your own will, but the fact that so many people are using it, it becomes a "me and what army" in its performance abilities.

### 3. Golden Seal:

**Type:** Powder or oil form.

**Amount:** 6 to 8 drops of essential oil; 20 to 30 if oil is in a 'carrier' oil

**Powder:** One level teaspoon (tsp.)

**Oil:** A few drops (lasts eight hours)

**Directions for Golden Seal Powder:** If you are in a hotel room or other area that might be sensitive to burning substances, then using powdered Golden Seal is the best option instead of burning sage or camphor.

Take the Golden Seal and sprinkle it on a pillow and then whack the pillow the way people beat rugs, to shake the powder out and disperse it throughout the room. (You can use Sage powder in conjunction or as a single cleanser using the same method of "dusting" the room with Golden Seal.)

**Directions for Golden Seal Oil:** (Same as Camphor oil above) Acquire an Aromatherapy device such as those fired clay rings that go around light bulbs or the cast iron ones that have a shallow copper dish to hold a candle, or other devices such as those that you can use in your vehicle. Follow the directions for using Aromatherapy oils, such as putting a few drops on the ring and setting the ring on a cool light bulb, turn the light (bulb) on and leave the light on for at least ½ hour.

Another option if you are in a hotel room and do not have a your aromatherapy devices with you, is to take a hanky that is disposable, add a few drops to it, and drape it over the lampshade, use caution though, some hotel rooms use halogen bulbs which burn very hot and can set cloth on fire. Only do this method on low watt incandescent bulbs. If in doubt, better not to use this method.

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#### 4. Sage:

**Type:** Leaf, powder, or oil form.

**Amounts:**

- **Leaf:** Pre-sized bundles are available at New Age/Aromatherapy markets; if making your own, gather no more than will slide through an ordinary napkin ring; hang the twigs upside down until dry.
- **Powder:** One teaspoon (tsp.)
- **Oil:** A few drops (lasts eight hours)

**Directions for Sage Powder:** If you are in a hotel room or other area that might be sensitive to burning substances, then using powdered Golden Seal or Sage is best instead of burning sage or camphor.

Take the Sage and sprinkle it on a pillow and then whack the pillow the way people beat rugs, to shake the powder out and disperse it throughout the room. (See Golden Seal directions above.)

**Directions for Sage Oil:** (Same as Camphor oil and Golden Seal oil above) Acquire an Aromatherapy device such as those fired clay rings that go around light bulbs or the cast iron ones that have a shallow copper dish to hold a candle, or other devices such as those that you can use in your vehicle. Follow the directions for using Aromatherapy oils, such as putting a few drops on the ring and setting the ring on a cool light bulb, turn the light (bulb) on and leave the light on for at least 1 hour.

Another option if you are in a hotel room and do not have a your aromatherapy devices with you, is to take a hanky that is disposable, add a few drops to it, and drape it over the lampshade, use caution though, some hotel rooms use halogen bulbs which burn very hot and can set cloth on fire. Only do this method on low watt incandescent bulbs. If in doubt, better not to use this method.

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## 5. Cleansing and Preparing for "Battle":

**Directions:** When you are preparing to enter a difficult atmosphere, such as a meeting with a much-reviled employer, a hostile legal case, or even discussing some contentious issue with a family member or friend, as you get dressed for the encounter, imagine that you're putting on an armor of light as a last layer. It worked for St. Augustine, and it's helped me in times of nastiness. When you get done, take a quick rinse in cool water with just a touch of cider vinegar on a wash cloth - not enough to smell like a salad - just a touch - it will cleanse away the bad vibes trying to attack you.

It also helps to use the vinegar wash if you have gotten off the phone or after any uncomfortable/confrontational conversation with anyone, regarding any subject.

### B. Cleansing Process: For Will-Based Negativity

When you are in a situation where the negativity is more Will-based than Emotion-based, that is, if one or more people are not merely shooting off small negative energies, but large and extremely hostile ones and are giving you an unrelenting hard time by actively manipulating you or your circumstances, then you need to have an exorcism performed (of sorts) to invoke a positive will in a more powerful way. Another way to identify this situation is when the perpetrators are basically invoking a curse on you, that is, they want you to experience suffering and you can actually feel their hate as a palpable presence, then this is when you need to bring in the big guns...as it were. This type of negativity cannot be cleared up by using the passive or organic flame of a candle, but requires the ACTIVE WILL of a master.

Candles, sage, etc. just cannot handle a sleazy situation like this because it is a personal issue. The people who perpetuate this type of energy are of a low echelon and when they try to or succeed in squashing you, they just don't care.

You cannot battle this type of negativity on your own so you will need the help of a master, of whatever denomination that you prefer. This would be someone that is powerful enough in their spiritual development to invoke THEIR own will or their own understanding. They will take an active role in meditating on your behalf as well as using certain mantras and sutras to help cleanse you of the onslaught. Meditation can be performed with them because they will be in a state of CLEAR WILL. This has to be done in the master's own environment, a master performing at a distance may not be effective or as effective as when you are in their physical presence.

The type of person to seek out should use a minimum of specialized jargon or religious terminology; the person should be of good character but not necessarily either intellectually or emotionally sophisticated. As with most 'spiritual' people - avoid those who guarantee results and claim that they've sensed a change or given protection when you feel none yourself. Procedure should be either silent meditation, the chanting of a familiar or common prayer/mantra (Lord's Prayer, Gayatri Mantra), the use of simple geometric

shapes - circle, pentacle, and a sharp, clean blade to draw the image; perhaps sacred water (Ganges, holy water) and a flame. Minimal theatrics and theatrical setting: an ordinary meditation room or chapel, not a tarted up 'sacred space'. Uniformity of image: not eclectic, half-christian, half-buddhist, half native-american - for the will to work, it's got to do just one thing - when you swim, you're not reading a book or jogging...

### 3. Ghosts and Astral Images

#### **What advice/suggestions do you have for someone who sees ghosts/dead people regularly (and is disturbed by it)?**

I have seen the dead and ghosts and night visitors (three different populations; definitions (mine) to follow) all my life. In my case, they average a dozen or so a year - sometimes more, sometimes less. It takes some getting used to. Especially if the person still thinks they're alive...

Knowledge is power. To help you get some privacy and peace and quiet, rather than for protection, it's important to understand what you are seeing and how to interact with them. While there are some malign forces out there - that's really just about as rare as real angelic visitations (which convert the person on the spot, no question).

#### **As to the populations:**

- **Dead People:** people that you know or who know you and are in fact dead - usually within minutes of death out to about 3-5 years post mortem.
- **Ghosts:** people you don't know, but have some sense of personality, haunting buildings day and night, sometimes (rarely) a real dead person, more often their shadow or the building's memory of them.
- **Night Visitors:** people you don't know, and tend towards stereotypes, or are hard to see clearly - moving in a blurry way, the 'cobweb' people. These are Fairies (a la the Gray Havens of Tolkien fame) and other subtle-world people.

**Dead People:** Often they don't know they're dead, in which case, just greet them and wish them well on their journey (it's not your job to handle the transition - it should have happened at the time of death, and is now between that soul and its guardians - unless there's a powerful (and brave, loving) shaman handy). I take the attitude of greeting someone from my past that I have fond but mild feelings for - a college buddy, etc. Sometimes they do know they're dead and are here to give or receive a message - if they're not distraught then you can be open to them - there will be no verbal or mental communication in terms of thoughts or speaking - just a communication of feelings or intentions (this can include the transmission of a request - sell my old house, bury me in the woods,) when such communication occurs, usually you don't know it until after the vision has gone, and as a sort of after-glow you now know what to do. Do it, if possible, and take your time - they're dead! If they're distraught, imagine holding them in an embrace or

taking their hand (unless they're somebody that disturbs you) and guiding them to the nearest holy place – preferably one that they'll recognize, and “dropping them off” there. This may take a few trips. If you're disturbed by them – a nasty uncle, whatever, -- then call the angel-dogs: sort of seeing-eye dogs for the spiritually blind – they look like what most people call angels (real angels are slightly larger than the moon) and imagine handing the dead person over to their care – willy-nilly.

**Ghosts:** If of a dead person, treat as above. If it's part of the building & you like it, fine, if not, either move or clean the building. In most cases, don't contact or talk to them – they're like cats: if you feed them with direct attention once, you'll never get rid of them. Better to ignore, or treat like cats – don't let them crowd you. Clean by smudging, camphor burning (my favorite) and washing all surfaces with cold water & cider vinegar (PB's favorite). Leave a psychic deodorant on all the time: a white candle burning – preferably either simple or with a traditional Christian image. Don't leave candle unattended – poltergeists can tip it over – as can the wind. Do sleep with the candle on – use the little ones or the eight-hour ones. If you put them on a non-flammable surface (like in a sandbox) below the bed's height, then all you see at night is a circle of light on the ceiling – so that will keep the bedroom clear at night. I basically have a white candle burning at all times in whatever room I'm in. I add incense & holy music (not at night, usually). This is usually something that occurs only in old buildings.

**Night Visitors:** (I discussed all this with Anthony in my twenties and have incorporated his suggestions along with my own.) Here Anthony bluntly said: they're living in a time/space/dimension that fades in and out of our own; leave them alone. Generally that's my advice. Don't worry about them. There's something weird about them because they're not human – they're part of the 'old races' – faeries, the 'shii' of Ireland, etc. At this point fewer of them believe in 'humans' than we do of them, in any substantive sense. Occasionally there's something to be exchanged here – but I doubt it. Like walking into the wrong locker room, just turn around and go back out. Again the white-light and spiritual icons will create a quieter room. Only keep those icons and statues around that you have a relationship to and don't let them fade into the woodwork. I add and subtract various pictures, stones, and statues (I increase with the waxing moon and decrease with the waning, until I'm down to a very few on the new moon). The point is to fill the room with your own consciousness. This is particularly important in the bedroom, since we're variously unconscious here – sleep, sex, etc. It's good to add the other half as well – prayer, meditation, a conscious environment.

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## 4. Meditation

### Thoughts on Meditation:

"Ordinary meditation exercises aim in their earlier phases at rendering the mind concentrated and undistracted, and in their higher phases at resting in the Spiritual Self or in God--which usually means in a concept of God. Philosophic meditation exercises do this too but refuse to stop with a concept and seek to exclude all preconceptions from the mystical experience. They go farther still because they also expand the aim into contemplation of the infinity of being, the universality of consciousness, and the illusoriness of ego." (Notebooks of Paul Brunton, vol. 11, cat 16, chapter 2, number 263)

### Here's a thought or two on meditation:

I think that becoming a meditator is like becoming a vegetarian – it leaves a lot of room for variety, and is no guarantee of health (chocolate's a vegetable, right?). So what follows is my own reaction to staring at this particular inkblot:

There seems to me to be three basic motives/modes of meditation: discipline, hygiene, and contact.

**Discipline** - like being a vegetarian, fasting, studying specified texts, undertaking pilgrimages, are all expressions of the will. Since the will is innately subjective (c.f. K. C. Bhattacharyya), disciplining the will is basically to force it to correspond to some objective methodology, thus removing the will from the ego, which is good. But it also removes the will from the deeper self, which is eventually weakening and ultimately impossible. So the task here is to undertake a discipline long enough to thin out the ego, but not so long as to distort the soul. Meditation here is on the order of "just do it" – sit in a specific posture, at a specific time and place for a fixed length of time, while doing some basic action – repetition of a mantra, wiping the mind clean, staring at a mandala, counting breaths, etc. This is all right, if you like to count things.

**Hygiene** – keeping the mind and psyche clean – is something of a knowing activity, in that the emphasis is on the results (a quiet mind, a silent ego) rather than on how you get there. There is no success here, any more than one takes a successful shower, or has successful feet. It's known to be a natural condition of the mind and psyche, and various instructions and initiations awaken us to this condition. Contemplating the Sunset, assimilating the wisdom of "Be Still & Know that I AM God" are far healthier contents of the mind than brooding upon family dynamics, Presidential idiocy, or the latest doings of Hannibal Lector. Having a healthy mind in a healthy body is just good human behavior; neither spiritual nor secular – just normal. Which is okay if you like normal.

**Contact** – comes from the feeling function. Here meditation is taken as a mode of contact and communication, and its practice is like that of becoming fluent in a language. The first phase is to decide what or whom do you wish contact with: your self, your Higher Self, Divinity, a Deity, or Reality? Each has its own language, and as such requires something of the investment of time and energy involved in learning any language. Bleah. First we have to learn the vocabulary, then the grammar and stock phrases, and finally, after lots of drills and – this is important – conversations with a native – we begin to have fluency. Holding the metaphor, if I want to talk to God, I will need a guide who knows that language; if I want to contact Brahman, I need eventually to meet with someone who “speaks Brahman.” This mode, as is characteristic of all feeling enterprises, incorporates something of the other two (discipline and clarity of content), but adds – another. That other is what brings and sustains life to meditation, in my experience.

I have found that reading the Yoga Sutras as koans rather than as dogma brings about a meditative state all by itself – you can’t put a real koan or mahavakya in your mind without the mind having to become meditative in the process. Also sitting in the presence of the Teacher, or the Teacher’s essence, or the Light, or the Silence, as living Reals, is helpful. Spending a chunk of time similar to that required for learning a language also helps – for me, being a little resistant to these things, I find that I have to sit for two or three hours at a time to break through the addictive momentum of the psyche and get down to work; I know others who, being quieter and cleaner to begin with, can enter the interior conversations in a matter of minutes. I have found that by spending up to five hours at a time in meditation, and taking advantage of any opportunity to meditate with a ‘speaker’ has – slowly – taught me a few things about meditation. Also reading PB, Chu Hsi, Patanjali, and even Plotinus (who has some exquisite visualization exercises, and gives instructions for entering each of the all 6 classical samâdhis).

Above all, to enter mediation feeling the living, powerful, intelligent and close proximity of Soul, Deity, Reality means that when you get up off the floor, that relationship will come with you, and provide you with much instruction and nourishment in many unexpected – as well as ordinary – circumstances.

## 5. Philosophy

### **What does the soul keep from one life to the next?**

When a soul becomes embodied in the World Idea, it is to learn, grow and unfold through what experience comes to it via the body. But at death, what actually is taken back with the soul? The memory traces would seem to go with the body back to the "Dragon" and add to the World Store of ideas and images, but what does the soul take? And what part of soul? The Overself? That being eternal, established in the Nous, what does that have to learn? Plotinus says something like the soul becomes what is most intensely lived, but what does that mean? If it is the secondary soul that actually learns and grows, again, what is it that it

learns? Not that it can do a good tennis backhand, or swing a Japanese sword, but concentration and calmness? Is that what it gets?

You start off with “When a soul becomes embodied in the World Idea, it is to learn, grow and unfold through what experience comes to it via the body. ”

Let me lay down some language: Being is Dynamic, but always transforms back into itself; Life is the reflection of the Power of the One in Being – and therefore is the same in Being, Becoming, the Sacred and the Profane. Intellect Acts to Know the One, which knowing gives rise to the Ideas within itself. Soul looks [PAY ATTENTION] to these Ideas in the Intellect, and seeks to Know them. Since Soul is not Intellectual Principle, it has got to be wired differently, or it would still be Intellectual Principle – therefore where the Intellectual Principle reflects its prior within itself, the Soul reflects its prior OUTSIDE itself – i.e. in Nature, and then in Body. Soul is ever evolving – although its head, as it were, is stuck inside the Intellectual Principle, its own Soul-ness is NOT, for then it would simply be Intellectual Principle, which it isn’t. So the Soul is always evolving, refining the Ideas of the Nous – and the Place where this Evolution occurs is Nature (i.e. psyche). Now, Nature doesn’t actively look to its prior – for if it did, it would be Soul Two—which it isn’t. Nature does RECEIVE from Soul, and thence further imitates Soul by casting that reflection beneath itself – into and AS Body. Body doesn’t look up, doesn’t look down, just runs around looking for trouble.

“Therefore” the Soul uses Nature and Body as the environment in which to work out its contemplation of the Intellectual Principle. This loops around insofar as the Ideas of Nature & Body (& their derivatives) are themselves Ideas in the Intellectual Principle. Even as the brain is not the active perceiver, but the embodied, coagulating record of the mind’s perceiving act, so also the world is primarily (from the viewpoint of Soul, mind you) significant as relatively responsive or recalcitrant to the Soul’s efforts to image Intellectual Principle. Now, the world and the psyche are certainly significant in their own right, and have their own meanings and capacities to work out, but these are part of Nature’s and Body’s work – NOT Soul.

Therefore again, it’s not so much what the Soul takes from this life when we die, but rather what we take from the Soul’s imaging during this life. If we are in harmony with the World-Mind’s presentation of Body and Nature, then our Soul will have a clean slate to write upon, and we will easily read its work – which work will appear as understanding, powers (healing, teaching, writing, whacking things &c); new or refined Ideas (including scientific, political, artistic & metaphysical ones). Thus the artist’s true inspiration is from within – and that inspiration – to paint a Madonna – is the image in that artist’s nature of their Soul’s contemplation of Mother-Goddess / Blessed Virgin Mary or something like that.

This abstract model is considerably ‘cleaner’ than the reality of partially evolved souls on a somewhat dim planet (half dark all the time). So just like the artist who finds his work

mutating to accommodate recalcitrant material (the sculptor who starts out making a horse but ends up with a dog, because the marble cracked in half), our Soul's work will be corroded by the potency of natural and un-natural elements within our psyche. So the Soul wants to paint Madonna, but my nature is to fantasize about sex with the 'other' Madonna (not really) then my Soul's work will be contaminated, and it will now have an association of sex with Madonna that it didn't have before. So in the next life it will have to keep working on this image, will have to learn to differentiate between sacred iconography and pornography - and will have to put extra time into this because of the earlier corruption.

So at death the Soul brings home it's homework, as it were - and if the paper itself is clean (not sterile, not inert, just truly natural), then the soul will be able to hand that assignment in and can then go forth to get another one. If the paper is dirty, then the Soul will have to undertake a life of just cleaning up the paper - i.e. straightening out the 'normal life' of handling the world and psychology - almost to the exclusion of working on its own vision. Plato says we get one life of 'writing' and one life of 'cleaning up' alternately - if we're not too far off the mark. The saint is the one who just goes from writing to writing, with no further need for clean-up lives. The Sage actually undertakes to introduce the Ideas whose images have evolved in their own Soul BACK into the World-Mind.

At death, then, the Soul takes back part of Nature, and Nature/Body clings to part of Soul - thus creating the Dragon, which binds the Soul to staying close to its prior incarnatory imagery - i.e. if the psyche is strongly tainted with Christian imagery to an unnatural and egotistical degree, then those energies will bind the Soul - it has to come back into a Christian environment to clean up its negative relationship to Christianity before moving on.

As far as what the Soul learns - in my opinion, the 'realm of Soul' is more potent and richer and more detailed than the realm of Nature or the realm of Body. After all, the bodily aspect of marriage (living more or less in the same house with a person of the (usually) opposite sex) is not that different from one house to the next, from one decade to the next. The psychology of each marriage, however, is far more complex - to the point that even the two people in the marriage seldom have the same image/experience of it. How much more so, then, for Soul?

Starting from the top, let us say that the Soul is contemplating the reason-principle of one-on-one competition (something that even dung beetles engage in); it writes its notes down in the psyche; if that psyche is American/European 18<sup>th</sup> Century or better, it may find that Tennis is a perfect image for this reason-principle - no blood, and much concentration. This is then transcribed upon the body, and the person becomes a good tennis player. So good they define their ego around this skill. Oops. Now when the body dies, the Soul will carry some egotism mingled with its 'tennis/competition' notes. Next life, it has to sift out the ego from the image - so the person may be talented as a tennis player, but will experience sufficient humiliation or rejection or what have you to not identify their ego with their skill. If all goes well, in the third incarnation you get Arthur Ashe.

So I don't think that the Soul only gets the intangible quality – the Soul consistently – dead or alive – gets a compound of Idea, Quality, Image, and Embodiment – otherwise, the Soul would indeed be better off rolling around heaven all day. This view holds that enlightenment is not ever an escape or cessation of incarnation, just luminous, inspired, empowered, blessed living. After all, if the plan was to harvest the great Souls, then humankind/existence is nothing more than purgatory. I prefer the name “Cosmos” for our world; it literally means “the Adornment of the One.”

**“I am”**

**QUESTION:** "I have a question that might challenge you in both your language and scripture knowledge, or maybe not at all!!

In the consquential sequence: io sono questo / io sono / sono, the english would read literally: I am this / I am / and what is the third one, am?

Does it sound right to you, or have you come across something else that would solve the language problem and still maintain the essential clarity?"

**ANSWER:** Thanks for the question. English is such a poor language when it comes to expressing ontologically precise thoughts. Although the absolutely literal translation is “I am this,” “I am,” and “am,” it just doesn't sound right, does it? I suggest “I am this,” “I Am” and “IS” – using the capitalization to indicate the gradation of the states. (I also find it interesting in terms of my own development, that neither the first nor the third statements are currently true for me – in fact my mind does not recognize any way to link ‘am’ and ‘this’ these days, which is weird, to say the least.) At any rate, I like switching to the third person singular ‘is’ because it is more impersonal than ‘am,’ and as individuals such as Raphael have indicated, when that state applies, it's hard to continue relating to the personality as “I” – it's much more of a “he”.

Your suggestion seems very good. We had thought of "Being" with inverted commas to differentiate it from Being but your suggestion is very possibly better. <snip> I think it is good to know that 'I am', it would be impossible to go to the next step otherwise, and dropping that 'I' is it not the hardest? May be 'i' should try and settle for an intermediate 'i is' first!

Have you (sic) read/studied the Naishkarma Siddhi of Suresvacara? A remarkable exercise in examining the three pronouns: I, You, and He (as well as their plurals) – especially in light of the great sayings. For example, he points out that TAT TVAM ASI (literally: That Thou You-are) is directing us to become aware of BRAHMAN as OTHER – as YOU but not I; when most people contemplate this statement, they immediately twist it around to mean “I am Brahman” – which is a different statement (SO'HAM BRAHMAN (literally: I-am I = Brahman) altogether. He goes on to say that until we have been able to become free of the ego in all three pronouns, we're not really free – in other words, “I” am not free until “You” and “They” are also experienced as free.

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## *Paul Brunton (PB) – OTHER*

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### *1. Overself*

#### **a. Does the Overself have feelings? Does this contradict other PB quotes where he says that the Overself is impersonal?**

"The Overself, like a woman, wants to be loved ardently and exclusively. The door upon which you may have been knocking a long time in vain will open to your frequent loving remembrances." (Notebooks of Paul Brunton, 23-6.160)

Somewhere along the line the word 'impersonal' has come to mean 'unfeeling' or 'remote.' This is certainly sometimes true of ANY impersonal content, including the Overself.

But before we reach that far, let us consider other impersonal moments. The beauty and awe radiated into human consciousness from a great mountain like Arunachala or Mont Blanc; the power and terror generated by a hurricane; the simple peace accompanying a sunny day. To assert that such emotional responses to the environment are anthropomorphic can only be made by an unfeeling person. We have already agreed (or so we say) that the world is mental. Is that mental world limited to sterile absolutes and inert sensations? Is not the world presented through our senses filled with purpose, meaning, & laws? Why then refuse it emotions and feelings? Is there then someone who feels these world-feelings? Yes and no: the yes is the individual mind, the no is why such feelings can be designated im-personal – i.e. without-person, or better still, without ego.

Turning to our favorite subject, our own self, it is often when we're least self-involved that our feelings are most potent – the joy of a birth, the grief of a death (of another); the emotions felt about a collective triumph or tragedy; the feelings elicited in a concert or before a magnificent painting. There are surely feelings here, and, oddly enough, little of ourselves at the same time. hmmm... there may be a connection...

and that connection is, I suggest, the Overself. To presume that we as we know and feel ourselves are the greatest locale of ANY subjective condition – freedom, wisdom, love – is as habitual as it is wrong. What we feel, are capable of feeling, is only a little of what the ego-less, instinct-free Overself feels, knows, and does. Our Soul is not some sterile impotent stalactite dangling eternally from heaven's roof; it is the heart of our heart, the fire of the instincts, the steel within our will, and the light within our mind. Therefore to establish a relationship to it, we must do so in kind – to seek the Overself not with our mind, but with such light as may be present therein, to love the Overself with the innermost intimacy of our heart, to desire the Overself more passionately than anybody, to attend to the Overself with a Will made more of steel than of intention.

But all this is impossible. We can only sustain such attitudes for moments and snatches of time before nature and habit close over our quest once more. Nonetheless, each time we get a little closer, we find that the light, wisdom, love, and will of the Overself is entirely

adequate to the task of presenting itself to us in many, many ways throughout our experience. Then the task becomes rather one of receiving its great Love, and trusting to it for the rest.

**b. Immediate task to become aware of Overself:**

**"The immediate task is to become increasingly aware of the Overself's presence, or, if you are working under a master, of the master's presence in your own heart."  
(Notebooks of Paul Brunton, 23-6.238)**

Thought: all other tasks are mediated. The only access to Overself, to true inner self is and must be unmediated – how can there be any relationship but identity to that authentic subject? The presence of the master is analogous – it's not the master him/herself that one is to be immediately aware of, but rather their presence – which is the aura of their own higher self.

**c. Turn away from smug satisfaction of ego:**

**"Man has no power of his own to command Grace but he does have the power to turn away from smug satisfaction with his own ego and throw himself at the feet of the Overself - the source of Grace." (Notebooks of Paul Brunton, 18-5.144)**

This little statement has hung around in the back of my mind. It doesn't say turn away from one's conscious smug-ness, but rather from the smug-ness of the ego. It strikes me that only in the moment(s) of throwing ourselves at the feet of the Overself is this latent smugness overcome. Since we're not often so inclined without dire (or rarely blissful) motivation, the conclusion is that we're smug – or that the ego dominance latent in our unconscious attitude is smug – smug that it (and hence I) don't really NEED the Overself. Therefore our quotidian emotional state may not be consciously characterized as 'smug' or satisfied, but perhaps we would fare better in our inner work were we to do so.

**d. Personal experience of the Overself:**

**"He begins to prize his fleshly desires at their true worth and treads them under foot. He has been permitted to taste of the spirit's fruits, and he knows that they alone are good." (Notebooks of Paul Brunton, 22-7.62)**

PB doesn't say that the person in a mystical state treads (or should tread) the flesh under foot - but rather 'fleshly desires.' In the moment or state of being uplifted by a Glimpse, of being blessed by the presence of the Overself, the question arises, "how could I have ever wanted anything else?" For the Overself, like the body, carries its own desirability within itself. To become aware of the Overself is to be awakened to a desire for it. The same is true of the body. Unfortunately, the converse is also true - when we are not truly awake to the Overself we can only conceive or believe (or remember) its desirability, while we are awakened to the body - and its fleshly desires - every morning. As to the goodness of these

latter - they're basically good for the body, and only are bad for the querter in that they absorb attention and energy that may be required to achieve contact with the Soul.

**QUESTION:** Tim, when you write, "when we are not truly awake to the Overself we can only conceive or believe (or remember) its desirability, while we are awakened to the body - and its fleshly desires - every morning." is this statement based upon your personal experience?

**ANSWER:** I remember that PB never allowed himself to be recorded and was very cautious about 'self-disclosure'. Yet in conversation, PB was quite frank about past and present realizations.

My conclusion is that to withhold or disclose, or to hesitate, to act spontaneously or to act with deliberation - the EGO will still find a way of benefiting. There seems to be the least negativity aroused from discretion, however, and that is the course that I generally prefer. I think that PB's verbal frankness reflects the living presence of the Overself. Whenever something is recorded, written down, that statement becomes fixed, and that which is fixed as a personal fact is inevitably food for the ego.

It is fair to ask the source/basis of a thought or opinion. In this case, I am speaking from experience; this can neither be ratified nor denied by another (which limits debate, discussion), but at least it's my own truth...

Getting back to the quote, my point is that the ego harbors desire, and not the Overself or the Body. As long as the ego remains, the filter - and filtre - of desire will color our contact with both.

Regarding the remarks expressing concern about losing the desires and pleasures of the flesh should one happen to be enlightened, an image from LOTR popped into my head while pondering the prevalence of this anxiety: Desire, like the Gollum, cannot be easily dispatched nor pleasantly confronted. It is best left alone, yet should never be ignored.

## ***2. Christ Principle and Jesus***

### **a. Is the Christ principle the Atman, the Buddhi, the "we", all of these, wending its way into our consciousness, becoming our individual Overself?**

How do I say this? No! No!! No!!! You might as well call mustard yellow chocolate! Without writing pages, let's see if this makes sense: "The Christ Principle is that aspect of the Idea of Man which links Soul (Purusha) to Atman, providing for the occasion of an avatar. When the Purusha and Buddhi (the evolving soul and the pure mind) are linked, then there is "We" which is capable of responding to the presence of Atman. That response of the evolving Soul now resonant with Atman through the inspiration of the Christ-like Avatar, is the source or place of our Individual Overself.

**b. How does one explain who Jesus really was? Was he a single figure or two or three different people?**

To deny the avatar/sage status of a single historical Jesus is, to me, as grievous as it is to assert that He is alone in that status. To identify earlier avatars as His predecessor, or He as their subsequent is just a subtle variation on the first point. They are a string of pearls woven into the ordinary cloth of humanity.

Neither Anthony, PB, nor translations of the Bible are internally consistent in using WORD or LOGOS. These are sliding terms, sort of Mystical and Metaphysical relative pronouns. This isn't sloppy or careless thinking, but rather, it's exactly where thought and vision touch (notice all the various senses getting involved?).

To wit: the Greek Bible says "en on arche" meaning "the One IS Idea." The Vulgate Latin says "In Principium Verbum Est" meaning "In Principle, The Word IS" and the King James (inspired translation) says "In the Beginning Was the Word" The first is true metaphysics, the second ontology, the third cosmology. All are correct, but none are identical.

I believe/recall that PB is primarily using the third version in his writings, because he was/is writing for the generic Christian world, not the scholars & metaphysicians. Anthony went the other way, as we know, with different results.

### ***3. PB's Colleagues and Contemporaries***

**a. Did PB say that his holiness Paramacharya Chandrasekara Saraswathi was "the greatest being on the planet?"**

Students' comment: Shankaracarya did not teach enlightenment because he had the responsibility of being the head of the Mutt.

First a couple of personal comments – when I report what PB has said, it is because I asked him, or because he offered an unsolicited comment – something He rarely did, and so I paid close attention to those moments. His remarks regarding the exalted state of Chandrasekharendra Saraswathi were of the latter type – PB just started talking about Him. I had the life-long blessing of visiting – and having a few conversations – with His Holiness in the last few years of His life (I also met with Jayandra). My meditations in the presence of Shankaracarya opened a remarkable glimpse of His Darshan. I have therefore to disagree – my experience is that Shankaracarya DID teach enlightenment by Silence – the greatest way of all.

**b. Why has PB not mentioned much about V. Subramaniya Iyer in his notebooks?**

PB did not mention Iyer in his notebooks because by the time PB started writing the notebooks, He (PB) was no longer the person that had studied in India or traveled the world. Secondly PB studied with many masters and teachers – including Zen, Tibetan, Chinese, Aztec, Egyptian, Moroccan, European, Thai, & Burmese throughout the middle of

his life. These studies usually consisted of living in or near the master for a few years in their native country. I have always found it indicative of the shadow side of Hinduism that only the Hindu teachers have claimed PB as their chela alone; the others primarily retain a private and personal relationship with PB. Their names, by the way, are mostly to be found in the unpublished volumes "Talks in the Orient" (They are unpublished because the copyright problems are labor intensive.)

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## ***PAUL BRUNTON (PB) - PERSONAL RECOLLECTIONS***

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### ***1. What was the impact of your first meeting with PB? Was there a feeling of peace in his presence?***

The impact of meeting PB was very powerful. Every time. Every day when He opened the door.

To give a little context, I've met many gurus and spiritual personalities, including several encounters with the Dalai Lama, and Shankaracarya in India. Each encounter was very wonderful, and each of these great beings has/had a distinctly different Presence.

My first encounter with PB was through the kind offices of my teacher Anthony Damiani. I met Anthony within days of coming to Cornell as a Freshman, and knew that he was the reason I'd come to Ithaca as soon as I encountered him. That was 1967. Over the next several years many of his students were able to visit with PB in Europe, sometimes for a few days, sometimes for a week. Although I asked to go several times, PB never responded to my requests. By 1971 I had moved in to Wisdom's Goldenrod, where I lived as a monk with several other men for the next three years.

By 1972 not only had everyone else closely connected to Wisdom's Goldenrod met PB, but some (including my ex-girlfriend) had seen him quite often. I truly despaired of ever meeting him, and wondered what personal flaw or spiritual weakness was blocking my way - or rather which of my flaws and weaknesses were the blocks. Then one morning Anthony stopped by the Center and said: "Can you be ready to see PB by next week?" I said of course I could and proceeded to make hasty arrangements to travel to Switzerland (having never been abroad before). My itinerary - arranged by my backwater travel agent had me traveling by bus, plane, boat and rail for 48 hours from Ithaca to New York to London, then on to Paris and finally to Montreux Switzerland, where PB was living at the time. I was told that I should call PB the moment I arrived in Montreux and follow his instructions.

Although I'm a pretty hardy traveler, that trip was very exhausting for me - going through customs, finding my way to Calais, and so forth. But, I took the instructions literally, and called PB the moment I got off the train in Montreux. "Very well," he said, "come right

over.” I was aghast – I needed a shower, and a change of clothes; it was Sunday, and I had meant to get some flowers or fruits to bring as an offering (something that had been recommended to me). Now, in those days Switzerland on Sunday was deader than a parking lot in an ice storm – even in the train station, there was nothing open, not even a newsstand. There was, however, a vending machine that sold oranges as well as chocolates and crackers – so I bought all the oranges in the machine, stashed my suitcase and headed up the long road to find PB. I got to his apartment, knocked on the door, and who should open it but my friend Alan Berkowitz from WG, who bid me enter and told me that PB was awaiting my arrival in his study.

I entered the study to find a diminutive man reclining on a vivid orange couch, propped up on pillows reading *The Search in Secret Egypt*. “You’ll have to forgive me,” he said, “I must find out how this book comes out.” Too nonplussed to make a remark, I knelt on the floor for some time. Gradually a great peace and joy began to fill me. I felt absolutely wonderful and had the sense that I could never desire anything again, except to be in that room, with PB. I didn’t stop being tired, and I still wondered about his remark concerning a book he himself had written, but I had no doubt that I was in the presence of something I’d never encountered before. The way I put it to someone today was that being in his presence didn’t make the rest of life meaningless, but rather it revealed to me a plane of Reality in which meaning simply didn’t – and doesn’t – apply. I felt an odd disappointment. The disappointment was the inner death of my secret (and unrecognized) hopes that other goals and avenues of life besides the quest were worthwhile and legitimate in their own right. In the presence of the Sage, in his Silence, in his Radiance that was manifestly not the case, for I now knew that the Sage, in this case PB, is at the center of life, of human endeavor regardless of our skills, interests, opportunities or abilities. I also knew with intimate clarity exactly why I had had to wait so very long to meet with PB. I could see that an earlier visit would have unbalanced me, filled me with too much pride or shame, too many questions or too many answers. If, now, in these latter years, I am ever able to communicate these facts – the FACT of enlightenment, and the fact of the extraordinary wisdom involved in the unfoldment of our own spiritual experiences – I will indeed feel that I’ve done something to repay PB – and the Overself – for that moment.

So, by and by, PB sat up, apologized for the wait, commented that He hadn’t read that book in decades and was reviewing it with Alan for changes and corrections. Then he said: “Do you have any questions for me?” Well, I did, but I was hardly in a state of mind or body to ask them, or retain his answers – being exalted in mind, and exhausted in body. Nonetheless, I knew that this was a moment that could not be postponed. So I got out my little notebook and presented him with my three questions. One of them was of a personal nature, and I shan’t repeat it here. The second was: “what is dharma?” His response was “Putting into practice what you know.” The third question was: “What can I do to help you?” A question that has been answered for the rest of my life! At the time, PB just smiled and said: “I’ll think of something.”

Shortly thereafter Alan and I went our hotel, and I fell into a deep sleep. After that, for the next week, each day we met with PB for a few hours in the morning, and sometimes again in the afternoon. Sometimes he saw both of us, sometimes just one of us. My own subjective state was all over the map – some days I was in bliss, and very content to be present; at other times I was filled with negative thoughts, resentment, anxiety, and a variety of irrelevant preoccupations and fears. Fortunately, these attacks seldom occurred while I was in his presence, so I was able to really pay attention to him.

During this stay PB discussed his original books with Alan, and started making a list of all the corrections that he wanted to see made to these texts. I believe that this discussion was completed until Alan's final visit with him in 1979.

He gave me several envelopes full of typewritten phrases, a set of envelopes numbered I to XXVIII, and a list of 28 categories, somewhat similar to those found in the Notebooks. He asked me to sort the phrases into their appropriate categories. I eagerly accepted the task, and when I opened the envelope, I was confronted with statements like: "and this is more important than" or "on no account should this be neglected." I spent several days trying to deal with these fragments, and eventually placed all of them in one category or another. PB then grilled me on my placement, and ended by giving me another couple of batches to sort.

And so our days passed, walking in the streets of Montreux, taking tea with PB, speaking when spoken to, eating tahini and toast, and trying to write down as much as we could of our sojourn. On the last day, PB sat both of us down, and spoke to us at length – for what seemed hours. After we said our goodbyes, we went to a nearby park to write down this remarkable moment – and found that we had no memory whatsoever of what transpired. And to this day neither Alan nor I have even the slightest recollection of that conversation.

I do remember having the strong sense that I would see him again, and an overwhelming desire to do whatever it took in whatever inner or outer work, to make it so. Fortune, the Grace of the Overself, and PB's own profound generosity saw to it that in spite of my own limitations, my wish was granted, several times over, with benefits that will affect me for lifetimes to come.

So yes, PB did give off a feeling of peace – but also of barely contained power – sort of like walking on the surface of the sun – so much light it was wonderful and extraordinarily difficult to bear at the same time. Others, untrained and untutored also felt this. When we went out for the day, sometimes a person would sit next to us on the bus or in a café, and then would follow PB around for the remainder of the day; when he was in hospital for a minor operation, the nurses, doctors, and cleaning staff would sometimes just come and sit in the room – and these were not people who had any reason to recognize him or his name. In another time I'll try writing some anecdotes about them.

## ***2. Did PB ever give direct advice or direction?***

Yes. Although it varied from person to person and question to question. I remember being present when a couple asked him to bless their new vegetarian restaurant. He commented to me after they left: "I'm not a businessman, and although my blessing will help them, it has nothing to do with making their business successful or not."

At one time, through a series of questions he drew out of me my own choice of profession – astrologer – showing me what was already within me. In another instance, during my first visit, when Alan Berkowitz and I were both preparing to leave, Alan said: "I've never been to Europe before; are there any places or people that I should see?" PB paused, and then proceeded to lay out a month long itinerary during which Alan met many of PB's European students. 'What a great question' I thought to myself: let me ask it too. So I did. "Well," said PB, "you could go to Iona, if you like." That was it. So I went to Iona – where I met the founders of Findhorn, and had several weeks of interesting meditations. I would say that PB certainly gave direction from time to time, but preferred to assist a person in finding their own guidance from within themselves, and providing them with the tools and understanding to do so.

## ***3. Has PB ever visited you in dreams?***

Perhaps once or twice, shortly before and after his death. Many times during the development of the PB Notebooks, and from time to time since then, I feel a whiff of his presence, a touch of memory. Whenever that fragrance passes by these days, I try to take the moment to write down the thoughts the come in at that moment.

## ***4. Appearance, Behavior, & Personality***

### **a. Images of how PB looked and his lifestyle**

First of all, I knew PB only as an elderly man, and briefly at that – from 1974 until his death; that leaves a lot of room for other impressions. I also noticed that almost everything about his appearance and behavior was mobile – he didn't so much 'adapt' to circumstances and personalities, as meld with them.

### **Images of PB from my stays and visits:**

First, PB was a slight and short man, barely topping 5 feet. He was very agile and usually quite graceful in his movements and mannerisms. His voice was usually as soft as a whisper, and as penetrating as a wonderful perfume or incense. He was not hard to hear; I often felt that he had to keep his voice so gentle and soft-spoken, as even at ordinary volume the power within him would break glass and burst minds. His demeanor was: arctic impersonal; jauntily casual; wittily literary; silent; receptive; Cockney; elderly; wry;

remote; 'on safari;' beatnik; gentlemanly; noble; magical; fragile; old; ancient; human, and Light.

Whenever He greeted me at the door, I never knew what I would see from one day to the next.

**Our first meeting:** PB was wearing a red bolo tie, short-sleeve faded Hawaiian shirt, a gold lame vest, disco bell-bottoms, and open sandals. He had a three day beard, and leaned bohemian style against the door jamb as he talked with me.

The next day: PB was wearing what I thought of as his Author's clothes - a comfortable colored shirt, a cardigan sweater, grey slacks, quality shoes. This was the most common attire he wore, especially during my second (and longer) stay with him.

**Moroccan:** sometimes he would wear a little Moroccan cap (sort of a squared-off skull cap), a warm shirt and loose-fitting pants that somehow felt more Mid-eastern than European, and oriental slippers.

**Old Man:** sometimes when we went out shopping it seemed to me that he literally disguised himself as a frail old man: he would wear oversize galoshes, a heavy and oversize overcoat, carry a cane, and wear a battered old Fedora. He didn't look like a homeless person so much as someone about 100 years old being led around the block by their great grand children. In this outfit he would stumble and waver on his feet, giving me all the cardiac exercise I would ever care to have.

**On Safari:** Other times when we went to Lausanne (a day trip by train), he would wear all khaki, a sensible hat for sun or rain, and a light rain coat should the weather warrant. In this ensemble one became aware that here was a man who had trodden on many, many remote pathways of the outer as well as the inner world. He didn't look affected in this outfit at all, nor emit a gung-ho sort of 'vibe', so much as radiate the attitude of an explorer more at home in the mountains than the towns, and not caring who knew it.

**My Lord:** Sometimes he would wear the most dignified and tailored clothes I have ever seen on a Western man: a navy blue silk suit with real gold buttons, a perfect white shirt with gold cuff-links (given to him, he said, by Comte de St. Germain [this might have been the truth or him pulling my leg; he was capable of both]), polished black diplomat's shoes, & a silk top hat (on the short side, to match rather than mock his stature). He also had the same sort of ensemble in 'grey flannels.' He only wore these clothes when genuine royalty or other European dignitaries visited him (which happened about once a month). When PB wore these clothes, his own inner dignity and, if I may say so, Glory, absolutely shone forth, intensifying the ongoing awareness of his Presence that at times was addictively, terribly, unbearable.

I would be surprised if others who knew PB far better than I would completely disagree with these impressions: it was so obvious that His nature was responding/revealing as much as I could handle and comprehend, which was and is a long way from His Truth.

**Lifestyle of a Retired Author Expat:** PB lived quite simply, but not stringently. He shopped for his food (or had a visitor do so) practically every day in the local markets. At the time, that was the norm for everyone in the area; few apartments had full-sized refrigerators. He saved his paper sacks for reuse, but threw them out when they were worn out, and had a compact little collection of various sized sacks and bags: the rest he recycled. He would get an aged valise repaired for the 100th time, and toss his carpet sweeper out in favor of a new one – repairing where the time/cost was favorable, replacing when that was more efficient. In fact, that word, efficient, would best describe his life-style, as would economical.

**Also dynamic:** During one phase of my stay, there were many visitors, some of great worldly renown. At that time, the living room was transformed into an interview room: tangkas came and went according to the visitor: (nothing Chinese for the Tibetan, nothing Hindu for the Christian); the color scheme remained dominantly bright red-orange, with earth-tones and off-whites softening the potency of the red-orange furnishings and upholstery (which I believe diluted the visual impact of PB's aura somewhat). If there was to be one visitor, then there'd would be two chairs and a low coffee table set to create distance; if it was someone he was close to (as it were), the coffee table would be replaced by a small tea-table that afforded closer proximity. If two people came, they would be seated either on a settee, or a couch (allowing them to sit further from each other) or on separate chairs. (This furniture moving took only a few minutes somehow, and the rest of the apartment was shifted accordingly – couch out of study, extra chairs in, etc.)

After a few months of visitors, PB changed gears and everything in the living room was piled in a big heap in the center of the room – including the ceiling light fixture! After an adventurous day in the attic store-room, and another at the hardware store, the living room was transformed into a writing/study room, with a bright white ceiling light, white lights on a writing desk, book cases and a meditation chair replacing the orange lamps and couches. It was like walking into the director's office at the British Museum Library (which I'd seen, and so, presumably, had PB). At this time the walls were hung with a tapestry of the Pyramids and Sphinx, and several Turner Prints (images that had been meaningful for me long before this stay, and which made me feel quite at home).

When he was recovering from minor surgery, this room was transformed once again into a 'day room' – with lots of plants (which were brought out of the study and kitchen), the coffee table, the big couch for PB to lie on, low but white lights, one orange lamp, and lots of Chinese decorations: a silk robe made for him during his stay there, three floor-to-ceiling paintings of Confucius, Chou-Tun-I, and the Buddha (a la Chinese).

The thing that struck me most was how flexible he was within his own accommodations. I could describe the shifting designs of his bed-room and the study, but let me say they were of the same nature – though one additional image comes to mind. One of the visitors PB had was a man of vigorous and inconsiderate or unconscious behavior (something I learned more about later in life). In anticipation of this visitor, PB got a twinkle in his eye and spent an afternoon with me planning and designing a Rube-Goldberg type invention. When this man opened the door to the hall closet where he would hang his outer coat, the door would catch on a string, preventing it from opening more than half-way; a second tug allowed the door to open further, and caused a little sign to drop down to (the visitor's) eye level that said "QUIET PLEASE." PB was pleased with this little device, which had the desired startling and stilling effect on his guest – but he seemed a little disappointed that we couldn't figure out how to also rig something that would give a buzz or tingle to the closet door-knob. Such inventiveness abounded in PB's apartment, but seldom with that degree of whimsy: an extra hole was drilled into his tea kettle lid to soften the whistle; part of a chimney pipe was shaped so that PB could better see the flame on his stove on a sunny day; he combined an incense burner and a table leg to produce a beautiful little lamp which gave him the desired bedside illumination; one set of tea cups he had were priceless China, another was actually from a children's tea party set, both were actually beautifully made, and very pleasant to handle.

## **b. Five questions from "K": Behavior & Personality**

### **Q1. Dancing**

**"This is a bit random, but did PB dance? Did he waltz at weddings? Get down in a freestyle fashion when he was feeling glad? Or was he "too proper" to dance about like a sillybilly? Was he schooled in the popular ballroom dances of his day? He probably wasn't a head-banger..."**

What an interesting question! As far as I know PB did NOT dance, waltz at weddings or "get down". In fact the whole idea of him doing so is scary to contemplate. You have to remember we're talking about a colleague of Jesus Christ. To touch PB was to enter his state of bliss and to have your spiritual, emotional and physical ailments cured in a trice. It also meant that he knew you, your body and instincts with a degree of physical intimacy unachievable even in powerful sex. So to be held by him for a moment was the blessing of a life-time, and often took months to recover from. The idea of being swept around a ballroom by him is like having a nice pint of LSD for breakfast!

On the other hand, given PB's general cultural skills, I bet that he was, in his youth at least competent as a ballroom dancer. I witnessed him operating with a Queen and Princess, and also in a Leather bar, with equal poise. So he had social graces, even though he was far from a socialite. Also, PB moved in a state of grace that was co-extensive with his bodily presence. He didn't 'party' any more than Mont Blanc cracked jokes; the world received his

quieting, mysterious silence and thereby drew healing, joy and deep, deep happiness just by having him around.

## **Q2. Energy Presence**

**"Also, what was he like to be around normally...what I mean is: did he have a fiery energy behind his calm?"**

There was NOTHING 'behind' his calm, there was nothing 'behind' whatsoever. There is no "inner" or subjective state of the Sage; there is no "who" of the sky, no boundary to the ocean, and no secondary quality in the sage. That is not to say that PB was monochromatic - he had many moods and demeanors, but each one was homogeneous to his character. I could say it is like a little kid's emotions, but that's not quite true; the sage's homogeneity is rather like the homogeneity of a symphony - rich in texture, instantly recognizable, and inexhaustible.

## **Q3. Energy & Physical Manifestation**

**"Or was he so at peace that if you weren't paying attention, he'd disappear right before your eyes?"**

He might disappear right before your eyes, but that was more the 'void mind' factor than some sort of placidity. And as for 'not paying attention' that was nearly impossible and entirely inadvisable. The presence of the Sage is not entirely benign, nor comfortably human. One would not become distracted with thoughts of the morrow while taking tea in the lion's cage. To be near PB was to be filled with awe and uneasiness, longing and comfort, fear and joy moment by moment. At the end of each day I would go home and collapse exhausted into bed until the next morning; after my time with PB I slept for 12 hours a day for nearly a year (I usually sleep 6 hours a day).

## **Q4. Moods**

**"Was he low-key? Stern? Happy go lucky? Warm, open and inviting? Always alert or sometimes sleepy?"**

He was low-key most of the time; one had the impression of someone wielding tremendous power, and moving, speaking, even gesturing with great parsimony and care. After all, even a quick hand gesture might unleash a shock-wave of power, a hasty glance might pierce an unprepared ego, a loud word might brand itself unhelpfully in the mind (making it hard for the person to ever think for themselves or hear anyone else). PB was surely stern at times, especially when fielding impertinent questions or commenting on secular politics (he deeply disapproved of communist China). You could call PB "happy go lucky" in a sense - he was certainly spontaneously at ease in the world and could be quite merry at times. While I wouldn't go so far as to say that PB was warm and open and inviting, he certainly had tinges of those emotions, subtle forms of them if you will. One did not feel unwelcome or put off in his presence, and there was a genuine graciousness in his

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greetings. However, there was also just that profound sense of 'other' of something ultra-human, something extraordinarily impersonal that permeated any of these social energies.

Was PB ever sleepy? Yes, certainly, he tired out, and could be physically exhausted. But even at his most sleepy, there was an alertness there which we seldom achieve even in our most wakeful moments. It was not the alertness of some sort of 'leaning towards' experience or intentness; it was rather the alertness of the luminescent sky - coexisting with whatever physical condition he was in, or rather that his body was in.

### **Q5. Demeanor**

**"I know what he looked like physically, but I wonder about his demeanor. When he was not addressing people on spiritual matters...what might he have been like to bump into in the grocery store for instance. Was he mercurial and energetic, always changing depending on who he was with and where he was at? Was he the life of the party? Gregarious at social events? or quiet and off to himself in the corner?"**

When PB was not addressing people on spiritual matters - that was most of the time and none of the time. He rarely granted direct interviews; in the 7 months I attended to him, I believe that I had two such conversations all told. On the other hand, issues, philosophic points, techniques for meditation, occult information more or less flowed from him during our tea-time and lunch.

I too wondered how he would be in the grocery store - and got to see him in action there. Basically he was incredibly efficient, circumspect, and tried to avoid bumping into anyone at all costs. (That touching thing again.) Once someone became aware of him - a shopper, a shopkeeper, they tended to follow him around, sometimes even walking down the street after him, leaving their store untended. He therefore put out a kind of invisibility cloak and moved swiftly through the public environment. Occasionally he would arouse animosity, as people would literally stop thinking in his presence, and those who had a resistance to spiritual matters would deeply dislike him. Mostly though, people would begin to glow and kind of 'wake up' around him - and these are ordinary shopkeepers who didn't know his name, reputation, or anything about him.

As for 'mercurial' - I suppose so, in that he responded to whatever was the deepest essence of the person with whom he was interacting. So if that person was kindly, he became kindness itself; if they were selfish, he became coldly impersonal. He did not judge people in the sense of condemning them, he simply reflected their own spiritual status back to them, willy-nilly. He was aware of what people thought, aware of their whole life, and often their past lives as well, not in a psychic way, but in a more direct, innate mode of knowing. He certainly had a sense of humor, and was not above teasing or quick repartee, but these moods mostly occurred over tea or while traveling. And while I could say that he was always changing, it was more that no projection or expectation really 'stuck' on him; he was immediately present to life, and as such flowed along with the circumstance and quality of the moment. It's like when you and I meet for a few moments each year, we're reminded of

the fuller life-presence of the other person; the rest of the time we're just words on paper, thoughts in the ether. Now take that sense of aliveness we get when we meet someone and square it; meeting PB was like meeting the purest power of human life. Is that mercurial? sometimes. Energetic? definitely.

But life of the party? Gregarious at social events? Well, there may have been a time in PB's long life when there were social events, but certainly not during the period I knew him, or knew of him. He would meet people for dinners and have a few words, or for tea, but that was more one on one or in small groups. In such settings the visitor's awareness of his presence forestalled any sense of socializing, though there was a gracious and cultured atmosphere at all times. I never saw him 'relax' or let his hair down, nor did it occur to me that he would have need of such activity. He was exactly and effortlessly who the World Mind called him to be in each moment of life, no more, no less.

He did not tolerate artifice, and since most social gatherings are artificial in one way or another, he did not engage in such gatherings. When I say that he did not tolerate them, I mean his very presence shattered any pretense around him, freeing those who preferred authenticity, and scaring the shit out of those clinging to formalism and pretense. So it was really impossible for him to be part of a party, as his very arrival changed the whole quality, the whole fact of the event!

Well, that's enough from me on this topic. I bet that if you asked other people you would get different answers. After all, I knew PB as an older man, and we had a lot of work to get done during my stay with him. And I myself am hardly inclined towards social activities - all of which inevitably colors these stories - but it's what I saw, what I observed, and what I'm most glad to pass along to you!

### ***5. Meditating with PB — “the sun behind the sun”***

**"The mind stilled, the self surrendered, a divine awareness possesses him. For there can be three forms of possession: divine, human (as in artists or writers), and diabolic. In the ideal sage, divine possession has become a permanent state."  
(Notebooks of Paul Brunton, Category 22: Inspiration and the Overself > Chapter 2: Inspiration > # 33)**

This quote stirred a recollection or two of PB: Sometimes he would become so still that the very world around him stopped, as if to honor that silence within him. In those moments, he would become He; His eye-color changed - or rather His gaze became beatific, terrifying, intimate and impersonal all at once. One could barely stand to accept that gaze, much less return it - and at the same time, one could barely tolerate the prospect of ever, ever forfeiting that presence ever again. Should He speak in such a moment, it was so quiet and penetrating that the words seemed mere echoes of the transmission of meaning/consciousness. In such a moment, the meaning of Shruti - the speaking truth of the Rishi became absolutely literal and exquisitely Real.

One day we were to travel from the small town of Vevey to the Cantonal center of Lausanne. Standing on the train platform, I anxiously awaited the arrival of PB. He was nowhere in sight. The train came and left. Then PB appeared walking through a large culvert that ran underneath the tracks. "I tried a different route to the station," he remarked; "evidently, it's not a short-cut!" This being Switzerland, there would soon be another train to Lausanne, so we had about 40 minutes to wait.

PB said to follow him, and headed off towards a pile of railroad ties and other industrial junk. Having just witnessed his egress from the culvert, I had no idea where we were headed or why. A few steps beyond the tracks we found a small well-kept formal garden with three benches encircling a little fountain – all nestled in amongst the detritus of the rail-road station! It was very secluded and yet afforded a glimpse of the tracks, so we could easily know when the next train had arrived. This took place sometime in March, which was still winter in that part of the world – mostly overcast and rainy, but seldom nice enough to be outdoors for more than a few clammy minutes. However, on this particular day, the weather was sunny and clear, and pleasantly warm.

We seated ourselves on the benches, and just rested in the welcome sunlight. Whenever such a moment would present itself in PB's presence, I would always start to meditate, in hopes of partaking of his silence, and in natural response to the overwhelming radiance that flowed from him. This day was such a chance. As the Sun shone down upon us, it complemented the great light I felt shining forth from within PB. The silence deepened, thought slowed, and a great simplicity of light remained. Then the spell was broken – gently, actually, by the arrival of our train. PB rose from his bench, smiled, and remarked: "It is pleasant to sit in the sun." Then He paused, and looked upon the world with those Eyes of Other and added "But it is better to sit in the Sun Behind the Sun."

Later, Anthony Damiani pointed out the following passage from Manly Palmer Hall (Secret Teachings) "Apuleius said when describing his initiation: 'At midnight I saw the sun shining with a splendid light.' The midnight sun was also part of the mystery of alchemy. It symbolized the spirit in man shining through the darkness of his human organisms. It also referred to the spiritual sun in the solar system, which the mystic could see as well at midnight as at high noon, the material earth being powerless to obstruct the rays of this Divine orb." For a more thorough explanation, I suggest "The Oration to the Sun" by Emperor Julian (which I can post if anyone's interested).

## ***6. Have you read "My Father's Guru"?***

I have read My Father's Guru – and it is indeed an odd book, generated from an odd man (who has written a similar book about Freud). The only thing that I found useful in that book was the contextualization of PB – he evolved in a period when occultism and peculiar cults were abundant amongst the post-war intelligentsia – which is one reason, I believe, that he became a recluse in his later years, and also explains his very strong criticism of all

things occult. Certainly there was little of the PB that I encountered to be found in that book.

## ***7. Others' recollections of PB***

### **A Columbus Ohio student - Memories of PB:**

I also remember that his actions were unpredictable - a true individual. When I delivered some turtleneck shirts to him in pastel colors, I noted that the sender had said he wouldn't like them. He said mildly, "how would she know what I like?"

PB wearing a beret and leaning against the wall in his apartment in Montreaux.

(He said he often wore the beret indoors because his head got cold.) Sometimes his poses were so picturesque it was as if they were carefully arranged and indelible.

The first time I saw him he was standing beside the waterfall near the hotel where I was staying, wearing a light green cotton suit. A small man in an unorthodox wrinkled suit etched its place in my mind in a way that a neatly pressed dark blue outfit wouldn't have.

Having tea with PB in a Moroccan restaurant. He ordered the tea and a few minutes later ran into the kitchen to tell the waiter not to put sugar in it.(He said they put in too much.) When the tea came he squatted on the bench to show me how they drank tea in Morocco. That picture makes me smile.

PB was authentic, not contrived. He gave the impression he was genuinely interested in the conversation. He was so interesting to speak with, not mentally tired, but enthusiastically alert. I wondered if he was being kind since our small talk couldn't be that interesting to him. He always had something to add but it was as if he were discovering it too. (Shankaracharya had this same quality of freshness.) He gave me a stack of newspapers for reading material in my hotel room. They were published years before in England by the Theosophical Society and I found myself telling him about the articles. He knew the background of the information and corrected erroneous statements. He even asked me to bring in a particular article so he could read it.

He asked for some ideas about how to rearrange his living/dining room so the sunlight didn't fade the upholstery. This was amusing in itself because I am - or used to be - an inveterate furniture mover. I am not able to explain exactly why but I often sense that furniture in a room is not placed right for that particular time. (I didn't know about Feng Shui) When I suggested switching the two areas, his attitude was open and interested. I found myself thinking it wasn't going to work and suggested we might draw it out to scale on paper to see if things would fit. He said, "not necessary, we are not professionals, let's see how it works." He seemed interested and curious. Was this the quality of enthusiasm he later applied to Anthony and related it to the word for spirit in Greek? When he was in Columbus he conducted some of his interviews with people in the Witter's dining room. He

