Intermediate Gnostic Psychology – Notes 8

http://www.GnosticStudies.org/Psychology

Methods to Counteract Negative Emotions

The most difficult center to control in our organic machine is the Emotional center. Here are 2 methods which can be used to counteract Negative Emotions:

1. **The Elephants** – using the Intellectual and Motor centers to control the Emotional center by relaxing the body and emptying the Mind. The result of this will be that eventually the crazy elephant of the Negative Emotions will eventually have to calm down next to the 2 sane elephants of the Intellect and Motor centers.
2. **Superior Emotions** – when we are assaulted by a Negative Emotion, we choose a different emotion, a Superior Emotion. We could do ourselves a favor, in those moments,
    a. by listening to the Symphonies of Beethoven, or "The Magic Flute" of Mozart;
    b. or by submerging ourselves into profound meditation full of Superior Emotion, reflecting upon the Mysteries of Life and Death;
    c. or by choosing to express ourselves in the best possible way regarding the situation, that is, to not feed the Negative Emotion, but instead speak positively of the person, place or thing that our ego is blaming for its negativity.

    In this way we will not be internally injured and we stop the momentum of the ego or "I's".

Remember that Negative Emotions are often the result of our unwillingness to cooperate with the inevitable, and in life we have to LEARN TO COOPERATE WITH THE INEVITABLE.

The Danger of Negative Emotions

People full of Negative Emotions easily infect those who come in contact with them (through daily activities, conversations, speeches, presentations, mass media, etc). The people who become infected with negative emotions accept a certain way of feeling which is damaging to their Consciousness and to their spiritual development. Negative Emotions empower the Ego and take us away from the profound peace of a tranquil heart. When a negative emotion shakes us, it is worthwhile for us to **recognize what kind of psychological aggregate has produced it** and then (after we have observed the aggregate in action) submit it to the technique of meditation in order to disintegrate it.

What is most serious about all of this is that Negative Emotions turn us into liars. The lie produces a mistaken connection with our own Divinity, and this energy produces an intentional dislocation or disconnection of the mind. Negative Emotions make us into slanderers and liars, both consciously and unconsciously. In either case, it is a negative connection of the mind with the Superior Centers of the Being, which produces a dislocation between them. One must tell the truth, at any cost; to say the truth and only the truth.

Understanding and Overcoming Negative Emotions

Gnostic Psychology uses the term 'Negative Emotions' for all the expressions of the "I's" located in the inferior emotional center and controlling it, such as: fear, jealousy, self-pity, self-consideration, anger, boredom, untrustworthiness in oneself and in others, etc. We usually accept negative emotions as something completely 'natural' and 'necessary' and people also frequently call it 'sincerity'. Of course, these emotions are unnecessary and unnatural, and have nothing to do with sincerity; they are simply a sign of weakness, a sign of the egoic condition and the inability to learn **how to receive the unpleasant manifestations of our fellow man with pleasure**. To be sincere with ourselves would be to recognize that we have "I's" controlling the emotional center, and not allow those "I's" to express themselves through us.

The Need to Sacrifice in Order to Progress

Sacrifice is necessary because without sacrifice nothing can be attained, but if there is anything in the world that people do not understand it is the idea of sacrifice. They think they have to sacrifice something that they have. In actual fact we have to sacrifice only what we imagine we have and that in reality we do not have. **We must sacrifice our fantasies.** But this is very difficult for us. It is much easier to sacrifice real, tangible things.

Another thing that people must sacrifice is *their suffering*, which is also very difficult to sacrifice. A person will renounce any pleasures you like, but they will not give up their suffering. We are made in such a way that we are never so much attached to anything as much as we are to our own suffering and it is necessary for us to be free from this suffering. If we are not free from suffering, if we have not sacrificed our suffering, we cannot make progress in this work...

What is Sacrificing Suffering?

In order to understand what 'Sacrificing Suffering' is, we must distinguish between Conscious Suffering vs. Mechanical Suffering. What is mechanical suffering? It is something so intricate, so apparently contradictory, so subtle, and so historically long-standing that it is basically a psychological habit of ours which we do not observe. Everyone suffers *mechanically*. We do not see its continual, inner, private, petrifying action, like that steady drip of calcium-charged water that builds up those strange pillars between floor and roof in deep caves. Gnostic Psychology teaches that mechanical suffering is the only thing we have to offer as sacrifice. In order to change, one must sacrifice something. Understand this clearly and ask yourself the following question: "Can I possibly change if I do not give something up?" This simply means that <u>you cannot change if you wish to continue as the same person. To change is to become different.</u>

Now notice carefully what we have to give up. According to Gnostic Psychology one of the greatest obstacles to our internal development is **being identified with Mechanical Suffering**. We must sacrifice our mechanical suffering because it leads nowhere. We cannot *awaken* if we retain this dreadful weight of our mechanical suffering, and continue to nourish it, by a continual process of justifying it. On the other hand, Conscious Suffering leads to inner development. In one of the Gnostic Books called the Acts of John, there is a passage (section 96) which says: "If you had known how to suffer, you would have been able not to suffer. Learn then to suffer, and you will be able not to suffer."

Conscious or Voluntary Suffering

The Key to understanding what Conscious or Voluntary Suffering is, is to understand our present condition and the way to get out of it. Right now we are a Human Organism which has its centers controlled by "I's" or egos. They make us think, feel and act in almost any way they choose. But we consider ourselves to be those "I's" and this is the ultimate problem. In order for us to fight against them, to take back control of our Human Organism, we have to stop doing what the egos or "I's" push us to do. And this is where the Struggle, the Battle, begins (the Fight against Ourselves).

When we start to confront ourselves and our habits, we discover that we are comfortable with this or that "I", it makes sense to us. Making efforts to go against an "I" is a bit painful. Why? Because it is hard to be honest with ourselves as we presently are... Gurdjieff said: "Sincerity is the key to self-knowledge and to be sincere with oneself brings great suffering" and "Sleep is very comfortable, but waking is very bitter." The truth is that our false personality likes being proud, likes being greedy, likes being lustful, likes being lazy, etc. So to go against all of this seems absurd, but it is the only way... To Consciously Suffer is to intentionally do something that goes against what our ego wants, simply for the purpose of confronting the "I's" and not being mechanical. In those moments when we are facing our old enemy, a deep fear, an activity we despise, etc., we 'taste' the bitterness of the ego, we feel the ego fighting in us, trying to control us (and make us think, feel or act in its way), while we strive to remain conscious of ourselves and our goal. This is how Conscious Suffering will give us internal development.