

Education in the New Age

Aim and Methods



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The article consists of two parts: aim and method. In the first part, I introduce the aim, the three fundamentals, and the seven underlying determinants of education. The second part is about ways of acquiring knowledge. It deals with Yoga, the Double working of the mind (Occult meditation), and Service (Occult creation).

Aim

The aim of education is twofold. Firstly, there is the connection between the soul and the personality, or the building of a bridge of consciousness between the soul and the personality. This bridge-building can be called living in the here and now. Secondly, there is working as a soul. Working as a soul continues the first part and involves consciously participating in the future.

The Three Fundamentals of Education

Three fundamentals are introduced as the basis of education. They are Yoga, the Double working of the mind (Occult meditation), and Service (Occult creation).

Yoga. We can call Yoga the bridge-building of the mind. The goal is to build a bridge of consciousness in the student's mind. When the building of the bridge is complete, there is no longer anything to hinder the constant flow of consciousness or awareness from the higher spiritual levels to the student's brain. In this way, the pupil becomes increasingly aware of God's aim and purpose.

The Double working of the mind (Occult meditation). Occult meditation is more connected to sciences than religion. It is, in a way, a part of Yoga and has three functions. First, to create sensitivity to influences from higher realms. Second, to produce a constant stream of consciousness or awareness. Third, to train the student in the basics of Service (Occult creation, by creating images or visual sequences of images in his mind.

Service (Occult creation) constitutes a natural extension of Yoga and the Double working of the mind. As the bridge-building between personality and soul progresses and understanding God's plan flows into the student's mind, his Service capacity grows. A unifying soul and personality initiates a specific sequence of events or functions involving the student on the physical plane. These functions are always in conformity with the aim and purpose of God and are known by the term Service.

The Seven underlying determinants

The main objective of the education of the New Age should be the pupil's training to respond to the soul's life. But, on the other hand, the teaching depends on the personality type. Therefore, all education must aim to increase soul awareness and work soul determinants in the individual's life.

In this section, I examine the elements the soul employs on the physical plane and expresses through its personality. There are seven in all: three aspects and four attributes. They correspond to the characteristics of the seven rays. The aspects are *Will or Purpose*, *Love/Wisdom*, and *Active Intelligence* (rays 1, 2, and 3). The attributes are *Harmony Produced Through Conflict*, *Concrete Knowledge*, *Devotion*, and *Order* (rays 4, 5, 6, and 7).

The aspect of Will or purpose (Ray 1). The individual must develop this aspect to the point where his personality expresses his spiritual purpose. All his actions need to be directed toward his inner reality. All teaching in this aspect must guide the pupil's will in the right direction. Points to be emphasized are The will toward the good, The will towards the beautiful, and The will to serve.

The will towards the good means seeing how creation forms a whole and understanding that all life is part of a larger living whole. When this awareness is attained, the individual develops understanding and sympathy with his fellow men regarding their difficulties in their development path. This altered attitude's natural consequences are inoffensiveness, goodwill, and correct conduct in dealings with other people.

In one way or another, the will toward the beautiful results from the will toward the good. The individual experiences the beauty of creation in the correct context and as a single entity, as a physical expression of the vital force of we are all part. He realizes that all forms are life's attempts to express nature and creative powers, restricted in time and space. One form gives place to another, yet life remains. The will toward the beautiful makes life strive for greater perfection and beauty in its expression.

The will to the good and the will to the beautiful are the foundation of the will to serve. When the individual realizes his position and duties within the whole, his creative powers, and how to apply them, the will to serve awakens in earnest. The pupil's life's driving force is his duty towards the life he is part of and the tasks he is assigned. In other words, the pupil becomes part of the plan he has been entrusted with.

The aspect of Love/wisdom (Ray 2). Love leads us into the consciousness of the whole. The first step in teaching about this aspect is the cultivation of love of self (self-consciousness), followed by the love of those around us (group-consciousness) and, eventually, love of the whole (God-consciousness). The pupil is taught that self-consciousness is only part of a larger consciousness. This process is love, which leads to wisdom. Self-consciousness is the awareness of man as an individual, which is isolating and harmful. Love is the path of consciousness from isolation to freedom, from embracing the self to embracing the whole.

When the pupil becomes one with his soul group, his consciousness has attained unity with the group consciousness. He then takes part consciously in the group's work. This work is known as service, and wisdom (love in action) is employed in carrying it out. Service is a method used to expand consciousness.

The aspect of Active intelligence (Ray 3). This aspect concerns developing the spiritually aware individual's creative powers, which come about through the correct use of the mind. The soul's creation method consists of the following steps: 1) The soul creates the

physical body. 2) The soul, bounded by its physical body, creates in time and space following its aspirations. In this way, physical reality is brought into existence and, with it, our culture. 3) Using its lower, concrete mind as a tool, the soul creates a world of symbols, filling our lives with interest, concepts, ideas, and beauty. It expresses these things in language, spoken and written, and in the form of art.

All teaching concerning this aspect deals with the nature of ideas and how they originate and are expressed. It should also deal with understanding the laws governing all creative activity.

The attribute of Harmony produced through conflict (Ray 4). This attribute leads to the liberation of man and the expression of his creative powers. This attribute is concealed in every form and is the fundamental force that causes the individual's restlessness and discontent. It makes him strive onward and develop until he finally unifies his soul. The awareness of conformity and beauty leads the individual along the road of development and back to his origin.

In teaching, special attention must be given to the force which causes restlessness and discontent. It must then be interpreted so that the pupil recognizes the cause and can deal with it sensibly.

The attribute of Concrete knowledge (Ray 5). This attribute enables man to define his concepts and generate mental images to materialize his plans and transform his ideas into reality. He carries out this work with the aid of his lower concrete mind. The pupil must be trained in the correct use of the mind. He must be brought to a fuller understanding of the underlying purpose of being and be led to work with wisdom in creative activity.

Teaching concerning this attribute should be directed at training the pupil's ability to handle ideas and receptivity to God's plan. To build in conformity with his soul's will and materialize that part of the plan that is his contribution to the whole.

The attribute of Devotion (Ray 6). This attribute is the product of discontent, acting with the possibility of choice. Depending on the degree of a man's dissatisfaction and ability to see things in the correct light, he passes through many periods of temporary satisfaction. In each of these, he demonstrates devotion to a desire, a person, an idea, or a plan until he finally adapts himself to that ideal, which is the highest possible one for him. This ideal is first and foremost the soul, then the universal soul or God.

Teaching and training about this attribute consist of guiding the pupil from stage to stage, from one goal to another, and finally into the embrace of his soul.

The attribute of Order (Ray 7). This attribute involves a particular order, thus bringing the individual to work under the control of a concentrated will, towards a specific goal, and under certain habitual forms. Under the influence of this attribute, the individual learns to act in a particular way in his service.

Teaching and training concerning this attribute must allow the pupil to cultivate his will, intellect, decisiveness, and the technique of functioning as a soul. In this way, the foundation is laid to develop the pupil's spiritual powers and increasingly express these powers.

Method

The method chapter is divided into three sections. The first section deals with the teaching of Yoga. The second section covers teaching the Double working of the mind (Occult meditation). The third section deals with Service (Occult creation).

Yoga

This section presents four basic assertions on which the method of Yoga is based. These concern not only the nature of knowledge; they also contain a particular method for the pupil's training. They are as follows: The soul as the creator. Dharma the duty of the individual. The emotional body and its purification. The mental body and work with thoughts.

The soul as the creator: This involves a description of the individual and the way he is constituted. Then follows a description of the role of each of his constituent parts and their interaction. The main emphasis is the interaction between the personality and its creator, the soul. In this way, we achieve, to some extent, the first part of the aim stated. Mutual trust is an essential factor in the interaction of soul and personality, and we pay attention to this.

Dharma, the duty of man: Dharma is the theory of duty in life. It has been best expressed: "Do your duty without fear of the consequences." Each person's dharma is his duty in one particular incarnation. It constitutes his path, laid out before he is born on earth. It cannot be changed after he is born, and the personality's free will does not affect it during that particular incarnation. The personality is the soul's tool during each incarnation, and the soul forms it according to the nature and purpose of each embodiment. The personality consists of three layers or bodies: The mental body, the emotional body, and the dense physical body, which is also, in part, an etheric body.

The emotional body and its purification: The emotional body is the dwelling place of our aspirations and desires. The aim is to train and purify it so that it finally reflects only feelings of love. The steps in the purification process are inoffensiveness, goodwill, and love. Man has free will on the emotional plane. If it is misused, it creates karma, while if it is used correctly, it can liberate the soul from the shackles of cause and effect. The training and purification of the emotional body lie in understanding the composition and flow of the emotions and guiding them in the right direction.

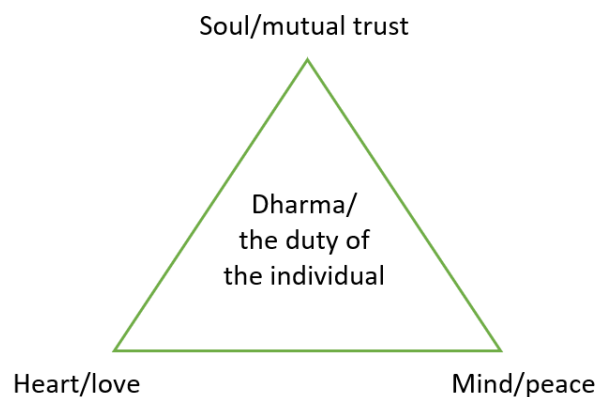
The mental body and thoughts: The mental body (the lower, concrete mind) is the dwelling place of our thoughts. As with the emotional body, the aim is to train it and develop it until it

finally reflects the goal and purpose of the soul. The man also has free will on the mental plane. This aims to gain control of our thoughts to liberate us from the shackles of karma. Here, too, we must understand the origins and the progression of the contents of our minds and then guide our thoughts in the right direction.

Double working of the mind (Occult meditation)

As stated earlier, the Double working of the mind is a part of yoga. Therefore, the main emphasis is on linking the soul and the personality. At the same time, the Double working of the mind is a direct connection with Service in that through meditation, we train the mind and the mental function, which is the fundamental basis of Service. Therefore, there are two sides to the essential elements of all Occult meditation. Firstly, they involve linking the soul and the personality; secondly, they require forming thought forms of the plan, which the soul reveals.

The linking of the soul and the personality: I introduced four basic assertions in the Yoga section. These assertions are the basis of the link between the soul and the personality. The method of the double working of the mind consists, amongst other things, of combining these four basic assertions in a particular meditative process in a graphic form. The combination is visualized as a triangle. The apex is the soul, the creator of the personality, symbolizing the mutual trust that must be cultivated between the soul and the personality. In the center of the triangle is the individual's dharma or duty, which must be carried out during this particular incarnation. In the left-hand corner is the heart, symbolizing the emotional body when love is the aim. In the right-hand corner is the mind, representing the lower mental body and symbolizing the peace the mind needs to create.



This graphic form must be visualized mentally as the basis for linking the personality and the soul.

The formation of thought forms and the Double working of the mind: The Double working occurs when invocations and mantras are used in meditation together with thought forms or graphic sequences of events. An example of this double working of the mind is found in *The Disciple's Invocation*. In this, the graphic form above is continuously kept in mind while the following text is repeated:

The Disciple's Invocation

My pathway is laid out before me.
I keep peace in my mind and love in my heart;
a soul am I, soaring on wings to the heights.

The Double working of the mind is the perfect method of Occult meditation. When the pupil has become aware of his plan as part of the whole plan for the evolution of humanity, he is prepared to participate in Occult creation and the perfect service of humankind.

Service (Occult creation)

As mentioned above, Service is a natural extension of Yoga and the Double working of the mind. The introduction to Service is intended for all pupils prepared to work at service tasks under God's plan. The elements to be treated, which are fundamental for Service, are The creative process. Mathematics - number systems. Color theory - laws of color mixture. Music - basic theory. The connection between tones, colors of light, and numbers. Breathing techniques. The act of Occult creation - responsibility and consequences.

The creative process: The creative process is a method of Service. This part of the course introduces all aspects of the creative process. It refers to the preparation, implementation, and consequences of Occult creation.

Mathematics - number systems: This element deals specifically with the base seven number system but also discusses other number systems and their mutual relationship.

Color theory - laws of color mixture: The emphasis here is on the basic theory of color mixture regarding additive and subtractive color mixtures and the distinction between them.

Music - basic theory: The emphasis here is on the basics of musical theory, with exercises in the structure of the scale.

The connection between tones, colors of light, and numbers: The emphasis is on exercises in connecting numbers and colors, numbers and tones, and tones and colors.

Breathing techniques: The emphasis here is on introducing and practicing correct breathing in Occult creation.

The act of Occult creation - responsibility and consequences: This element emphasizes practicing Occult creation. All aspects of the creative process are practiced and discussed.