At the close of our last lecture, we were dealing with a very important part of the discipline with respect to the yoga. This falls in the general field of the fourth moral rule laid down by the Buddha, namely, that of non-concupiscence. This involves more than the problem of sex, and we shall briefly consider some of its other ramifications.

There are altogether discernible five fundamental lusts. These are lusts connected with drinking, with eating, with sex, with which we have at present been concerned, with the gambling lust, and the—who might call the great Roman lust, namely, the fascination with death and the witnessing of suffering—the material and activities that made up the, what is known as the Roman games. All of these must be extirpated from the consciousness of the candidate, not only for Jnana yoga, but for any yoga whatsoever. They are the dark shadow that stands over so much of our life here. And these lead to the consequences that are most obnoxious of any connected with mankind. In general the animals are relatively free of these extremes, but man can through his lusts actually sink lower than the animals. The tragic fact is that one sees in the world today, not only a tolerance for these negative features, but even an active cultivation of them, as for instance in the writings of Abbie Hoffman, who actually uses obscene language and encourages its use. The essence of a lust is an extreme enslavement by the object in one form or another. Man who is in reality a royal being, a part of the divine, or a Buddha unveiled—not yet unveiled, whose royal and in command potentially, permits himself to become the subject and victim of essentially nasty qualities. One who has not brought these weaknesses into control is totally unready for the way. This is only the primary task, but essentially the first task on the way—purification of the psyche, cleansing it of the quality of a fallen kama or desire principle. Moderation in these things may be proper, one must eat and drink to live; and if the race is to continue, there must be on the part of at least the larger portion of humanity, certain primary sexual activity; and the quality which becomes a lust in connection with gambling, in its better manifestation is the daring that ventures into undiscovered country, an activity that is highly desirable, and, in fact, if there was not the capacity for this daring the venture of yoga would never have been undertaken. But concerning that most obnoxious of all lusts, namely, the satisfactions that are derived from killing or the witnessing of suffering, that has no valid place whatsoever. It may be at times necessary to kill; in fact, if man is to eat, and to live, there is involved, unavoidably, a certain killing of vegetable and even of animal life, but the sin arises in connection with finding enjoyment in this process. He who hunts for pleasure is a sinner, for he kills unnecessarily. There is a defense for him who kills for necessary food, as in the case of the Eskimos, but there is no moral justification whatsoever for him who kills either as a fisherman or a hunter simply for the pleasure of it. These are qualities that must be completely extirpated on the part of him who would be a yogin.
In connection with the use of obscene language and of fantasizing in sexual dimensions, one further point should be made, that the candidate for yoga should isolate himself from any companions who engage in the use of such images in their speech. Ultimately when he has arrived, and may have taken the way which I have called the yoga of the Great Renunciation and become one of the host of redeemers, it may be for him necessary to enter into the dark chambers where so much of mankind dwells psychically in order to effect or facilitate a purification, but for the sadhaka who has not yet arrived at a position of secure purification, there should be a careful avoidance of all association with those places where there is an engagement in foul speech or the presentation of ignoble photography or art. Indeed, he should avoid all engagement with art that appeals to the middle and lower vital. He should be concerned only with that art which touches the interest of the higher vital and the mental.

The necessity for the sadhaka to obey the first three moral rules laid down by the Buddha is quite obvious. He cannot be a killer, a liar, or a thief. This is so obvious that I think no commentary is necessary. But now we have to consider the fifth rule, one that is perhaps less understood than the other four. It is the rule of non-intoxication. The psychical state of intoxication can be produced by many agents or even practices. Intoxication in the familiar sense is a condition produced by an excessive use of alcohol, but not only by this. There are the serious intoxications produced by numerous drugs, particularly the psychedelic and narcotic drugs. There has been in our time an extensive development in the use of such drugs, not for medicinal reasons under the direction of a physician, but because of psychical effects induced by them. This is totally taboo. To be sure, certain states can be induced, but these states are inferior and affect a bondage for him who indulges in them. The purification of the sadhaka requires the complete eradication of all intoxication whatsoever. Even though they seem like shortcuts or easy ways to attain states of consciousness that have a certain external analogy to authentic mystical states, yet they are not the authentic mystical states, they are essentially counterfeits, and they are not yet earned. To enter into such states by such shortcut means involves the very grave danger of becoming locked into an intermediate psychic zone from which escape may prove to be extremely difficult. All intoxication must be avoided even the intoxication of a delight. Even the lofty delights may not properly be regarded as the objective of the yoga. The true objective of the yoga is the attainment of oneness with truth, of oneness with transcendental wisdom. The attainment of this oneness, to be sure, brings an inconceivable richness of delight, but to make the delight the objective is a manifestation of a subtle and even spiritual selfishness. One properly seeks the truth, and then if delight comes with it happily and gratefully welcomes it, but does not selfishly abandon himself to it. In fact, if he is the true yogin, he will seek to bring something of the delight to other portions of humanity and experience it himself rather as it passes by him or through him, not as an end in which he would immerse himself purely selfishly. This is one of the more subtle demands of the yoga and one of the more subtle hazards of the way. But be warned here, if thou hast been caught by intoxicants of any sort, strive, then, to purify yourself from their influence. Strive toward the correction of the damage they have produced in thy nature. Only then are you ready to undertake in earnest the path of the true yogin.
Somewhat akin to the temptation for indulgence in the lower anandas, is the fascination with the lower powers. The first sentence in *The Voice of the Silence* runs this way:

These instructions are for those ignorant of the dangers of the lower IDDHI.

And a footnote on that sentence is as follows:

The Pali word Iddhi is the synonym of the Sanskrit Siddhis, or psychic faculties, the abnormal powers in man. These [There] are [of] two kinds of Siddhis. One group which embraces the lower, coarse, psychic and mental energies; the other is one which exacts the highest training of Spiritual powers.¹

It is the latter that is to be sought, and an intriguery with the lower powers can act as a fundamental barrier to the attainment of the higher powers. The true goal of Jnana yoga is liberation, and the sadhaka is repeatedly warned not to be fascinated by any of these lower powers, but to march on without any diversion in his purpose until he has attained effectively the great liberation. Having then anchored himself upon that high peak, he may reach down and make use of these lower powers without danger to himself provided he does not employ them in a purely selfish way, but uses them for the service of those others who may have need in one form or another.

At this point it seems appropriate to say a word concerning a form of yoga known as Tantra. It has been said that at this time there are certain teachers from India who are propagating in the West a form of Tantra that has become quite popular. There are certain considerations here that should be brought to the attention of the sadhaka. First, what is Tantra? The Tantrics maintain that Tantra is a form of yoga that is appropriate to Kali Yuga, namely, the age of iron, and indeed the age through which we are now passing according to ancient teachings. This form of yoga makes use of both physical and psychological practices designed to raise a power, a root power, said to be located in the muladhara at the base of the spine. This power is known as kundalini. The process in the yoga involves a more or less complex technique involving posture, asana, pranayama, mantra, meditation, and so forth, designed to raise the kundalini, as it is called, up the sushumna, ultimately to reach the sahasrara at the top of the head at which stage the sadhaka is said to be liberated.

As the kundalini is raised, there are certain critical points that are potential stopping places and which may be activated. The first of these is known as svadisthana, in a position intermediate between the solar plexus and the base of the spine, and all of the instructions warn one not to arouse to activity this chakra; nonetheless, the rising of the kundalini can, in spite of one, arouse to activity this chakra if one is not very careful. The next station on the way is manipura, corresponding roughly to the solar plexus, or what Aurobindo calls the middle vital. The next station is anahata, or the heart center, and the first station which should ever be awakened. The other two that we

have passed should be kept closed. Above that is a center correlated with the throat known as visuddha. From here one may rise to ajna, corresponding to what has been called the third eye, or a point roughly located back of a point between the eyebrows. Very often the techniques used involved a focusing of the eyes upward and crossways toward this point. From there the final ascent is to the sahasrara, or the seven-petaled lotus on the top of the head. There are appropriate mantra, and symbols, and so forth connected with each of these stations. Now, it is entirely possible, without any radical purification of motivation and of the psyche, by the use of these techniques to arouse powers of an inferior sort, not necessarily evil, but with a great chance of becoming evil. The sadhaka going this way should be under the immediate supervision of a proficient guru in this particular kind of yoga. It involves danger for the reason that it can arouse the lower Iddhi, and the lower anandas, so that one without having reached to any spiritual altitude at all can be—know certain euphorias of an inferior sort and exercise certain Iddhis also of an inferior sort. There’s danger in this. There’s temptation. You can take a person and give him these facilities, and though he has not purified his egoism, though he has not purified his psyche, he can actually have experiences that are intriguing and powers that are in a small way impressive.

I list among these powers are some things that are told; these I do not know from experience: that a person can, for instance, effect a reverse peristalsis and can thus, sitting in water, take water in through the posterior orifice of the alimentary canal, pump it up through the system, and have it come out the mouth. Impressive physiological no doubt, and no doubt too, it would be very interesting to a doctor, but there’s nothing in it in the least spiritual or intellectual about that. One that is also maintained, it is possible to stop the heartbeat in one part of the body while it continues in the rest, or even to stop it entirely while throwing oneself into a catatonic trance. Again, something that is very interesting physiologically, but nothing in it that is at all of higher mental value and much less of spiritual value. It is also said, though for this I cannot vouch anything from my own experience, that it is possible with the appropriate effort to rise into the air and to transport oneself through the air or to walk upon water. But there is nothing of higher mental value in this; much less, there is nothing of any spiritual value. Rama Tirtha, hearing of a man who had spent forty years working on the problem of walking on water was said to have been finally successful. And what did Rama Tirtha have to say about this? Well, that after forty years of effort he could save a ferry fare when crossing the river and that was all. There was nothing of higher mental value or of spiritual value in all this, nothing that was worth forty years of effort. But these things are intriguing to the youthful ones on the way, and they may be sidetracked by these rather startling things from the standpoint of our physics; but, as we are now dealing with a form of yoga which is not well guarded from going the dark way—mind you it is not necessarily oriented to the dark way, but it is not well guarded—and since the sadhaka without a rigorous purification of motive, without a rigorous purification of his thoughts, can actually open these inferior doors by mere technique, he’s vulnerable, extremely vulnerable, to the temptations that would lead him the dark way and one that could become an object of capture by the brothers of the shadow. So I warn all students who come under my influence at all, beware of all Tantric practices.

This I will say, if some teacher comes and claims to teach yoga, and he accepts a price, not only accepts but asks a price and then accepts it, and gives an instruction in a
technique and then departs from his sadhakas leaving them to himself, beware of him. Anyone who goes the way of Tantra requires the immediate and continuous attention of the proficient guru in this line, and if the teacher claims to be a truly spiritual teacher he will neither ask nor accept material payment for his spiritual services. He may accept compensation for material costs, since that is really a payment for a material service, but for the spiritual service, he will neither ask nor accept payment. That is a fundamental test. If, therefore, one claims to be a spiritual teacher and asks a price and accepts it, and then in addition, after giving some technique, departs from the immediate supervision of his chelas, I would say beware of him.

Correction: inadvertently, I spoke of the sahasrara as the seven-petaled lotus. It should be thousand-petaled lotus.

The best authority in the English language that we have on the subject of Tantra is Sir John Woodroffe, who wrote very largely under the nom de plume of Arthur Avalon. We have of his works, something like four volumes. Among them, The Serpent Power, The Principles of Tantra in two volumes, The Tantra of the Great Liberation, or Mahanirvana Tantra, Hymns to the Goddess. There is further the Tantra of Tibet, of which certain portion is provided to us through the volumes edited by Evans-Wentz, in particular the Tibetan Yoga and Secret Doctrines, which deals with the highly Tantric school of the Ningmapas, or Red Caps, or sometimes called the Dugpas, along with the semi-Tantric school of the Kargyutpas, with respect to which the names of Marpa and Milarepa are the most prominent, and finally, the radically non-Tantric Tibetan school known as the Gelugpas, or Yellow Caps, founded originally by Tsong-Kha-pa, who is said to have been a tulku incarnation of the Great Buddha himself.

A principle that is fundamental to the Tantra is the leading of the sadhaka by Shakti to her lord who abides in the sahasrara, or the thousand-petaled lotus. In this distinction that occurs so often in Oriental yogic philosophy, namely, of the divine mother and the principle of Purusha, or Shiva, which may be likened to the divine father, we have a symbolism which is taken from a biological base. I prefer a more abstract and philosophical statement. Think of Shakti as the activistic principle, as the principle governing becoming, and of Purusha or Shiva as the root principle which is quiescent and permanent, unchanging. Now, if the orientation of the individual is very strong to the activistic principle, then the yoga for him may tend to be that of the Tantra or something similar. On the other hand, if his orientation is more to the root principle that is permanent or invariant, he may very well be most strongly oriented to the non-Tantric types of yoga of which the yoga of knowledge, in the spirit of Sri Shankaracharya is the outstanding representation.

The Tantric yoga makes a very considerable use of the powers of the organism; but bear in mind, it is not the powers of the gross body, but rather those of the subtle body where there is a system analogous to that of the nerves which are called the nadis. The three principle ones being sushumna, ida, and pingala. These are not the same as our nerves, and the centers are not correctly identified with any gross physiological ganglia or knots, but rather with certain corresponding nerve places in terms of the nadis. This gets to be—this becomes extremely technical.
If anyone thinks that the real Tantra is any less morally exacting than that outline which I have already given in connection with the yoga of knowledge, please listen to these words quoted from the “Introduction” to The Serpent Power:

It is obvious that before the pure blissful state of the Atma can be attained, the Jiva [that is the pilgrim] must first live that ordered life which is its proper expression on this plane.

To use theological language, only those who follow Dharma can go to its Lord. The disorder of an immoral life is not a foundation on which such a Yoga can be based. I do not use the term “immorality” in the absurdly limited meaning which ordinary English parlance gives it, but as the infringement of all forms of moral law. All such infringements are founded on selfishness. As the object of Yoga is the [destruction] surpassing of the limited self even in its more ordered manifestation, its doctrines, clearly presuppose the absence of a state [disordered] governed by the selfishness which is the grossest obstacle to its attainment. The aim of Yoga is the achievement of complete detachment from the finite world and realization of its essence. In a life governed by Dharma, there is that natural attachment to worldly objects and sense of separateness even in acts of merit which must exist until [the destruction] by the absorption of Manas, the Unmani or mindless state is attained. Where, however, there is unrighteousness (Adharma), attachment (Raga) exists in its worst and most injurious form, and the sense of separateness (Dvaitabhava) which Yoga seeks to overcome is predominately present in sin. The body is poisoned by the secretion of passions, poisons, and vitality or Prana is lessened and injured. The mind under the influence of anger, lust, malice, and other passions, is first distracted, and then, on the principle what a man thinks that he “becomes,” is centered on, and is permanently moulded into and becomes, the expression of Adharma (unrighteousness) itself. In such a case the Jiva is not merely bound to the world by the Maya which affects both him and the virtuous Sakama-Sadhaka, but suffers Hell (Naraka), and “goes down” in the scale of Being.  

I, myself, am not entirely without some experience in the Tantric yoga. In 1928, I along with eleven others was appointed by an East Indian known as Yogi Hari Rama, Disciples of the Absolute, and we were assigned to the task of continuing a work which he had started which consisted primarily in the teaching of certain techniques which he called keys. There was a certain identification or adjustment to Western thinking in one of the principle keys which ran this way: twenty parts of the body, attention with the will, low/medium/high—vibrate. It was explained that this low, medium, high was an adaptation to our practice in driving automobiles. First, you put them—the lever into low, then into intermediate, and finally into high. This was adaptation of an Indian way of thinking to the American psyche. But, I think we in the West are more sophisticated than

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2 Arthur Avalon, The Serpent Power (Madras: Ganesh & Co., 1964), 187-188. There is some difference between what Wolf is reading and what is found in the book.
that in our depth psychology and in our metaphysical philosophy, and I have always felt that this was something of an undervaluation of our intelligence. Other keys or techniques made use of certain mantramic sounds of a Sanskrit or other Oriental source. In general, a warning was given not to use these to any great extent, but only with great restraint. I have given these keys in my experience in the past and have given this warning, but one of the students ignored the warning completely, used excessively one of the keys, and called down upon himself a Fire, which he was totally unable to control. In the end, he had to be entered into a psychiatric institution. This awakened in me a realization that this was dangerous stuff and that a mere verbal warning is no adequate protection of the sadhaka at all. He must be first trained in the seriousness of violating instructions, and that does not exist naturally in our rather superficial and casual Western consciousness in these matters. So, when I say that Tantra is dangerous, I speak from experience. The student needs supervision if he’s going to go this way—immediate, personal supervision. And, adaptation to the Western psyche involves a good deal more than simply using references to our driving practices.

Now a word further: for those who feel somewhat called this way, I would recommend the guidance of a man whom I highly respect, namely, Sri Aurobindo. He has stated that his yogic position is in an intermediate zone between the Vedanta and the Tantra—that he has worked out an adaptation of the two. By Vedanta is meant the orientation directly to the Purusha and by the Tantra is meant orientation directly to Shakti, or the divine mother. He says in a letter that his position leans slightly in favor of the Vedanta. He has given an elaborate transformation of yogic technique in his Synthesis of Yoga, and has much of value in it which could be recommended, and serves very considerably in avoiding the pitfalls of the pure Tantra. With this word, I will finish with this particular subject.

Our next consideration in connection with the yoga of knowledge is: who is called to this discipline. The answer of Shankara is to be found in his Crest-Jewel of Discrimination, or the Viveka-Chudamani. There he says, only the male Brahmin. This brings up the question of why has there been the institution of caste in the social organization of India from very ancient days and what is its significance. We have as a result of European contact with India derived a rather unfavorable interpretation of it, for in all of these later days, the institution has been in a fallen state. The institution was founded, it is said, in the laws of Manu, way back; and in those days, there were only four castes and not the many subdivisions that came into existence latterly. Furthermore, caste was not rigidly fixed; it was possible for one of a lower caste to rise by his effort and merit from that lower state to a higher one, and it was also possible for one born into a higher state to drop to a lower state because of important failures. When it became rigidly fixed, as in later days, caste was a matter of birth simply and was developed into many side ramifications that were foreign to the original principle.

Now, caste is based upon the principle that not all human beings are equal in their forms of development. There is variation both in the vertical sense and in the horizontal sense. In other words, that some stand at a higher level of evolution than others, and, again, some have developed powers in different directions from others, even though standing upon a comparable level of evolution, so that they are different and not equal. I think we can see how this must be so. First of all, we reject the thesis of John Locke that
all men are born equal simply for the reason that their minds were blank tablets and that all differences were a result simply of experience. The development of Immanuel Kant and the development of depth psychology have shown quite conclusively that this is not the case, that we are in fact born with tendencies that vary from individual to individual, and, indeed, it is possible to classify humanity into a number of different groups. This has been done by Dr. Carl G. Jung in his *Psychological Types* and the work has been based simply upon the massive factuality which grew out of his experience. Type psychology is the modern substitute for the ancient institution of caste. It implies the principle that men are innately different and do form into certain distinct groups.

Now, in the ancient system of caste, there were at the bottom those who were neither strong in intelligence, rather oriented to their gross animal bodies, who were classed therefore as *Sudras*—in general, the ordinary workers or servants who are not capable of anything more; secondly, the *Vaisyas*, who made up the large group of the industrial people, the merchant class, those who functioned, say, as the equivalent of engineers, the—in a word, those that ran the economic and technological society such as it was; above them, the ruling class consisting of the civilian rulers who were usually *rajas* and of the soldiers; and finally of the *Brahmins* who were said to represent the head of *Brahma*, and their function in life was that of the priest and of what we would call the scholar, the scientist, and the philosopher.

If we take in contrast to this the organization given us by Dr. Jung we find that there is not an obvious parallelism, but we may uncover some correspondences. First of all, he distinguishes the two attitudes of introversion and extraversion, and this is combined with four functions of consciousness, namely, the rational functions consisting of thinking and feeling, and the irrational functions consisting of sensation and intuition. Here a note needs to be made. The word ‘irrational’ has two senses: one is the sense of being against reason; the other is that it is not in the province of reason. It is in this latter sense that we speak of irrational functions. And to illustrate this let us take a simple sensation such as the sensation which leads us to say, that is a tree. There we do not have a process of reasoning that leads to a conclusion; we have rather a direct presentment which is what we call a sensation or a sense perception. There is nothing of the principle of *ratio*, which is the base of reasoning, involved in it. On the other hand, there’s nothing in it that is against reasoning. That perhaps will clear up what might otherwise be a difficulty.

Now, human beings as they come are naturally oriented in different ways. There are persons in whom the attitude of introversion is normal and the position that they take most of the time; and, of course, with us in the West, the counterposition of extraversion is much more common and the *zeitgeist* of our time throws a great deal of discredit upon the introverted attitude, quite contrary to the valuation which exists in India. Now, among those with these attitudes there may be an accentuation of functions, particularly if they are cultivated or have evolved out of the primitive confusion that is characteristic of early man. And in this differentiation some—most develop in the power of thinking and others in the power of feeling. Secondly, there may be some whose orientation is strongest to simple sensation, and this would be quite characteristic of the gluttons among humanity.

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3 This is a reference to the *Kshatriyas*.
Again, there are those in whom the principle of intuition is strongly developed. The subject is so large that I cannot go into in an exhaustive way, but I think we can identify the extravert—the Brahmin as being more or less of the type that is introverted, oriented to either the function of thinking or intuition; if oriented primarily to the function of thinking, his auxiliary function would normally be intuition, or if he is primarily oriented to thinking—to intuition, his auxiliary function would be thinking. This would typically be true of the masculine representative of the Brahmins. In as much as feeling is most predominantly a function developed among the feminine side of humanity, it’s most likely that the feminine Brahmins would be similarly oriented to either feeling with intuition as the auxiliary function, or intuition with—or feeling with intuition as the auxiliary function. It might be that this type could be ambivert, and I suspect that is true; but in general it would not be a characteristically extraverted type and certainly not a sensational type.

Now, the tendency of one with this particular psychology is to move towards the transcendental or the metaphysical, towards that which is unseen. This would imply that there is a loosening of the dependence upon the physiological and—or the sensuous. The grip of the body upon the consciousness, or its power to influence the consciousness, would be much weaker than in the case of the lower castes. Therefore, you have a type that would be oriented to the discipline of the yoga of knowledge more readily than is the case with the other types. Now, there was a rule in the ancient Laws of Manu to the effect that only the two upper castes, namely, the Kshatriyas and the Brahmins, were permitted to engage in yogic austerities. The principle here is that the right method with the wrong man leads to wrong results, and in general yoga is not a practice recommended for the two lower castes. They were going through life experience preparing for the day when they might reach this point where they could enter into the discipline; but not yet, so long as their evolution was not above that of the lower castes. And we can see, I think, in our own system of classification that it is obvious that an individual who was strongly oriented to extravert sensation was very far indeed from being ready for any yogic training.

Another question arises, why is this a discipline for the male Brahmin and not for the female Brahmin? First of all, this rule applies only to that form of yoga which is known as Jnana yoga. It is not a rule applying to Karma yoga and Bhakti yoga. For one in whom the principle of feeling is very strong, the path of devotion is natural, and there’s no reason whatsoever why the female Brahmin should not take the path of devotion, for instance. But the discipline, the austerity that is peculiar to the yoga of knowledge is much harsher upon the female nature than it is upon the masculine, and the result is that this discipline was never recommended by the ancients for the female portion of humanity. They can come again in masculine bodies, for remember, we are dealing with a process that normally takes more than one incarnation, and the preparation before yoga may have passed through many lifetimes indeed. This is not a childish effort for a casual enjoyment of some modest ananda or a minor development of powers; and, furthermore, there are the temptations of the dark way that could become paths much more readily for those not sufficiently evolved in—to face the

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4 Wolff apparently meant to say, “. . . intuition with feeling as the auxiliary function.”
exacting discipline. So, therefore, this discipline is intended for only one portion of the whole, and that means a relatively small proportion of the whole of humanity, for in terms of numbers, the Brahmin, or the introverted thinking-intuitive type, is very much an exception to the rule among men. Bear that in mind when you think of the discipline as being severe. It is intended only for those who are capable of assuming that severity without arousing a disorganization of their psyches in the form of neuroses or even of psychoses. There’s a reason in all of these things; and remember, the right method with the wrong person leads to wrong results.

This I think will be enough for this Sunday. We will continue with this subject when we return later in October.