

Running Commentary Following Gertrude's Death

Part 32 of 53

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I thought I might make a report concerning my own psychic condition at this time, which is three years and two months since the passing of Gertrude.

Life still is difficult, but it is not as difficult as it was in the first two years. I find that my general state of feeling continues depressed, but I am becoming accustomed to a more depressed feeling outlook. There is, thus, a process of adjustment continuing. I have not had the temptation to suicide for some time now, and that is a definite improvement. I continue to maintain the environment here, as far as possible, the same as it was when Gertrude departed. When it becomes necessary to change, change is accepted, though, I admit, reluctantly. I continue as though she were still here. I speak to her many times each day as though she might hear me, though I realize that such hearing is highly improbable. Nonetheless, the question arises, to what extent does influence cross between the planes, either conscious or unconscious influence, or either a verbal or nonverbal impact? I do not know. So that on the off-chance that something may be carried through the planes, I continue to speak to her at the place where she used to fix herself up, where she had a special mirror for her own usage.

I have not been tempted to engage in the excessive use of alcohol, nor have I been tempted to use either psychedelic or narcotic drugs. I do smoke more than I have ever smoked before. I have not tended to eat more heavily; if anything, I have tended to eat less. I do not sleep as well as I used to, which causes me to fall to sleep at times during the day when I should not. This is the most difficult passage that I have had to make in this life. I would welcome the transition which men call death.

Apart from the loss to the feelings and the deprivation felt when one loses a companion that has touched his affections deeply, there is something else that bears upon the maintaining of life itself. I had been told by a medical doctor that statistical studies have shown that there is a probability that a man will die within two years when he has lost his feminine companion, but that this is not true in the case of a woman who has lost her masculine companion. This statement leads to interesting queries. It would seem as though in the case of the male that there has been a readjustment of the life support system, particularly when there has been a long, continued, and successful marriage so that the capacity to live is undercut when the loss through death occurs. Women may suffer as much as the male, but they seem to have a better grip on life. This is not material that I know from my own experience. I have been told that it is derived by a study made by the medical profession. This is a feature over and above the affectional loss itself. I acknowledge that I have found it difficult to continue to live; nonetheless, I have maintained the life, as much as possible, by the reinforcement of life through the will to live. I maintain the will to live because I received a request from one of the Brothers to live longer, that there was some need for my presence in this world to be

extended; and as I greatly honor the Brother, it is my determination to maintain the life as far as I can.

The subject of suicide deserves some serious attention. While it is true that the social attitude of the present day is negative with respect to suicide, that is not the only or even the main reason why suicide is very questionable as the means of getting out of a difficult situation. It does imply, or may imply, that one is trying to avoid the effects of *karma* and it is manifest that any such effort is doomed to bringing about less advantageous conditions. In other words, it seems to be, normally, a sin against the Good Law. However, I have some evidence that there is a condition or state in which death can be chosen without involving the guilt of suicide. I experienced this state back in February of 1979 after passing through an experience which seemed to have the character of a trial run through what has been called the death channel. I came out of the experience feeling as though I was in a state of balance between continuing to live or passing in, as I prefer to call the death process, and I had the strong impression that when one is in such a state, he may choose to accept death without involving the guilt involved in suicide. This, in other words, is a voluntary kind of dying; and hopefully one may be able to proceed through the process consciously, although both *The Tibetan Book of the Dead* and *The Mahatma Letters* speak of a death swoon as the normal experience.

Now, in my own experience with the temptation to suicide, which happened not only in the case of the passing of Gertrude, but also in the case of the passing of my first wife Sherifa, the problem was easily handled so far as rational determination was concerned. I knew perfectly good reasons why one should not take this fateful step, but there were certain occasions when the anguish was particularly severe that the organism, or the entity, was not impressed by rational considerations. It simply wished to get away from the experience of deep hurting. These were the difficult times when it was not easy to prevent oneself from taking the fateful step. However, I have succeeded in doing so and it has been some time since I felt that deep, deep pain which renders one inclined to do anything that would get away from it. Manifestly it is quite foolish, if we are to believe the reports concerning the lot of the suicides on the other side. Their lot appears to be quite dismal, perhaps lasting for the remainder of time that would make up their proper life cycle here. For myself, I have been fortunate in being able to pass these critical moments successfully, but the life is essentially dull. It is not as productive as the period of life that I had known hitherto. I do produce somewhat, but not anything that would compare with the production of former years.