

# Running Commentary Following Gertrude's Death

Part 35 of 53

Franklin Merrell-Wolff

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There is an item not so much connected with the present time but with a little earlier that I think is of importance. I was in the hospital in February for a hemorrhage problem and then about ten days later, I again entered the emergency room and got a diagnosis of pneumonia and also of congestion of the heart. This body was placed in intensive care, and I've been advised that the staff thought I would make the transition. However, I had no doubt myself that I would recover and I did so in a matter of about eight or nine days. But there was a certain phenomenon connected with this experience which I regard as serious. I found myself in a state of mental confusion. Something in me was not confused since it was able to identify the state as one of confusion. This persisted until I was released from the hospital and has been a problem with which I have worked a great deal since then. When I came out of the hospital, I had received a normal check and the normal process would have been to deposit it. But I did not know what that process was. I did not even know what brand of cigarettes I smoked, and the same was true about all of the activities that were normal to ordinary life. There was a confusion with which I wrestled, and I would succeed by will-force in gaining a degree of clarity. But the clarity seemed not to be well-founded. It had a tendency to disappear and leave me again in confusion.

I have worked with this ever since and have managed to become aware of all the activities or steps that must be taken if one is to live as a responsible individual managing his own affairs in this world. That means knowing what you should do in connection with government, with finances, with the purchase of the necessary items of life, and considering what is necessary for the car, and for existence generally. I have recovered a reasonable degree of command, but as always I seem to have to struggle with a tendency for the elements of knowledge necessary for living an ordinary life to disappear into a kind of confusion. It is as though I find it necessary to stamp on the level of the mind the moves that are necessary for life and to hold them there, as they tend to vanish. This seems to be connected with the weakness in holding the elements of recent memory in the mind, which is said to be characteristic of people of advanced age, but it seems to be somewhat aggravated. It was not that bad before the last time in the hospital and this constitutes a major problem. It is one of the reasons why I feel there should be some individual who could function as a practical nurse if I do reach a state of being incompetent in handling my own affairs—someone who in addition to being a practical nurse could also function as a secretary. I did reread the life of Dr. Carl G. Jung, and I found that many things in that book which I had found of value and had impressed upon my memory at the time of earlier readings had become lost. I recognized them when recovered them, all right, but they'd dropped out of my mind. Just what this means is not wholly clear, but it is very disturbing.

There is another factor which I note and that is that I'm not as steady on my feet as I formerly was. It is as though the sense of balance whereby one moves in a vertical position or avoids getting out of alignment so that he is vertical and so forth, it is as though all of this has been weakened. It makes me wonder whether damage has been done to the semicircular canals in the ear which is the basis of our balance. At the same time, I feel it's very important not to break a bone which might happen in case of a fall. So far I have fallen in the last three and a quarter years only once. There was some pain connected with the coccyx region at that time, but it passed in due course and seems not to have any lasting effect. Nonetheless, I see danger in continuing to live alone. I might fall, have a broken bone, and be lying on the ground, perhaps with it quite cold, and no one here to take care of this organism. This is outlining the condition of this person at this time.