

Running Commentary Following Gertrude's Death

Part 45 of 53

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Doroethy, who is here at present with the twins, felt that I should put on the tape a certain point that I spoke to her about, and I agree. I have had a considerable trouble with keeping clarity. In part it is probably due to the aging; but it became aggravated when I was last in the hospital with the condition diagnosed as pneumonia and also heart congestion—a state of confusion in which I lost knowledge of many of the processes that are essential just for the ordinary living activity. As examples: I received through the mail a normal monthly check. I knew that it should go into the bank, but I didn't know the process by which it is put in the bank. I also did not know the brand of cigarettes which I was in the habit of smoking. And the same, very largely, throughout the whole field. This is to me an extremely obnoxious condition. I have difficulty recalling the things that I know, actually, very well indeed. This, of course, is part of the recent memory problem attached to old age.

Now, while I've already spoken of this, I have not spoken of the fact of an aid that I have found very useful in this connection, and that is the actual working with numbers. This rises quite naturally in keeping the books and the checking account correct. I continue to keep books as completely as possible. In working with numbers, like adding, and subtracting, multiplying, and dividing, I do not use a calculator, but I go through the operations in the old fashioned way and have found that I'm maintaining perhaps as good accuracy as I ever have, at the present time. This is a force that I find helps to increase the clarity and to reduce the confusion. Number thinking is preeminently precision thinking, and that is the diametric opposite of the confused state of mind. It is like being in the light, as it were, instead of in the darkness, or a twilight state of existence. I find maintaining clarity is the most desirable thing in which I can currently proceed. When I am clear there is alleviation of the deep unpleasant drag of this cycle of life. It is as though it's becoming alive instead of being half dead.

And this brings another suggestion to my mind: am I actually going through part of the dying process while still alive physically, namely, the part of the process that affects the psychical side? The breakup of clarity in the psyche is like a kind of dying. It's possibly the most obnoxious aspect, as contrasted to what the physical aspect may be. From reports, I gather that the physical aspect—when it is not a matter of pain from sickness and so on, but just a passing because of age—may be very much like the withdrawal in what is known as movement or the activity of the astral body. In fact I suspect that is precisely what the first stage of dying may be, and that one proceeds with the astral body through what has been called the death channel. He is therefore, in one sense, at this stage not completely through that process, but passing through something that may happen during life. In other words, there are those who report the experience of astral travel, and they have departed from the gross physical body. The one essential

difference is that in the ordinary experience one can return to that body and enter again into it. In this case, the dying case, the body has ceased to live, the vital processes have stopped, and there's no return to it. Then beyond this there is the experience in what has been called in *The Mahatma Letters kamaloka*, or the place of desire, where one may linger if he has died prematurely, so it is said, until his normal death age would have arrived. In advanced old age, if the problem of purification is not major, then the period in this realm may be very brief—it is said even of only a few minutes—and that then he goes on to either the *Rupa* or *Arupa loka* and into a state of *Devachan*, which seems to be akin to a state of Enlightenment; and that before he does this he drops off of his total organization of seven principles, not only the gross physical body, but also the astral body, the life principle, the lower mind, and part of the higher mind, or higher *manas*; and that that which goes on consists of *Atma*, and *Buddhi*, and the better part of the higher *manas*; and it's from the better part of this higher *manas*, there is carried something of a potential memory of the life. The state here is reported as being one of unbroken bliss. I gather that it is akin to a state of Enlightenment, but not developed so highly. From this, later, there is the movement toward rebirth. This is not developed in *The Mahatma Letters*; it is to some extent developed in *The Tibetan Book of the Dead*.