

A Creative Phantasy

After several months of practice I had finally perfected the power of visualization. By this time I could clearly form with my mind's eye the complete outline and features of the ideal Being I had imagined. I had learned to project this image before me so that now it appeared quite objective and ^{it} no longer required the continued effort of ^{my} will to maintain its appearance. All that seemed to be ^{needed} required was to think toward the image and there it was. I found also that I could by a simple act of will cause the image to move or to take such postures as I might choose. While I was continuing in this effort in much the spirit that an artist forms his figures out of the more tangible plastic material, there grew within me a very real ~~xxx~~ love for my creation. I had poured into the work the best of my ideals and aspirations, it being my idea to construct a symbol in an idealized human form which would represent the best that had been dimly envisaged in my consciousness. Naturally I could not help but love that ideal, yet ^{it} it was not prepared for the intensification of feeling that had grown within me. My love grew until it became an adoration, such as devote men are accustomed to ^{only} give to subliminal and transcendent objects.

It is true that in the beginning I had created the image ~~xxxxx~~ by a conscious effort of will and imagination. ^{At} It first it was just what I meant it to be and no more, but as time went on it seemed to acquire a life of its own. Like all living things it began to assume its own character so that qualities ^{came} began to be manifest which had not previously been in my thought. As its own life grew it became first faintly personal ~~in its own right~~ and then a well ^{loved} companion. Now no longer was it merely an image but a person in its own right, and so I felt that it deserved the recognition that is afforded only by giving a name. It was not

hard to find an appropriate name for the Being that was so dear to me. To me It meant Wisdom that I loved so well and so I named it Prajna.

As the days passed, often as I wandered over the ~~solitary~~ rugged hills of that solitary country, Prajna would ~~often~~ come and walk with me. It was an unutterably sweet companionship, although up to now it had been a silent one. When Prajna was near I knew that not anywhere throughout the world nor in the mysterious hidden regions of the psyche was there any danger. If I needed understanding in any direction determined by my needs or questionings somehow it was born mysteriously into my mind, when Prajna was near. At other times this was not so, There were in fact a few occasions when I narrowly escaped serious mishap when wandering over the rough and dangerous terrain. ~~On~~ More than once I had been lost and only succeeded in finding my camp after an extended period of fruitless wandering and much hardship. But when Prajna was ^{beside me} near this never happened. Then I seemed to be infallible and always knew the wise thing to do. So quite naturally I came to lean more and more on my companion and learned always to call upon Him when faced with any difficulty.

There was a strange mystery revealed within this experience. I had created something by a conscious effort of the imagination, and then, presently, I found a Being that lived and had a life quite objective to my own. The being had a character far better than my own empiric self, and though I had determined the primary form of Its appearance, yet It grew within the matrix of that form into ^{much} far more than I could have possibly foreseen. It had become Prajna, the very soul of Wisdom, to whom I now turned as to a Teacher and well-loved Guide. What is this creative mystery? How is it possible to bring ^{to} birth out of the imagination that to which one may later turn as to a new discovery? Strange indeed

are the powers hidden within this that we call Life! I had come to ponder much upon this question, but somehow failed to find an adequate answer through my unaided efforts.

One day I walked to the top of the singing mountain. I sat upon the highest ridge of sand looking forth contemplatively upon the desert panorama spread before me. It was one of those early spring days wherein one can feel both cold and hot at the same time. As the altitude was moderately high the air was more than a little sharp, yet the heat rays of the sun came through with that peculiar intensity that is characteristic only of desert places and high altitudes where there is but little moisture. In the sunlight one felt the heat of summer, in the shade the chill of winter. In the more humid climes this heat and chill tends to blend into the moderate effect that is neither hot nor cold. But, in this desert country the effect was of a mosaic of heat and cold ^{simultaneously} ~~at the same~~ time, the two principles maintaining their verginal purity in the same space and at the same time. While one shivered from the chill of the air he was simulataneously roasted by the heat of the sun. Under such circumstances it is easy to feel that heat and cold are living entities and not mere names for thermo-dynamic relationships. Levels of consciousness are stirred which in most men lie dormant. The witness is easily brought to contemplate the purity of principles that is not so readily apparent in those states of compounded and blended effects. New values, not former^{ly} dreamed of, begin to unfold until the whole field of consciousness undergoes substantial transformation.

The air that day was exceptionally clear, as there was not sufficient movement to stir the dust. The blue of the sky was sharp and clear, flecked only by a few small clouds about the higher western mountains. The bounding mountain ranges and the desert floor stood out in ^{strong} clear relief. Below stretched the flat

desert waste with its exceptionally sparse vegetation. On the sides and on the northern and southern boundaries the mountain ranges stood clear-cut and not shimmering. All about was the brown red and black sun-varnished rock with the grey sand and clay below. Not anywhere was there sign of animal or human creature, not even the works of man. For here there is no road, no human structure either new or old, nor sound nor smoke even from the most distant horizon which would mark the presence of man. There alone were the ancient primordial forces and a little vegetation. When man comes alone to such a place he finds either God or - terror.

Naturally the lines of my contemplation assumed a course consonant with the environment. Both space and time in their immense and grand sweeps flowed into my very being. There was space and time and a little, almost primordial form and, also, I. It seemed as though I were the sole apperceiving subject in an unbounded universe, as might Ishwar have been at the day of the beginning of things. Was I then alone, severed from all companionship? Yes, if I thought of myself as bounded and circumscribed by this time and space and elemental mineral form. But when I considered that it was my body, an object among other objects, which alone was so circumscribed, and not I who felt out and thought through that body, then I saw myself above the bounding and restricting conditions. Upon myself depended and hung this very world that I was witnessing. For I could think and create out of myself. Thus had ~~Prajna~~ ^{creation as the} Prajna come to be my ^{my} dearly beloved Companion.

Again the questioning thought came into my mind: How is it possible that I should have created out of my own imagination and then discover in my creation a life and character and understanding beyond my own knowledge and purposes? Scarcely conscious of what I was doing I had asked this question aloud, and then to

my utmost surprise [^] heard a Voice give answer. It was a Voice that seemed both to be within me and yet also seemed to come from another. It answered with a question; "Hast thou^g considered the mystery of Thyself?" I turned, and there stood Prajna smiling upon me.

Surprised and startled, I said: "How is it that ~~now~~ Thou, my most dear Companion and Guide, now speakest for the first time?"

Then in tones, gentle but withal reproving, He said: "I speak because thou hast made ^{it} possible for Me to speak. Heretofore thou hast communed with Me only in silence and made possible My form through ^{thy} visualization. But ~~you~~ ^{thou didst give} ~~gave~~ not ^{to} Me the power of speech upon this plane until just now ~~you~~ ^{thou} spoke with words that could be heard with the outer ear. And, though ~~you may~~ ^{thou mayest} not have known it, thou didst indeed ask the question of Me. With that Thou gavest Me the power of speech.

"Now consider my question given in answer to ~~you~~ thy own, 'Hast thou considered the mystery of Thyself?'"

With these words Prajna vanished. But within me and all about me there grew a great stillness such that even thought itself receded and then the whole scene surrounding me grew dim as though I had moved or it had moved to a great distance. Yet I continued to see it as though it were part of some dream-world. Then down deep within me grew a great happiness, a strange sort of happiness such as I had never known in my wanderings among men. It was not a sensual kind of joy. It was not coarse or strong like that, but ^{had} a subtle quality which at the same time was like a substance that fed me through and through so that I knew now that I had long been starving in ways unimagined. And with the Joy came Peace, beyond even that of the quiet ~~desert~~ places and the mountain tops. Then I knew Rest. At last the strain of life was gone and contentment

reigned. I sat still, scarcely knowing that I sat, dwelling within. And there I Knew and Knew that I Knew, in a realm where was no thought nor ^{or}ought that men call motion. There in a formless Sea I ~~Knew~~ the answer which ever is, before any question yet was formed. I rested within Myself, a Great Space containing all spaces and all times. A veritable seed-ground of the universes and, as well, their fruition. Alone I was, but full, and thus never less alone. Neither senseing nor thinking I knew all and comprehended all for I was identical with all.

How long I sat there on the singing mountain I did not know, but presently the world came back. The sun was gone and the stars shown brightly in a moonless sky. The valley was swallowed in the dim shadows and the mountains ^{were} bare ~~in~~ ~~silhouettes~~ against the star-specked sky. The sharp shill of night was all about, yet somehow my body did not feel cold, sustained, it seemed, by an inner wrmth. I then returned to camp in the nearby hills deeply brooding upon the clear remembrance of the deep inner state. I knew that I had found my answer, though not yet had I the concepts and words for its formulation.

That night after partaking of a frugal supper I retired at once, quickly falling asleep. In the morning I was awakened by the heat of the sun's rays against ~~my tent~~ the tent. As needst must be under that solar urging, I arose at once, feeling unusually refreshed and joyous, but at the same time curiously tired. However, as I became busily engaged about the morning camp duties the subtle fatigue was dissipated and I found myself again enveloped in the gentle Joy that comes from nothing. The performance of the morning duties seemed like the words of a song accompanied by a soundless harmony and unseen beauty. Every move and every thing was just what it should be, falling into its proper place ^{apparently} ~~seemingly~~ without effort on my part.

Soon all the work was finished, the morning meal prepared and eaten, the breakfast utensils cleaned and put away in their proper places. Then, it was, I became immersed in a train of profound thought which seemed to think itself with scarcely any conscious effort on my part. I now knew and could formulate the answer to my question. At last it was fully clear.

In my thought of earlier years I had thought that I had come to understand the "I", the inner subjective Self which is witness of all. Long ago had I learned to distinguish between the "I" and the "me" as a matter of thought. I had seen that while introspection could isolate a "me" as an object of analysis, yet that "me" was not "I", since "I" was observing and analysing "me". Thus the "I" never was and never could be observed. It was like a point without parts nor aspects, but simply a center of consciousness. But now after the mystic insight of the day before, I saw that this seeming point was also like a Space which comprehended all forms within it. I saw, also that it was another mystery, the counter aspect of the external world, and that, within it, was not only rolled up all of the past but, as well, all future possibility. Thus within it was rolled the future destiny of the world. The empiric self of the individual self-conscious man was but a partial aspect of this larger more comprehensive Self. I saw too that when man wished to explore this mystery of this larger Self, he did not proceed by the external method of observation and discovery, but rather he proceeded to produce a creative phantasy, and thus revealed Himself to himself. The empiric self started the process as a conscious act, but at the same time drew forth the hidden potentialities of the Larger Self. Thus it is that when man creates he also discovers more than he knew. He gives birth to living form which is Himself, and yet more than himself. I now understood how I was one with Prajna, and yet Prajna was more than me.

Then it was I again saw Prajna seated upon a rock nearby, with the well-loved smile upon His face. This time He spoke before I had uttered a word.

Thou hast
~~you have~~ learned the lesson well," He said. "Now thou art in a position to understand that within the Self lies the answer to all questions. There ^wlies all the past and the future that is to be. But it lies there in privation of form until the creative power of the imagination casts it into form, first as idea, and then ~~then~~ as object that can be sensed. In this way man creates that which he later discovers. Truth is both ^{made} found and ~~made~~.

"Man thinks of his self as contained an ^dbound within the universe, and because he has believed this to be the case, he has verily produced a world within the world that binds him like a slave in chains. But this second world, superimposed upon the first is a false creation which has no power save that which the finite aspect of man has given to it. This he can and must destroy if he would be free. Within the false world many problems arise which, like a burning acid, irritate^s the soul of man. Within that world the means for resolving these problems can not be found. And so man finds no peace within his world as he is driven by needs he never really satisfies, though here and there mayhap he finds anodynes to relieve his pain for a few brief hours. There can be no enduring peace, no satisfaction of the burning questions, until the false creation has been destroyed. Then beneath that fetid and corroding shell, once 'tis burned away by the purifying Fire of the Truth Eternal, there will once more be revealed the undying Beauty of the Real.

"In very truth the Self of man, at once the Self of all, is the womb wherein there lies this universe. Out of that Mystery, transcending all other mysteries, comes forth this universe and, as well, many others now forgotten in the dim far reaches of horry

time. There too within the womb of Self lie other universes yet to be. By the union of ~~the~~ Love and the creative Thought, ceaselessly are these born forth. Thus the eternal and ever-concealed becomes the revealed. Some men say that God created this world to please his inscrutable pleasure, others that it is but the chance effect of the play of blind and mechanical forces. Both are wrong. For I produce this universe from out the hidden depth of Myself. And ~~in whose~~ ~~speaks~~ abides in the central core of all creatures. ~~Within~~ Myself in a dark and formless mystery, I know all ~~that~~ that is and was and ever shall be. But as I produce from out Myself I then discover anew My ancient and hidden Knowledge in its illimitable transformations. So I say again, man discovers what first he created and yet always Knew in the timeless Eternal."

As Prajna spoke I sat entranced, seeing now in clear deliniation the general answer to the buring questions that had tormented for so long my weary soul. The Light born out of yesterday's mystic realization now took on clear ^ylines and form. When Prajna ceased to speak I dwelt upon his words for a season noting how form and order underlay the old seeming disorder. But out of this a question arose which I could not resolve. If this world and all the universe is from out the Self creatively produced, would not that reduce it to a lawless fancy without ^yrhym and reason?

Again Prajna spoke, though I had not uttered a word, and the answer cut right to the core of my difficulty. He said:

"Creativeness is not lawless fancy. It seems to thee that thou canst produce with thy imagination in any way whatsoever. This is because the imagination is free from externally imposed constraint. Yet that imagination obeys a Law which is part of ~~the~~ its very Self and the great SELF as well. The imagination needs must move within a form which is itself none other than the great Law. In fact you cannot choose within your phantasy other than that which

is your own true nature. To such degree as your nature is impure will you produce a form that distorts the Real, but in so far as it is pure you cannot help but create in atunement with the universal Law which is the Self. Thus through imagination you actually discover the hidden Reality. The one essential requirement is purity.

"Men commonly believe as they search the phenomenal objects surrounding them that the relating and causal laws are made evident simply by the facts. In this they overlook the office of imagination, which, brooding upon the facts, actually recalls the Law already known. Often, indeed, are these recollections far from adequate, and so one hypothesis is replaced by another until some theory is found which works more or less well. It is often a slow and groping labor and generally the results are but partly true. But again it is a question of purity. Human consciousness is stained through and through with compromise and a willness to accept that which will work for the current hour. But he ^{who} would know the Truth must never compromise with purity nor be satisfied with a merely passing convenience."

With these words, Prajna left me alone ^{with} ~~to~~ my meditations. After what seemed a brief lapse of time, and feeling somewhat wearied, I glanced at my watch and found it was nearly noon. So I prepared and ate my noon-day meal. Then feeling an urge to a counter-poise through more external activities, I gathered my prospecting tools filled the canteen with water, and set forth to explore in detail one of the near-by canyons.

Chapter (2)

Some days elapsed since the last conversation with Prajna during which time I had occupied myself with prospecting. The period of intense inward penetration which had culminated in the mystical insight on the singing mountain had so withdrawn the forces from my physical organism that a supplementary objective activity had become necessary. For this purpose I found the work with the minerals to be of especial value, as it forced the mind to function in the extrovert phase with more than usual incisiveness. For when dealing with the so-called inorganic kingdom no carelessness in objective judgment can be tolerated as this phase of manifested Law is quite inelastic. For ~~An~~ error of judgment can very easily lead to disastrous results. Thus one learns to observe with care and to make his decisions relative to courses of action only after a due consideration of all the calculable factors. Within my experience there is no activity that so well balances the more intensive subjective penetrations than just this kind. For while on the one hand it is a complementary activity since the focusing of the attention in the objective sense is particularly strong, yet, at the same time, there is a persistent discipline of the judgment.

I am strongly convinced that ceaseless discipline of the judgment is of the highest importance both as a preliminary and collateral aid of the phantasy function. For all too easily phantasy can become a purely subjective activity in the invidious sense. Just as there are sensory illusions which may be regarded as the counterfeit of sensory perception, so there are also phantasms that are no more than counterfeits of genuine subjective insight. In both cases ~~discipline~~ discrimination is of decisive importance.

That there is such a thing as mistaken judgment is a common-place of experience. A familiar instance of such error is afforded by the

those who, for the first time, travel upon the desert. Quite frequently upon the floor of the desert there appears to be a body of water lying off in the distance. So far as the sense-impression alone is concerned, the traveler who has been accustomed to more humid climes may feel quite justified in forming the judgement: "There lies a body of water." If he then approaches the apparent body of water he may first find it receding and then disappearing entirely. He has simply seen a mirage. Now, clearly, here was an error of judgment, though the initial sense-perception was clear enough. Not all that looks like water is water. The question then arises, How do we to determine when that which looks like water actually is water? This is done by testing the appearance of water by the other characteristics we have learned to associate with water. Thus, for instance, it seeks the lowest level available and will not move from that level up a grade as it is approached. Further, its surface, if undisturbed, remains horizontal. Also, when touched it is wet, when drunk will quench thirst, if the mineral content ~~is not too high~~ in certain respects is not too high, and it will put out fire. There are other characteristics, but these are sufficient for the present purpose. The first qualities mentioned are usually sufficient to distinguish between a true lake and a mirage. The lake will remain in the lowest place available, while the mirage may be seen resting upon higher ground, or may retreat to higher ground when approached. Also its surface may run up the slopes of hills.

In dealing with the data given through objective experience men have been forced to develop an elaborate technique for discrimination between appearance and reality. While any sensory impression is an immediately given psychical fact, the existence of which cannot be challenged, yet when the judgment is extended from the bare psychical fact to the assertion of an existence in a more objective

sense, a possibility of error enters into the judgment. In these cases our general method of differentiating between true and false judgments proceeds on the following lines: From the initial judgment one or more implications can be drawn. Generally, some or all of these implications can be tested through experiences other than the original one that led to the ~~fix~~ judgment in the first place. If these tests confirm the judgment it is said to be true, otherwise, false. This is the practical criterion between appearance and reality in the work-a-day world.

When, however, the investigation is extended into the subjective pole of the consciousness-principle a different method is required to differentiate between true insight and its counterfeit. For one thing, the insight is intensely private. It is not a case of two or more individuals observing the same source of sense impressions, a possibility which always exists in connection with objective phenomena and affords one of the principle ~~means~~ means of checking the judgment. In the second place, insight is not ~~observation~~ simple observation, but a process of creative projection, after which in a secondary sense observation may become possible. But it is not even this secondary observation that gives the crucial value of the insight. It is an awareness of a totally different order that becomes born along with the creative projection. This latter we may call awareness of significance as distinguished from the objective awareness of phenomena. Now the question arises, Are we to judge every realization of significance as equally valid, or is there some basis of relative valuation here? Are some insights more significant than others? Do some men have greater power to penetrate to significance than others? Is there some significance that is generally valid for all men or for extended classes of men, while other significance is only valid in a purely private sense? Or, perhaps, is all significance exclusively of

private personal value? All of these are questions of fundamental importance as the answers to them not only determine how the individual should relate himself to his own insight, but as well they determine the social bearing of private insight.

During the interim of prospecting I had been mulling over these questions with the result that I began to appreciate in a larger measure the importance Prajna had attached to purity. It was clear that in some way the validity or value of the insight was related to the degree of purity attained by the individual. This, then, led to the question: What is purity? Upon this I meditated for some days without finding an adequate answer.

One day after the evening meal had been completed and the various eating utensils had been cleaned and put in their proper places, I was seated upon my cot and had become partly lost in a chain of reflection on the nature of purity, when presently I saw Prajna seated in my only chair. I shall never forget the benign look upon His face as He watched me. With most men compassion is rarely or never pure. Nearly always there is some admixture of self-interest or personal predilection in those actions or councils that are most altruistic. Rare indeed are those men in whom Truth has replaced the last shadow of self. But now I realized, as never before, that Prajna was one of these. I saw that not only was he compassionate and patient, but that indeed He was the very embodiment of Compassion and Patience as well as of Wisdom. He was not merely the servant of these qualities but the actual incarnation of them. All this was revealed in His more than kindly smile.

Said He: "You have done well in considering these questions. It is also not surprising that you have not found it easy to understand the full meaning of Purity. In general men have too narrow a view of just what purity is. Often they conceive it to consist of an externally prescribed course of conduct and then, through efforts

that are often sincere enough they force their conduct into the determined course, and yet fail to attain real purity. Far too frequently they only succeed ^{in suppressing} certain instinctive or emotional tendencies and thus thrust these forces into a place where they are merely hidden, but not transformed. Instinctive and emotional forces when ~~hidden~~ merely repressed and hidden undergo a sort of fermenting process which, in time, causes them to burst out with explosive power. Such explosions are apt to be very disruptive to the psychical organization and may, very largely, submerge the ethical insight. As a result damage is done which has to be repaired before further genuine progress is possible. Thus, on the whole, time is lost.

"It is a great mistake to regard purity as simply a matter of forceful conformation to an external norm of conduct. There is no action which is, as such, impure. The right action at the wrong time or in the wrong complex of circumstances becomes impure in its total effect. In this sense real purity means the appropriate action at the given time and in the given situation. Purity means harmony among all the elements involved.

"In a general sense, purity implies a conformation of every function of man according to its own inherent law. If there never had been an undue accentuation of any one of the functions, ~~and~~ accompanied by a corresponding suppression of others, there never would have developed a disharmony among the various functions. Each would have its due hour of accentuation followed by its relative ^{or} complete retirement in the face of other functions. In this way man would complete his duty to life and mature normally until he was prepared for the new birth into another level of consciousness with its further possibilities of development. But the general condition of the present humanity is quite different from this.

One or more functions have been given a much larger field of activity than was properly theirs while others have been neglected. On the whole the more animal side of man has been given too large a place. Then as a compensating reaction, this side has been overly repressed, leading in turn to the explosive repercussion which may have determinant results in that or a later life. The total effect of all this is a great deal of impurity.

"Impurity that is obvious is relatively easily handled for it is recognized for what it is quite readily. But real trouble arises when impurity is hidden under the cloak of virtue, quite unbeknown to the individual concerned. Certain attitudes of uncompromising moral sternness are a compensation of an unconscious impurity. As a general rule the ~~presence~~ attitude of moral tenseness in an individual is the sign of a hidden impurity. When in any respect the nature of an individual is highly purified the resulting ethical attitude is one of relaxation. With growth of purity inner conflict vanishes and then the moral attitude becomes the spontaneous expression of the whole man. The feeling of 'I should' and of 'I wish' become largely identical.

"A considerable degree of impurity in any individual even affects his judgment of objective fact, There are those who try to deal with unpleasant facts by disaffirming their existence. When this is done with sufficient intensity and persistence, then the unpleasant facts seem to disappear. They are simply not observed although they may be quite apparent to other witnesses. What has happened in the case of such an individual is that he has encased himself in a sort of psychical cul-de-sac wherein his consciousness may be bound for a period of greater or less duration. In the extreme cases where the impurity has resulted in a psychosis, the whole field of consciousness may become a confused delusion, wherein fragments of consciousness belonging to quite different levels

are almost hopelessly interblended.

"But serious as the effect of impurity may be upon competency in objective discrimination, it is much more serious when the focus of attention is directed inward toward the subjective pole of the principle of consciousness. In this domain there are not ~~to~~ be found the clearly defined correctives that exist in the case of purely external observation. The individual penetrates into himself and, in one sense, is quite alone, as thou hast already noted. In the spontaneous flow of his creative imagination there is a taint from such impurities as may exist within him. Sometimes this may be largely corrected by the isolation of certain functions which may be pure in high degree, from others that are contaminated with impurity. But in this case only a part of the total nature operates and, to that extent, the product of the creative imagination suffers from being incomplete or one-sided. However, ~~same~~ there are very few human beings who ^{have} attained to a general and rounded purity, the best that can be hoped for are such incomplete and one-sided constructions. In their particular dimensions they may be pure in high degree and, in so far, are quite valid insights. By a combination of complementary constructions of this type an approximation to synthetic Truth may be attained, but the result is, admittedly, imperfect. But save on those rare occasions when a fully Enlightened Man incarnates on earth, this is the best result that can be hoped for.