

Meditation Group For The New Age

THIRD YEAR SET III

May 21 - June 20

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Part I

Glamors of Superiority and Assertion

Introduction

Glamor, as already seen in this study, invades our lives in many ways. It has been compared to a mist or fog in which we wander, unable to see clearly or truly all that lies around us. But it might be even more accurate to think of it as a veil or curtain which we place before our eyes ourselves and by which everything is consequently blurred and distorted, colored and conditioned. A little reflection on it will show the truth of this analogy.

Few of us are able to look out at life with no emotional coloring. But some have less perception of Reality and of things as they really are behind these distorting “veils” than others, and the kinds of glamor which condition our seeing, thinking, feeling, attitudes, and reactions vary. Seven types of glamor were listed in *Third Year, Set II* in the present Set we shall examine the “positive” or assertive glamors, which seem to be particularly evident at the present time.

Before going on to that, it should be remembered that there is world glamor as well as individual glamor. The two are closely interwoven, and although we have more responsibility for the latter, it helps to keep a proportionate attitude and saves us from the glamor of too much self-deprecation if we recognize that there are frequently universal causes underlying the problems that beset us.

On the other hand, we do have a certain responsibility for the glamors and illusions which abound in the world. We have helped to build them and are doing so all the time by our fears, desires, and unilluminated thinking. Therefore we have a real obligation to try to dissipate them, and this is an important reason for attempting to see and understand them more clearly and for finding out how we can deal with them in a practical way.

There are two necessary prerequisites or attitudes for this work. The first is a certain measure of *dis-identification*; that is, ability to stand back and recognize glamors for what they are. As long as we are identified with a particular glamor, we are pervaded by it. While we are completely glamored, we neither know it nor admit

it, and can do little to release it. The first step therefore is to recognize it. This immediately puts us in a different position; the glamor is still in us, but we know it and therefore begin to stand apart from it. (See the *Technique of Dis-identification* in *Third Year, Set II*.)

The second prerequisite is *use of the will*. It is not enough to desire to combat glamor by using the various techniques prescribed; the will has to be brought in as well. First we must come to the decision to take the necessary measures, use the different techniques and decision is an expression of the will. Then the energy of will is needed to generate the persistence and determination to carry through with the techniques for as long as needed.

Another point to be remembered is that there is an intermediate stage between recognizing a glamor and getting rid of or dissipating it. This is the period during which we do the actual fighting. During this time we are in the paradoxical position of continuing to have the glamor, although seeing through it. In other words, it is still in us and is apt to reassert itself at any time, but we refuse as much as possible to be driven by it. This may continue for a long time, and it is a difficult period because, although we try to control the glamor and keep it from affecting our lives, it is still rooted in us and continually rises up. It would be more exact to say that at this stage we are controlling rather than dispelling the glamor. The stages or steps in the process are therefore:

1. Recognition — seeing the glamor for what it is.
2. Dis-identification — standing back from it as the Observer.
3. Control — keeping it in check and refusing to be driven by it.
4. Dissipation — gradually eliminating and dispelling it.

These stages frequently overlap, but if we keep them in mind it will help us to see the different points at which we stand with the different glamors with trouble us, and prevent us from becoming discouraged if it takes time to deal with them. Glamors do not disappear “over night” or directly as they are recognized. Some of

them are deeply rooted in the unconscious, as we saw when looking at that subject in *Set II*, and to draw them up out of the unconscious and dispel them in the light of the higher consciousness of the Self can be a lengthy process. Once we are aware of the situation, however, we have already started on the undertaking.

The process has been compared to the rising up of the mist from a deep valley as the sun begins to climb up from behind the mountains and pour its light and warmth over the earth. To begin with, clouds of mist rise up; then the rays of the sun, having drawn them up, gradually disperse them as they reach the higher air until eventually we can see the whole panorama, unclouded and in its true proportions.

Positive Glamors

The glamors in this category have been called “positive” because they are based on the Positive Modality, which was mentioned in *Second Year, Set III* as one of the characteristics of the New Age. It should be noted that the word “positive” is not used in this context as meaning valuable or good. On the contrary; the “positive” glamors are just as negative in the qualitative sense as all the other kinds of glamor. In fact, they may be even more so, because they are often harmful and have destructive effects.

Two different and opposite types of people are prone to them. The first type are those who are innately self-assertive, authoritarian, and “will-full” in a personal sense. The second type are, on the contrary, people who have some inherent weakness, are acutely aware of it and resent it bitterly. This prompts them to over-compensate for the weakness by displaying and asserting power. An example of this is the self-assertion and aggression sometimes found in small people who have a feeling of physical inferiority. Adler has given a good exposition of this psychological mechanism, and various kinds of “inferiority complex” may be insidiously at the root of the different forms of aggression and self-assertion.

These two opposite causes of the positive kinds of glamor should be kept in mind, because to understand the origin of any glamor we are trying to dispel will help in selecting and using the right techniques for dealing with it.

There are many glamors in this positive category, and only a few of them can be mentioned here. But these examples will make us aware of the many variations of this “over-positive” tendency and the different forms it can take, and show how such glamors can be checked, countered, and dissipated.

1. The Glamor of Power

The glamor of power is an exaggerated and distorted manifestation of the normal drive to self-assertion. Power gives both an intense subjective satisfaction and makes possible –at least temporarily –the obtaining of success or things desired. This glamor can so possess an individual that he or she becomes obsessed by it. An outstanding example of this was the philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche, in whom the will-to-power had such unfortunate results.

The power that is sought may be directed in three different ways:

1. Over people, producing the glamor of authority
2. Over the forces of nature
3. Over matter.

The last two produce the glamors of efficiency and technology.

The Technique of Right Proportions, which was discussed in Set II, will obviously be a valuable practice for all those who recognize they have this glamor of power or a tendency in this direction. As Theodore Roosevelt found, it “cuts down to size,” and we see ourselves in truer perspective. *Cultivation of the Opposite* is also one of the chief techniques for dealing with this glamor. (See p. 18 of this Set.)

2. The Glamor of Authority

The glamor of authority, or to be more precise, of imposing one’s authority, is common at all levels and in many fields. There is a host

of small dictators to be found in all organizations, and our present bureaucratic systems give them ample breeding ground. Until recently the autocratic father was accepted as the normal head of the family – a fact which has been one of the chief causes of the rebellion of youth.

This autocratic attitude is based not only on love of power but on the certainty of being right which is of course a glamor too! In more or less conspicuous forms, it is so widespread today that it forms the basic attitude of a great part of humanity.

The glamor of authority like all the glamors associated with power and a sense of superiority— may be expressed on the physical, emotional, or mental level. But it can also appear in the spiritual consciousness. Based on either a strong sense of divine direction or “revelation,” or on the authority of established dogmas and teachings, it can become a serious glamor and a dangerously distorting and aggressive force. The Inquisition is an example of the worst kind of this glamor of “spiritual authority” becoming all- powerful.

Fortunately the cult of authority is rapidly on its way out. It was a particular characteristic of the past age, but the freedom-loving and free-thinking society emerging today at least in the West – has a new attitude. Deference is no longer given to “authority”: in fact, it is very largely rejected, and we can expect a gradual lessening of the grip of this glamor and the support it gives to all dictatorships as the New Age proceeds.

Although, as just mentioned, the glamors of efficiency and technology very often arise from the love of power and its expression, they are more specifically connected with activity, the third category of glamors which we shall be considering, so they will be examined later in Set VI.

The techniques recommended for dealing with the glamor of power are also recommended for the glamor of authority, which is really an expression of love and power. But when they have been used for some time, the *Technique of Transmutation* might also be practiced (see *Set II*, p. 17). With this, as will be explained more fully in *Set IV*, we direct the energy underlying a glamor and try to utilize it in a higher way. This means that having recognized our tendency to be over-authoritative, having placed ourselves and our situation in right proportions, and having taken some steps in cultivating the opposite qualities, such as humility, we then proceed to transmute our love of authority and dictatorial tendencies into a sense of responsibility of genuine and compassionate care for those within our area of influence. Both

the previous *attitude* and the *method* of expressing it have been transmuted, and then the energy underlying the glamor can be used in a constructive and helpful way.

3. The Glamor of Physical Strength

The glamor of physical strength is what might be called a more primitive expression of the positive, self-assertive type of glamor. For those who cannot express themselves at higher levels, the cult of games and athletics serves a useful purpose. It demands self-discipline, courage, focus, endurance, ability to face hardship, and very often group effort and cooperation.

The glamor arises when too much importance is given to this level of achievement and attention is focused entirely upon it. Pride on the physical level then develops, and a competitive spirit asserts itself which, in turn, fosters ruthlessness, and may even lead to extreme forms of physical aggression and violence.

The techniques just mentioned can be usefully practiced for this glamor also. In fact, they will be found helpful with all the glamors that follow, which are along this line of over-positivity.

4. The Glamor of Ambition

The glamor of ambition is closely linked with all the foregoing; for love of power, success, and high position are the driving forces of ambition. When ridden by this the individual is concerned only with reaching the top, and this has harmful repercussions both socially, on those nearby, and individually. Frequently the ambitious person keeps going beyond physical strength, using up energy to an extent which leaves the body exhausted and prone to physical and nervous troubles.

But the ambitious person is also apt to undertake too much in other ways. This results in inefficiency and even failure, and affects others also. This has been brought out humorously in the book entitled *The Peter Principle*, by Dr. Laurence J. Peter and Raymond Hull. (Published by William Morrow & Co. Inc.) It has proved a best seller, which may be taken as an encouraging sign, because it exposes the glamor of ambition and ridicules the present universal system of promotion called by Dr. Peter "hierarchiology" – which results in faulty leadership and the incompetent organization which surrounds us on every side.

Among the more serious effects of ambition is the fact that it often promotes ruthlessness, cruelty, and total disregard of the rights of others. It is frequently the motivating impulse behind crime and violence, and is of course the driving force of all dictators. Ambition is not only personal; one's group may be the focus of excessive ambition. In the case of dictators and national leaders, they are ambitious for their country or people, and strive for its aggrandizement and, consequently, the domination of other nations. They are dedicated to this to a degree which demands complete self-sacrifice, for the whole of their energy goes to achieving this aim. Such people thus assume tremendous responsibilities and run great risks. Ambition can lead to destructive action very easily, and recent history holds many dramatic instances of this.

Fortunately, few of us are in a position where the glamor of ambition can have such disastrous effects on a wide scale, but we should understand its workings on a group and national level as well as individually, so that we do not run the risk of getting caught up in it, perhaps unwittingly, and of contributing to it without realizing that we are doing so.

Ambition is a glamor more easily recognized in others than ourselves and, as with the glamor of authority, it can be connected with the spiritual life as well as with achievement on personality levels. It could be said that the higher the level of expression of any glamor, the more difficult it is to recognize; and spiritual ambition, although a much transmuted form of desire for personal success, can subtly distort true higher motivation.

5. The Glamor of Pride and Superiority

Pride and a sense of superiority are glamors closely associated with ambition. People over-estimate themselves and their accomplishments and look down on others who do not appear to have achieved as much, regarding them as inferior. This may begin from the need to "boost" themselves, but it develops a sense of superiority and, as this becomes established, they bask in this glamor and feed it with the satisfaction that this attitude gives them.

People with the glamor of pride cannot bear the superiority of others! This reaction is prevalent at present; it takes the form of

resenting those who have proved themselves superior and attempting to pull them down in every way possible. Like a seesaw, the sense of personal superiority is raised if another's superiority can be lowered. The current fashion of "debunking" the great men and women of the past and discovering and elaborating all their shortcomings, while belittling if not ignoring their achievements, is largely due to this attitude.

This is obviously stupid as well as unjust, because the great have achieved *in spite* of their weaknesses and shortcomings, and they are to be appreciated all the more because they overcame these handicaps sufficiently to accomplish great things. This has, in fact, sometimes been the most heroic part of their achievement. Also it should always be remembered that we function at different levels, and while having shortcomings and even failing at one level, we may achieve much at another.

The current trend to pull others down is put neatly in its place in the words of Rabindranath Tagore:

The firefly said to the stars: "The astronomers say the day will come when you will be extinguished." The stars did not reply.

With those who have no special abilities or gifts, this glamor often takes the form of pride in possessions. This is what underlies "keeping up with the Joneses," which, although it may seem a minor glamor, often causes much harm. Apart from the bad feeling created, the whole of life is sometimes given over to the acquiring of more money, higher status, better cars, bigger houses, and more and more things which feed pride, and this hollow empire is frequently built at the expense of health and true enjoyment of and participation in life.

6. The Glamor of Being Certain

Certainty of being right is also an aspect of pride. It is a sense of superiority on the mental level and in its train come failure to recognize or tolerate the views of others, dogmatism and other "sins" of the mental type, which we will go into more fully later. This is a glamor which is apt to appear as the mind begins to develop—for example, the mental arrogance so often seen in youth before the acquiring of wider knowledge and wisdom.

However, it is an attitude which is on the decline because of the present crisis in humanity's thinking. The widespread questioning of the validity of all existing forms and ways of life is causing a growing number of people to feel perplexed, uncertain, and insecure. This bewilderment is a necessary stage, which has its good aspects, but it also creates problems and difficulties, and fosters glamors of a negative kind, such as fear and depression.

Before leaving the glamor of pride, we should also take note that it is one of the great obstacles to recognizing glamor. It not only prevents the seeing of any weakness in ourselves, but makes us refuse to acknowledge it, even if it is quite blatant. Pride has a way of covering up ourselves from ourselves, and we need to look closely to be sure that it is not "fooling us" into false estimations and a disproportionate sense of importance and achievement. *The Technique of Right Proportions* is, again, of great value in this connection. It is, in fact, especially useful with all the positive glamors which tend toward a sense of personal over-importance and superiority.

7. The Glamor of Self-Centeredness

It should be recognized that all human beings are normally self-centered to some extent, and are therefore more or less glamored in this respect. To draw an analogy from the science of astronomy, people in whom this glamor is prevalent have not yet reached their individual "Copernican revolution;" They still consider themselves the center of everything around them, as the pre-Copernican astronomers believed that the earth was the center of the universe. It is, of course, a completely mistaken attitude, yet many conduct their lives in this way without realizing it. They expect things and people to revolve around them, and ignore the fact that other people are apt to have the same attitude and, anyway, have the right to their own independent lives.

Self-centeredness also produces isolation, separateness, and aloofness. Those who are under the "veil" of this glamor lack interest in other people and have little psychological understanding. It simply does not occur to them to identify with another person, and their intense preoccupation with their own lives prohibits any such opening out.

The radical cure for this glamor is, again, the use of the *Technique of Right Proportions*. Another exercise of great value here is the “As if” *Technique* given on p. 23 of this Set. Through deliberately standing “as if” we were in another person’s place we can imagine and reach real understanding of his feelings and reactions. In this way we become more aware of the worlds in which others live, and this opens out the ring-pass-not of self-centeredness, and begins to dispel its grip.

8. The Glammers of Separateness and Isolation

Separateness, isolation, and aloofness are glamors which are closely related to self-centeredness. Separateness could be called arch-illusion, because there is in reality no such thing, either in human life or in the universe. We are constantly impinged upon by innumerable influences on all levels. These impacts extend from the rays which reach us from distant galaxies after millions of years, to the climatic conditions in our own environment and the psychic influences which bombard us, both blatantly through mass media and surreptitiously from the general psychic atmosphere or “sea” called in psychological terms the “collective unconscious.”

Conversely, we are influencing our surroundings all the time, even if we are not aware of it. At the physical level we can be unconscious carriers of microbes and viruses, and each of us has a specific scent, to which animals are particularly sensitive. Emotionally and mentally, too, we are constantly influencing others, not only by our words and actions, but also through our subtler psychic influences. We should be aware of all this because it entails serious responsibilities. It also enables us to discriminate between the influences that are helpful and those that may be injurious amongst the constant streams which we both receive and project.

People who have a sense of isolation or a separative attitude falsely believe that they are unaffected by what is going on around them, but, paradoxically, this makes them more liable to be affected! Also, they are very apt to let loose harmful and destructive forces, because their lack of consideration for and communication with others tends to develop criticism, prejudice, dislike, and even active hatred.

But there is also another and quite different kind of isolation and separateness. It arises from over-sensitivity, and in this instance is a form of self-protection, a defense mechanism, built up by creating a kind of “psychic armor.” This is a more negative type of isolation, and we will return to it when considering the negative glamors.

We need not go specifically into the technique for dispelling separateness. The ways in which we can set about this are obvious, and qualities that should be cultivated to counteract it were listed in connection with both Right Human Relations and the Principle of Goodwill in *Sets I* and *II* respectively. Several of the techniques will be found helpful in dealing with this glamor, but it should also be remembered that separateness is often fed by other glamors, particularly by those of a mental type.

The Glamors of Freedom and Independence

At present there is a great clamoring for freedom, both on the part of the individual and of groups. But a curious paradox arises. When people gain the freedom they claim, they either use it wrongly, in extreme form of uncontrolled self-expression, license, and even violence, or else they do not know what to do with it. This latter predicament induces them to look for some external prop, or in other words, to turn again to some form of authority. Eric Fromm has described this well as “*Escape From Freedom*”¹ in his book of that name. People discover that freedom is a responsibility; it becomes itself a burden which they attempt to evade in various ways, seeking either an authority on which they can rely or which they can blame! or some substitute.

Then of course uncontrolled freedoms clash with each other, and so limit the expected freedom. For instance, the relationship of individual and group freedom raises many problems, and it quickly becomes apparent as new-found freedoms are sampled and indulged in that it is not the simple thing imagined, or the panacea for all frustrations.

¹ Fromm, Eric. *Escape From Freedom*, Hart, Rinehart, and Winston. New York, 1941.

The fact is that freedom should not be thought of as only “freedom *from*,” but rather as “freedom *for*.” The desire to be free from is the basis of the glamor of freedom. We are apt to think of freedom as a blissful condition of escape from everything that binds us and restricts, whereas in reality it only releases us to new levels of opportunity, which must, in turn, be taken up for full expression of ourselves. As with separateness, there is no such thing as complete freedom and independence. We are indissolubly linked with and involved in a network of interdependencies, and the glamor of freedom consists in believing that it is possible for us to be free of it and live independently of all around us.

The right claims of freedom are for liberty to express the best in ourselves, to be creative, and to have opportunity to expand. This does not mean license, selfish indulgence on the lower levels, or anarchy. The right use of freedom calls, in fact, for a high degree of personal discipline and self-control.

This glamor may not always take the extreme and obvious forms so frequently seen among the youth of today, but it can be a subtle influence affecting our inner attitudes and reactions. This can then give rise to other glamors like resentment, bitterness, and frustration. To offset this we need to discover *where* we are free, in what areas of our lives, and recognize the *true* levels of freedom; then we can agree with ourselves to accept the lesser restrictions with which we may be hemmed in, seeing them in proportion, and as temporary limitations necessary for the good of the greater whole.

Techniques such as that of *Dis-identification* and *Right Proportions* will be helpful here, and the *Techniques of the Presence* and of *Indifference*, which will be explained more fully later, will aid especially in bringing about the wider attitudes and more inclusive realizations that dispel this glamor from the various levels of consciousness.

Impatience and Irritability

Finally, we come to another kind of glamor, which is often a “liability” of the positive, domineering, or aggressive type of person *impatience*. To this are allied the hasty temper, irritability,

and irascible attitude which makes life so miserable for a great number of people.

These are glamors of a destructive nature, often affecting others severely as well as ourselves. They eliminate equanimity, inhibit joy, and sour the system, and create a general disturbance in ourselves and our environment. They are glamors that should be taken in hand most earnestly.

In these days of high-pressure living and nervous tension, impatience and irritability are exceedingly prevalent, and the point should be made here that glamors of this nature and some others also, like fear and depression – are apt to appear or be increased when the physical body, which includes the nervous system, is under excessive strain.

A glamor can have its roots on any of the three levels of the personality, and we should always try to discover the point in ourselves from which it seems to arise. A “mental” glamor, for instance, may originate in some emotional attitude, and an emotional reaction such as irritation may well be caused to a large extent by nervous tension and physical ill-health. In this latter case it is obviously useless to blame the emotional nature and use only psychological or spiritual techniques. We need to take what measures we can on physical levels also to ameliorate the situation and ease the originating strain.

Intellectual ability is a frequent cause of impatience. Those who can think quickly, comprehend clearly and accomplish things efficiently are apt to be impatient with those who are slower and less capable, not realizing the difficulties through which the less efficient have to struggle. In reality, those who have reached higher levels of intelligence and integration should be able to see the problems of others more easily, and therefore have more understanding of their situation and greater compassion for them; this is rarely so, however, in the case of the positive type of person with a dominant will and concerned with driving on to achieve his own ends.

Recognition of a broader picture and of the fact that we cannot expect perfection is a first step in dealing with this glamor. We are in an imperfect universe in which we, in company with all life, are

evolving towards ever greater consciousness, ability, and perfection. It is a slow process in which we are all involved, and none of us has the right to be impatient with the inadequacies or imperfections of those around us. To recognize this eliminates the erroneous idea that everyone should have the same capacities and be at the same level of competence; thus greater tolerance is developed.

The technique of *Right Proportions* will, again, be helpful here, and also the cultivation of a *sense of humor*, for instance, we are often irritated and even momentarily enraged by inanimate objects, and a sense of humor soon disposes of this ludicrous reaction.

One of the difficulties of glamors of this type is that they are apt to take charge of us too quickly to be offset, but the practice of the various techniques, such as *Dis-identification*, *As-if*, and *Indifference* will all be helpful and gradually dispel the tendency to quick, automatic, irritable reaction.

In the case of *cultivating the opposites* we should try to develop not only the obvious antidotes of patience, forbearance, and tolerance, but also such things as humility, which dispels the sense of superiority so often at the root of impatience. One glamor often has to be dealt with alongside another, because they frequently give rise to and then mutually support and feed each other. *Acceptance* is another quality to be cultivated, because it builds up a general resistance to these glamors. If we cease fretting against the obstacles and imperfections around us and develop an attitude of acceptance, we develop a tolerance and serenity which saves much waste of energy.

It is helpful to seek the cause of a glamor and to believe in our power to change. One lifelong sufferer from impatience and irritability assumed that these were unalterable personality traits of hers. Finally she realized they were giving her a sense of superiority. In the light of that insight the glamors dissipated, and all her relationships improved.

To conclude, we might say that the main characteristic of the positive glamors is their wrong, and sometimes violent, use of energy. The positive type of person carries a higher charge of

energy than the more negative types, and it is often difficult to control this and use it only in right and constructive ways. Such an individual has high potential and can achieve great things, but this power also entails the capacity to be destructive.

The great “opposite” to be cultivated by all who possess this greater amount of energy and will and these drives is *love*. This is the great solvent of all the problems and difficulties that may arise, it is the balancer of the positive, dynamic, driving forces and the great safeguard of their right use.

Techniques

Cultivation of the Opposites

You will remember that the first two techniques *Disidentification* and *Right Proportions* were given in *Set II*. The next two to be dealt with are *Cultivation of the Opposites* and “*As if*” The first of these, while it is one of the simplest and most obvious, is one of the most important psychological and spiritual methods of dealing with personal glamors. It helps us to grapple with psychological, nervous, and also psychic difficulties and is a “master” method, particularly for the negative glamors.

Where is it difficult to combat a glamor directly, its opposite can often be cultivated much more easily, and the point reached where it overcomes the glamor that has troubled us. For example, it is difficult to fight fear directly, but courage can be developed so that it lessens, and may in the end even eliminate, the fear.

It is a method that has been implicit in most spiritual teachings since the earliest times, and was mentioned in the *Yoga Sutras* of Patanjali:

To overcome the obstacles to Soul cognition and their accompaniments, the intense application of the will to some one truth (or principle) is required.

Alice A. Bailey in her commentary of this *Sutra*² lists the seven obstacles given by Patanjali and their opposites:

Obstacle	Remedy
Bodily disability	Wholesome, sane living
Mental inertia	Control of the life force
Wrong questioning	One pointed thought
Carelessness	Meditation

² Bailey, Alice. *Light of the Soul*. Lucis Publishing Company. New York. 1927
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Laziness	Self-discipline
Lack of dispassion	Correct analysis
Erroneous perception	Illumination

This is an example of how the technique can be used to prepare for greater recognition of the Self or Soul, but it is equally valuable for dealing with any glamors or characteristics which particularly trouble us.

There are two ways of cultivating the opposite: One is the psychological method – cultivating courage, for example, to neutralize fear, love to neutralize hate, and so on. This could be called the horizontal method. The other might be called the vertical method, because it entails invoking the Higher Self, so that the downflow of its energy and the light which comes from the Soul neutralizes and then disperses the glamor.

Clear recognition of the glamor to be dispelled is necessary for the effectiveness of all the techniques, but this is particularly the case with cultivating the opposites, because upon right understanding of the glamor depends the right selection of the opposite to be cultivated. The will is also an essential element in this technique, because the method requires constant effort to develop what is latent, or perhaps almost non-existent.

The technique of *Cultivating the Opposites* can be applied to most of our glamors. For instance, the opposite of self-centeredness is group awareness and universality; the opposite of separateness and isolation is cooperation; the opposite of independence is interdependence. But as a definite and specific exercise, this technique is most useful for offsetting the negative glamors, which will be dealt with in the next Set.

Cultivation of the opposites is always more or less effective, but often it is not sufficient, especially where the intensity, or one might say “voltage,” of the glamor is very strong. For instance, if there is a deep fear it is not enough to cultivate courage. The use of other techniques also will be needed. In general, it is always a good

principle *to use more than one technique, and use them in combination with each other* so that their effects are complementary.

The exercise which follows can be used to cultivate any of the qualities in the list below, or any other attributes which we feel we need.

Glamor	Opposite
Self-absorption	Interest in others
Inferiority complex	Confidence
Self-pity	Compassion
Depression	Joy
Over-activity	Regulated action
Inertia	Activity
Conflict	Harmony
Criticism	Appreciation
Indecision	Will
Possessiveness	Generosity - Sharing

Exercise For Cultivation of the Opposites

1. Assume a comfortable position; relax all muscular and nervous tension; breathe slowly and rhythmically.
2. Think about the quality you are seeking to cultivate. Realize its value and effects. Appreciate it with your mind and feelings, and determine to develop it increasingly.
3. Now evoke it directly. This can be helped by naming it repeatedly or reading a short passage connected with it.

Endeavor to feel it. Try to consolidate it in yourself and become pervaded by it.

4. Pledge yourself to maintain and express this quality throughout the day whatever happens, to be a living example of it and to radiate it.

The “As If” Technique

The first point that should be made clear about the *As if Technique* is that it is not a matter of making ourselves believe that we have not the glamor in question. The method is not denial, such as certain extreme schools practice; rather, it is a clear recognition of the trouble, and then the determination to go on *in spite of it*. We know it all too well but we refuse to identify ourselves with it, and in this way put it in its right place and keep it as “arm’s length,” so to speak.

To give an example: we may feel depressed, but we recognize the depression as a *wave offeeling*. We stand apart from it. It may wash over us and encompass us, but it is not our *selves*; and, as the self, we endeavor to act *as if* the depression were not there. This makes all the difference. We do not deny an existing fact, but put it in its right place.

Acting *as if* obviously requires a measure of dis-identification, and so work done on that technique, as outlined in *Set II*, will contribute to our ability to use this method also. It will also be apparent that to act *as if* we are not troubled by a prevalent glamor generally means we have to arouse a good deal of its opposite. For instance, it takes courage to go on *as if* we had no fear, and it requires strong inner positivity to act *as if* we felt no depression. So, as well as using disidentification, we are cultivating the opposite when we employ this technique. The three methods are closely linked.

Acting “as if” has the advantage that it is immediately effective, and we do not have to wait for results, as with the other techniques, which are more radical but which work more slowly. The *as if* technique in a sense short-circuits the emotional part of ourselves. It is the mind which commands and directs the body to proper action and, without considering the emotional reactions,

isolates them and prevents them from interfering. This does not eliminate the glamor, but makes it temporarily powerless.

The *as if technique* is effective when there is a conscious emotion in opposition to the way we wish to, or should, behave. It is successful when the emotion to be overcome is moderate and not too intense, but when a fear or other emotion is very intense the technique that should be used is *Desensitization* or the *Technique of Imaginary Training*. Also, when there is a blockage from the unconscious to traumatic impressions from the past which have created a complex, it is difficult or sometimes even impossible to act “as if.” In those cases one has first to deal with the blockage, using methods suited to that condition.

At this point it might be well to dispose of two queries which sometimes arise regarding the *as if* method. Is it not a pretense, some ask, the cultivation of a non-reality, an untruth? And also, does this method not induce the glamor of believing that we have mastered something when in reality we have not?

These questions overlook a fundamental of the technique – the fact that *as the Observer* we have recognized the glamor and decided on the technique to adopt to counteract it, and also that this attitude of the *detached Observer*, the Controller, has to be maintained to carry out the experiment successfully. For example, in spite of the fact that one part of ourselves is afraid, we act *as if* we were unafraid. We *know* what we are doing. Therefore, if this attitude is maintained correctly, we shall not believe that we have eliminated the glamor. This is quite different from self-deception.

Another point is that we cannot wait until completely mastering a glamor before adopting a positive attitude towards it. For all progress, we have to move our attention forward to the point we are seeking to achieve. This is true of all forward going, all discovery, all attainment. First we catch the vision of what has to be done; this sends out the “arrow” of the mind. Then we slowly gain this position with the aid of creative thought as well as our physical and emotional endeavor to attain it, building and consolidating the achievement through our focus and affirmation.

To affirm something brings a definite creative force to our aid; it establishes it in thought and strengthens our attitude by

awakening an emotional response to the quality affirmed. Above all, it is an action of the will; and when the will is summoned we are well set to overcome the glamor facing us.

As to the idea that we should not pretend to be something we are not, this is an over-simplification which does not take into consideration the many-sidedness of human nature. The different elements in us act in different ways. We are not controlled in all parts of ourselves by one particular glamor or rarely so and therefore it is not hypocritical to act in accordance with our highest conceptions or ideals.

Those who object to this technique on the grounds that it is a pretense are demonstrating another glamor the glamor of sincerity. This is one of the “higher” glamors, but it is good to see through it and recognize that it can have unfortunate and sometimes even disastrous consequences.

Sincerity does not mean giving vent to every impulse and letting loose all our emotions. This is nothing but impulsiveness and the primitive attitude of those who have not begun to work on and transmute themselves. True sincerity means faithfulness to principles, to one’s ideals and values, and it does not justify aggressive behavior – nor require the saying of unpleasant things, as those with this glamor so often assert.

Therefore, the *As f Technique* is not a form of self-deception or of intentionally deceiving others. In fact we may often quite frankly admit to a glamor, to being afraid or impatient, or depressed, yet also affirm that we will go on *as f* we were not. This might be considered as an “emergency method,” due to pressure of circumstances, but it is a most useful technique *while* we solve the problem of eliminating the glamor completely. To do this the use of the various other methods will also be required.

Part II

The Law Of Group Endeavor And Glamor

When considering the Law of Group Endeavor we again come face to face with glamors connected with our relations with others. For example, self-assertion is in direct opposition to group endeavor; self-centeredness prohibits, or makes very difficult, the free interplay of true group life; possessiveness obstructs sharing.

In fact, it can be said that attempts to live in groups and work with the Law of Group Endeavor present a stern testing of ourselves in connection with these kinds of glamor, and offer much opportunity for learning to eliminate them. Yet many people are more or less successfully living in groups and experimenting in “group life” today, and this is a hopeful sign that the glamors which obstruct right relationship are in some ways receding. Certainly with the outgoing of the old autocratic order we are seeing far more group work and group interplay of a true nature.

The interest in psychology — particularly humanistic psychology — is also leading in this direction. There is a genuine interest in and concern about our relations with each other, ability to work with and live together, and a new awareness of the creative results of group exchange.

Our concepts of group life and group endeavor should not be confined to the specific and comparatively small groups we may join for a particular purpose or because of mutual interest. We all belong to groups of all kinds family, social, political, religious, national, and so on. This means we need to think in terms of what we are doing as a community and what responsibilities we have as a nation, just as much as in terms of more specific groups and associations. It also means that, as mentioned earlier, we are responsible for dissipating *group* glamors, such as those of a national, racial, and even worldwide nature.

The dispelling of glamor on this scale requires concerted action, and here we can see that group endeavor is today playing an increasing part. Many are uniting their efforts to combat worldwide glamors and problems. For example, in the religious field groups are working to eliminate the glamor of authority and

dictatorship. Scientists of many nations are showing concern about the right use of the powers of science. And people are grouping themselves together in the endeavor to combat glamor of many kinds, such as the cult of possessions and social status, and the “rat-race” of modern society.

Exercise in the “As If” Technique

- I. Sit quietly, in a relaxed position, emotionally calm, and breathing slowly. Say to yourself: “I recognize there is in me the glamor of – (fear, despondency, impatience, criticism, naming whatever may be the glamor you intend to deal with). I observe it, am aware of the consequences of it and dangers attached to it, and I therefore refuse to be identified with it. I affirm it is a *glamor*.”
- I. Realize that while you may not be able to eliminate or directly change this glamor immediately, you can prevent it from influencing your outward attitude and conduct, and keep it “in leash” or “by-pass” it.
- II. Now imagine yourself in a situation which arouses this glamor. This may be an important interview or examination, a difficult relationship with a troublesome child, a nagging partner or an exacting superior, or the meeting of some other problem. Picture the situation fully and go through it carefully, stage by stage, *in imagination*. But instead of allowing the “natural” or usual drive, emotion, or glamor to determine your behavior or conduct, imagine that you disregard it and that you can act with coolness, patience, confidence, and courage.
- III. Emphasize again your inner non-identification with the glamor, and identify yourself with the *detached* Observer, the Onlooker and Director of all your actions.

Repeat this exercise until you develop a degree of inner assurance that you will be able to act in this way in actual practice.

Exercise in Group Endeavor

- I. Glammers which prevent Group Endeavor
Dictatorship – Imposition of Authority; Personal ambition;
Certainty of being right; Independence; Self-interest;

Narrow vision; Fanaticism; Possessiveness

II. Points for reflection

1. To what groups, using this word in the broadest sense, do I belong?
2. Do any of the above glamors obstruct my fulfilling my rightful part in them?
3. What seem to be the glamors of the groups to which I belong?
4. Does my attitude contribute to these glamors, and what can I do to help to dissipate them?

These four questions if pondered on can bring much insight into our responsibilities in connection with the different groups we belong to and with the true meaning of Group Endeavor. They will also help in selecting the most appropriate themes for Meditation.

Meditation Outline

Meditation on Recognition of Reality through Dissipating Glamor

1. Sit quietly, in a relaxed position, breathing slowly. Link in consciousness with those doing this meditation all over the world.
2. *Stage of Recognition*
Raise the focus to the mental plane and, *keeping the attention there*, turn the searchlight of the mind upon the glamor selected, seeing it clearly in this light and reflecting on the work to be done. Do not let any emotional reaction interpose itself.
3. *Stage of Direction*
Realize that it is through the higher light, the light of the Higher Self or Soul, that the personality life can be illumined. *Identify* with this light and *direct* it, with the aid of creative imagination, upon the glamor under consideration, visualizing the light encompassing it, penetrating it and dissipating it.
4. *Creative Stage*
Now link the Law of Group Endeavor with your work; deliberately and creatively bring its *reality* into the thought- form being held. *Affirm*, by an act of will, that it can manifest, can triumph, and *radiate* in all directions along lines of visual light.

Invocation

Repeat the Great Invocation, seeing the light, the love, and the will of God streaming in to disperse world glamor and establish a spiritual New Age.

The Great Invocation

From the point of Light within the Mind of God

Let Light stream forth into the minds of men.

Let Light descend on Earth.

From the point of Love within the Heart of God

Let love stream forth into the hearts of men.
 May Christ return to Earth.
 From the center where the Will of God is known
 Let purpose guide the little wills of men –
 The purpose which the Masters know and serve.
 From the center which we call the race of men
 Let the Plan of Love and Light work out
 And may it seal the door where evil dwells.
 Let Light and Love and Power restore the Plan on Earth.

The Sons of Men Are One

The sons of men are one,
 and we are one with them.
 We seek to love, not hate;
 We seek to serve, and not exact due service;
 We seek to heal not hurt.
 Let pain bring due reward
 of light and love.
 Let the soul control the outer form,
 and life, and all events,
 And bring to light the love
 Which underlies the happenings of the times.
 Let vision come, and insight.
 Let the future stand revealed.
 Let inner union demonstrate,
 and outer cleavages be gone.
 Let love prevail.
 Let all men love.

The Gayatri Mantram

O Thou, Who giveth sustenance to the Universe,
 From Whom all things proceed,
 To Whom all things return,
 Unveil to us the face
 of the true spiritual Sun,
 Hidden by a disc of golden Light,
 That we may know the Truth,

**And do our whole duty,
As we journey to Thy sacred Feet.**