

The Empty Cup, the Fire of Love
The Festival of Aquarius Full Moon Meditation Meeting, New York
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Hello everyone and welcome to this Full Moon Meditation meeting in the sign of Aquarius.

We meet here tonight to work as a group in meditation, to mediate spiritual energies into human consciousness. It is prudent, before we begin, to reflect on the reasons why we gather at the time of the full moon—and why this work is so vitally important to the Plan, to the work of Hierarchy, and to the spiritual evolution of humanity and our planet.

The Ageless Wisdom has always posited that energy is the basic substance of the universe and that all forms of life are energy forms. There is only one basic form of energy—life energy which pervades and is all manifestation, though endlessly diverse in its expression.

The Ageless Wisdom also states that all lifeforms live within greater forms in a great Hierarchy of being extending from the atom to the human, from the human to a Planetary Logos, and on upwards to the macrocosmic Whole. This Whole is therefore composed of an untold number of parts, and of relative wholes within greater wholes.

These various forms of life and energy are therefore related by an unbroken web of life, a web of relationships that extends unbroken across the manifested universe affirming both the unity and the diversity of the macrocosmic whole. These relationships are not just relationships of the substance or form; these relationships are relationships of being and in their essence can never be broken.

It follows then that each human being, each soul-in-incarnation, is a center of life which has enormous potential to both receive and distribute energies within this web—to be inspired by higher sources of spiritual wisdom and ideas as well as to radiate and distribute this “life-giving sustenance” to one’s fellow man. In this way, we uphold the divine circulatory flow of life throughout the greater whole in which we live.

At the full moon we seek to mediate spiritual energies across the great gap in consciousness that separates the world of spiritual reality from the world of effects and normal human living. This requires vertical alignment with the source of spiritual power as well as horizontal activity within the world of human living. We, the group, take our stand at the center of this cross and from this point serve. And we do so, not for own spiritual satisfaction and contentment, and not even only for the benefit of those who “suffer on the darkened path.”

There is a greater Life in which humanity lives and moves and has its being, and through this Life, a Divine Purpose beneficent and beautiful beyond comprehension, seeks expression and unfoldment. Humanity has a vital role to play in the working out of this purpose. But this requires the manifestation of new and higher energies and potencies within humanity. This necessitates a reorientation of human consciousness such that extra-planetary Lives of unimaginable spiritual power can begin to aid our small planet in its redemptive work. Group meditation at the full moon is an opportunity to cooperate with these great Lives and play our relatively small, but vital part in this great work.

Let us take a moment to affirm our group integrity and purpose and sound together the Mantram of Light.

Radiance we are and power. We stand forever with our hands stretched out, linking the heavens and the earth, the inner world of meaning and the subtle world of glamour.

We reach into the Light and bring it down to meet the need. We reach into the silent Place and bring from thence the gift of understanding. Thus with the light we work and turn the darkness into day.

Aquarius is the sign of group consciousness and service. On the discipleship path, service is the right use of soul force for the good of the group. Service is a soul activity, not so much on its own plane, but the soul functioning within the world. As we know, the soul must perform work through a mechanism—a personality which is intelligent, integrated, and responsive to the sacrifice and compassion which is the natural prerogative of the soul. In the early stages of its evolution, the personality is simply not suited to this task. One therefore cannot serve as the soul indicates until one has taken the lower nature in hand such that it becomes coordinated and has achieved some measure of freedom from selfishness and personal desire. When this occurs service, “the spontaneous effect of soul contact,” naturally and automatically flowers forth as altruistic living and goodwill.

Service is also a technique of at-onement, for it brings about eventually a total and complete fusion of soul and personality leading consequently to unfettered service. When the conflict between soul and personality is resolved, the point of spiritual tension can then be lifted entirely into the world of the soul, the realm of group consciousness and group work. This is also why service has been called “the urge to group good” for the soul seeks only the good of the greater whole.

Achieving this ideal of service is much more difficult than many of us realize. It involves great sacrifice, the choosing of the hard and narrow way of self-relinquishment. It requires placing all that one has, all one’s desires and aspirations, into the pot of water which one carries for others and not for oneself. The symbol of the Law of Service is a man with this pot of water perfectly balanced on his head with hands outstretched representing the cross of sacrifice. He has served upon the cross for so long that he himself has become it and serves without conflict or effort. The symbol of the Aquarian Age is very similar, however, in this symbol the pot of water is carried on the shoulders, representing the burden of service. In the Aquarian Age, humanity is learning how to serve, how to wield the force of the soul and express it through the many facets and vicissitudes of human living.

The ideal Aquarian server places all he has into the pot upon his shoulder. All his hopes, dreams, aspirations, and even his thoughts, his mind, and his hands. He gives and gives, yet his pot diminishes not, for through his self-relinquishment he taps into the abundant and limitless source of life. He works as the soul and not as the form and thus his spiritual potential exceeds normal human capacity. He bends every will, every human power to tread the way, to show the way—and eventually he becomes the way. His power to love, to unite, to bridge, to radiate grows as “he loses himself to find himself,” and he serves the Plan thereby.

The great hope is that in the Aquarian Age, humanity will take the first steps on the path of conscious soul unfoldment. Today, many of the barriers and limitations that have perpetuated the myth of separation are beginning to be broken down. These barriers are barriers of consciousness, first

evidenced through general trends of thinking and values. Such changes in consciousness—of paradigms and values—always precede changes to the institutions of human living, and these changes can be seen today in large and small ways in virtually every nation throughout the world.

This becomes more plainly seen as one develops the esoteric sense which sees the good and the bad, the past and the present, triumphs and failures in right proportion. As one awakens this sense, one begins to see in the light of the soul and recognizes that human consciousness proceeds forward but one step at a time.

Today, individuals and groups are reaching a point of real discontent with the current paradigm. We are striving after new ways of thinking about who we are, our relationships with each other, and what good can be brought into the world. Many of the alternative paradigms being proposed are very obviously flawed, but the important point is that the human aspiration for something more inclusive, more compassionate, and more just is waxing ever stronger. This waxing is evidence of an awakening of soul consciousness on a mass scale. Such an awakening is precipitated by the mind, but flowers forth in the heart as right relationship and goodwill. This awakening is referred to as the first initiation, the birth of the Christ (the soul) within the cave of the heart. The attaining to this great expansion of consciousness by humanity as a whole is what will truly inaugurate the Aquarian Age.

After the first initiation has been taken, the individual or group is truly on the path, and seeks the spiritual life, the life of service. This expansion of consciousness opens the door to the recognition that the self is the immortal soul. This self is first known as the voice of conscience but increasingly recognized as the Solar Angel or the Angel of the Presence—that which pervades the universe of the personal self with only one fragment of itself yet remains.

One of the natural effects of soul contact is the rapid working off of karma. The light of the soul both reveals the mistakes of the past and clarifies what must be done as one moves forward into the future. It precipitates the crises and conditions which make plain what must be done. Karma, when consciously faced, is precipitated by the power of thought (via the soul), however, it is love that resolves that karma and brings it to an end.

This suggestion to simply “love more” as key to the resolution of both an individual’s and humanity’s problems may seem trite and useless, ignorant of the complexity and the reality of the contemporary world. Yet, the sense of futility that such a suggestion evokes itself reveals the gap that must be bridged.

The Tibetan made very clear that it is the disciples of the world that prevent the externalization of the Hierarchy and the reappearance of the Christ—not the intelligentsia and not the general public. He wrote that it is the responsibility of the disciples of the world to demonstrate the fire of the will-to-love, and that until this fire was adequately expressed it would be a grave mistake for the Christ would to reappear.

One might ask, what exactly is this fire of the will-to-love and how is it brought forth? The will-to-love is the power which destroys all hindrances to the pure beneficence of spirit. This is the love that is “the cause of all creation and the sustaining factor in all living ... it induces that radiation which invokes and evokes not only the heart of God but the heart of humanity also.” The will-to-love is the result of identification with the whole and is only possible after soul and personality have been consciously fused through the synthesizing agency of Spirit. To accomplish this, the disciple must take the very drastic step

of occultly throwing himself into the fire (of Spirit) so that his whole being may be “set ablaze.” These purificatory fires destroy produce a synthesis in which the light of the soul, whose nature is spontaneous love, can blaze forth in its perfection. This state is reached not by any sort of aspiration or effort to be loving, but by complete sacrifice of the personal self (that is, utter self-forgetfulness) and the total submerging of one’s consciousness in the needs of others, the needs of the group, and the need of the Plan as one sees it.

The requirements to fully submit oneself to this fire are severe and culminate in the final stages of the path of discipleship. But certainly, we can all aspire to submit ourselves to whatever “fiery ordeal” constitutes the next immediate stage before us, and thereby increase our capacity for service. Regardless of where we are upon the path, such an act is sure to produce intense conflict and crisis—which is a blessing; dynamic points of tension are essential in this fiery work.

Humanity evolves through conflict and points of tension. But, we are told that humanity also evolves through pain and suffering—and these are an unavoidable effect of the conflict produced between humanity’s free will (which necessarily errs) and the divine will (which does not). Lucky for us, the great Law of Karma provides a safe environment for human learning and ensures that good will always triumph in the end whatever our mistakes.

One of the greatest services the disciple can render is the rapid working off of his own karma so that he can shoulder some part of humanity’s karma, thus bringing the entire human race into closer alignment with this Divine Intention. Such work draws upon all the qualities of the Aquarian server: self-effacement, unerring compassion, right vision, and sacrifice to name a few, but most of all it is based on his capacity to love.

There is an ancient writing called the Cup of Karma which exemplifies the attitude of the Aquarian Server as he proceeds from self-achievement to group consciousness to group service as a member of the spiritual Hierarchy. I will conclude with reciting a portion of it, and then we will proceed into our meditation.

THE CUP OF KARMA

“There is a cup held to the lips of those who drink, by four great Lords of Karma. The draught within that cup must all be drained, down to the nethermost drop, e'er it is possible to fill the cup with a purer, sweeter one. The seven Lords of cosmic Love await the hour of filling. ...

But when to utter emptiness the Pilgrim drains the cup then to the world in torment now he turns. With cup in hand (drained once, filled again, and refused to selfish need) he tends the need of struggling men who tread the way with him. The draught of love, of sacred fire, of cool, health-giving stream he lifts not towards himself but holds it forth to others. Upon the road of weary man he becomes a Lord of Power—power gained through work accomplished, power reached through conscious will. Through the cup of Karma drained he gains the right to serve.

Look on, O Pilgrim, to the goal. See shining far ahead the glory that envelops and the light that naught can dim. Seize on the cup and swiftly drain, delay not for the pain. The empty cup, the steady hand, the firm and strong endeavour lead to a moment's agony and thence to radiant life.”

The Rays and the Initiations, pp. 762-63