

## DANGERS AND CHALLENGES ON THE SPIRITUAL PATH

The topic for today's webinar was formulated in response to a question asked by a member of our Facebook page. The person expressed an interest in working with subtle energies but was concerned about the safety of opening herself to subtle forces and passing them through her etheric body. She wondered how we can actually distinguish between beneficent forces and those forces that are masquerading as beneficent but are actually materialistic.

People on Facebook responded to her query suggesting she search out her motive for wanting to serve energetically. This is of course key in all of life. We can all stop and ask ourselves why we wish to participate in Triangles or any other spiritual activity? Why do we want to serve in this way? This questioning is particularly helpful for esoteric groups to do as it's said we suffer more from glamour and misperceptions than any other groups and surely this is so precisely, in one instance at least, because we are opening ourselves to the world of energies and we do not necessarily know how to distinguish truth from falsity, the unreal from the Real.

There are quite a number of causes underlying the present confusion. As we know, we are living and working in a time of transition and there is a tremendous amount of spiritual stimulation pouring into the planet from ray and constellational sources that were never before contacted by humanity. These energies are proving highly stimulating to the atomic structure of our subtle bodies and awakening aspects of ourselves that have hitherto lain dormant. The question therefore extends to include not only the type of energy we might be susceptible to but also to the amount of energy.

For example, there is the stimulation inherent in the transition period itself which because of the mental development of many people, brings in a wide array of shifting additional energies that have hitherto not been possible of contacting. And another factor which some people might be unaware of is the fact that due to the intensity of the sound released during the First and Second World Wars there were rents or tears produced within the delicate etheric structure of the planet. This etheric web is intended to provide a separating protective mechanism between the astral and the physical planes, a mechanism which has shielded humanity from a wide array of astral energies. As a result of this rending process, energies and forces from the astral plane were released and allowed to pour into the consciousness of sensitive people everywhere, particularly those people who have innate psychic or mediumistic tendencies.

We can see, therefore, how the combination of these rents, coupled with the powerful mystical temperament which developed under the passing Piscean, sixth ray age, has created a situation that is a real cause for concern for all people who work in the esoteric or spiritual fields. Many people have been subjected to energies and opened up to areas of consciousness that they don't understand and for which they are hard-pressed to find anyone who can help them sort out the many impressions to which they are subject. This has resulted in the "occult wrecks" that populate the spiritual path--people who suffer from intense lower psychism, insanity, neuroses and mental imbalances of many sorts. These conditions are widespread and

increasing at this time as we are in the midst of the preparatory period for the externalisation wherein all things are more intense.

So much of what is being contacted today, including visions of the various members of the spiritual Hierarchy, as well as that which is contacted in daily meditation practice, is astral in origin. The real effort that we are asked to undertake is not necessarily to deny these impressions but rather to learn to shift the focus of our meditative practice to the mental plane and to thereby begin the process of learning to distinguish between truth and falsity. And in order to make this shift we're advised to make haste slowly, in the realization that the path of return takes much time and the results depend upon our efforts to extricate ourselves from that which holds us back, to observe the swirling astral forces that abound in the world today and with detachment to simply note them down in a spiritual diary. The Tibetan advises we repeat to ourselves the following line, "Let reality govern my every thought and truth be the master of my life."

We live in a time wherein the difficulties of spiritual stimulation are exacerbated by the plethora of information available to spiritual seekers today on the internet. This situation calls for discrimination and caution. Unfortunately, these qualities seem in short supply as we live in a world wherein speed is placed at a premium, with all the hares racing about and the tortoises plodding along unnoticed. We have to decide how to go about our spiritual practices, what we choose to do in all aspects of our lives for the energies we contact are a clear reflection of the lives we live and the practices we undertake.

Primarily a wise spiritual practice should be engaged in lifting the energies from the lower centers, those beneath the diaphragm, to those above, not through breathing exercises and kundalini yoga but rather through living a sane and balanced life in which one's spiritual practices are integrated within the normal flow of things. Balance is needed, moderation is key, and the following in the path of those who have come before and paved the way provides safety.

The issues confronting spiritual seekers are compounded by the fact that by placing themselves upon the spiritual path they are subjecting themselves to a forcing process, to an accelerated path of development. They, therefore are willingly subjecting themselves to a substantial increase of energy with which they consequently have to contend. That is why the heart development of the mystical path does provide a safe ground upon which the mental development can be constructed.

We're advised to avoid intolerance and fanaticism. To pay attention during the daily life to events both large and small for it's said that "It is literally true, in an occult sense, that 'not a sparrow falleth' without its fall being noticed." So during this stimulating time, let us all dedicate ourselves to living sane and balanced lives wherein meditation, study and service are our keynotes, taking one step at a time, making haste slowly.

Kathy Newburn