

Imagination and Intuition
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Today I'd like to speak briefly on two very related topics: imagination and intuition. And I'd like to preface the presentation by acknowledging that these words have many varied definitions and are used to describe sometimes totally different things. This presentation will deal with the way these terms are used in esoteric philosophy which ascribes to them a precise and scientific meaning.

Imagination and Intuition are inherent, even if unawakened, in every human being, and can be viewed as the higher and lower interludes of the creative process of the soul whose task it is to create on earth the pattern of things as they are in the heavens. This creative task requires the ability to contact both the higher realms of spiritual reality and also to work within the "subtle worlds of glamour" to which our opening invocation today referred. The creative task of the soul as it seeks to bridge between spirit and form requires the ability to see and perceive beyond all veils of illusion and distortion, and also the ability to employ the creative will within the three worlds to mediate the higher vision into some form.

Imagination always precedes the intuition and in many ways is its seed. While Intuition can be defined as the direct grasp of truth, imagination is the ability to bring into one's mind and brain some combination of forms to express that truth. Though the imagination is often employed towards perpetuating glamour and fancy, it is a powerful tool for creation of any sort.

While there are many who believe that the human being is capable of original thought and creation—numerous occult and metaphysical authors suggest that there is no truly original creative capacity in the human being. All that is and can be imagined already exists within the subtle worlds of our planetary ring-pass-not. Imagination is therefore the ability to tune in on what is already there (though unexpressed) and to bring it into some form within one's own mind and brain. When that which is imagined is steadily visualized, vivified and the will brought to bear upon it, it can be projected into existence. This process highlights that the creative power of the human being is not to create something entirely out of nothing, but rather to mediate some new life into existence.

Imagination is also a very important tool in treading the spiritual path and is instrumental in the employment of the as-if technique. In this technique, the mind is imaginatively directed towards an alignment or goal which does not yet exist with the intention to bring about its manifestation. There is first desire, then focused intention, imagination, followed by the steady employment of the will which comes from holding the mind steady on what one wishes to create. In time this leads to the fulfilment of the creative work.

Imagination is described by the theosophists as kama-manasic. This specialized term simply means that it is neither pure desire nor pure mind; the imagination links desire and mind and connects the mind to the brain. It is therefore a bridge between them and key to the "exteriorization of the veiled splendour" as the Tibetan so clearly expresses it. Imagination makes possible the eventual escape from the illusion and glamour of the human experience and thereby becomes a way of emergence into the wonder, beauty, and joy of human living. Through the imagination, the hidden spiritual nature of each and every individual, descends into the brain consciousness and there persists as a beacon of light for those seeking to tread

the path of return. Helena Blavatsky has referred to the imagination as “one of the strongest elements in human nature” and one need only bring to mind the greatest that mankind has created—in the fields of art, literature, music, and science—as a testament to the power of the human imagination.

While the imagination is key to the fulfillment of the creative task of the human, the intuition is key to the creative task of the soul on its own plane as it seeks to bridge between spirit and form and to mediate divine ideas into human thinking and civilization.

Intuition is perfect sight, and also Pure Reason, the highest use of the mind—entirely free from prejudice, illusion, and divisiveness. The intuition is a means of perception free from all doctrine, and the limitations of form as we know it. It is impossible to express what one sees in this light in its fullest purity, for even the most perfect of forms distorts, refracts, and veils it.

The mind is the means whereby the intuition can be accessed, and this requires the ability to unify the many and varied aspects of one’s spiritual and material nature. This union is most clearly symbolized upon the plane of mind where the two aspects of the mind, the concrete and the abstract, must be unified through the medium of a third factor. This third factor is the soul, the true self which persists after death. The soul is the true thinker and creator of forms. The soul possesses the ability for abstract thought and the ability to express those abstractions in accurate and coherent forms.

Meditation is the key to achieving the soul consciousness which eventually leads to an unimpeded rapport across the entire plane of mind—and of course a rapport between mind and brain as well. Through meditation, one learns to contact the soul and gradually to express that contact through the round of daily living and relationships. This gradual integration of the soul and personality leads eventually to their fusion and at-onement. This prepares the way for the soul (increasingly one with its reflection) to penetrate into those higher realms of mind and heart, and to mediate that vision into human thinking.

Today the human imagination is stronger than ever, and this is evidenced by the many new and creative ideas of how to transform our social, economic, and political systems to be more just, efficient, and in better alignment with our highest values. At the same time, it is clear that this vision is also conflicted and that there is disagreement about the way forward. During these times we are all challenged to employ the imagination and to cultivate the qualities of understanding and universality which are characteristic of the intuition. Rather than devolving deeper into the realm of doctrine and thus disagreement the better path is an upward one, one that is more abstract but also more meaningful and unites that which is good and true in the many current propositions. Through the clarifying light of this higher thought that which is flawed and full of glamour becomes more obvious and easier to discard.

This work requires individuals and groups trained in the art of clear thought, possessed of sensitivity to the many and varied ways of approach, and with the moral alignment to see the highest good work out no matter what.