

Today our theme is “Challenges on the Spiritual Path During a Time of Transition.” Each disciple has his own unique challenges, some of which might be karmic in nature, others related to the particular place upon the path and increasingly these challenges may very well be related to the group or nation of which they form a part. The path on this planet is an initiatory process. It’s also helpful, thinking from a larger perspective to know that we stand upon the periphery of the great ashram of the spiritual Hierarchy and, as such, participate as well within the pressures and initiatory process going on with that center. And also, as disciples we stand as brain cells within the body of the planetary Logos Himself and he, too, is at this time passing through a cosmic initiation. As such on our own scale, we are taking part in that process. As above, so below.

So we are all passing through a momentous initiatory cycle on all levels within the planet. But humanity tends to be so self-centered that we might not recognize or even consider the prospects facing others whose challenges and responsibilities are so much greater than our own. For example, the challenges confronting the great Lives that hold the destiny of the planet in their hands make our own pale in comparison. But nonetheless, initiation is not a normal process and it is a challenge but it is also an opportunity and a privilege. Souls on other planets, we’re told, do not go through this initiatory process. Their development is a much slower and safer evolutionary journey. Our planet is involved in an experiment, a forcing process and this experiment it is not without its risks. There are many casualties as it’s not an easy process and particularly at this time because of the foment that naturally arises in this preparatory time for the externalization. We have to have compassion for the many who crack under the strain that is so general and widespread upon people at all levels.

We are living in a time wherein there is a massive confluence of energies that are generating tremendous pressure, not only on human consciousness but also upon the very fabric of the planetary etheric body, hence the need for increased vigilance on the part of all Triangles workers to help in the needed strengthening of the network. Unfortunately, many approach the stimulation of the times and enter onto the spiritual path with a type of fast food mentality— expecting instantaneous results, perhaps from a weekend workshops or an online seminar and there are unfortunately all too many teachers who are more than willing to offer promises of rapid realization, often through the offering of unwise spiritual practices. It’s helpful therefore to keep in mind that despite the speeding up of the processes of initiation, it is nonetheless a long, slow process and safeguards are needed in order to minimize the dangers.

We could say that in olden times the path could have been compared to walking down a country lane whereas today it’s speeding upon a super highway. In the past seekers lived in remote areas and, one by one, entered into caves and meditated for years, or developed under the care and guidance of Teachers and Masters in small ashrams in ancient India or monasteries in Europe – secluded and cared for in a quiet and regulated manner, behind the scenes. It was a safer and slower way, perhaps easier in many ways without the complexities of our contemporary world.

But the processes of a group approach to initiation had to be instituted now because of the sheer number of people today who are seeking spiritual training. The Masters could no longer meet this need as they are busy preparing for the externalization and the responsibility for the training of students was placed in the hands of disciples, schools and through books. But interestingly enough this whole process of initiation is said to relate not so much to the need of humanity but rather to the need of the Logos Himself. It’s said that He has a limited amount of time for his incarnation, just as does a human being. And on account of this the process of initiation had to be speeded up in order to meet the need of the sheer numbers of people applying today. In relation to this we have

to keep in mind this need for speed, not in the sense of practicing kundalini exercises but rather in applying ourselves to the principles of the raja yoga techniques. It's helpful in this regard to keep in mind that the training had to be externalized and therefore there are no longer the safeguards to protect students that were in place in days gone by. People today have to tread the path in the midst of all the challenges of living in this world, in the so-called jungles of the West, the major cities of the world. And everyone has to deal with the concentration of energies that are pouring in and the consequent stimulation that is impacting all of our brain cells.

We can perhaps see parallels of this speeding up process in the symbol of the scaling of the great peaks that is so widespread by climbers today. The first scaling of Everest was in 1952 and now it is commonplace and hundreds are reaching that summit and many others. But there are many casualties and just this past week one of the best female climbers lost her life on the way down. A considerable number of climbers die on the way down. It might be that as a consequence of the tremendous effort needed on the ascent and the fading exuberance that occurs on the descent, plus the fatigue and loss of the adrenaline, that one's guard is perhaps relaxed a bit on the descent and, as a result, there are many casualties. Perhaps this is why for the spiritual seekers of the world the entry way to the summits are so carefully guarded, for their protection for the inner teachers know all too well of the dangers of a premature entry

Therefore, one of the major challenges today is the need for discrimination and the dangers that ensue if it is lacking. The world is so full of teachers and teachings and many people simply are unable to determine which path of the many is the best for them. And, as a consequence, people are easily led astray by so-called teachers who have no idea of the dangers they are promulgating. Many of these teachers are advocating spiritual practices that are unsafe for beginners on the path and which in olden times were kept safely guarded in the hands of teachers who were able to guide their chelas and who knew if or when their students were ready to handle more advanced techniques. Today, people often expect instantaneous results from their practices. They want to achieve an unfoldment of their chakra systems, the raising of the kundalini through long meditations and breathing exercises rather than placing the focus on the needed preparatory work on and integration of their lower vehicles and the practicing of the golden rule.

Unwise spiritual practices can lead to what the Tibetan calls the "occult wrecks" that are everywhere seen today –people whose lives have been damaged by such practices for they open up portals within the subtle and delicate systems within the body which cannot easily be shut down even if one wishes to. The wise student, therefore, and the one who makes the most progress in the long run, is the one who follows the recommended sequence and makes haste slowly.

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