

EVOLUTIONARY STAGES OF INDIVIDUAL AND GROUP CONSCIOUSNESS

Greetings. Blessed be this hour. Blessed be every one of you, my beloved friends. Once again I am allowed to come to you through this channel and bring you what you need at this particular juncture on your path. This need may not always be quite clear to you. Some of you may not immediately realize why this particular lecture is just what you require at this point. Others may immediately be touched by it and know that this is exactly what they need.

I will start, as many times before, with a general discussion of some cosmic realities and philosophical premises, but once again you will see that they have immediate practical value for you. It is often said that this period of your history, the Aquarian Age, or the New Age, is bringing in a new group consciousness. This consciousness manifests in many different ways. Groups and community life are taking entirely new forms. These developments express something deeper; it is not enough simply to see this occurrence out of context, as it were. It is very important for you to understand the dynamic principle of the evolution of consciousness at work here. You need to gain an overview, so that you can grasp the deeper meaning of what is happening today.

Ever since human beings have incarnated, an evolution of consciousness has existed on this earth plane that alternately emphasizes individuation and group consciousness. The emphasis must change in different phases of human development. In one period, people need to gather their energies inward and concentrate all their faculties on their personal lives. In other phases they need to develop through their relationship to their surroundings. This alternation occurs in an overall movement, as well as in smaller cycles, both historically for humanity as a whole and personally, for the individual.

In each phase a higher level of development is reached, so that what was gained through the emphasis on, say individuality, can then further the group consciousness, and what is learned in group relating can then further individual development. I will now give a brief, somewhat simplified picture of this.

At the dawn of human evolution, there were only a few human beings scattered over the earth. Each individual lived more or less alone. People fought the elements as best they could by themselves. They were generally in such a state of fear that they could just about cope with the environment, but they could not yet handle other human beings. Of course, they did live with relatively small family groups, or clans. They already understood to some degree that they needed others to cooperate in fighting the enemy, whether this was the elements, beasts, or other clans. So even at this highly individualized period at the bottom of the evolutionary scale, there existed the need to cooperate with others. The lessons learned at this stage could then be brought into the following phase, enriching a group consciousness.

Later, as the population increased, humanity developed the ability to cope with the elements. People learned to take care of themselves more efficiently. The need then arose to widen the circle of human relationships. Thus group consciousness came to be emphasized.

From family clans came tribes and people had to learn to get along with others. They were not yet able to widen their relationships beyond a relatively small circle of their own clans. Eventually, larger groups, and, much later, nations came into existence, but only after further alternations between individual and group consciousness had taken place.

Even today, humanity is not yet willing and able to get along with all brothers and sisters inhabiting the earth. The old consciousness still makes for separation. But humanity is now ready for a new influx, so that those who resist the movement will experience a painful crisis, while those who follow it will experience unprecedented richness and blessing.

Let us now return to the second phase of this great cosmic movement. Group consciousness at this very early stage meant learning to get along with others. In this phase, getting along could best be learned for a negative reason: fear of an enemy. As human development proceeds further, getting along with others will no longer come from fear and need only, but also from love and mutuality.

Group consciousness means finding the oneness between the self and others. In the early development of consciousness this happened in a very primitive and superficial way. Nevertheless this stage, too, had to be traversed. Human consciousness had to learn this particular lesson of cooperating out of fear. So for extended periods of history individuals existed within the tribe finding security in it. They could find security only when they learned how to get along with others. Then the tribe would act out enmity, suspicion, and negative aggression, not so much by fighting between individuals within the tribe -- although this, too, always existed within tribes, nations, and families -- but mainly by opposing other tribes. In the expression of negative aggression, loyalty to one's tribe and protection of the other members of the tribe had to be learned.

So you can see, my friends, even the negative manifestation of the lower development -- hostility toward the other, warfare -- can be used to promote the evolution of consciousness.

As population increased and civilization advanced, this movement had to reach its next alternation, in order for evolution to take its course. As you know, in more recent history, just a few hundred years ago, the emphasis began to focus more on the individual. Individualism became very important and has continued to increase in recent years. Humanity had learned certain lessons in bridging the gap from the self to the other. So now the emphasis had to return to the individual, to individual rights, the right to be oneself, to be perhaps different, to not conform, to become more self-responsible.

This phase is now approaching its end. The importance of the individual is not diminishing, but the emphasis is again shifting to the group consciousness on another level of reality. The principles that were previously learned on lower levels can now be applied to a higher evolutionary level. The lessons learned recently in the phase of high individuality can now be brought into the new phase of the development of group consciousness.

Once again you see here the familiar spiral movement of creation that you detect so often, in many individual forms, on your own path. The same spiral movement exists, of course, in the development of humanity as a whole. The spiral always seems to go around in circles, yet if the growth is real, these are not circles that repeat on the same level. They repeat on ever deeper, or higher, levels: higher in development, deeper in consciousness.

Let us look at an example. The more self-responsible you are, the more you contribute to the group. The more you can assert your rights and your individual needs, the less you need from or conform to the group. The freer your love and your ability to give to the group, the more you can receive from it. For the self-sufficient person has valid needs for love, intimacy, closeness, and warmth to be happy. The greater the individuality, the better your integration with the group consciousness will be. It is therefore a great mistake to think of this development in either/or terms. There are those who believe that group living is contradictory to individuality. And there are those who accuse practitioners of individualism of being opposed to love and brotherhood. Both are wrong, as you can see.

There are many more such alternations historically speaking, that I cannot go into at this time. Actually there is a spiral within the larger spiral. The spiral I have discussed here is a fourfold alternation that holds true on the overall scale of human evolution. But within the fourfold alternation exists a smaller spiral movement in which subdivisions of many more such alternations exist. For instance, within the larger overall phase of either the individual or the group consciousness, constant smaller fluctuations of the same alternations take place. And within that secondary spiral movement exist many more alternations of individual and group consciousness.

An entity is born many times within one overall phase that may last many hundreds or even thousands of years, but each individual life must still go through the same alternations. One incarnation may emphasize one form of consciousness much more than another. And even within this same incarnation, you go through periods of your life in which, whether you know it or not, you concentrate first on one form of development, then on the other. So, for example, a small infant is almost entirely in the individual state. Do not believe that no lesson is learned in that phase. School age is the first phase in this particular lifetime of learning how to get along with a group.

As you continue to go through each alternation, each fulfills a purpose and presents a lesson. This constitutes a third spiral within the larger spirals. There are periods where living alone fulfills an important function. At other periods living alone represents stagnation and a refusal to follow the organic movement. The same holds true for the reverse. There are periods when group development is essential for the development both of the individual and humanity as a whole. There are other periods where staying within that framework represents stagnation. But one cannot generalize about when one or the other applies. Each has to be evaluated in terms of the person's own path. The only thing that can be generalized is that when people follow their inner path movement, they will find peace and joy; when they do not, they will be discontented and anxious.

Living with one other person in real intimacy can also come under the heading of group living, at least to some extent. Once again it can be quite misleading to try to judge whether it is right or wrong to be alone or with others. It depends on what phase of all the intermingling spiral movements an individual is in. If you truly follow your path, you will know that what is at one time

important and advisable, may at a later period be a sign of stagnation and inadvisable for you. So you have to be aware that no specific thing is always right, for there is a continuous movement.

When an entity -- individual entities or the entity of the planet -- is ready for an alternation, when its development approaches the switching point, there are always strong new energies released into the planet or the individual from higher spheres. This manifests on the inner plane as a strong movement. When this movement is halted by the ever-existing tendency to stagnate, it creates a painful crisis. You may look at all the upheavals in human history from this point of view. Most such periods were manifestations of exactly this principle. When the new movement is halted, what would express itself in a blessed, rich way, can manifest only in a distorted, therefore painful way. You create the distortion by not feeling, not trusting, and not following the course of the inner process.

Let me give you a specific example of something that is happening right now. Humanity as a whole is ready to approach a much deeper phase of group consciousness. The natural manifestation of this, if followed, would be the transformation of nations into one human government; religious differences would disappear because the One would be recognized as undifferentiated. All humanity would apply laws of equality, justice, and love to all, sharing the wealth of the earth. New laws and new approaches would be instituted that would yield undreamed-of results. The "other" would no longer be "the enemy."

But since humanity by and large resists this natural development, those who follow it necessarily separate from those who do not. They create their own communities where this new spirit will increasingly manifest. In the meantime, the great new movement halted by the resisters manifests in a distorted way. This is why you find today the regrettable manifestations of "group consciousness" in overpopulation, overcrowded cities, in the emergence of monopolies in which large groups master the masses and dictate laws and values. The self-alienation of overcrowded living and working, in which human qualities give way to robotic qualities, is by now well known.

Those who are not connected -- consciously or intuitively -- with the movement and development of consciousness are regressive and try to halt the movement, fearing it, and believing it is bad. But they cannot really halt the movement, which then hits a closed channel that is alien to its own benign nature and thus creates negative conditions. The group becomes an amorphous mass. Instead of highly individuated members, such groups have a mass-consciousness that must not be confused with group consciousness. The halted movement of group consciousness expresses itself in large groups selfishly running the masses; big concerns in which all personal connection to others, to employers, to aspects of the work itself, is almost lacking. These, and many more such manifestations in your modern life, are not the result of overpopulation, but of halting the movement of consciousness, of not feeling and following it. Overpopulation itself is one such manifestation. Modern people are small cogs in a big machine, depersonalized because they halted both movements: their own individuation and the group consciousness.

As the movement is blindly halted, feared, denied, population increases; greater communities develop a mass consciousness instead of a group consciousness -- in urban and industrial life, in the disconnection from nature. As group consciousness distorts into mass consciousness, so does individual consciousness turn into separatism and alienation from the other.

If the movement is followed, unobstructed by blind resistance, by fear of change, but is trusted and honestly accepted, then these negative manifestations will fall by the wayside. As for those who follow the movement, they will not be affected by the distortions of mass consciousness. They will create a new group consciousness. There is a great difference between the two as you, my friends, can surely perceive now. Mass consciousness eliminates individuals; group consciousness honors and furthers them. Each individual is, of course, an integral part of the whole. The more fully you function as an individual, the more you have to add to the group. The less you are a full-fledged individual, the less you can contribute to it.

In the mass consciousness this is entirely different. Mass consciousness does not require individuation; instead, it imposes a blind following and conformity. The halting of the movement creates a perversion of what group consciousness would create.

This is very important to understand, my friends. Within yourself, as well as within the consciousness of humanity, group consciousness has definite gradations and categories. There are three major phases of development in this respect. Both as a whole, and as the individuals that form part of it, humanity has gone through these three stages. You are also going through them on deeper, and respectively higher levels of consciousness-organization, until total oneness with the All is achieved.

On the lowest scale you need the group because you are frightened, you are dependent, and you are not yet able to be responsible for yourself. You do not yet have the ability to establish a channel to your own limitless creative potential. This phase can be likened to the infant who needs the mother.

You often find individuals who are ready to move into the next phase of being self-responsible and establishing their own channel, but are unwilling to do so. I might say, you have all found this resistance on your path when encountering your lower self. Since the planet also has a lower self, there are factions of people who express a similar resistance. So you must differentiate between being unable to take on selfhood individually, and being unwilling to do so, insisting that others -- parents or groups -- give you the sustenance that only the divine self can give.

People who use the group as a crutch to substitute for individuation halt the movement as much as those who use individualism as a cover for their inability to be intimate, to be open and undefended, and who therefore fear the group. Such people will have a stake in confusing conformity and mass consciousness with group consciousness and will use the rightful arguments against the former to blot out the existence of the latter.

When individuals organically take the next step from needing the group to emancipation and self-responsibility, the pendulum may first swing slightly too much in the direction of individualism. They then rebel against the group and deny its value. You also find this rebellion within you, and you now know that to the degree you deny, fear and distrust autonomy, to that exact degree you will dislike yourself and those on whom you depend. Thus you need to rebel. But if you proceed organically, that rebellion will not last long, for you will recognize the rebellion for what it is and your emphasis will be put on the self, rather than on those against whom you rebel. You then learn to utilize your dormant divinity, but you are still in a phase where you must concentrate mainly on your individual process. Of course, this does not mean going into isolation. Help and reactions

from others are always an integral part of this phase. Contact with others is always necessary. Others can mirror to you where the self is stuck, and the self deeply needs this awareness of its effects on others during its individuation process. In this entire phase, the emphasis is on individuation.

The third phase of development comes when individuals have developed full self-realization and can thus benefit from and give to the group without losing selfhood, autonomy, and self-responsibility. They do not lose privacy, the right to be different, nor do they deny their need to express their uniqueness. Quite the contrary. In such an evolved group there is no conflict between individual needs and those of the whole group.

Group consciousness does not diminish uniqueness, but furthers it. The self no longer uses the group as a crutch because it cannot handle life. Nor is the group an authority that one needs to rebel against. The group is truly an extended self in which one can function as a free agent. The highest organization of group consciousness occurs when each individual has found his or her autonomy.

In the overall development the phases are never that clearly defined. They overlap and there are many spirals within the spiral, yet the movement is not haphazard but an expression of such profound harmony and lawfulness in a larger scheme that the human consciousness can sense it only vaguely, at best. So I would say to you, my friends, that in this period of your history, humanity is ready for the individual autonomy that can form groups and ready for the group consciousness that becomes an entity in itself. Those who obstruct group consciousness distort it into mass consciousness, and individual consciousness into separatism. But those who follow the movement of autonomy within a new group consciousness will create the new world, the life of the New Age. Community living is springing up increasingly, and although it does not always express itself in its perfect form, it moves toward it so that it will blossom.

Now, in your particular community, you will find each of these three phases of human consciousness represented. Even people who are, on the whole, sufficiently highly developed to form part of this New Age community living, have areas within them that represent lower phases. You all know this and have been working with these aspects. You find that part in you where you desperately need others because you fear you are not enough and have not actualized your inner God. This does not mean that you should now separate yourself from the group, for alone you could hardly accomplish the task of development. But you need to be aware of your wish to misuse the group in order to avoid meeting yourself.

And you also find that part in you that rebels against the group and wants to shun it because you fear exposure and rejection; you fear your need and your weakness; because you do not yet know how to function without the pretenses of your mask and your defensive games. Again this does not mean that you should now abandon all your individual needs and forms of self-expression and submerge into an amorphous group organism. It merely means to see and pay attention and understand and proceed from there. So even while all these aspects may still exist in you to some extent, this does not mean that you are not ready to become a fully autonomous individual who is part of the group, being enriched by it and enriching it. You can find your privacy and individuality totally intact, your group living and intimacy totally unhampered. In the course of your movement

on this path, you will find the phases I mentioned; all of them are represented. They coexist within the soul, and that has to be recognized.

Most of you have already found your dependency, be it on family, a mate, the group. First unconsciously, and later consciously, you expect the group to do for you what you think you cannot or will not do for yourself. You have also discovered that you become frightened and uncomfortable in the group and want to run from it because of your expectations from and demands on it, as well as because of the hidden guilt and shame of your lower self. So you turn against the group and rebel against it.

You are all perfectly well aware of these tendencies, but you have applied them exclusively to the parental situation: you, as a child, still want to have a father and a mother figure. This is true in a purely psychological sense, in terms of this life, but putting it into a cosmic framework, it is also true that in the phase of group consciousness you endow the group with the power that you resist developing within yourself. You therefore go into the second phase: rebellion against the group, resenting it, avoiding it. You find that part in you, too.

But many of you are becoming increasingly ready to go into the third phase where you will find true self-responsibility, your own inner strength, your autonomy, your own channel to the highest, where you can indeed stand on your own two feet because you have within you what you need. Therefore you need not fear and rebel against the group. You no longer need the group in a debilitating way; you need the group out of love and a desire for mutual giving and receiving. You share and experience the struggle of growth and the joys of life, the pain and the pleasure of living, and you are grateful for this richness of life with others in which being together in no way infringes on your privacy, your uniqueness, and your need to be by yourself. That kind of relating is true intimacy.

This kind of relating must also exist for a couple in order for the one-to-one relationship to be truly fulfilling. If you use a mate because you do not wish to fend for yourself, the relationship becomes unbearable. By the same token, if you use a group because you feel frightened alone, you will simultaneously fear and hate that group.

The negative expressions vary in the different phases. In phase one you will be more in touch with the fear and the need and less in touch with the hate and the rebellion. Feeling the fear of life more, you will need the group, or the mate more. The hate for those one needs and depends on is more dormant in the first phase. In the second phase the hate and fear of the group is predominant as is the desire to run from it, while need and dependency are more dormant. A false independence is then courted in which give and take cannot be learned, neither can flexibility and openness. People in this phase continue to cultivate a rigid, inflexible attitude in which they think they can control everything within and around them. They cultivate an unyielding false selfhood.

All the phases of the alternation of individual and group consciousness exist not only on the planetary level, on an overall scale of the total evolution of the planet Earth, of humanity as a whole; they exist within each human being. From this point of view it will become quite significant for you, my friends, to see where you are. To be aware of this is of great importance. It will be a map for you with which you can chart your way through an inner situation. Without this awareness it would be much harder for you to understand where you are, what you do, and what your reactions truly

mean. You will come into an even deeper understanding of the unitary principles of life. In this particular instance, the dualistic principle proclaims that either individualism is "right" and group consciousness "wrong" or "bad," or vice versa. Each "wrong" is easily rationalized by the use of the distorted form of its true expression.

From the unitary principle you understand that both have their function and both have the healthy, truthful expression, or both can have a perverted, distorted expression. So it is of utmost importance for you to see where you are in relation to the group; to probe yourself with questions. Are you needful of the group? Are you afraid of being alone? Do you expect the group to do for you what you do not wish to do or believe you cannot do? The answer may not always apply to the whole group; it may apply to only one other individual, but the principle remains the same. The moment you fear your aloneness, you must also understand that relating to the other -- be it one person or a group -- will be as difficult as being alone. And only when your aloneness is no longer difficult will the group living or the one-to-one living be a true joy.

You will then move into the new consciousness that spreads its wings, that is rich from within and therefore adds to what is without, and that can also take in from without and bring it back into the inner world. In a group that consists predominantly of autonomous individuals, the richness multiplies and compounds with almost incomprehensible speed. This is a phenomenon you, in your work here, begin to perceive. Those who are following this new stream will and do perceive it. Those who may be very active in this work but are not yet within that stream are blind to it. They are not able to differentiate between the healthy and the unhealthy attitude toward group and individual consciousness. They cannot differentiate between healthy selfishness and unselfishness as two expressions of the same source. But those who are within that stream, who have reached their first foothold in that cosmic current, which constantly expands, will know that the group will never eliminate their privacy or the autonomy of their being. It will further it as well as your independence. As you develop, you enrich the group, and the group enriches you.

New communities, new living centers of the new consciousness, are springing up on Earth. They will increasingly manifest and practice this consciousness.

It is important that you be well aware of the unitary principle. This possibility is speedily ripening into a reality manifest on your earth plane. Thus you can follow the various spirals within you, knowing where you are and what you move toward. It is one thing to know about their phases as conditions within the human personality, but it is another to understand them within the framework of a larger cosmic scheme, as a meaningful manifestation of a cosmic movement that you are part of. Such understanding will help you to not bring this new force to a halt so that it would manifest negatively, but you will go with it in the best possible way.

On each threshold from one new phase to the other, new energies are being released. So it is not the first time in history that new energies are being released onto your earth plane. Each period had its own newly released energy-and-consciousness streams brought into the inner awareness of individual beings. But humankind has now reached a much higher potential of development and those who follow this potential will therefore be swept onward by this inner movement as never before.

If you wish, you can tune into this force and truly use it for your transformation. In this respect you are not yet doing as much as you could, although your progress individually and as a group is very substantial. You do not yet tune in enough to this force, which is operative in the universal consciousness and therefore also in you. You still cling to the belief that this or that problem or attitude of yours cannot be changed. By doing that you not only make yourself unavailable to the new consciousness and this energy force that streams inside of you, but you also endanger yourself because this force will then reverse the process and bring you into a crisis that could have been avoided. The force is there, whether you use it consciously or not. If you use it consciously and wisely and follow it, go with it, it will bring you into undreamed-of unfoldment and enrichment. If you stem against it in blind fear and stubbornness, it will turn against you. This is the law. It is no evil force per se that is doing it; it is only the denial of the movement of the whole, the divine flow. Whether you deny it because of ignorance, stubbornness, or anything else makes little difference. So I say to you, my friends, you are in a wonderful process of awakening; wake up more. Take yourself out of your numbness. Look at it, feel it, the force within you. It is the living Christ force that can transform the negative material, the stagnant attitude into an entirely new expression. Do not hug your negative thoughts and convictions. The force is there the moment you embrace it, the moment you turn to it, the moment you lift your face to it, allegorically, inwardly, symbolically. Lift your hands to it, allow it, and go with it. So much has already happened in this respect. It can be activated more to the wonderful unfoldment of each of your lives.

Universal love is highly concentrated here, at our meetings, so that you do not receive just words, important as the contents of these lectures are for you, to understand and to work with. Most of you who do not numb yourselves are indeed aware of this very concentrated love force penetrating and enveloping you. You feel it and are enriched by it. So I say, open your inner eyes and ears and all your faculties of intuitive perception to soak in the force that is here, so that what your mind learns on the level of consciousness can become a vibrant truth -- not just a cut-off intellectual understanding. You live and move and have your being in this love and in this truth at all times, only most of the time you are not yet aware of it. What you have to learn is know it, that is all. You are all blessed, my very beloved friends.

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