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The Hidden Cause of All Things

Shakespeare's Hamlet in his famed soliloquy pondered, "To be or not to be," and thus faced squarely the primary challenge of life. Most people only exist, and never truly *are* at all. They exist as predictable equations, reacting rather than acting, walking compendiums of aphorisms and taboos, reflexes and syndromes. Surely the gods must chuckle at the ironic spectacle of robots fancying themselves free, but still, when finally the embodied consciousness rises above the pain-pleasure principle of nature, then the true meaning of freedom is made apparent at last.

Action versus Reaction

We exist in order that we may become something more than we are, not through favorable circumstance or auspicious occurrence, but through an inner search for increased awareness. To be, to become — these are the commandments of evolving life, which is going somewhere, aspires to some unsealed heights, and the awakened soul answers the call, seeks, grows, expands. To do less is to sink into the reactive prison of the ego, with all its pain, suffering,

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limitation, decay, and death. People who live through reaction to the world about them are the victims of every change in their environments, now happy, now sad, now victorious, now defeated, affected but never affecting. They may live many years in this manner, rapt with sensory perception and the ups and downs of their surface selves, but one day pain so outweighs pleasure that they suddenly perceive their ego as illusory, a product of outside circumstances only. Then they either sink into complete animal lethargy or, turning away from the senses, seek inner awareness and self-mastery. Then they are on the road to really living, truly becoming; then they begin to uncover their real potential; then they discover the miracle of their own consciousness, the magic in their mind.

Mastery over life is not attained by dominion over material things, but by mental perception of their true cause and nature. The wise person does not attempt to bend the world to fit their way or to coerce events into a replica of their desires, but instead strives for a higher consciousness that enables them to perceive the secret cause behind all things. Thus they find a prominent place in events; by their utter harmony with those events they actually appear to be molding them. They move effortlessly through the most strenuous action, the most perilous times, because their attunement with the mental force that controls the universe guides them to perform the work that needs to be done.

Electromagnetic Mind

This mental force that controls the universe may be called anything you like and visualized any way you choose. The important thing is to understand that it exists, to know something about how it works, what your relationship to it is. It might, for instance, be likened to an enormous electromagnetic field. All conscious forms of life then would be tiny electromagnetic fields within the universal field and finding positions within it, each according to the kind and quality of

its field. Where each individual field would wind up within the main field then would be a matter of inexorable law and absolutely unavoidable, as is illustrated by the millions of people who perform the same tasks over and over with absolutely the same results, almost as if following ritual. Perhaps they are always sick, always defeated, “just barely missers,” perhaps always broke, always out of a job. If we give just the slightest reflection to our own lives we cannot help but be startled by how we seem dogged by the same situation in all things, year after year, time after time. This deadly recurrence is the source of most frustration and mental illness, and is the bottom root of all failure.

Yet it is avoidable. And the way by which it is avoidable brings complete emancipation of the mind and spirit. *For the tiny electromagnetic field has inherent within it the ability to change the kind and quality of its field, so that it will be moved about within the main field with all the power and sureness of the main field until it arrives at the position its new quality of consciousness demands.*

The important thing to remember about this illustration is that the tiny electromagnetic field does not move itself. It is moved by the large field. And behind its movement lies all the power of the large field. Any attempt by it to move itself is obviously futile, since it is held in place by a power infinitely greater than itself. And it is held *where* it is because of *what* it is. The moment a change occurs within itself, it is moved by a power outside itself to a new position in the field, one in keeping with its new potential.

The Mental World

The foregoing is admittedly an analogy, but nevertheless the Dutch scientist S. W. Tromp, in his remarkable book *Psychical Physics*, has proved beyond all doubt that the human being exudes certain electromagnetic fields, that the earth itself gives off an electromagnetic field, and his illustrations are so impeccably documented that there

cannot possibly be any scientific quarrel with them. We indeed may be on the very threshold of scientific proof of those invisible areas of human aspiration that have hitherto been the province of philosophers, diviners, and priests. Departments of investigation into the paranormal abilities of the human psyche have been established at our leading universities, and it is now surely only a matter of time until we are faced with the final irrevocable proof of our intuitive perception — the power of mind over matter.

It is a mental world we live in, not a physical one at all. The physical is merely an extension of the mental, and an imperfect extension at that. Everything we see, hear, and feel is not a hard and inescapable fact at all, but only the imperfect revelation to the senses of an idea held in mind. Preoccupation with sensory experience has focused attention on effects instead of causes, has led scientific investigation down a blind alley where everything grows smaller into infinity or larger into infinity and walls us off from the secrets that lie behind life. It is not the planets and stars, the elements and winds, or even the existence of life itself that is the miracle that demands our attention. It is consciousness. It is the mere fact of being, the ability to say, "I." Consciousness is an indisputable fact, the greatest miracle of all, and all the sights and sounds of the world are merely side effects.

The Hidden "I"

To be conscious is to be conscious; there are not different kinds. The "I" that is in your neighbor is the exact same "I" within you. It may appear to be different through being attached to different sensory experience, but that is only because it has allowed itself to be conditioned by such experience. In point of actual fact consciousness is never the result of experience but the cause instead, and wherever we find it, it is primarily aware of existing, of being "I." There is only one basic consciousness in all creation; it takes up its residence in

all things, appears to be different according to the things it enters into, but in essence is never changed at all. It is intelligence, awareness, energy, power, creativeness, the stuff from which all things are made. It is the alpha and omega of existence, first cause; it is you.

“Everything in Nature contains all the powers of Nature. Everything is made of one hidden stuff,” wrote Ralph Waldo Emerson. He pierced the veil, perceived behind the sense-enchancing dance of nature’s myriad forms the workings of the one mind and one intelligence from which all life and aspiration spring. There can be no inner peace or surety of action without this basic spiritual knowledge. People who live isolated from the roots of their being have cut themselves off from the source of all power and dwell alone and without resource in a hostile and threatening world. Let them once perceive the true nature of life and their relationship to it, and they soon see that the world always reflects their thoughts.

The Mask

The surface mind or sense-self or ego is the villain of the play that is being enacted on the human stage at present. As a form of life, we humans are sufficiently evolved so as to understand our separateness and uniqueness. We look in the mirror and understand that the reflected animal is we. We are concerned with the appearance and welfare of this animal and ponder its relationships with the world and others. We do not truly understand what we are, only that we are conscious and confined within a particular body, and the experience and knowledge we acquire, together with our disposition as to their use, we label “I,” and thus we are deluded into calling a ghost by our own name.

Hidden behind this ghost, obscured by its struggles and fancies, is the Secret Self, which even though hidden, ignored, or misunderstood, nevertheless moves all things on the chessboard of life according to their natures and aspirations. We are never ego or

sense-self. These are masks we don as we play at the parts we find in life. What we truly are is not a changing thing, but is whole and entire, powerful and serene, limitless and eternal. It springs from the inexhaustible source of life itself, and when we learn to identify ourselves with it, then we have hitched a ride on a power so far beyond our tiny temporal selves that our lives are changed in the most amazing manner.

The Imprisoned Self

“To be what we are and to become what we are capable of being,” wrote Robert Louis Stevenson, “is the only end of life.” But when we stultify our divine birthright in manacles of mental and spiritual limitation, then we have no alternative but stagnation and pain. As long as we are responsive solely to the stimuli that impinge upon our senses from the outer world, we have no choice but to be victims of every circumstance. Locked to the senses, we reel under each stimulus, now aggressive, now afraid, now joyful, now sad, now seeking death, now life, but always our inner serenity and equilibrium are in the hands of something we neither understand nor control; and so we are puppets, pulled by invisible and unknown strings, swirling in the maelstrom of life like scraps of paper in the wind; and if perchance we garner knowledge enough to perceive our helplessness, then we often are overcome with such depths of sadness as to make effort against our bonds an almost unimaginable thing.

But the moment that we pause long enough in the headlong rush of life to see that we are not moving in accord with or in response to our own decisions but rather in reaction to the world around us, then we have taken the first step toward freedom. Only someone who knows their slavery can aspire to be free, just as true freedom is possible only to one who has experienced chains. Our hates, loves, fears, envies, aspirations, deceits are for the most part products of circumstance, of false and limiting codes and mores — more often

innate terrors of mountains that are molehills; and the solution to all of them is to stand foursquare before them, daring them to do their utmost, exposing them for what they are, thus forswearing allegiance to the cupidity of the deluding and blinding ego, which forever keeps us thinking we are greater than others and less than we truly are.

The Liberating Power

It is not necessary to become a mystic, even a philosopher, certainly not a melancholy metaphysician in order to come to grips with the spiritual side of existence, to establish a mental causation in your life that will give you control of circumstance. What *is* necessary, however, is that you do not immediately throw out the door everything that has to do with spirit simply because it is the established province of religion. You may be a Christian or a Hindu, a Muslim or a Buddhist, a Taoist or a Shintoist, but that only increases your individual human responsibility to think through all issues that bear on the world and life and death and your individual being. Only when you come to grips with your own mental essence, only when you arrive at a realization of the ephemeral, ever-changing nature of "I" will it become apparent that everything is in a constant state of growth and development and aspiration, and there are no limits and finalities and defeats, and anything is possible to one who first conceives the image in their mind.

There is within us a power of complete liberation, descended there from whatever mind or intelligence lies behind creation, and through it we are capable of becoming anything and doing anything we can visualize. The mental stuff of which we are made is of such kind and quality that it responds to the formation of images within it by the creation of a counterpart that is discernible to the senses. Thus any picture we hold in our minds is bound to resolve in the material world. We cannot help ourselves in this. As long as we live

and think, we will hold images in our minds, and these images develop into the things of our lives, and so long as we think a certain way we must live a certain way, and no amount of willing or wishing will change it, only the vision we carry within.

The Law of Life

It is astounding and sad to see the many thousands of people whose mental machinery keeps delivering to them the very effects they say they do not want. They bewail the fact that they are poor, but that doesn't make them richer. They complain about their aches and pains, but they keep right on being sick. They say that nobody likes them, which means they don't like anybody. They aren't bold, they aren't aggressive, they aren't imaginative; mentally they quiver and quake and are bound to negative delusions. It simply doesn't matter what the picture in your mind is, it is delivered nonetheless, with the same amount of faithfulness and promptness if it is a picture of poverty or disease or fear or failure as it would be if it were a picture of wealth or health or courage or success. The law of life is this: all things both good and evil are constructed from an image held in mind.

A tightrope walker edges swiftly out on her elastic and minuscule support. High in the air, wavering, suspended on a thin black line, she seems to transgress all normal laws of behavior. What is astonishing is not that she is able to do this thing so well but that she dares attempt it at all. Yet what she is doing is an inescapable result of mental law. Long before she set her first uncertain steps on the taut wire, she made a picture in her mind. Throughout her early stumbling attempts the picture persisted. She saw herself, agile, balanced, adroitly crossing the swaying wire, and this vision sustained her through all early failures. Now she flaunts her skill and courage in the very face of death, nonchalantly, as the spectators gasp. She is sure, poised, confident, delivered of all fear and mishap by the sustaining picture within.

Image Power

The image power of the mind is imagination, but just what imagination is and where it comes from nobody seems to know. A famous surgeon is reputed to have remarked that he had sliced open many a brain without ever having seen a picture or found a thought. The imagination certainly is no more exclusive property of the brain than of an arm, a leg, or the stomach. Thinking is performed not by a part of the body or even the whole body but by the inhabitant within. It is that function which enables consciousness to know its surroundings and to know itself. Only one who thinks is able to say, "I." Only one who can say, "I," is able to cast up pictures within their own being, known to no others.

The eternal striving for knowledge and capacity, the most apparent thing about life, is resolved always by two principal elements of the strife — the knower and the thing to be known. By definition these appear to be separate, and we observe that people ordinarily cope with the outer world by tabulating the manner in which it impinges upon their senses. A thing is so long and so wide and weighs so much and is so hard and a certain color. A name is given it, and as long as each subsequent time it is encountered it maintains the majority of its original characteristics, people recognize it for what it is and know it when they see it. If you ask them if it is near, they are able to answer instantly, simply by glancing around. If its presence produces some particular effect upon them, like fear or anger or love or tension, then the mere presence or absence of this object may be said to materially affect their life. In that case, their state of mind is not a matter of their own determination, but instead is the direct result of the object as they encounter it or avoid it in the outer world.

Inner Vision

Life in animal and vegetable forms is purely a matter of reaction. There is first the organism, then there are the elements that intrude

their presence upon it. The conflict thus engendered resolves itself in the process of evolution as each organism attempts to overcome the obstacles it meets, but this influence, through the lower stages of evolution, apparently comes only from outside and is the result of processes and forces beyond the control of the organism. Nature holds the world and life in an iron grip, and lower animal as well as vegetable life is led inexorably along a path it neither understands nor can avoid. A thing is the kind of thing it is through a creative process that appears to be outside it; existence itself, in any shape or form, appears to be beyond the power and scope of the individual being. We are born and we die, and nothing within our known powers or knowledge can aid or stop these events. And insofar as we live in response to the senses, we are automatons only, and the shape of our lives is predestined by the circumstances we encounter.

Imagination is the tool by which we may be delivered from our bondage. We can decide what we will think. We can decide to originate thought from some secret wellspring within rather than in response to the stimuli of the outer world. We can resolve that the images in our minds will no longer be products of the conditions we meet, but instead that our visualization will be the result of our inner resources and strength, in conformance with our goals and desires. Thus the quality of our consciousness will be tempered by our true motivations and we are freed at once of the trap of defeating our purposes through giving credence to every obstacle. The unalterable law is this: only that which takes root in mind can become a fact in the world. Thus the person whose consciousness is influenced only by the goals and purposes they have set within is delivered of all defeat and failure, for obstacles then are only temporary and have no effect upon their inner being. Only that which conforms to their inner vision is accepted home at last and allowed to take root in the plastic, creative medium of the Secret Self.

The Secret Self

It is knowledge about and faith in this Secret Self that is the key to correct use of the imagination. No one lives in the dark when they learn where the light is. To understand the Secret Self is to free oneself from bondage to circumstance, to loose within a power compounded upon itself, to provide life with perfect working and perfect serenity. This entity within each of us, not the ego, not experience, not time or circumstance or place or position, but consciousness only, the "I" divested of all accoutrements except pure sense of existence. This is the self that contains all power, whose essence is greater than the individual, greater than ten thousand individuals, for it is the supporting structure upon which all things are built, the evolving self of the universe. It is not confined to the body, to a time or place or condition, but is in all times and places and conditions. It is infinite and eternal and only one, but being so as easily manifests as the finite and temporal and many. All are contained within it, yet each contains it all, for by its very nature all of it is everywhere at the same moment.

The Secret Self is timeless and eternal. It is the self of the universe and it is the self of each of us, the self of you. It was never born and it will never die. It enters into each of its creations and becomes that creation. What is going on in life and the world and the universe is completely its working and the result of its secret purpose and undivulged goal. The nature of its being is mental; its essence is dynamic and creative. It is the eternal stuff that occupies all space and time and within which there is no dimension. It is all ends and middles and opposites and extremes, and it is infinitely creative. The myriad forms of life are but a tiny indication of its vast potential for plastic multiplicity out of its essential oneness.

Mental Ascendancy

The Secret Self is within you. It is not visited upon a fortunate few and withheld from others, but is totally existent in the heart of each

of us. Insofar as we are able to divorce ourselves from the world and the ego and sensual stimuli we will become increasingly aware of its existence within and consciously strive to identify ourselves with it. It is through this identification that the seeds of power are sown. One who is able to cast off the limitations of ego and improve the quality of their consciousness through disciplinary use of the imagination is able by means of direct identification to become one with the Secret Self and thus attain to a measure of its power for perfection. The potential for achieving this astounding goal lies within each of us. By means of inner mental ascendancy and pictorial definition we may become one with the purposes of the Secret Self and thus become infallible in our works and our goals.

This is a pretty big capsule to swallow. Our materialistic society with its reverence for the products of science has excised three-quarters of our mentality. We have concerned ourselves too much with the world, what it is, what is in it, how we can use it, and today we know little more of the origins and purposes of life than we did before humans were able to read and write. It is difficult when we know something of the principles of the gasoline engine, the generation and transmission of electricity, the refining and tempering of steel, of electronic and radio transmission, to admit the possibility that something radically opposed to the viewpoint of science could have a foundation in fact. Science says, "The laws of nature are supreme, and humans must learn to live with them in order to prosper." Now comes this diametrically opposed theory: "Nature is subservient to mind, not the human mind as we know it, but the Supreme Mind or Secret Self that lies behind life, and this Secret Self is within each of us. We can come to know it and to use it, and thus transcend the laws of nature and free ourselves from bondage to the senses and the material world."

Thoughts Become Things

What is going on in life is the evolution of the individual to complete oneness with the Secret Self. The universal being that lies

behind creation has differentiated into finite form, taken disguise, so to speak, in order to work out the manifold sides of its infinite and eternal nature. Therefore those who expand their consciousness are fulfilling the fondest wish of life. It is not necessary that we become saints to understand as much of the Secret Self as is necessary to use its power in our affairs. To know this law is enough: whatever we accept as a permanent mental image in our consciousness must manifest in our world, for we become in life what we are in consciousness, and nothing can alter that fact.

It takes a great deal of courage to admit to yourself that if you are sick, frightened, frustrated, or defeated you have brought these conditions on yourself and no one but yourself can get rid of them. Occasionally someone so afflicted will experiment with the power of the mind to cure himself but will give it only the most cursory trial. If, for example, they are ill and in pain, they might say, "I visualized myself well and happy, but I hurt just as much as ever." What they didn't do above all things was visualize themselves well and happy. They visualized themselves sick and in pain. The moment they began to visualize themselves well and happy, they would become well and happy. This is not a law that works once in a while or part of the time or on auspicious occasions. It works all of the time and it works in the exact same way, and it is returning to you right now in the material world the images you maintain in your mind. You cannot escape them. They surround you, sustain you, or torment you. They are good or evil or uplifting or degrading or exalting or painful according to the vision that prompts them, and as long as you are alive, as long as you think and imagine, you are literally surrounded day and night by the images that predominate in your consciousness.

Thought Control

The startling power of the Secret Self is that it always makes manifest the image it beholds. Nothing illustrates this fact better than

experiments with hypnosis. Someone may be in such excruciating pain that even narcotics will not relieve it, but they can be put under deep hypnosis and told that there is no pain at all, and presto, there is no pain. They may have a deep and abiding fear of crowds, but under hypnosis it can be suggested to them that they like crowds, and lo and behold, they enjoy crowds most of all. They can become stronger, healed of disease, smarter, more aggressive, possessed of endurance and indomitableness, all because these things are impressed upon their psyche as facts and the image in their mind grows from them.

“Aha!” the cry goes up, “find me a good hypnotist. I want to be smart and strong and successful and all those good things and to be rid of weakness and pain and failure.” And hypnosis can do it too, if you are willing to abdicate as the person in charge of your life. If you are willing that someone else run it every hour of every day throughout the whole of it, then you can turn your life over to a hypnotist and they can remake it in the image you outline. However, it will make small difference to you. You may still be in the vehicle, but you no longer will be driving. If effort and strife and the overcoming of obstacles are the spurs to growth that the Secret Self intends them to be, then surely you will have abdicated from life itself.

You need no hypnotist to put the power of the Secret Self to constructive work in your life. No hypnotist can overcome the negative image making of your mind unless they are with you twenty-four hours a day. You are the only one in constant rapport with yourself, and thus you are the only one able to police the thoughts and images you entertain. If you let the image be prompted by something outside you, then you exercise no control over your life. If you accept images only in accord with your desires, then life will deliver your inner goals. In any case, the magnificent promise of the Secret Self is this: *you can change your life by altering the images in your mind, for what comes to you in the end is only that which you have been accepting in consciousness.*

Now there are many people who agree with this premise but are quick to point out that the images in the consciousness of most persons are projected there from the subconscious and are not of their own choosing. Most schools of psychotherapy apparently feel this way, for they propose a tedious and time-consuming treatment bent on expurgating from the subconscious memories of painful and bitter occasions which might prompt unpleasant images in the mind. Seven or eight years of this process have not noticeably emptied painful memories from the subconscious of most patients, and in any case, if a treatment is truly efficacious, it cannot possibly consume so long a time. The saddest thing about the modern “put the blame elsewhere” school of psychoanalysis is that the person undergoing it accepts it as justification for their failure to police their consciousness and thereafter expects such policing to be accomplished by having the neighborhood rid of criminals. If they achieve some semblance of a changed consciousness in the hands of the psychiatrist, they soon go back to a world full of negative thoughts and ideas, and just because they do not police their own mind, they readily find acceptance there. You may not be able to alter the positions of the stars, to stop the earth from revolving, to cause the winds to blow or the sea to calm, but you *can* choose what you will think. You can think what you want to think. You can think only in response to an inner vision and a secret goal, and if you take your stand with a firm heart and a high resolve you will be successful and you will not be intimidated and you will project your image clear and true, and its counterpart will return to you in the world.

“Dry Hole” Casey

In a little village on the western slopes of the Great Divide lived a man whose entire life had followed one ignominious pattern. For thirty-five years he had been an oil well driller and had followed the frontiers of oil exploration throughout the United States. During

that time he had drilled forty-four wildcat wells and not one of them had made a strike. He had drilled in Texas, Oklahoma, Kansas, Louisiana, California, New Mexico, Arizona, Colorado, Wyoming, and still he had not hit. Oil operators wouldn't hire him anymore. He became known as "Dry Hole" Casey, a nice guy, but strictly out of luck. Finally he took a job in a Colorado mine and eked out his days without hope. He kept his drilling rig, though. It was his first love. Weekends would find him in the backyard, lubricating and cleaning its parts, handling them with ritualistic care.

One day in late spring, when the snow stood in broad glittering fields on the slopes of the mountains and the rivers and streams were high and roily, he wandered up into the woods and sat gazing over the valley. The valley was a basin hemmed in on three sides by precipitous intrusions of granite, and these mountains had been productive of many minerals, lead, zinc, silver, tungsten, manganese. Our friend gazed to the west, to where the basin sloped down to a plateau. Suddenly his mind formed the perfect picture of a faulted anticline, a predominant type of subsurface oil trap. The image seemed superimposed over the scene before his eyes, so that he could almost see the oil below the surface of the ground. He trembled before his vision, could not resist it. It seemed like a sudden visitation from heaven, and he left the mountainside absolutely certain that within the small valley lay a major oil field.

Next day he quit his job in the mine and with his savings managed to procure oil lease options on the land he visualized as being the most favorable. Now he had to raise capital to complete his leasing arrangements and provide funds to drill an initial well, a gargantuan task, since everyone who knew him knew also his history of failure. But the vision in his mind persisted. It led him to take a bus to an eastern city in quest of funds. It led him after a week of discouragement to a park bench and a seat alongside an elderly man who quietly and patiently fed the squirrels.

It was a bright warm day, and the squirrels were active, playing

and clowning over the proffered food, and the two men laughed at their antics, and each told stories of other squirrels and other times and agreed that the foibles of humanity were not shared by animals. Warmed at each other's company, they agreed to lunch together at a nearby restaurant. In the course of the luncheon, the oil driller told his newfound friend of his vision and his problem. His friend was interested, questioned him closely about the vision he had had on the mountainside, seemed impressed that it persisted.

"How much money do you need?" he asked.

"Fifty thousand dollars," replied the oil well driller.

"I will provide it," the man said suddenly. "We will be equal partners."

It seemed incredible, but there it was — a chance acquaintanceship on a park bench, and the money was provided. It is almost anticlimactic to relate that the subsequent well discovered a rich oil field. There simply was no alternative. And the man who put up the money knew that it would. He had had sufficient experience with the power of inner vision to manifest in the world to be absolutely sure of his position. He did not dwell for a moment on his partner's previous failures, only on the vision that possessed him now.

Dissolving the Mask of Vanity

What strange alchemy prompted our oil driller to have this clear vision in his mind, a vision that subsequently made him a rich man, when his whole previous life had been one unbroken line of failure? Surely the wells he had drilled before had been drilled in response to a vision too. Why should they have failed?

They failed because the vision he possessed then was one of failure. Sure, he would have denied it, but it was true. Perhaps a sense of the great hazard connected with searching for oil lay at the crux of his subconscious. Perhaps he felt that the odds were against him. Perhaps he was conscious of the fact that there are millions of acres

of land without oil under them. In any case, his vision was one of failure, from whatever cause, and he was led into those arrangements that would inevitably cause him to put his drillbit down in barren soil. And in two cases, where he actually had drilled on productive land, he once had ceased making a hole only twenty-seven feet above the productive formation and another time failed to make a test of a sand that later produced several million barrels. But he could not help himself. He was only following the dictates of the vision in his mind.

See how different his behavior was in the discovery of the basin field. He *saw* the oil. He *knew* it was there. There was not the slightest doubt in his mind, and that is the way he acted. There was no resisting him this time. His vision was for production, and that is what resulted.

Why? Why did he finally have a positive vision after harboring a negative one for so many years? Such a question could not be answered with certainty without making an intensive study of the man, but in all probability the debilitating and crippling factor was fear. Fear more than any other single thing warps and distorts our vision. Our oil driller most likely was afraid of failure, and his apprehension twisted his inner vision from success to defeat. He couldn't win as long as the fear stayed with him. Finally, when he had reached the absolute bottom, when the business he loved had rejected him and the men in it no longer would hire him, fear simply left him. Everything bad had happened already; what more was there to fear? And in this psychologically relieved attitude, the Secret Self was able to get through the mask of vanity, and the ensuing vision inevitably brought success.

Mind over Matter

“It is computed,” wrote Jonathan Swift, “that eleven thousand persons have, at several times, suffered death rather than submit to break their eggs at the smaller end.” The resistance of the human

mind to change is amazing, especially when it appears so obvious that life itself is nothing more than change. Multitudes of people, many of them very intelligent, argue that all cause is in the physical world and that mentality only observes. They seem determined to go down to their deaths with this frightfully erroneous viewpoint, even though their own inner attitudes belie their stand, even though their slogans extol the power of mind over matter.

On locker room doors and conference room walls the framed and placarded slogans emblazon their messages: "A quitter never wins. A winner never quits." "A team that won't be beat, can't be beat." "Put your heart in it. All else will follow." "Make up your mind, and you make up the future." But these verbal expositions to thoughtful vision are regarded as having precedence only in such matters as team effort, to bind together the group for a purpose, and their tremendous importance to individual creativeness is largely overlooked. From the inner vision all things are done — the bridge is built, the tower constructed, the oil well drilled, the motion picture made, the book written, the picture painted, music composed, outer space probed, secrets of the atom exposed.

There is absolutely no such thing as accomplishment unless it is preceded by a vision of that accomplishment. You simply can't reach across the table and pick up a dish unless you first have the mental image. All things come to all people according to the pictures that form in their minds, and the effort that is expended in this world to escape fates that are inevitable is sufficient to construct a tower to the sun. No amount of movement, of physical energy expended, can prevail against a wrong mental image. Similarly, the possessor of the correct mental image is guided to perform the work to be done, effortlessly, almost nonchalantly. Most of the struggling and striving in the world is done by people who are trapped into unwanted circumstances through incorrect mental visualization, and the fact that they visualize the very thing that they profess to abhor is the contradictory situation that is filling our psychiatrists' couches.

Mastery over Fate

The Dutch philosopher Benedict de Spinoza wrote, “So long as a man imagines that he cannot do this or that, so long is he determined not to do it; and consequently, so long is it impossible to him that he should do it.” The picture that forms in the mind, whether for good or ill, will deliver its inevitable consequence. The problem is not with the mental or spiritual fact of physical fulfillment of mental visualization, but rather of finding a key that will enable each person to cast up mental images at will, hold them until realization, and not have other images intruded by the recalcitrant subconscious, which so often runs contrary to the wishes of the conscious mind. In the deeper reaches of the human psyche the seeds are formed that motivate a whole life, and we either accede to or take command of these invisible prompters. If we accede, our lives will be run from a source beyond our conscious control. If we take command, we become master of our fate.

Taking command is never as simple as it sounds. It requires a firmness and boldness that only few people innately possess. Most of us live as complete slaves to reaction, absolute victims of the commands of the subconscious, and we seldom if ever even think it possible that we can overcome our feelings and react in an entirely different way than circumstances would have us do. For example, if you participate in a test and defeat seems inevitable, you only make it certain by acceding. But if you keep your spirit alive by a vision of victory, by an absolute resistance to the importunities of defeat and disaster, who knows what miracles may occur? The mental vision that resists all sensual stimuli becomes at length a thing unto itself and its resolution as objective fact in the material world cries out for utterance and will not be stifled. Nature’s vast creativity springs from the infinite potentiality of the Secret Self. Anything possible of conception is sure to eventually be created as a solid material fact for all the world to witness. There is no such thing as an idea without a visible resolution, for the great plasticity of the Secret Self

shapes every idea contained within it, and whoever is possessed of a thought is possessed of a thing as well, as long as they hold their image clear.

Creativity

Creativeness is not part of the surface self, of the ego, the conscious mind, the physical or sensual being. It emanates upward through the levels of consciousness from the Secret Self, takes shape and form through a power greatly beyond and infinitely more powerful than the small individual "I." That part of a person which is most powerful of all is invisible, seems apart from them completely, is hidden in the deepest recesses of their being, is not callable by name, is not recognizable through the physical senses, cannot be coerced, but responds innately and completely to image. This is the great plastic Secret Self from which all things are made, the creative self of the universe, maintaining a sameness in all differentiations, being eternally one in the midst of multiplicity; this is the Secret Self within you, which is not different from you, which in final analysis is altogether you. You are not conscious mind or ego or memory or sensual being, but were born directly from the mind that formulated and constructed the universe, and you are not different from that mind but attached to it by a mental and spiritual construction that makes you and it the same.

Abandonment of the surface self and seeking self-balance in the deeper regions of consciousness is the pathway to power and perfection in works. For when we attune ourselves to the life force and mental entity that gives us consciousness and lives within us, then we take on by a process of identification the effectiveness and potency of the infinite and eternal entity from which our individual lives have sprung. Our horizons expand, our consciousness widens; there wells up from secret and subterranean springs a constantly increasing and never-ceasing power for perfection and perfect understanding. Our faith is placed with simplicity and unflinching trust

in the inherent power of the Secret Self to return in material fact those mental images that live within us, and we need not have the key that unlocks the universe in order to use effectively this basic law. It doesn't bother us that there exist doors in the mental and spiritual realm that thus far have not yielded. We need not know all and understand all to use those truths we thus far have discovered, and we live in the consciousness that life is a mental adventure and not a physical journey.

Knowledge — the Great Lever

We all have seen people achieve great ends effortlessly. We have seen others strive frantically toward some goal only to consistently fall short. We are assured on all sides that hard work makes a person successful, yet we discern almost immediately that hard work sometimes fails of accomplishment while fortune often smiles on people who seem to make little effort at all. Shakespeare wrote, "There is a tide in the affairs of men which taken at the flood leads on to fortune." The story is told of a homeowner whose furnace refused to work and who subsequently called a repairman. The repairman struck the furnace a blow with his hammer, and it promptly resumed working. He presented a bill for one hundred dollars. "Outrageous," sputtered the irate homeowner. "I want that bill itemized." "All right," answered the repairman. He scribbled on the bill, "Striking one blow with hammer — one dollar. Knowing where to strike — ninety-nine dollars."

It is not how hard we work that matters, but what we get done. It is not the wailing and gnashing of teeth that is the show, but the things that are built and accomplished. The knowledge of the simple lever six thousand years ago might have saved a million hours of backbreaking labor, and had television existed in the time of Christ a different shape indeed might have been given the Christian Church. Knowing where and when to strike, just as the repairman so aptly illustrated, is the goal to be sought, and not the energy to run a

million circles around a field which does not need to be circled even once. Knowledge is the thing, not physical effort; all things exist because of mental causes, have risen in the physical world in response to ideas held in mind. Mind is first cause, and those who are guided by this knowledge discover the fountain of power.

Your Secret Self is a giant self, dwarfing into nothingness your surface mind and ego. It is a self without limits in space and time, and anything is possible to it. Its manifestations on the human scene sometimes seem supernatural. It outcrops in our geniuses, in those with "second sight," in our artists, our explorers, our pioneers, our adventurers. Its presence may be intimately felt in the fields of parapsychology, extrasensory perception, precognition, clairvoyance, thought transference. It stands behind all human endeavor and aspiration as the guiding intelligence of evolution. Life is going somewhere high and lofty and worthwhile, and the path by which the heights are to be scaled is safe and secure and well known. Only in partial knowledge is there confusion, and only through the separate and incomplete view of the surface self are we rendered impotent and afraid in a world that should be ours. The little mind that sits immediately behind our eyes has not the horizons nor the expanded consciousness to see the larger picture, the worthier and greater goal of the Secret Self. All individual suffering, frustration, and failure stem from the failure of the surface mind to find and properly identify itself with the Divine. In isolating ourselves from the true roots of our being, we are thrown out of kilter with the power and surety of the Supreme. By fancying ourselves to be sense-minded only, we are like the severed tail of a snake, possessed of movement still, but senseless now, without purpose or entity, helter-skelter, scratching out a crazy pattern in the dust.

The Giant Within

We are one body only, one mind only, one deep and abiding intelligence. We are not tiny infinitesimal parts of an infinite and

incomprehensible whole, but we are that very whole, that entire mind, that great and vast intelligence from which the universe has evolved, and everything contained within the universe is contained within us, and if we truly understand ourselves we understand the world and everything in it.

You can be anything you want to be, do anything you want to do, tread any path you will to tread, become master of your fate, ordain your future, but you will not do these things by railing against circumstance, by throwing yourself frantically against events and persons simply because they do not seem to be in accord with your plans. Only by perceiving the hidden purpose behind events, the true motivations that actuate people, will you be able to attune yourself to life, to act in accord with the gigantic tides that bring the future. This faculty is yours once you have gleaned the existence of the Secret Self and have set about striving to live in accord with it rather than with the surface self that has moved you heretofore.

We all aspire to goals, desire to improve our understanding and our abilities. We would not be alive if growth were not inherent in us. But oftentimes our growth becomes calcified through being ringed around with impermeable layers of selfishness and conceit. This selfishness is not necessarily just acquisitiveness; it may even be exemplified by an overwhelming generosity; it is simply primary concern for the ego, a living by and in accordance with the little "I" that constitutes the average person's self-knowledge. Such conceit makes knowledge of self a constant judgment, a comparison with others, favorably or unfavorably. It feeds on flattery and victory, is decimated by criticism and defeat. It has no true existence, but depends entirely upon circumstance and the reactions those circumstances set up within it. As a consequence, it is always exultant or sad, for its impression of itself is that it is either better than or worse than everything that confronts it. It has absolutely no knowledge of equality.

The Ultimate Resource

Breaking through the limiting boundaries of the ego into the unimpaired vision and knowledge and joy of the Secret Self is the undoubted goal of evolution, the purpose of life. This transformation, truly a transfiguration of the mind and spirit, is not an absolute thing but a matter of degree, is partially achieved at this moment by thousands of living persons, is possible of limited attainment by anyone who lives. To exist immersed in the ego is to live a restricted life, to realize only a small fraction of your potentiality. Such deliberate subordination to the dictates of nature is a subjection to pain and suffering and death and decay. Such subjection is normal to lower forms of life, seems part of the plan by which the Secret Self is emerging from matter, but when consciousness has reached the point where it recognizes its imprisonment, when it sees its subjection to circumstance and pleasure and pain, then it must strive to be free, to establish a truer order for its development. It then must break through the barriers of its awareness, cease living in the ego and attain the widened horizons and powers of the Secret Self, or it will fall back into the inertia of the sensual nature, lose its capacity for growth and development, and so cease to represent the Secret Self at all. To the person trapped and resigned to be trapped in the ego, there is no final end but suffering and pain. Only in the Divine lie the ultimate resources that overcome all obstacles, and only in seeking to discover the Secret Self have we firmly set foot on the one and only path that leads to success, serenity, and joy.

Struggle and Sacrifice

Nothing, of course, can be accomplished without a fight. Life itself is a struggle, and each of us enters it daily. It is simply a question of where to expend the effort: pursuing the material wraiths of the physical world that constantly seem to elude us or concentrating on an inner resource that controls the outer world. It is a wise person

who expends their energies developing their consciousness. They shortly will find that all the aspects of the world have assumed an order and a benignity they would not have thought possible. All things appear to do their bidding, not because they truly bid them, but because they understand them. It is this knowledge, attained by inner perception, of the potentiality of each thing and circumstance, that leads to beneficent power, that allows someone to move through the most intense conflicts with serenity and surety. They see the thing to be done because they know the outcome that must be achieved, and because of this inherent perception of the laws of life and nature, they appear to be modeling each event, shaping each thing, yet it is not they who do this but the Secret Self within them, to which they have entrusted themselves completely and which guides their steps and actions with omnipotent assurance.

Will you have the power and assurance and serenity of the Secret Self? Then there is something you must give up. You must give up the ego, that thing within you that you always have thought to be your very self. You must seek to shed that sense of separateness that is a product of your surface mind and to search deep within your consciousness for the pure core of being that is the self of all things. It will not be easy. The sensual nature with its constantly distracting stimuli brings daily clarion calls from the outer world. But if your life has provided you full measure of pain and frustration from chasing these tempters and deceivers, then you will face them with resistance and resolve to pursue them no more. The path to power lies within you. All things will be found there. The fight is not between the world and you, but between your ego and your true self. Simply choose to find your true self, and in the end you cannot lose.

When the fight begins within himself,
A man's worth something.

— ROBERT BROWNING