

The underlying sea of aether was completely dismissed. Physicists came to accept that waves of energy could exist with no underlying material to move. Waves could exist without the ocean – like the grin on the face of the Cheshire cat which stayed behind even after the cat had vanished.

A vortex theory today has no need of the aether; indeed any mention of the aether would be scientific suicide. A claim that particles were vortices in the aether would be taken as ludicrous. But if you can have a wave of pure energy, why not a vortex of pure energy? Kelvin was so close. He was after all a founding father of the dynamics, the science of energy. If only he had talked about energy, not aether! His theory would then make perfect sense today. Its foundation would be:

an elementary particle is a vortex of energy.

This is a simple idea. But it has immense power. If the elementary particle is a vortex of energy, our understanding of the world would be completely transformed.

For a start, the vortex resolves the most fundamental enigma of modern physics. It shows for the first time how energy is locked up in matter. Einstein described matter as frozen energy. The vortex gives a much clearer picture. movement is the very foundation of matter – there is nothing 'frozen' in it at all.

Now we can really see what Einstein meant when he said that mass is equivalent to energy.

It is ironic that at the turn of the century, just as Einstein was predicting the equivalence of mass and energy, the idea of the vortex went out of vogue. The achievement of the vortex is to portray matter as energy. It makes Einstein's idea intelligible, by describing the form that energy takes in matter.

Energy is not material. There is no sea of energy like the aether. It is not some stuff or some fluid that flows. Energy is dynamic, it is action and change. We could picture energy as movement.

just as movement cannot exist without direction, so energy cannot exist without form. It is not that energy forms the vortex or the wave. The vortex is energy. The two fundamental forms of energy in our world are matter and light. Light is often taken to be a wave form of energy. We are suggesting that matter is a vortex. Just as waves of light can exist without an aether to

wave in, so matter is not a vortex in anything; it is pure energy, with no material moving.

In nature, most vortices are conical in shape. Tornadoes and whirlpools are swirling cones. These natural phenomena well illustrate the dynamic nature of the vortex particle. But they completely fail to show its form. Elementary particles are best thought of as spheres, not cones.

Neither do Kelvin's smoke rings give us an accurate picture of the vortex of energy. Smoke rings have sides. The vortex of energy, to form an elementary particle, must be spherical and symmetric.

For an elementary particle, we need a spherical vortex, one that is completely symmetric. The vortex particle cannot be a cone or a ring; it must be a ball – a ball of energy. But how could a ball of energy arise? How could a spherical vortex be formed out of movement? Picture movement as a line. If a line is wound freely in a spiral, it creates a ball. Likewise, movement in a spiral could form a spherical vortex – a ball of swirling energy.

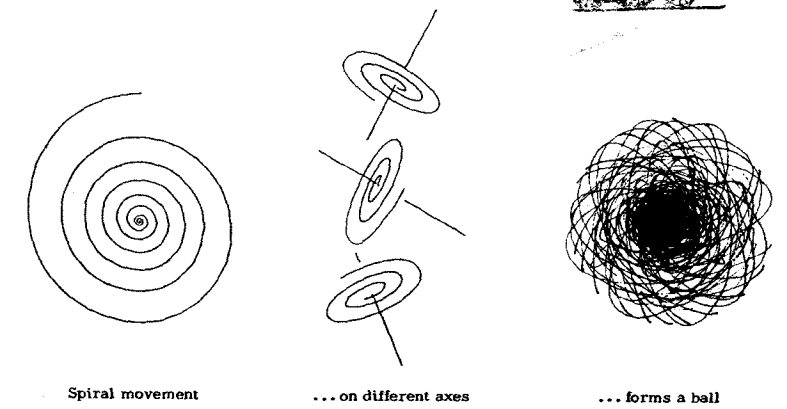
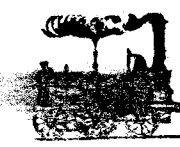


Figure 6. The vortex: spiral movement in three dimensions forms a swirling ball of energy

curved; if space is a bubble around matter, it would obviously take on the shape of the matter. The space bubble extending from a heavenly body, such as the sun, would necessarily be an extension of the spherical shape of the sun.

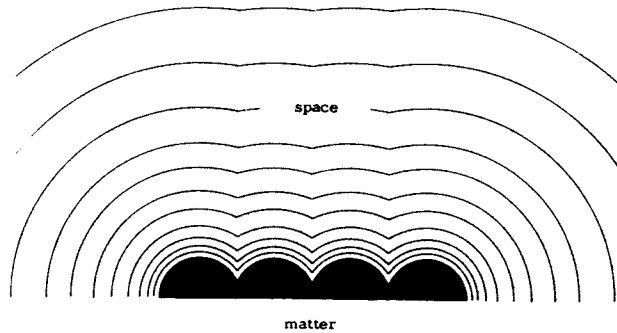


Figure 14. The space around an object is an extended field of energy with the same 'shape' as the matter

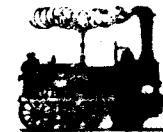
Before Einstein, space and time were each regarded as an endless continuum in which events took place. Newton taught that space and time were both absolute, existing quite independently of each other or anything else. Einstein showed, by contrast, that space and time are not fundamental and absolute, but closely related to each other and dependent on the speed of light.

* The vortex shows how space, time and matter all arise from the vortex of energy; as such they are inextricably linked – they are simply different aspects of a single underlying reality. If the speed of movement in the vortex is the speed of light, then it is obvious why space, time and matter are all linked, and relative to the speed of light.

Einstein regarded the speed of light as the limit of our world. We have suggested that the speed of light is not an absolute boundary – but rather the dividing line between physical and super-physical reality. These two realities differ in substance because movement is entirely relative. Movement in one vortex creates the space and time in which another can exist and move. They are all totally interdependent; they exist only in relation to each other. In transubstantiation, the movement in the vortex

is speeded up. As it exceeds the speed of light, the particle ceases to have the same relationship to the other particles left behind. In effect, it leaves their physical space and time.

Breaking out of space and time by transubstantiation would open up entirely new possibilities for travel. In our everyday experience, we travel *through* space and time. Via transubstantiation, bodies could *move in and out of space-time*, passing through the light-barrier. By this means, journeys at speeds which appear to be greater than that of light might be a real possibility.



of light can be detected and measured scientifically. If a realm of *sub-energy* existed, it would be part of our world and we could be aware of it.

Another way to picture the form of the universe is to imagine a box of matches in a room. The matchbox would represent the lesser, inner realm of energy. The room would correspond to the greater, outer realm of super-energy.

The box is part of the room. It fits into the room. However, the room isn't part of the matchbox; the room can't be fitted inside the box! We can locate the matchbox in the room; we can say where it is in the room. But to ask where the room is in the matchbox is meaningless.

We could extend the matchbox analogy to consider how the room is contained in a house and the house in a town. Moving from box, to room, to house, and into the town we would enter ever-increasing realms of experience.

It is easy to see from this analogy how inhabitants of one realm might have only limited access to adjacent realms. Imagine people confined to one room of the house. They would be able to peer through the keyhole and catch a glimpse of what is happening elsewhere in the house. Through the window, they might be able to gain an impression of the world outside. But, confined to one room, they would have no real experience of the rest of the house, let alone the town. Knowledge of the outside world would be very sketchy. There would be much speculation about these mysterious other places and their possible inhabitants. Some people might even deny that they existed, and put it all down to illusion or wishful thinking.

This account begins to explain many of the traditional ideas about the supernatural. It shows how supernatural beings could exist in their own realms of space and time, interpenetrating our world. They could be all around us without our being aware of them through scientific instruments or any of the five normal human senses. It would be as if we were matches in the matchbox, unaware of the room or its occupants.

Many psychic powers could find their explanation in the ability of some individuals to probe with their consciousness through the light-barrier into the higher realms. Some people with 'psychic faculties' claim to be aware of supernatural beings



and even to commune with them. With this so-called 'sixth sense', they appear to be able to transcend normal space and time and see into these other realms. To such people, the walls of the matchbox are transparent; they can see out.

But is there any way we could actually move from one realm of the universe to another? Could we move from matchbox to room, from the room into the house? We move in dimensions. When we move about, we travel in the three dimensions of space. In our journey from cradle to grave, we travel in the fourth dimension, of time.

The different realms of the universe would have to be separated from one another by yet a further dimension: this would be a fifth dimension.

The fifth dimension would be the cardinal dimension. It would be the dimension of speed itself. Linking one critical speed with another, it would be the dimension connecting all the distinct realms of energy in the universe.

The fifth dimension would be quite different from the other five. It could not be a dimension in space-time. Unlike the four dimensions of space and time, the fifth dimension is not an aspect of the vortex of energy. Rather, it underlies the vortex and the four dimensions associated with it.

A body would not travel in the fifth dimension by moving faster or slower. Movement in the fifth dimension would only be possible through change in the intrinsic speed of energy. We have already described this process as transubstantiation. Transubstantiation is movement in the fifth dimension. It involves change in substance, rather than change in form or position. In transubstantiation, bodies travelling in the fifth dimension appear and disappear as they leave one realm of the universe and turn up in another.

Power over the fifth dimension is the power of the gods. This power could account for miracles such as those performed by Sai Baba today and Jesus Christ two thousand years ago. The fifth dimension is the dimension of the gods. It could appropriately be called the Deific dimension.

But what are the gods? Where do they fit into this picture? We know that the physical universe contains life and intelligence. But ours is only a small part of a greater whole. Because there

are living, intelligent beings in this small corner of the universe it would be reasonable to suppose that life and intelligence exist in the universe at large. There could be beings very much more powerful and intelligent than us, existing in the super-physical realms.

Tradition has it that there are whole hosts of super-physical beings. Ancient pagan religions all described a pantheon of gods. But not all supernatural beings were described as gods. The Greeks and Romans also recognised nature spirits: nymphs and fauns, satyrs and dryads, all under the dominion of the god Pan. In Western and Northern Europe, their equivalents were elves, fairies and pixies. Alongside these beings from other realms, were thought to exist the souls of human beings departed from this life. There is a hierarchy of life forms on Earth; it is natural that there would also be a hierarchy of supernatural beings. The term 'gods' has generally been reserved for the most powerful of these beings.

The power of the gods is the power to change the intrinsic speed of energy; it is this that confers freedom to move in the fifth dimension. A god would descend through the realms by decelerating the speed of its energy.

Accelerating its energy again, it could ascend step by step into each progressively higher heavenly realm of the universe. Such beings could sweep up and down the Deific dimension from one realm of the universe to another, like the Biblical angels ascending and descending Jacob's ladder.

Some humans also appear to have had this power. Christ, Mohammed, and Babaji, for example, each on occasion vanished out of our world and sojourned in some higher realm before returning to Earth again.

Powerful angels and demons, genii and ghouls, are reported to materialise from time to time, involving themselves in human affairs. But it would seem that not all supernatural beings have the power to travel in the fifth dimension. Just as we are confined to our plane of physical reality, so many of them appear to be limited to a single level of super-physical reality, a single realm of existence.

To the gods, we humans would be as limited as chickens in a garden. Chickens eat, drink and reproduce themselves. They

are conscious and alive, but limited in intelligence. The god-like creatures responsible for the garden eat, drink and reproduce themselves. They are conscious and alive, but they are far more powerful and intelligent; they can talk, read books and compose music and do many other things which the chickens can't do. They can enter or leave the chicken enclosure at will, while the chickens stay imprisoned within it. With their bird-brained mentality, the chickens limit their world to the enclosure.

Food and drink are always made available to them by the frightening god-like creatures who steal their eggs. The stupid chickens don't understand that these superior beings have built their world and bred them as well! Nor do they realise that these beings have power of life and death over them. All they know is that from time to time one of them disappears amidst a flapping of wings and a flurry of feathers, never to return! Like chickens in the garden, we humans are imprisoned in the physical universe, stuck at the lowest level of the Deific dimension.

The physical universe is like the nursery slopes of a ski resort. Beginners, confined to these gentle slopes, are restricted to the lowest speeds. Advanced skiers, having mastered their technique, can enjoy the freedom and exhilaration of faster speeds on the steep slopes higher up the mountain. Sometimes they come whooshing down to a standstill on the nursery slopes, with a swirl of snow – terrifying the beginners out of their wits!



of the universe. However with the vortex, everything changes. The concept of a creator becomes absolutely vital.

The universe seems to exist in its own right. It gives the impression of being completely independent and self-sustaining. However the vortex challenges this common sense notion.

The vortex totally undermines the concept of material substance existing as an independent reality. It shows how everything – including matter, space and time – arises from energy. But what is energy? In the vortex of energy, no thing is moving. This primal energy is nothing but movement itself.

In this new scheme of things, it is movement and not material that is the reality underlying the universe. There is nothing concrete in the universe whatsoever. There is no underlying material there at all. Movement is the sole reality.

This is a staggering thought. People mostly imagine our world to be made up of substantial things that move. In reality, it is quite the opposite. Movement exists first and foremost. Everything in the physical universe is relative to the speed of light, which is itself a measure of movement. Pure movement creates our world – from light and warmth to the wind and rain, from trees and mountains to the laughter of children playing.

But what can this movement be? How can there be movement if there is no-thing to move? In this primordial movement, there is nothing concrete at all. It is movement without any substance in it. This movement seems to be an abstraction. Could it be that the movement underpinning the universe is an abstract reality? Could it be purely the idea of movement? Is the universe but a vision of movement, a pure act of imagination?

If the movement underlying energy is an act of pure imagination, then every particle of matter is simply imagined into existence. Every bit of energy and super-energy is nothing but an idea.

Having excluded the concept of material, we are led to the conclusion that the entire universe is an immense, unfolding vision. In the words of Michael Faraday, "All this is a dream". The entire universe is nothing but a dream.

There cannot be a dream without a dreamer. There cannot be an act of imagination without one that imagines. If the universe,



from minute atom to mighty galaxy, is an unfolding vision then there must be someone behind it.

There must be some One responsible for this immense act of creative imagination. This, man calls God. As the modern teacher Maharaji has said, "This world that we see is the imagination of God".

A dream is inextricably bound to its dreamer; it is the act of the dreamer. Should the dreamer cease to dream, the dream vanishes as though it had never existed. Were the universal act of imagination to cease, then the entire universe would disappear without trace. Every particle of matter, even space itself, would vanish in an instant. They are totally dependent upon the continuous act of creation. This would explain the ancient teaching that God created the universe out of nothing and that, without God, the universe could not be.

Matter and light have no independent reality. As acts of imagination, they are utterly dependent on that which imagines, just as a dream is utterly dependent on the dreamer. Creation was not a one-off event. The universe is in a continual state of creation. Each and every bit of energy in the universe, every particle of matter in our world, is an act of continuing creative imagination. Each vortex is continuously being imagined into existence; it is part of an ongoing dream.

When one considers the immensity of the universe, the scope of this act of imagination is bewildering. There are thousands of particles in each human blood cell. Yet a blood cell is almost nothing; five million would fit in a pin-head. So how many particles must there be in just one human body? There are litres of blood in the body, and bone and tissue besides. Then there are five billion bodies. But what is the whole mass of humanity compared to the planet itself? Yet the Earth itself is merely a speck of matter orbiting a small star; there are billions of other stars in our galaxy and galaxies themselves are beyond count to modern astronomy. So how many particles must there be in the entire physical realm of the universe? Each is an individual act of imagination. But even the entire realm of matter and light is only a small part of the total universe. Science has found no end to the physical universe and hasn't even begun to probe the super-physical realms. The power of the creative principle behind the universe defies comprehension. Being the source of

everything it could be described as almighty.

Equally staggering is the immense duration of this focused act of attention. Consider the life-span of each particle in an atom. The proton has a life expectancy estimated at a billion, trillion, trillion, trillion years. That is a long time for a continual act of uninterrupted concentration.

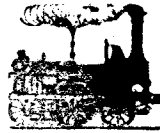
Is it meaningful to look for an original moment of creation in a far and distant time? The universe exists through the imagining of forms of energy. Should the pattern of imagination be changed, so would these forms. All forms in the universe could instantly alter with a change in the pattern of universal imagination. Even though each particle vortex exists now, it could conceivably vanish in a moment. It could have come into existence a moment ago.

* By (imagining) (movement) the creator brings into being the manifold forms of the universe and the dimensions which separate them, such as space and time. Space and time do not exist independently of the universe, because they are created by movement. There is no possibility of space-time separation between the creator and the universe. The creator is neither inside nor outside time.

The universal dreamer and the dream are inextricably bound together in the absolute here and now, the eternal present. God could only pre-exist the universe, and continue after its demise, if time existed beyond the universe. Past and future, along with all other forms of separation, are mere facets of the dream. There can be no separation in God whatsoever; within God, there can be no distinctions of any kind.

A human dreamer can live apart from his dream; the dreamer alone is real and the dream is as nothing. This analogy suggests that the creator alone is real and vital to the creation. Without the dreamer, the universal dream could not exist. But could the universal dreamer exist without the dream? Could the creator exist without the creation? If God were defined solely as the creator of the universe, then the answer would have to be no. If the universal dreamer were to stop dreaming, it would cease to be a dreamer and so cease to be.

A dream is distinct from the dreamer. Likewise the creation is quite distinct from the creator. This account of the universe is not a form of pantheism. Pantheism claims that God is the



substance of everything, that all things are formed out of God. The universe is formed out of movement which has no substance, be it material or God. Movement is the act of God, not the substance of God.

So what is the creator? What is God?

To begin with, consider the universe. If the universe is an unfolding act of imagination, it could be viewed as a vast body of thought. Every movement, every bit of energy, would be a thought-form. Every particle of matter and light, as an act of imagination, would be a thought in the mind of God. Could it be that the universe in its entirety is simply the mind of God?

In mind, we see the conjunction of consciousness and thought. Mind could also be regarded as the body of thought. But consciousness is quite distinct from thought. Consciousness is not thought, it is the awareness that lies behind thought. Consciousness can exist without thought, but without consciousness there is no awareness of thought.

Perhaps there are only two fundamental realities, consciousness and thought. If the universe is the mind of God, then God would be the consciousness underlying it.

The two realities could also be described as consciousness and energy. Consciousness is the creative principle, and energy the universe it creates.

Consciousness is not energy, nor is it the consequence of any form of energy. Rather, consciousness is the source of all energy, pervading the whole of creation even to the sub-atomic level. Consciousness is present in everything. Like the eye in a hurricane, consciousness would be present even in the vortex of energy, right at the heart of the atom. Consciousness is the prime reality, the ground of all existence.

Consciousness could be taken to correspond to 'spirit'. In the past, the word spirit has been used very loosely to describe anything intangible. But if spirit is defined as consciousness, then it could be said that 'spirit' is within everything, from the greatest of beings to the lowest particles of matter. However, only the one God would be pure spirit. Everything else in existence would be a form of energy through which the spirit is made manifest.

The creator of the universe is the unseen consciousness in all

things. It experiences everything but (judges nothing). It is the source of all power, yet remains untouched by power. It is all-seeing and yet unseen. Simultaneously totally immanent and totally transcendent, it is the all-knowing experience of everything that exists. It is as if God creates the universe and then experiences through every single part of it. God experiences being a blade of grass and a tree, being an eagle and a dolphin, being you and being me.

Consciousness is the most obvious attribute of the creator. However the creation of the universe also involves will, love, and intelligence. These must also be attributes of the creator.

The creation is an act of conscious imagination, shaped by intelligence, activated by love, and impelled by will. This is what the creator puts in; experience is what the creator receives back.

These diverse attributes need not imply separation in the creator. They could correspond to the different facets of the creator. Just as we experience matter, space and time as separate aspects of the one, undivided vortex of energy, so we would experience the creator simultaneously as consciousness and will, intelligence and love.

Through understanding consciousness, we can begin to appreciate who we really are. If consciousness is the ground of all existence, there can be no separation in consciousness; consciousness must be single and undivided. This conclusion is also borne out by physics.

In our common experience, no two things are identical. No two snowflakes, flowers or persons are precisely the same. However, at a sub-atomic level, this is not the case. The most basic forms of matter are the elementary particles. Yet, within each type, all particles appear to be the same. For example, all protons throughout the universe seem to have identical physical characteristics. This uniformity of elementary particles strongly suggests that a single consciousness underlies them all; that they are all, so to speak, shaped by a single hand. If protons were being created by separate sparks of consciousness, it seems likely that they would differ from one another in their characteristics.

If consciousness is indivisible, then consciousness cannot be separate in each individual. Different life forms manifest different levels of consciousness, according to their degree of develop-

ment. But we are all one in our essential being. We are all the same consciousness aware of the world through different bodies, looking out of many different eyes, cut off from one another only by an illusion of separation.

The consciousness, aware of your thoughts and feelings, behind the seeing of your eyes and the hearing of your ears, is the same consciousness within me.

This is what the indivisibility of consciousness really means. Behind our many thoughts and feelings, within our different bodies, we are all one. We see our physical bodies as being separate from each other and in our private thoughts and feelings we experience further separation. However, in consciousness there is no separation; our underlying consciousness is the same universal, undivided principle that manifests through everyone and everything. If this is God, then, in our essential being, each and every one of us is God.

In his essence man is one with God whether he believes it or not. God is not separate from man, for God is at the heart of man's very consciousness – not his thoughts and emotions, but the pure awareness behind them. God is the seat of man's being, the well-spring of his love, intelligence and will. For man to search for God outside of himself is pointless because God lies within him. We are already united with God whether we know it or not. All we have to do is wake up and realise it.

But is this awakening the whole aim and purpose of human life? If we are already in essence God, what is there left to achieve?

One clue to understanding the purpose of human life is to realise that God, as (pure consciousness), has no form and can manifest only through forms. Consciousness is present in every aspect of creation to some degree. It is the essence of being human to recognise consciousness within ourselves. It could be that, as human beings, we have the unique opportunity to expand into full consciousness of our divine nature and become an expression of God on Earth.

In doing so, we become a god.

A clear distinction needs to be made between God and the gods. God is the consciousness which creates the universe as an unfolding act of imagination. God is not a person or being, rather God is the animator of all persons and beings.

The gods are entirely different from God. The gods are highly evolved beings that manifest the attributes and powers of God. However, the gods are still part of creation; as forms of energy, they exist within the universe only as part of the universal dream.

Planets such as the Earth could be training centres for the gods. Life on Earth could be our opportunity to become a god; it could be viewed as a workshop for our personal development as gods. This idea is embodied in the word 'human' which means 'god-man'. We all have the potential to become gods. Jesus Christ, for example, fulfilled this potential to become a full manifestation of God on Earth. As for the rest of us, we are gods in the making.

Becoming a god and manifesting divine powers is not a question of gaining anything. It is just a matter of uncovering our true nature. The powers of the gods are latent within us all. They are part of our evolutionary path.

Numerous saints and mystics have these powers, which in India are called *siddhis*. These seemingly miraculous powers are simply the power of God manifesting through them. Many powers, such as clairvoyance, simply reflect the consciousness which is the ground of our being. Others, including bilocation and materialisation, involve the transubstantiation of matter, that is, acceleration through the light-barrier. But this is also a reflection of universal consciousness. It is universal consciousness which imagines the underlying movement – that is, energy – in the first instance. Therefore it is consciousness alone which can accelerate this movement. It is only consciousness that can change the substance of energy. From this standpoint, it is clear that the mastery of divine powers can only come with greater consciousness. The obvious way to attain them is, not through the growth of a new technology, but through a growth in consciousness.

There is a lot of unfounded fear surrounding supernatural powers. The powers of the gods are generally attained as a consequence of personal growth and development. They usually unfold as spontaneous gifts. A person may work over many years, maybe even lifetimes, striving to grow in consciousness. Then suddenly strange powers appear quite unexpectedly.

Most saints and mystics attach little importance to these

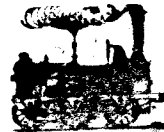
powers, seeing them as incidental in the approach to God. At the other end of the spectrum, there are those who seek the power of the gods as an end in itself. What really matters, however, is not how the powers are attained, but the use a person makes of them.

Some people exploit them – perhaps unwittingly – in the service of their own egos. Needing attention, and wanting to control those they help, they dominate through fear and manipulate through flattery. It is not for us to judge other people's lives – we each have our path of evolution. But for our own protection, it is important to discern where someone is coming from. There is a glamour surrounding the psychic which makes it easy for people to deceive both themselves and others. Highly gifted individuals can attract large followings, and even come to be regarded as divine. However, it is not a person's claims or the powers they display that are important; it is not their signs or wonders, but their personal quality that counts. The question is, who are they servicing, themselves or others? Sometimes it is hard to tell. The ability to discern requires experience and insight. There is a tendency in us all to be driven compulsively by personal desires and unmet emotional needs. We all have to meet our own needs, and serve ourselves as well as others. What counts is the balance we achieve between these two aspects.

The root of the problem is all too often the pursuit of power. Not satisfied with what they can achieve on their own account, some people seek to augment their power with supernatural forces. They seek an ally on the 'other side'. Such people tend to draw to themselves entities who in their turn are seeking power in the physical plane, through the intermediary of a human being. To begin with the human being may believe that he is the master, but he can very quickly end up as the servant.

The problem is that it is often unclear what type of entity we are dealing with. Whilst most supernatural entities are benign, others are definitely not. The more we are in harmony within ourselves, and the greater our integrity, the more we live with love and a good sense of humour, the less likely are we to attract malign entities. It is through fear and taking ourselves too seriously that we lay ourselves open to their influence.

There is nothing wrong with working in conjunction with the supernatural. We are all assisted in this way much of the



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they are taught. But attachment to a single teacher or teaching can be very limiting. We are multi-faceted, multi-levelled beings and few teachers are skilled in everything we need to learn. As we progress in the course of our lives, at each stage new challenges confront us, and our needs continually change as we grow.

To become a god, we need to recognise the enormous power of thoughts and emotions. Thought creates reality. To change our reality, we need to change our pattern of thinking, conscious and unconscious, and release the blocks on our emotions. Thoughts and emotions feed off each other. By choosing to replace negative thoughts with positive ones, by choosing not to feed negative emotions, and by freeing blocked emotional energy, we transform ourselves and the nature and quality of our experience.

Thoughts are real entities – they are as real as matter. Consciousness empowers thoughts. They depend upon consciousness for their very existence. Thoughts thrive on attention. As we entertain them, they grow and multiply. Before long we are totally lost in a whole train of thought.

→ Where to place our attention is ultimately the only freedom we have. Most of us are slaves to the thoughts which occupy our minds. There is a need to discriminate, to be master of our thoughts, choosing which to attend to and which to ignore. Instead, we get lost in imagination, identifying with our fears and desires. To use imagination properly is one of the greatest challenges facing us, and an essential step in becoming a god.

To become at one with God is another matter altogether. To experience the underlying unity of consciousness, we need to stop the mental chatter altogether. Normally we are conscious of things, of thoughts and emotions. Thus we are always caught up in the creation. Constantly searching for something to make our life complete, we experience duality and separation. Simply to be conscious, rather than to be conscious of anything, that is an objective in itself. Transcending all separation, we experience our unity with everything. Stepping out of duality, we experience ultimate peace.

In the East, many saints and mystics seem to emphasise the attainment of oneness with God while disparaging involvement with the world. In the West, on the contrary, most people over-



look their need to achieve oneness with God, so involved are they with the world and creative activity. It could be that the fulfilment of our potential comes from bringing together the East and the West, from combining full Self-realisation with mastery of the god-like powers of creation.

If this is so, we need to develop ourselves at every level of our being. As we grow in awareness, we first discover the fragmentation of our being, and then realise the need to integrate body, mind and emotions into a balanced and harmonious whole. The older spiritual traditions disparaged the body and regarded all its desires as obstacles to be overcome. However, in reality, being in a human body is an unparalleled opportunity to have many and diverse learning experiences. Spirituality is not about escaping the body and its functions; it is about embracing our total reality. To come into balance, we need to integrate the primal aspects of our nature, not reject them. To become gods, we need to know ourselves fully in body, mind and emotions, and rediscover ourselves in spirit. Our opportunity is to realise not only our oneness with God, but also our full creative potential as human.

For we gods in the making, life on Earth is an unparalleled opportunity to learn the skills of creation in a domain where imagination can be exercised with comparative safety. For God, every act of imagination immediately becomes a reality in the universe. Even the realm of super-energy is far more plastic to thought than our world of matter. In the higher realms, imagination works instantly; the way things are imagined is exactly how they turn out to be. In these domains, mind and imagination have a terrific impact.

On Earth, the situation is quite different. Here, the fruits of thought and imagination manifest more slowly. We therefore have the opportunity to see and understand their effects. Matter provides the clay which enables us to explore our God-like powers of creation with relative safety. This is what makes the physical realm so suitable as a school for gods.

The freedom to experiment and make mistakes is essential to this learning process. Earth is an adventure playground where we can't really hurt ourselves, since even physical death cannot harm us. To play it safe, that is, not to take full advantage of

our learning opportunities, is to miss the whole point of human life. The greatest risk in life is to risk nothing.

With freedom comes choice. We have the freedom either to pursue our own imaginings, or to align ourselves with the unfolding act of universal imagination. We have a choice; it is all a question of where we place our attention. We can remain limited, attached to our own partial understandings and preoccupations, or attune ourselves to a more universal reality.

Consciousness never judges. There is no punishment meted out to those who follow their own imaginings to go their own way. Rather they experience separation and the fullness of their own fantasies, fears and imaginings.

Likewise there is no reward for those who choose to attune themselves to universal consciousness. For them rather, there is the experience of unity and the joy of fully expanded consciousness.

As we grow, we move on from seeking to achieve things purely for ourselves. We find ourselves as part of an unfolding pattern which is much bigger than our personal desires and ambitions. It is not that we miss out on personal fulfilment, but that what we want is in alignment with others. A single cell organism is very limited in its possibilities. But just as a single cell finds that it has all it requires and more when part of a multicellular organism, so we can achieve far more working in cooperation with others than struggling on our own.

In the past, religions taught that life on Earth was a period of trial, in which good behaviour would be rewarded by an eternity in heaven. They taught that happiness is not for this life in the body, but for the life hereafter.

But if we are in essence God, then the point is that we are free, really free, with the whole universe as our playground. Earth is not just a training ground for some life hereafter; it is an integral part of our eternal existence. The universe is ours, to do in as we want. The universe is not static. It is not a succession of obstacle courses to be negotiated, with our reward an eternity of rest in some heavenly realm. The universe is our play. It is our creation, because ultimately we ourselves are God. In the universe, we are constantly setting ourselves new challenges, devising new games, and having more and more outrageous



adventures.

Some of us long to get out of the body and into the higher realms. We feel that life is like a maze. We are in it and we want to get out. To begin with we are confused. We try one way and another, but are foiled at every turn. We feel angry and frustrated, but gradually we begin to discover a pattern. Someone may help us so we begin to make progress. We remain convinced that our whole purpose is to get out of the maze and go home. But we chose to enter the maze in the first place. The experience of passing through it is what the game is all about. Every experience we have, good and bad, is all part of the play.

From this point of view, human life is just another game we have chosen to play. Will we remember who we are? Or, plunging into matter, will we lose ourselves in our creation? Will we recognise the incredible intricacy and perfection of the physical world as our own handiwork? Or will we spend lifetimes puzzling over who put it together, and why? How long will it take us to find our way out of the maze we have designed? And when we do, will we choose to stay, and revel in its possibilities? Or will we be hungry for new adventures elsewhere? Perhaps we will choose to set up new worlds, with even more intricate and difficult mazes, in which finding ourselves is even more challenging.

For the fun is in the journey, not the goal. The process of growth is such pleasure. The delight is in the rediscovery. There is such a joy in finding out again who we really are.

It is not that we are here to be servants of God, but to be fully God on Earth – that is our opportunity. If God is our own being, we serve God best by being fully ourselves. Our purpose is simply to act out and experience our real nature.

As far as consciousness is concerned, it doesn't really matter what we do. It is only the experience that counts. Like children at play, we can dress up and dance at different times in totally different ways. Morality and judgement don't come into it. Good and evil are just masks. It is all a game in the eternal play of creation. What we do and whether we have a good or bad time are a matter of sublime indifference.

But the creator is also love. It is complete and unconditional love that gives meaningful direction to the creation. With love come compassion and respect for the sacredness of all other