**The Antahkarana**

The human soul *(in contradistinction to the soul as it functions in its own kingdom, free from the limitations of human life)* is imprisoned by and subject to the control of the lower energies for the major part of its experience. Then, upon the Path of Probation, the dual energy of the soul begins to be increasingly active, and the man seeks consciously to use his mind, and to express love-wisdom on the physical plane. This is a simple statement of the objective of all aspirants. When the five energies are beginning to be used consciously and wisely in service, a rhythm is then set up between the personality and the soul. It is as if a magnetic field were then established, and these two vibrating and magnetic units, or grouped energies, begin to swing into each other’s field of influence. In the early stages, this happens only occasionally and rarely. Later it occurs more constantly, and thus a path of contact is established which eventually becomes the line of least resistance, "the way of familiar approach", as it is sometimes esoterically called. Thus the first half of the "bridge", the antaskarana, is constructed. By the time the third initiation is undergone, this way is completed, and the initiate can "pass to higher worlds at will, leaving the lower worlds far behind; or he can come again and pass upon the way that leads from dark to light, from light to dark, and from the under, lower worlds into the realms of light".

Thus the two are one, and the first great unison upon the path of return is complete. A second stage of the way has then to be trodden, leading to a second union of still greater importance in that it leads to complete liberation from the three worlds. It must be remembered that the soul, in its turn, is a union of two energies, plus the energy of spirit, of which the lower three are the reflection. It is a synthesis of the energy of Life itself *(which demonstrates as the life-principle within the world of forms)*, of the energy of the intuition, or spiritual love-wisdom or understanding *(which demonstrates as sensitivity and feeling in the astral body)*, and of spiritual mind, whose reflection in the lower nature is the mind or the principle of intelligence in the form world. In these three energies we have the atma-buddhi-manas of the theosophical literature. They are that higher triplicity which is reflected in the lower three, and which focusses through the soul body on the higher levels of the mental plane before being "precipitated into incarnation", as it is esoterically called. …

How is this bridging antaskarana to be built? What are the steps which the disciple must follow? We are not here considering the Path of Probation whereon the major faults should be eliminated and whereon the major virtues should be developed. Much of the spiritual instruction given in the past has laid down the rules for the cultivation of the virtues and qualifications for discipleship, and also the necessity for self-control, for tolerance and for unselfishness. But these are elementary stages and should be taken for granted by all students of this Treatise. Such students are presumably occupied not only with the establishment of the character aspect of discipleship, but with the more abstruse and difficult requirements for those whose goal is initiation.

It is with the work of the "bridge-builders" that we are concerned. First, let it be stated that the real building of the antaskarana only takes place when the disciple is beginning to be definitely focussed upon mental levels, and when therefore his mind is intelligently and consciously functioning. He must begin at this stage to have some more exact idea than has hitherto been the case as to the distinctions existing between the Thinker, the apparatus of thought, and thought itself, beginning with its dual esoteric function which is:

1. The recognition of, and receptivity to, *Ideas*.

2. The creative faculty of conscious thought-form building.

This necessarily involves a strong mental attitude and a reorientation of the mind to reality. As the disciple begins to focus himself on the mental plane *(and this is the prime intent of the meditation work)* he starts working in mental matter and trains himself in the powers and uses of thought. He achieves a measure of mind control; he can turn the searchlight of the mind in two directions—into the world of human endeavour, and into the world of soul activity. Just as the soul makes a way for itself by projecting itself in a thread or stream of energy into the three worlds, so the disciple begins consciously to project himself into the higher worlds. His energy goes forth, through the medium of the controlled and directed mind, into the world of higher spiritual mind and into the realm of the intuition. A reciprocal activity is thus set up. This response between the higher and lower mind is symbolically spoken of in terms of light, and the "lighted way" *(a term frequently employed)* comes into being between the personality and the spiritual Triad, via the soul body, just as the soul came into definite contact with the brain via the mind. This "lighted way" is the illumined bridge. It is built through meditation; it is constructed through the constant effort to draw forth the intuition, through subservience and obedience to the Plan *(which begins to be recognised as soon as the intuition and the mind are en rapport)* and through a conscious incorporation into the group in service and for purposes of assimilation into the whole. All these qualities and activities are based upon the foundation of good character and the qualities developed upon the Probationary Path.

The effort to draw forth the intuition requires directed occult *(but not aspirational)* meditation. It requires a trained intelligence, so that the line of demarcation between intuitive realisation and the forms of the higher psychism may be clearly seen. It requires a constant disciplining of the mind, so that it can "hold itself steady in the light", and the development of a cultured right interpretation so that the intuitive knowledge which has been achieved may then clothe itself in the right thought forms.

*Esoteric Psychology II*, p 67-77