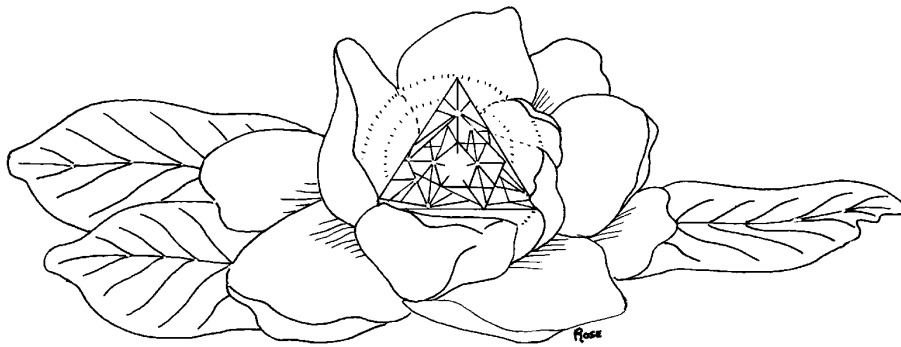


ThoughtLine

January 2001



To provide the training, the atmosphere, the companionship and service opportunities necessary to
"link Hierarchical intent with human aspiration."

Arcana Workshops

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 Workshops and Study Groups

Ongoing

The Millennium Disciple – Tuesday Mornings @ 11:00

White Magic - Tuesdays 7:30 to 9:00 PM

Nature of the Soul - Wednesdays 7:00 to 9:30 PM

Astrology - Thursdays 7:30 to 9:00 PM

 Up Coming Events

January 8, 2001, Monday, 7:45 PM

*Capricorn Community Meditation Meeting
Arcana Workshops, 3916 Sepulveda Blvd. Suite 202, Culver City*

February 7, 2001, Wednesday, 7:45 PM

*Aquarius Community Meditation Meeting
Arcana Workshops, 3916 Sepulveda Blvd. Suite 202, Culver City*

March 8, 2001, Thursday, 7:45 PM

*Pisces Community Meditation Meeting
Arcana Workshops, 3916 Sepulveda Blvd. Suite 202, Culver City*

March 24, and 25, 2001, Saturday and Sunday, 9:00 AM

*Meditation Groups Inc. GCM Conference
Meditation Mount, Ojai - Call 805-646-5508 for details.*



Taking Our Best Shot

Living is about making choices. However, I have read in the legends and myths that, initially at least, we did not choose to incarnate into these forms we call bodies. We were, so the legends say, forced into incarnation by a greater will. I suppose that I can accept that, but I do not really know about it, mainly because I just don't remember it one way or the other. It was a long time ago.

Also, let me hasten to say, I don't remember any of my more recent previous lives either. I am absolutely certain we have all had earlier lives, but beyond a sometimes overwhelming—but mostly vague—sense of having “been there and done that,” I do not actually recall any of the details. If my previous incarnations were anything like the present one, I am not totally displeased with this lack. Being able to recall the stupider aspects of this life is bad enough, and I assume that I am doing better now than I did 10 or 20 lives ago, so there must have been some real doozies and I suspect that it is just as well if they are not recallable.

Anyway, it seems clear to me that living is about making choices. I do not really have to look at previous incarnations to figure this out. It only takes a superficial examination of even a day's worth of this life to prove beyond a doubt that living is about making choices. Also, as even this superficial examination will make evident, not making or avoiding a choice is making a choice.

So, what I want to talk about this evening, in preparation for our meditation, is the process of choice-making or, I guess you could call it decision-making. This is a vast subject, and I want to touch on just a couple of its aspects.

To begin with there is consciousness, the notion of conscious decision-making. It is my observation that for a long, long time we make choices without even being conscious or aware that we are doing so. It is a long way up the ladder of evolution before a person under the process of daily and continual transmutation reaches that point where he actually

thinks to himself, “O.K. I am about to make a decision here.”

Transmutation is seen as “the inevitable result of evolution itself” (*Rays and Initiations* P. 275). It is, of course, the process of transmutation that finally brings a person to the point where he recognizes that he is going to make a decision, and that perhaps he had better think about it a bit.

In case this term transmutation is a new term for any one, let me translate it into plain English. It is a nice esoteric phrase which means, when you put it into simple English, the day-to-day living experience of the usually (but not always) very-painful-for-all-involved, fallout or results which flow from our numerous unconscious and mostly poor, but occasionally lucky and good, decisions which induce the traveler to change the way in which he is doing this or that.

Once this process—and you can call it transmutation or, if you prefer the simple English equivalent, you can call it “learning from direct and usually immediate feedback in the School of Hard Knocks”—but whichever, once this process has the desired effect, which is to cause us to think before we leap, we have reached a genuine turning point on the Path. The person steps off of one section of the Path of Return onto another section. Another way of seeing this step is to see that a person begins to “get it.” He says, “Oh, I get it.” And a light sort of goes on. The person begins to step out of that group referred to as “the blind being led by the blind,” and into a new group of “those who can see a little bit,” at least.

So, this is, to me, the entry-level position for conscious decision-making. In the Teaching, we say the person has stepped off of the Path of Probation and onto the Path of Discipleship. We can also call this the transition from the “Ouch! Gee whiz! What's happening?” level, to the “Oh, I get it!” level.

I would love to be able to report that this movement from being the blind victim of blindness into being a person with a little light to see by was a one-shot deal. Such is not the case. As you all undoubtedly know from numerous experiences, we take what seems to

be a long time to actually hardwire (if I may use what might be a modern esoteric term) these realizations, into the equipment so that they become—in another bit of modern esoteric language—*transparent to the user*, or automatic.

And now, of course, the fun really begins. I think it is debatable, if not down right dangerous, to assume that finally being able to think before leaping is an escape from the blind leading the blind scenario. It is true that in this new condition we now, occasionally anyway, consider things and actually think about consequences before making decisions. However, in a very significant way, it seems that we have just entered a new stage of blindness. And this stage is even more blinding than the previous stage, which was the blindness of ignorance, because this new stage is the blindness of knowing. As we all know, again from much personal experience, we are never so blind as when we think we know it all. Another name for this stage is The Great Illusion.

I wish I knew why, but I do not. And I wish it were not so, but it seems to be so. When we finally learn how to think, it appears that, rather than seeing the Truth, we see illusion. We slip quietly, and willingly, it seems, into a deep and profound sense of separation. I used to dream that this condition could somehow be avoided, that it did not have to be a part of humanity's evolutionary development. I still think that, someday, humans will be able to incarnate on this planet and move through the place in consciousness we call self-consciousness without falling into illusion and separation, and we will be able to avoid all the painful conditions like greed and cruelty and selfishness that The Great Illusion generates in our human psyches. But today, it does seem that this place, the field we call The Great Illusion complete with all of its traps and swamps and infernos, is a field through which we must travel.

Let me make a few hopefully clarifying comments about this part of the Path of Return. This section of the path is referred to as the Path of Discipleship. "It is perhaps well to remember that the stage of

discipleship is in many ways the most difficult part of the entire ladder of evolution." (*A Treatise on White Magic*, P.61)

This part of the ladder must be consciously climbed. Eventually, we are called upon to make decisions with full awareness of motive and intention. In this light it becomes clear that discipleship, a much-misunderstood term, has little to do with the devotional and unthinking following of a Master or a person or teacher or a Teaching or a creed or a culture or tradition.

Discipleship means trying to understand and unfold the essential divinity which one senses lies within one's own heart and every heart he encounters. It is on this section of the Path that the disciple makes the famous Libra decision. The disciple after much travail and struggle, reverses his direction on the Great Wheel and turns, finally, toward home.

Home. If there is a more poignant, echoing term in the English language, I do not know what it is. I know that sometimes the emotional overtones and the weariness of our journeys tend to make us think of home, the Father's House, *back to which* we are all being called, as a kind of retreat center, a wonderful resting place where we can lick our wounds, forget our woes and just be in the beauty and wonder of the One, a kind of cosmic Club Med of the subtle planes. Nothing, of course, could be further from the truth. Home is now and has forever been our starting place. It is not a stopping place. Home is not where the soul goes to retire. It is a place of dynamic energy of tremendous power, and fitting ourselves to be—to stand—within the orb of the awesome energy field we sense and think of as *Home* is what occurs on the Path of Discipleship. Once we are able to stand in the Light of the Father's House, we are ready to confront the Higher Way.

The Path of Discipleship encompasses both the second and third initiations. These are not rewards for achievement but signals that one is beginning to

"It is perhaps well to remember that the stage of discipleship is in many ways the most difficult part of the entire ladder of evolution." (*A Treatise On White Magic* P. 61)

demonstrate higher and higher levels of Love, of reason, of truth and divinity in one's daily life. On this path the disciple moves from the realm of self-consciousness to the realm of group consciousness. This does not mean that one has joined a group and is now group conscious. It means that one is beginning to see in terms of group wholes. It means that the illusion of separateness that has clouded one's vision for so long is beginning to dissipate and that one is beginning to become able to see the face of God in every form he encounters.

It is on this part of the Path that the ancient prayers to move from the darkness to the Light, from the unreal to the Real and from death to immortality, are finally answered. We no longer have to transmute anything, we simply are called upon to transform what we are. Through daily living and learning we have to transform the fool's gold of the separative self-conscious personality into the pure gold of the serving Initiate. This section of the Path begins in transformation and ends in transfiguration.

It is on this section of the Path, my friends, that we find ourselves. I have always wondered just what the old expression, "ignorance is bliss" was all about. Maybe it refers to the condition in the Garden of Eden before Eve got into the big apple. By the way, I think that we need to realize that Adam and Eve are symbols for infant humanity and that what happened to them happened to us all.

Before we knew anything about anything, we were—humanity was, I think—simply living in a state of union, a state of bliss, a kind of Nirvana on Earth. I think I see this condition in newborns, tiny little infants. I think that they do not know anything at all. They do not register separation at all and are in a state of bliss. Perhaps I am wrong about this, but Wordsworth also thought this and talked much about it in many of his poems, including his famous ode, *Intimations of Immortality* a few lines of which I want to share with you:

*Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting;
The Soul that rises with us, our life's Star,
Has had elsewhere its setting,
And cometh from afar:*

*Not in entire forgetfulness,
And not in utter nakedness,
But trailing clouds of glory do we come
From God, who is our home:
Heaven lies about us in our infancy!*

*Wordsworth, Selected Poetry
Modern Library College Edition, P. 541*

So, I am not sure about ignorance and bliss, but of this I am sure: On the Path of Discipleship, ignorance is definitely a dangerous commodity, and knowledge is a two-edged sword. In the one hand, it cuts deeper and deeper into the mountain of the past, the mountain of parts and pieces and facts and data, a mountain which is growing everyday and which is absolutely impossible to encompass, a mountain of innumerable trails and passes, many of which lead to nowhere, or box canyons or over sheer cliffs—much to the disciple's amazement. Down these trails and over these cliffs, at one time or another in one life or another, we have all plunged. The awakening shock was usually very instructive.

In the other hand, the soul's hand, the sword of knowledge can become the wand of wisdom and the light which simultaneously shines two ways: into the future (a place in consciousness and not in time), and into the *now* of our daily lives. In the hands of the soul-infused personality, knowledge becomes the tool that shows the way, which sets others free, and releases the prisoners of the planet from the thralldom of form identification—but releases them in a way that guarantees their learning and their own growth into the field of their own light and power.

On the Path of Discipleship we will learn to make conscious and seasoned decisions that lead to the growth and release of all of those with whom we are walking. There is in this effort, as there was on the Path of Probation, much trial and error. This time the error springs not from ignorance but from illusion and glamour, from self-focus and insensitivity to the reality of the interconnectedness and interdependence that we share with all beings. Among the lessons we will learn on this path is that when we harm another, we harm everyone including ourselves, for we are brothers on the Path and our bonds are everywhere and inescapable. They are bonds of relationship,

however, not bonds of ownership or rulership based on some sense of superiority or inferiority that gives us imagined rights over, or makes us subservient to, others with whom we share the Path.

To move forward on this Path, to pass through the second and third gates, we must transform the standard upon which we base our decisions. To move through the second gate, we must move out of the confines of hate and pain and fear and jealousy and other glamours generated by the separative, self-centered emotional field and replace them with the gold of serenity, gentleness, understanding, of our own and others' value and beauty and worth—all the elements of true companionship and brotherhood. To move through the third gate we must eliminate arrogance, selfish ambition, pride, cruelty and criticism and other illusions and glamours generated by the separative and self-centered mental field and replace them with the compassion that can only be generated by the power of Love–Wisdom.

This light, the light of Love-Wisdom, is the light by which our Elder Brothers see. It is this golden thread of Love-Wisdom which has been laid down by the countless disciples who have gone before that will guide us on the trail to the top of the mountain where stands the Third Gate and the One Initiator. In finding and picking up this strand of golden light and using it as our guide, we make it larger with our lives, more easily found and used by those who follow us.

I know we can do this. I know that we have to some degree already done it. And I know that we will continue to do it with greater and greater power and brighter and brighter love and deeper and deeper wisdom.

In moments of strife, when the waves of fear and anger threaten to engulf us or the darkness of hate or discouragement or pride and cynicism threaten to blind us to the golden way, let us remember who we are and where we come from, and as we courageously face the dark, let us chant the Mantra of Unification and watch it turn—under the fire of our love and the compassion of our wisdom—the darkness to Light, the unreal to the Real, and death to Immortality.

The sons of men are one, and I am one with them.

I seek to love, not hate;

I seek to serve and not exact due service;

I seek to heal, not hurt.

Let pain bring due reward of light and love.

Let the soul control the outer form,

And life, and all events,

And bring to light the Love

That underlies the happenings of the time.

Let vision come and insight.

Let the future stand revealed.

Let inner union demonstrate and outer cleavages be gone.

Let love prevail.

Let all men love.

And finally, friends, let us always remember that

In the center of all love we stand.

From that center we, the soul, will outward move.

From that center we, the one who serves, will work.

May the love of the divine self be shed abroad,

In our hearts, through our group

And through out the world.

That we will triumph is not even remotely in question. It is only a matter of time, and this is our time. This is what we came for, so with great joy, lots of love and a determined will, *let's take our best shot.*

Tom Carney
October 2000

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Dear Friends:

Arcana Workshops is shifting our meditation rhythm this year to align with the new moon cycle. This means that we will be changing seed thoughts at each new moon. We wanted to be sure that the seed thoughts and meditation form for the next year reached everyone who wishes to work with us in this new rhythm in time to start the new cycle with the new moon in Capricorn, hence this letter.

The 12 seed thoughts and the meditation form enclosed with this letter will be used by Arcana Workshops during the 12 new moon cycles beginning with the new moon in Capricorn of 2000. This new moon occurs on December 25, 9:23 AM P.S.T.

The dates in parenthesis in front of each of the seed thoughts are for the new moon in the Pacific time zone. You may want to check your copy of *Full Moon Magic* to get the exact date/time for your part of the world. If you do not have a copy of *Full Moon Magic*, please write, e-mail or phone for one.

As usual, the group will be following the 3 or 5 day rhythm for the full moon meditation work. We will be sending the mediations and seed thoughts for that work with succeeding issues of Thoughtline.

If there are any questions regarding this new cycle or any of the meditation work, please feel free to contact us.

Loving you:
Your Brothers and Sisters at Arcana.

Year 2001 Seed Thoughts For Meditation

(For use starting Dec 25) Love is the wielding of the force which guides the worlds and which leads to the integration, unity and inclusiveness which impels Deity itself to action.

DINA I P. 10

(For use starting Jan 24) The secret of the will is also closely tied in with the recognition of the unconquerable nature of goodness and the inevitability of the ultimate triumph of good.

Esoteric Astrology P. 580

(For use starting Feb 23) If you would learn, would become wise, then give your attention to Love, for Love created all knowledge. It lies within and behind everything that is.

The Nature of the Soul (Published by Wisdom Impressions) P.79

(For use starting Mar 24) Desire works from and through the material form *upwards*; Will works downwards into form, bending form consciously to divine purpose. The one is invocative and the other is evocative.

The Externalization of the Hierarchy P. 344

(For use starting Apr 23) Love governs the Way into the life of the Hierarchy and is the foundation for all approach to, and appreciation and acceptance of truth.

Rays and Initiations P. 45

(For use starting May 22) Will governs the Way into Shamballa and is the foundation for all approach to, appreciation of and identification with, Being.

Rays and Initiations P. 45

(For use starting Jun 21) Give to each other real love in the times that lie ahead, for it is the fusing and illuminating element in the life of the disciple.

DINA II p.4

(For use starting Jul 20) The will aspect can be contacted only from the mental plane and only those, therefore, who are working with and through the mind can begin to appropriate this energy.

Esoteric Astrology P. 586

(For use starting Aug 18) Love is spontaneous and carries ever the free spirit of Christ.

DINA I P. 736

(For use starting Sep 17) *The secret of the will lies in the recognition of the divine nature of man.*

Externalization of the Hierarchy P. 342

(For use starting Oct 16) The occult law is that the more you love the more you can respond to and include the point of view, the nature and the force of your fellowmen. This is vitally true also of a group of disciples.

DINA I P. 701

(For use starting Nov 14) Remember, brother of mine, the spiritual will must be present as a quiet deep pool of power behind all expression of the energy of love.

Esoteric Healing P. 527, 8

Please Note: The above dates are for the Pacific Standard time zone.