

Pathfinder

by Richard Rose

Man chooses a spiritual path according to his capacity, the same as he chooses an occupation or profession according to his capacity. Sometimes a man chooses a profession because of emotional association instead of capacity-knowledge, and very often a man chooses his spiritual path for emotional reasons, and does not know it. The latter man does not know his capacity, in fact very few men really know their capacity, because capacity can only be realized by effort beyond the limits which we set for ourselves when we engage in an enterprise, whether the enterprise be economic or spiritual.

As in business, so in spiritual things. Capacity is determined by and identified with intense desire and stubborn application of effort. And in business, the spiritual capacity of beginners is generally recognized by persons, more mature, who have tested their own capacity and proved the merits of their determination, and who know the symptoms and qualifications that make for success. In business, we may be stubborn and determined, and have all the qualification for a “do or die” project, but unless we find an opportunity or opening in a group of successful businessmen, in their business, or among fellows who dream the same dream as ourselves, our dynamism will flourish like a palm tree at the north pole.

And so in spiritual work. Too many think that they can go it alone. Others choose a path because it appeals to their emotions. Some doubt their own capacity, and settle for an easy course of action. Some overestimate their point of maturity and wish to leap ahead and do anything that is hinted at as being the million-dollar step or the discipline that brings knowledge of everything all at once. Some even approach this attempt at the giant step with a foolish reservation that they must hurry at it, get enlightenment so that they can go back to a “normal” life quickly and reenter the game of life.

They never stop to think that when they reach enlightenment, they will possibly have little or no interest in the game of life.

So the purpose in this writing is to join with the beginner for spiritual exercise, in looking at a yardstick of sorts, so that the beginner (at least he is a beginner in this field or system) will waste no more time than is necessary, and so that he can establish some balance and discretion in choosing the launching point of his endeavor.

It is not enough just to say that man is a victim of emotional determinations. The business of fooling oneself is very elaborate, and while emotions are generally at the root of the delusion, these emotions are skillfully veiled, and their case is argued against the spiritual convictions of the person with an elaborate diversity and cleverness, so that the person must be very astute and intuitive to survive the argumentative onslaughts.

The attacks upon objectives of a philosophical or spiritual nature are best labeled as forces of adversity. They include Rationalization, Procrastination, Fear, Fatigue, hereditary inclinations,

and others. And the knowledge of the existence of these blocks indicates a need to follow a practice of checking our thinking at all levels.

In speaking here of levels, a good method of designation of levels is the system used by Gurdjieff in which the least exalted man is man number one, and the most exalted is man number seven.

Man number one is Instinctive Man. He rarely pays much attention to religion.

Man number two is Emotional Man. Most people who read this will be in this category, or in Man number three, which is Intellectual Man. Emotional Man is he who chooses his spiritual path because of his application of emotions to religion or philosophy. He may have had a state of exaltation if in his lifetime he evolved from Man number one. The decisive change from one Man-Number to the next is accompanied generally by an exaltation or intense feeling of spiritual conviction that tells him that he has reached the final answer.

When Man number two supplants number one, it means that the man in question has translated his instinctive animal energies into an emotional attachment for survival. The emotional attachment furthermore may be one stimulated by fear, in combination with an intense love for another person (savior or spiritual guide) which exceeds his love for his genetic urges. In this transition there is a moment of exaltation known as “salvation” or “being saved.”

Man is his own greatest obstacle to finding Truth. It is only when his natural instincts, appetites, and egos have surrendered and left his field of consciousness, that he is able to think without coloring his own thoughts with wishful thinking. In “being saved” there is no doubt that there is a dropping of instincts, and a partial rejection of some of the appetites.

At this point, let us pause and see if we are Man number two. Do we believe in a personal savior? Do we go to church because the minister is charismatic? Do we follow a guru because he allows us to indulge in autohypnotic methods which bring about a pleasant or peaceful feeling? Are we inspired by writings that appeal to our emotions? Such stories may involve moving accounts of little children, their belief in a religious ideal, or their reaction to such beliefs. They may just as well involve stories of monks and nuns, depicting masochistic reactions to the misery of ascetic life or martyrdom, all of which appeals to the masochism or sadism within oneself.

To summarize a bit for identification of Emotional Man, all who follow a religion or ism with blind belief are people in this category. Devout believers and participators in conventional, organized churches and systems should not look further into this system. This system will not do too much good for Man number two, -- except in rare cases where, accidentally, an emotional attraction to a system of higher number leads the person attracted, to follow it blindly. This is never advised.

When Man number two graduates from his level, he experiences an exaltation of serenity, in which he no longer makes decisions from emotional motivation. He enters the level of Man number three, and embarks upon a frantic, enthusiastic adventure in which he chooses to reach

Truth through logical and systematic thinking-processes. One of the things which he attempts is the systematizing and symbolizing of all esoteric knowledge. He treats it like a science, and he will come up with concept-structures all his own. Or he may decide that there is power in symbols and decide on magic or numerology as a means to all knowledge. Or he may simply devote his life to scientific studies in the field of psychology, or pathology. If he has been a devout fundamentalist, he will step over into a methodical study of scriptures such as the Swedenborgian system, a study of the Kabbala, or of another literal method of appraising the scriptures. Man number three is motivated by an intellectual ego that is large. In fact it has taken him quite a few years of his life to reassure himself that his intellectuality knows no bounds. When he reaches the point where he knows beyond doubt that his intellect by itself will not take him to Truth, he suffers the loss of the intellectual ego, and enjoys an exaltation that is known as the bliss of mystics. He becomes a mystic-philosopher. He has learned that he will never learn the Truth, and that if he wants the Truth, he must become it. Of course he does not have any direction for his attempts to become and flounders about, often for many years. He looks into yoga and mysticism. Since he is living in an intellectual vehicle, he will become philosophic, and still try to reason. He has now become Man number four. He will try to use his instinctive, emotional and intellectual mechanisms to sort things out for the Truth.

Man number four is the man ready for the next and last step, the step into Satori or cosmic consciousness. This man will understand these papers (The Albigen Papers) when he reads them, because he has gone through all the previous levels, and thoroughly knows their symptoms. So that Man number four is the man I am most eager to encounter in this adventure, for he has a chance of getting more from the TAT (Truth and Transmission) system than the previous three. Others on the second and third level will not be rejected, but they may reject themselves.

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If you like the dynamism and spontaneity of Richard Rose as writer and teacher, please read his books, which are available at www.rosepublications.net or www.tatfoundation.org.