

COURSE SYNTHESIS NO. 32

CHANGING ACQUIRING WILL

The Work on the Path requires us to make a clear distinction between what is essential and what is secondary. And on an inner path, what is essential is to evolve, to change our being, and not to amass an accumulation of knowledge.

On the other hand, it is absolutely necessary to understand the principles of the teaching, and thus to acquire a certain knowledge, but this we must do with the aim of changing who we are. Without knowledge, it is impossible for us to change – since in order to change our being, we first have to discover what needs to be changed. But we must remember that changing is one of the most difficult things in the world.

There are four categories of people, and we all have in ourselves something of each of them:

1. *Ordinary man* : lives normally, ensuring his own sustenance and that of his family; he is distinguished by nothing in particular save the fact that he is capable of one day entering a spiritual path.
2. *Lunatic man* : is incapable of distinguishing between what has true value and what does not, between the essential and the secondary. He changes his opinions easily. He will have great difficulty entering a Path of evolution, since he lives with many illusions about himself, is irresponsible, and lacks discipline.
3. *Superficial man (or tramp)*: generally has a certain intellectual capacity, but he never pursues things in any depth, never manifesting anything more than a superficial interest. He changes his theories often and is incapable of perceiving what is real. He is often arrogant and tends to feel superior to other people.
4. *The swindler* : has very little or no conscience, is hypocritical and thinks only of himself and his own interests. For him the end justifies the means, whatever they are, legal or illegal.

Ordinary man will have the fewest difficulties progressing on the Path, but he will nonetheless be obliged, at a certain point, to abandon the morality with which he usually lives, but which was imposed on him, replacing it with a true morality to which he gives birth himself.

Lunatic man and *superficial man* are also capable of progressing on a path, provided the former seeks to discover true positive values and the latter ceases to become interested in things in an exclusively superficial manner, pursuing instead one single thing in greater depth. But both of them must completely change their nature. For these people, the most effective aid consists in following the rules of an esoteric school or school of the Fourth Way, where they will acquire discipline.

As for the *swindler*, he has no chance whatsoever of progressing on a spiritual path.

Two possible motivations may lead us to enter a path : the recognition of our own state of imperfection and our current limitations, and the possibility of change. The first indispensable condition for this change is to understand what is

explained here, and the second is to make efforts on our being, firstly on our emotional sphere and then on our will.

We can observe that man functions like a machine according to his conditioning; he has no will, but only wants and desires, and is accordingly not free. We begin to have will the moment we start to become conscious of ourselves, when we decide to do so. At this moment we begin to change, and we acquire a certain measure of freedom since we then no longer allow ourselves to be dominated by our constant flow of thoughts, emotions, and moods.

In addition, we can observe the fact that without will, we are incapable of remaining conscious.

The essential way to develop will is through effort, through our struggle against what is natural to us, against our wants and desires. We also acquire will when we decide to follow a rule given us by someone else or by an esoteric school or school of the Fourth Way; the rule then serves as an aid, permitting us to become freer.

Our personality consists of nothing but conditioning, past experiences, and everything that has been placed in us, and in this respect we are no different from a machine. As for our true being, we have no knowledge of it, and the goal of the path is to guide us toward this true being.

A very important rule consists in never concerning ourselves with what other people do, good or bad; we cannot change other people. We can only change *ourselves* by being active on the three lines: work on ourselves, with other people, and for the school. Someone who remains passive is incapable of evolving.

An absolute principle on a spiritual path is that as long as we only do what we feel like doing and what we are capable of doing, or what we can do easily, and nothing more, we do not become any better, we do not progress. True progress, true evolution begins when we do a little more than we are capable of doing.

A further effort on will consists in deciding not to impose our personal will on other people. And an absolute rule consists in keeping silent, in not speaking about the Teaching outside of the Teaching.

For someone on an inner path, it is important to acquire new knowledge and evolve toward a higher state, which means it is necessary to enter a process of change. By accumulating knowledge, the result is that we only *have* more. We *become* more when we change, when we make an effort to change. The first precondition for change is to understand the Teaching, followed by efforts on our negative emotions – observing them, not cultivating them, and not manifesting them – and finally, efforts on our will.

True will only exists in a person who has a unified I, whose every action is born of a thought and a feeling that are in harmony. And the beginning of will is when we decide to do something consciously and voluntarily.

The centers of ordinary man are separate, but time and again, one of the centers takes over the reigns, and the others follow it automatically; ordinary man has no mastery over his emotions. As his magnetic center gradually develops, his three centers begin to function independently; his emotions, for example, no longer have an influence on his physical body, and his mind remains clear. Later his magnetic center encompasses, unifies, and directs the whole, including the sexual center, the source of all of our energy. This energy, which he now uses for his work on the three lines, is thus no longer available to feed his negative thoughts and emotions.

If we wish to progress on the path, we must cease to do what we feel like doing, doing instead simply what is in front of us. As for work in the School, it is essential to do things exactly as they are explained. Someone who does not work on the three lines, in spite of the fact that he is capable of doing so, places himself outside of the Path.

On the Fourth Way, one must be conscientious with oneself; intellectual honesty and a certain moral conscience are indispensable.