



The International School of the Golden Rosycross  
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## The Inward Journey

### Part 2: Self-Knowledge

One of the main points made in the first exploration was that many ideas about the aim of human life are based on a delusion, a fundamental misconception, the mistaken idea that the earthly human being is the true human being, and that perfection can be found in this world or in the hereafter.

We explained that, very often, the ideals people strive for originate from the primordial atom, the last remnant of the original life in the human being. This remnant is what gives rise to pre-remembrance and the deep-seated, often unconscious, yearning for a life without conflict, a life of freedom, safety, and goodness. Not knowing the truth about this, the mortal being tries to accomplish this ideal image of a pure human being in the perishable world (which includes both the material world and the hereafter). However, because of the natural laws that prevail in the perishable world, all these ideals ultimately turn out to be impossible dreams.

‘Man, know thyself!’ That command, given in antiquity to seeking humanity, is the first requirement for the person who wants to find liberating knowledge. We too need to take this command as our guide now that we are becoming more conscious of our ignorance, and the impossibility of attaining perfection in this world. Real insight into our own state of being and the situation prevailing in the material world makes us see that the only possible next step is a total, inner reversal, a transformation of our whole approach to life and our whole inner state. Acceptance of the need for this fundamental reversal makes us open to the helping forces capable of transforming our entire life system and setting it on the path of liberation.

So, to give you the necessary insight, we would like to elaborate on the basic facts we have been explaining about the world in which we live. Insight into these facts is essential if we wish to satisfy our primordial longing in the only possible way.

As we said in our last exploration, the world we live in is characterized by constant variability. Everything is subject to the law of growth, maturation and decay, and hence to death. That is the reason why some teachers of humanity call this world a ‘nature of death’. For whatever values one seeks, whatever one tries to achieve, nothing is certain, nothing is lasting. Possessions, respect, power, health and happiness – everything passes away. A person may strive for the most noble and humane aims on social, religious, scientific or artistic levels, but sooner or later any achievement will come to an end. Everything that has its origin in this world must eventually perish. That is the law of this nature!

So there are always two poles, two opposites that characterize 'life' in our world: birth and death, day and night, war and peace, and so on. For this reason our world is also called the world of antitheses, the dialectical world. Everything that comes into being here, already contains within it the seeds of its own destruction. That is why nothing in our world has eternal life, not even the most noble, the most cultivated, the most sublime thing imaginable. When human beings nevertheless try to impose eternal values on earthly life, suffering is bound to ensue.

Do you see how illogical it is to try to sidestep this inescapable law of nature, to want to build an imperishable, good and harmonious existence in a world whose very fabric is perishability? Do you see how senseless it is to seek the lost paradise in a field of life characterized by continual change?

Many people are merely chasing shadows. They come, and sooner or later they go, back to their starting point. Such is the pattern of life on earth. And that is the tragedy of it all: people have so little knowledge that, driven by that mighty feeling of homesickness, they mistake themselves for the true Human Being, and work themselves into the ground for the sake of perishable things. In the end, what do they have to show for it? Nothing. This world is the world of delusion, a pseudoexistence in which the human being thinks he 'lives'. He does not know any better. It has become a habit.

So, if one accepts that this world of visible matter is a world of delusion, can one still look to the world of invisible matter for the fulfilment of one's primordial yearning? Is an eternal, happy life to be found in the place that is held out as a prospect by so many religions?

Perhaps you, too, believe in an eternal existence after death, in heaven or hell. But, if you are seeking the Truth, you will recognize that faith in an eternal life in the hereafter can only be a delusion. What is believed to be eternal life 'on the other side' is in fact only temporary. There is no lasting paradise there, and no eternity. The hereafter is the domain in which the human being's subtle bodies dissolve after the death of his material body. For this reason the hereafter is also called the 'reflection sphere'. What exists here is reflected there. The life people expect after death and that is described by sensitives and those who have undergone a 'near-death experience' is only temporary, just like life here, and serves as a preparation for the new birth of a human life-system.

So the fields of life experienced before and after death are two halves of one and the same nature order. It is a dual nature order, and real life is not to be found in either of its halves. Existence merely shifts from one half to the other, and back again, in the endless cycle of birth and death.

This brings us to the concept of reincarnation, with which we are going to deal later. The point we want to make here is that human life follows a circular course that remains enclosed within the domain of time, where life is unreal and ephemeral. This circular course winds from the cradle to the grave and from the grave to the cradle. In the Holy Language this earthly world of duality is always referred to as the fallen, sunken world. That is why Jesus said, 'my kingdom is not of this world'. Confined within the cycle of existence in this sunken world, the human being seeks. But what is he seeking, then?

He is seeking a life that the true Human Being lost in a timeless past. But the earthly personality does not know that life. It is not conscious of that life, since its own

consciousness is only the result of a particular combination of atoms. That is why his life and consciousness remain confined to matter. He cannot perceive anything else.

This, then, is the state in which the present human being exists, completely cut off from his divine origin. Nevertheless, he is constantly disquieted and goaded onward, by that last remnant of divine human life within him. The feelings of 'primordial yearning' or 'preremembrance' one experiences are attempts by the Spirit spark, the primordial atom to communicate with the I being. So you can see how important it is that the personality understands that he himself is not the original, divine Human Being.

At this moment the fallen, divine Human Being no longer possesses any of his original characteristics and abilities. He has lost his conscious connection with his Creator and the consciousness of his original, divine personality. All that remains to him is a damaged instrument in the form of the earthly personality, which is equipped with a material intellect and a soul. That limited state is the window through which the whole human system perceives, with a consciousness determined by the 'I'. The result is a wholly egocentric state of being, completely cut off from firsthand knowledge, from any direct perception of the divine world, the world of Light that fills the entire All.

Perhaps you can now picture the tragic situation of present-day humanity. People yearn to bridge the gap separating them from the Truth and from the original life, so they try to restore their damaged instrument, but the only means they have of doing so is their I-personality, which then becomes so dominant that the entire human system is bound more and more tightly to delusion and darkness.

Another point is that the existence of the I can only be sustained by the life force of the Creator. But the I misuses that life force to serve its own egocentric ends. That is the ultimate cause of death and of all those incarnations and bitter experiences. The human being can only align himself with the divine plan with his earthly instrument when the I, after so many bitter experiences, asks his Creator, 'Lord, what will you have me do?' Only then is there a possibility to remove the separation between the true, original Human Being and the Absolute. Only then, when the life force of the Creator is again used for fulfilling the divine plan of creation, there does arise a possibility to overcome and leave behind the nature of death.

If this yearning, as the sum of many experiences, bitter and sweet, is awakened in you, too, then you are standing at the beginning of the path of development proposed by the School of the Golden Rosycross. Then you will be able to follow a path that will make a radical revolution in your own being possible; a path that gives admittance to the original life that existed before the Fall. For, when you enter the sphere of influence of a spiritual school and participate in it as a living and co-vibrating cell, you live under the protection of a universal, divine power. This power guides you along an inner path of experience, through which you can gain the self-knowledge necessary to transform your life and being, and to realign it with the divine plan of creation. In one of our following explorations, we will go into this subject more deeply.

This is the 'knowledge of the world' we wanted to pass on to you in this exploration. But now, what about 'self-knowledge'? What about the many questions that have doubtless been troubling your mind since your search began? Questions like: where do I come from? Why am I on earth? What will happen to me after I die? What is my destiny? The seeker feels

certain that there must exist an objective answer to these questions. But such answers are only available to those who open themselves to the living, transforming Truth. But this living Truth is not something that was once said by a philosopher or a theologian. Neither is it to be found hidden in some ancient manuscript. Neither do you need to seek it far from home, for it lies within you, yourself, and has only to be reawakened and allowed to bloom. Indeed, it could be argued that if this Truth were not present, in principle, within your own being, then you would not be able to seek it or even to have any inkling of its existence. Neither would you experience the inner certainty that there must be an answer to the questions we have been asking here.

So, hidden within you, there must be something that is driving you to seek the Truth – a kind of ‘nucleus’ in which Truth already exists, at least in a germinal state. That is why the gospels say, ‘the Kingdom of God is within you’. All religions speak of a path that leads within to this nucleus. It is ‘the precious jewel in the lotus’ of the oriental religions. It is the ‘last remnant of the original state’ of the theosophists and the ‘seed-grain of Jesus’, or the ‘Rosebud’ about which the medieval Rosicrucian’s spoke. In the School of the Golden Rosycross we often use the modern term ‘primordial atom’ or ‘Spirit spark atom’, to refer to the nucleus present in the heart of the human system. In this imperishable ‘Something’, everything necessary for the restoration of the original, divine Human Being is preserved, just as in a seed. And just like a seed beginning to germinate, this true Human Being must be reawakened.

So it is possible for us to learn to listen to the voice of the primordial atom, and to silence the voice of the ego. Then we will experience that answers to our questions really can be found. In this way, we set out on a journey of discovery, the aim being to enable the true Human Being to become conscious.

This new consciousness cannot be developed through study or exercises, or through contact with ‘masters’. The path must be sought and experienced by the human being himself, guided by his own primordial atom, while he is standing in the midst of his everyday life. No one else can do it for us. We must do it ourselves! However, the Spiritual School of the Rosycross exists to stand beside you and all your fellow human beings on this journey of discovery. The School does this not only by passing on information, but also, and much more importantly, by means of its power field, the so-called Living Body, about which we will be telling you more in a later exploration.

So, the central aim of human existence is a process. The School of the Golden Rosycross calls mankind to follow that process, to walk a path. The more people do so, the more power will be available to help other seekers who are ready for it to see and to do what is necessary. Thus, by walking his path, the pilgrim helps bring about an inner change for everyone. For the power he sets free in this way will also be of benefit to others. That is how the law of universal Love operates, helping to carry out the plan of salvation.

So now you will see why the Spiritual School invites those in whom the spiritual nucleus is awakened, so that, with each other, they can more effectively illuminate the pathway for suffering mankind. For in this way a new possibility of liberation can be created for all those who experience the longing of the soul and who, driven by preremembrance, are searching for the true life that was lost so long ago. Everyone who experiences the inner urge towards unification with the divine origin, can then be helped.

We would like to end this exploration with a paragraph from the literature of the Spiritual School. In the *Elementary Philosophy of the Modern Rosycross*, Jan van Rijckenborgh writes (on p.111):

*'Man will only be free when he possesses the light inwardly, when he has made free the way for the light within himself. So, from below upwards, sufficient people must: yearn for light; ask for light; seek for light; have true love of mankind; know inwardly about the true way; and be willing to give up the separate I, the cause of all darkness.'*