

Talk by Alice Bailey to Arcane School students on Friday, April 9, 1943

AAB: The ninth talk on Discipleship [see “The Six Stages of Discipleship” in *DINA I*] has four or five paragraphs that I think are of great value for all of us who are aiming at discipleship and so perhaps are disciples either consciously or unconsciously. The Tibetan is dealing with the stage of discipleship in which the disciple is called a “Chela within the Aura,” or disciple within the Master’s aura. So many people believe that when you are an accepted disciple you are immediately within the Master’s aura. Actually it is one of the final stages. Here the Tibetan defines aura:

The aura of any form of life can be defined as the quality of a sphere of radiatory activity. Very little is as yet known about auras, and a great deal of nonsense has been written about the matter. The aura is usually spoken of in terms of color and of light, due to the nature of the vision of the one who sees and the apparatus of response that is in use. Two words only describe an aura from the point of view of occult knowledge and they are “quality” and “sphere of influence.” What the clairvoyant really contacts is an *impression* that the mind rapidly translates into the symbology of color, whereas there is no color present. Seeing an aura, as it is called, is in reality a state of awareness. That the seer may in all sincerity believe that he has registered a color, a series of colors, or light, is entirely true in many cases, but what he has really recorded is the quality of a sphere of radiatory activity; this he does when his own individual sphere of radiatory activity is of the same nature and quality as that contacted. [*DINA I*:752]

A person seeing auras in a séance room sees only the auras of people on their own level of development. I used to give talks in London to a spiritualistic group, and it was the lowest grade people in the audience that seemed to have auras. The highly mental types seemed never to have any.

Most seers register the astral range of vibrations of a person or a group and this through the medium of their own astral body. The impact of a truth or of a mental concept and its recognition is an expression of a similar contact, carried forward this time into the realm of the mind.

This explains the truth lying behind all so-called “expansions of consciousness” to which the mind of man can respond; he registers a constant succession of vibratory impacts, emanating from spheres of activity; these range all the way from the early stage of increasing awareness through the development of the five senses and the three vehicles of contact in the three worlds of human experience to those recognitions that lead a man into the sphere of influence of a Master and later enable him to take what is termed one of the major initiations.

These spheres of radiatory activity are ever present even when unregistered and unrecognized. [*Ibid*:752-753]

If we were all at the point of development of an initiate or of a Master, we wouldn’t need to go to an Ashram. We would be able to see right here because there is light here.

The evolutionary process is one of developing a response apparatus with which to register them; having done so, the next step is to react intelligently to such contacts, thus producing an ever increasing range of awareness that finally constitutes the sum total of consciousness.

I cannot here enlarge upon this theme as it proceeds under the impelling force of evolution. I am only here concerned with the fact of a Master’s sphere of radiatory activity and its peculiar quality and ray coloring (occultly understood).

The factor lying behind and thus making possible each of the six stages of discipleship is the existence in the disciple of qualities, radiatory activities and emanatory impulses that correspond to those emanating from some particular Ashram. These, when they have evoked a response and drawn the disciple to the periphery of the sphere of activity of such an Ashram, gradually intensify their magnetic, attractive quality; they awaken to still greater potency the same qualities in the disciple, occultly pulling him closer

to the central point, which is the focus of all the trained ability and the high-powered spiritual life of the Master at the very heart of the Ashram. [*Ibid*:753]

I think that is one of the clearest expressions of how we come to know a Master that I have ever come across.

High mental types like initiates and Masters don't see auras. There is color only on the astral plane, no color on the mental plane, just geometrical forms. Color doesn't go above the astral as we understand color. The science of color is one of the most difficult subjects there is.

The thing I thought was of interest to us to discuss is the words "quality" and "sphere of influence" and "the sphere of influence of a Master."

Why are we all here this evening? Because we are, as a group, reacting to the sphere of influence of that something we call the Hierarchy. It is a vibratory radiatory quality or sphere of influence from the other side that holds us together this evening. That is the great argument for the fact of the Masters and their groups – the only way you can prove them.

A Master's group on its own plane is a sphere of influence of such powerful radiation that it will take a group like us and weld us together. Then you take what happens at the Wesak Festival when aspirants cooperating with the Hierarchy will create a sphere of influence so powerful that they will attract force of a very high nature. I wonder if we are aware of the expansion of consciousness we are engendering in ourselves.

In these meetings I want to see each one of you get a greater grip on the fact of the Masters and their groups than we have ever had before, because so often people like ourselves believe in these things theoretically as reasonable hypotheses. It has got to be more than that, and we need to dig the thing through and have a firmer foundation on which to stand.

These theories that we have had for 25 years should begin to materialize in knowledge. I think most people have theories and hypotheses but no knowledge. I want to see knowledge acquired so that there are no longer any questions.

M: How do we get knowledge?

AAB: You can rest back on the theories of other people, you rest back upon a comforting supposition, or you can reason from effect to cause. Why is there the effect of this group here? What brings us together? We come together to discuss these things that are vital. The very fact that we come together means that these things attract us.

I don't think people *know*. People are using the knowledge they have to the best of their ability, but that knowledge stops there. I guarantee that if I asked, "Do you *know* that the Masters exist?" I would find that you *believe* that the Masters exist. We have to gain for ourselves the authority of experience and not just entertain a happy belief.

RK: I remember the phrase from Alexander's *In the Hours of Meditation*. The answer came in the hour of meditation that to know the Master was not to have seen his form but to have understood his will. That is "knowing" the Master. This does not mean a mental understanding, but to stand up to his will and let him work through you.

AAB: I think that is so. I think great harm was done by the Theosophical Society by over-emphasizing the form of the Masters. The form could stand right in this room, but unless you understood his will you would not recognize the Master.

HR: You still can't prove his existence.

AAB: That is because you want to see the form.

HR: Is it only an identification in consciousness? You can't prove it by ordinary scientific methods.

AAB: I was dealing with the question of the Tibetan with one of the School members, HC, who helped us start the Arcane School in 1923. He used to come into the office at 8 in the morning and leave at 8 at night and do everything. Then he trained a man to take his place and said he was going to Tibet to find the Masters. I said to him, you don't need to go to Shigatse to find the Masters; you can find them here in New York if you tune in on their life. He made three trips to India and to within 45 miles of Tibet. During that time he got to know a famous Tibetan, Gen. Laden Lha, who was head of the Secret Police in the Himalayas. One day Gen. Laden Lha said to him, "I know Mrs. Bailey very well." Mr. C. said, "Where have you seen her?" and Gen. Laden Lha said, "I very frequently meet her when I meditate." I was in the radius of his vibratory sphere of influence, but he was not in mine. The last time but one that C. was in India, he was up near Tibet, and one day he heard a commotion outside. Coming down the road was a lama on a donkey accompanied by four other lamas and servants. One of the servants said, "This is Lama ____ from the ____ Lamasery, and the Lama said, "How is Mrs. Bailey?" and asked all kinds of questions. He handed C. a package of incense for me, then he gave C. his blessing and went away. C. told Laden Lha, who said he had been hoaxed, that that Lama never came down. When C. came back to England and described the Lama, it was the Tibetan, but I did not tell him, because the Tibetan was not within his sphere of influence. He was standing face to face with the Tibetan and talked to him and didn't know whom he was talking to. Later Gen. Laden Lha admitted that the Lama had come down to talk to him.

You can never tell a person a thing like that until there is the knowledge within the person's own self. [For another account of this event, see Alice Bailey's *Unfinished Autobiography*, pp. 165-166.]

RK: I have a confession to make. Alice gave me a piece of the incense and explained how she had gotten it. I put my little piece back, took a bigger piece and divided it and gave half to my sister. We put it away, and when we came to look for it neither one of us could find it, although the envelopes were there. I shouldn't have taken it; it didn't belong to me. Then she gave me another piece and I still have it.

AAB: You see how apposite these two instances are. You have to have something in yourself before you can recognize the other.

ES: You speak of "in your higher consciousness." How do you know you have it; how can you prove it to yourself?

AAB: It depends upon your quality, your ray and how established it is. Some people have flashes of higher consciousness. Some people have cultivated the thought of the higher consciousness, but haven't got it. Can you define "higher consciousness" for me?

ES: No, I want to know what it is.

HR: I feel sure I could not define it because I do not have it.

AAB: Consciousness is that by which you know. The higher consciousness would be awareness of that which is not the normal. It enables you to know the supernormal, the spiritual, the divine.

HR: In one of the books the Master Hilarion said that the higher consciousness fell upon him.

AAB: I think all of us in this room have some touch of the higher consciousness, which we also call Christ consciousness or Soul consciousness.

RK: I think we can work from higher consciousness.

AAB: But it is still an effort for most people.

VH: In meditation you ought to get it.

AAB: I would guarantee that hardly a person touches it in meditation. There come flashes of it. "I am the light of the world." Light is something that reveals a near or a far horizon. We think of light as a form of color, and yet that isn't light at all. Light is simply an agent of revelation, and the higher consciousness is spiritual light, which reveals to us reaches of past achievement of which we know nothing. I do not know how many people in meditation do that – not many, and certainly not constantly, only occasionally.

RK: Don't you think that the higher consciousness is power to realize meaning?

AAB: It is one result of it.

HR: It seems to me that our expansion of consciousness is very slow and gradual within a certain section of the path. Then we get to the point where we can't go any further, and where we feel entirely blind. It seems to me that we all ought to realize that we are almost at the end of one of those big divisions of the path and at those points we feel perfectly blind.

AAB: We are blinded by the light that faces us.

VH: But we are nowhere near the end of the path.

AAB: We *are* nearing the end, and anyone who has neared the end of the path of discipleship has covered more than four-fifths of the way. The rest of this path has as its goal freedom from the three worlds. Then something else opens out. The subject of Nirvana in Evans-Wentz's *Tibetan Yoga and Secret Doctrines* has always interested me. We stand before the open door to the way of the higher evolution. We travel the Path of Light, which is the path of consciousness, which is the path of Christ. Then when we have traveled and passed through the stage of resurrection, we travel the Path of Life.

HR: We know that what we refer to as the higher consciousness is going to be something so different that we can't even imagine what it will be. I think that is where we are now. That is what I mean by the higher consciousness, something that I don't know a thing about. When you are at the beginning you don't feel blind. The feeling of blindness comes when you are almost at the end.

AAB: Do you know the story of the three men who had the blinders come off? They suddenly got a picture of the light and they were so obsessed with the beauty of what they saw that they thought they had reached the end, the ultimate, and they talked down to the Masters and claimed the position of world saviors. They really had made contact, but you can't keep that vision if you make

it separative and personal. The moment any expansion of consciousness puts you apart from the rest of the world, you lose it. One can't live in that consciousness all the time; one isn't meant to.

RK: The form couldn't stand it.

AAB: You wouldn't be of any use in the world. One of the reasons that we are not initiates is that we do not have the mechanism. If a Master came and stood in this room he would disrupt this group. His powerful force would bring to the surface all the evil in the group and also all the good, and in your own life you would be torn apart and your effect upon the group would be so evil and so good that you would not contribute anything to the group. The effect of energy upon the group and upon somebody not geared to carry the voltage, having not yet built the bodies to hold the life of the spirit, would be bad, and that is why our technical knowledge outruns our realization.

RK: Around 1930 we had a closed meeting. Somebody was there from India, and you [Alice] were disturbed. The next day you asked me what I thought of the meditation. I said that I had found it so powerful that I had not slept for 48 hours. You called FB and said, "RK felt it too."

AAB: KH was present during and after the meditation. What stimulated you was KH's presence.

S: There is a statement in this year's Wesak message that the Tibetan has employed many times before. He speaks of the organization and the coordination of the forces of good. I was impressed by the fact that orthodox churches are falling apart because they haven't begun to think in terms of an organized Hierarchy. Apart from the Catholic Church, the idea of organization is lacking.

AAB: The thought of the Hierarchy is coming more and more into the consciousness of the masses. An article about world economy after the Armistice talked of a hierarchy of economists. That talk is laying the foundation for the release of the Hierarchy, and I believe one of the functions of a group like this is, by having understood their will, having complied with the will and having brought our vibrations up as high as we can, we thus link Hierarchy and humanity. Then nothing can stop it.

RK: That is what Christ said; he that doeth the will of the Father shall know of the doctrine.

AAB: I would like to think that all of us in this group would pass from theory and belief to knowledge and experience. So often so little has to be done to release something.

RK: It is the opening of a window for somebody else that will release me. That is where most of us fail. There are people who are aching for a little light and we don't go out to share the light. If I did more, more would come.

M: Do you think it is karmic blocking that keeps people back?

AAB: I would think it was laziness, the disinclination to make the effort. Sometimes there is just one little thing that is preventing a person from making the grade. It might be karma, or it might be laziness.

G: Isn't knowledge always an intuitive experience, and don't you have to desire it?

AAB: The answer lies in the statement of the Master KH: "An adept is the rare efflorescence of a generation of inquirers." You answer your own questions. The very fact that you can formulate a question that will invoke the intuition means that there is in you the intuition that can give the answer. It is the personality invoking the intuition. The fact that we are here talking and searching is the guarantee of the higher knowledge.

C: Acquiescence, the willingness to receive and be.

AAB: You have to have more than that; that is only one of the conditions. So many people stay in an acquiescent condition and remain negative.

RK: The occultist has a difficult problem. If you are out in the world you have learned certain things, and it is easy to express those things, but the occultist has a terrific job trying to bridge, interpret and give what he has to the world.

P: Listen to the singing of life in your own heart; and if you hear it, then you will be able to hear it in the hearts of others.

AAB: I think we are afraid of each other. The Triangles work, for instance – I think we could all do it if we wanted to.

P: We are afraid of having what we love not appreciated. We do know how to give, and we should give whether it is accepted or not.

AAB: I think discrimination is needed. It is obvious that everybody isn't ready for what we have to give.

HR: I think they are ready provided we can translate it and step it down.

AAB: It is not my function to go into a Baptist church in a little village and teach them esotericism. My duty is to find those who are on the probationary path and help them become disciples. It is a particular technique, but I don't think I have much to give to the general public. I think the Roman Catholic Church is of infinitely greater use to people in Spain and Italy. One of the things we have to find out is where we stand on the path of evolution and then we can know the type of people we can help. Most people don't know their spiritual status; they are too humble or else they overestimate themselves and then render themselves temporarily useless.

N: We can make good use of our position and our training. A man who has helped thousands of people had a breakdown. He is very pious, devoted and sincere. This man called me and told me of his difficulty and asked my help. I went to see him and found him sunk in a chair with dull eyes; he had lost interest in practically everything. I started to talk to him and was there about an hour. I got him to go out and take a walk. When he came back he had a wonderful dinner, and two days later he said he was a different person.

AAB: That is the thing I have been talking about that occurs on the path of discipleship. A disciple cannot be with a person and not have some effect. If a Master were here he would have a terrific effect upon us for good or for bad, and a disciple on a lower turn of the spiral has a corresponding effect. Disciples sometimes have the effect of evoking all that is bad in a person and then getting blamed for it.

M: It is not what you do but what you are.