

## **The Cause and Dissipation of Glamors: a psychological perspective**

By a Student

Most of us human beings are, until a very advanced stage of maturity, controlled and deluded by our emotional reactions and by our mental illusions, which are two separate categories of problems. In this article we will deal with the problems caused by the first category, the emotional reactions, also called glamors.

What is a glamor? In a sense a glamor is the effect of the identification of the self with an emotion.

Here is an example of what a glamor would look like: At the office, Peter is very competent and is well thought of, but despite that reality he has a very negative image of himself and often feels inferior and depreciates himself. He never says “no” and does too much for others without being asked. So he is always overworked and not at the top of his capacity because he does not have time to develop himself. Peter does not feel the recognition he would like, despite all that he does for others.

Becoming fed-up with that situation, Peter attuned to the fundamental background feeling that he always experiences. First, he became aware of anger; going deeper, he became aware of always feeling as if he were a weak person and a victim. He then realized that this is not so: he is a very resourceful person and he considers himself as having always received a lot from life. Confronting that pervasive feeling in himself, he discovered the cause: Peter realized that he is always very demanding of himself and does all sorts of things to please others, because in fact he does not love and respect himself. Having realized that he was always expecting others to love and recognize him, whereas he was doing just the opposite to himself, he began consciously to care for himself as much as he cared for others. Within a year and a half he became a new man. He learned to say “no”; he wrote down his priorities and made a plan to enhance his skills and to develop himself in his leisure time; he has dissipated a glamor in his life.

Glamor is probably the main cause of the problems experienced by the majority of human beings at the present stage of evolution. Sometimes we are baffled and even discouraged because of the type or the intensity of our reactions. Glamors distort our perception of reality by making us insensitive or too sensitive, fearful, jealous, revengeful, angry, defensive, anxious, zealous, impulsive, naive, arrogant, depressed, etc.. Glamors are extremely costly in our life, as we discover by observing them, and they are in fact recurrent and deep-rooted patterns that greatly limit and undermine our potential as human beings. Becoming aware of these patterns is not a cause for discouragement, as it is the first step to their mastery and to the mastery of the emotional plane.

Observation will reveal to us that there can be much feeling perception without generation of an emotion, if the feeling is not related to an image or event. Emotion is a result of feeling combined with mental functioning and thought. Therefore, we call “emotion” the relation between thought and feeling. The emotions are the mind’s reactions to the world of feeling.

When we have a pleasant or unpleasant feeling, we register the circumstances mentally and the desire to reproduce or to avoid it: an emotion is born. The emotions are stored in the memory and can be reactivated by an image, a feeling or by another emotion. This implies that as long as a person has not developed the mental capacity to discriminate the real situation, the feeling experienced, the emotion evoked by it and the real need behind it, it is quite impossible to deal realistically and efficiently with the situation. For example, when my boss announces proudly to me that I will receive 85% of my bonus for performance at work, I may have an unexpected reaction: I

get upset and angry because he re-activated a memory of a very negative feeling, which triggers a series of unconscious reactions. Unless I work consciously on my emotional reaction with my boss, face the feeling experienced in the past and take charge of the real need, I stay hooked in the glamor of being the victim of my boss!

Glamors, being the effect of identification with an emotion, produce a false or distorted perception of the present reality, and as a result they end up producing a maladjusted response. Glamors are in fact recurrent and deep-rooted patterns that over the years greatly limit and undermine our potential and our development as a human being.

Many theories have been developed to describe the phenomenon of glamors. One of the most interesting is the Hierarchy of the Needs developed by Abraham Maslow (1908-1970). By observing the behavior of animals, he discovered that our basic needs do not have the same priority. For example, we will meet our need to breathe before our need to eat, and the need that has the higher priority must be met before we can move to the next category of needs, which he tabulated as follows: physiological needs, security, love, self-esteem, self-actualization and transcendence.

Maslow says that the first four categories of needs are based on lacks; when the lacks related to a level of need are satisfied, for example when the physiological needs (thirst, hunger, etc.) are satisfied, we will naturally move to the next level: the need for emotional security. But if a lack related to a level of need is not satisfied, we will get stuck in that level. For example, if a child lived in a poor family and suffered from a lack of resources, there are good chances that all his life he will be driven by an unconscious pattern that will make him feel insecure and fearful about lack of money or physical resources. To free himself from that pattern, he will have to become aware of this lack in himself and consciously satisfy the *real need* associated with it. To become aware, he will have to use the mind, enlightened by the light of the Soul, to scan the emotional plane, identify the emotion and the underlying lack, and satisfy the need directly. If the mind is not used consciously to understand what is going on, that lack, which can be seen as a needy part, will always push to have the desire satisfied. A person could possess one million dollars and still feel insecure and endlessly strive to have more money and possessions.

### *Physiological needs*

This first level of glamor, generated by the physiological needs, is called the *glamor of materiality*. The glamor of materiality is caused by the identification with the material as a way to get security through possession of tangible things. It is the cause of most of the present world distress. It is the cause of much of the aggression, insensitivity and selfishness that destroy whole populations and the environment for the sake of making money. To emerge from that glamor we have to face our fears of lack and identify what we really need to live our life fully. We need to remember that what is necessary varies according to the stage of evolution reached by an individual. For some people, for instance, the possession of what is material may be as great a spiritual experience and as potent a teacher in life expression as the more elevated and less material requirements of the mystic or the hermit.

We can also realize from the Hierarchy of Needs of Maslow that as long as the poor in the world do not have the necessary resources to assure their physical existence, they will not move to the next level. So the way out of this glamor involves a great responsibility from the ones who have in relation to the ones who have not.

### *Emotional security and love*

Higher in the Pyramid of Needs, we find the need for emotional security and love. For a long time, before learning to deeply love and respect ourselves, we remain dependent on the acceptance and love from others. As we badly need the love of others, we are ready to do anything to evoke affection from others; we will display gentle and pleasant characteristics, and we will do all sorts of things just to please others so that they will be indebted to us and will feel forced to respond with affection. But affection is not love, as the love of the Soul leaves others free. This game to buy the affection of others is called the *glamor of sentiment*. It imprisons and bewilders all nice people in the world, beginning in our own house, imposing upon us or others obligations that do not exist (such as pleasing and over-protecting them), and putting the needs of others before our own needs. So we do not take charge of our own needs and instead try to fulfill the needs of others, which is impossible. It creates a relationship of dependence, of veiled demands, and of control over the other, in which everyone loses contact with themselves and with one's sense of inner direction.

This glamor of sentiment is not only related to the need to feel loved and cared for, but to an attachment and an identification with the world of sentiment in general. The way out of that pervading glamor implies a shift of polarization from the emotional plane to the mental plane; it happens when a person has been deceived enough and decides to trust the mind and make more rational choices to satisfy one's needs. Then the person learns to discriminate what is good for one or not, and to depend on oneself rather than on others. As soon as the person begins to choose rather than begging affection, then the whole problem of glamor is considerably lessened, and the speed of progress greatly enhanced.

The *glamor of devotion* is related to this need for emotional security and love. That glamor is based on the strong desire to devote all one's life and energies to a cause, to a teacher, to a creed, to a person, to a duty, or a responsibility. One illustration of this is the sentiment of devotion that is poured out in a glamorous ecstasy by probationary disciples upon the Masters of the Wisdom. The devotee is lost in devotion so that the wider vision is obliterated, and the individual is imprisoned within a tiny circle of desire, to satisfy the sentiment of devotion and the expectation to be recognized and praised.

However, the devotee is always deceived, because the furious driving of oneself and of others will always be wasted efforts, as an ideal object of devotion will always elude all efforts to contact it, being always beyond and above the one who yearns to embrace it. Being eventually swept by futility, the devotee discovers that the way out of this glamor is to let go the ideal and the intensity, learn to relax and to recognize the Light that has always been within. Only then is it possible to contact love and inner value and discover one's own path.

### *Self-esteem*

The next level of need according to Maslow is the need for self-esteem. It first comes from the appreciation and the recognition of others. We are then conditioned to behave in a certain way, to adopt certain values, to comply with the norms and expectations of the environment. It will be so for a long time, until we are developed enough to have and to assert our own ideas, points of reference, skills, competencies and values, so that we can stand by ourselves without needing the approval of others. The transition between the desire to conform to the group norms and the capacity to discern and to assert our own truth takes a long time.

Until we learn to be self-determined, and to trust and esteem ourselves, we are stuck in the *glamor of the pairs of opposites*, and we swing between what we deeply want and what the others want from us, between the values and principles received from our environment and what inwardly we perceive as being good or bad. This inner split and oscillation between opposite ideas and values is also experienced on the emotional level, and we oscillate between feelings of acceptance and rejection, happiness and depression. We come out of that glamor by facing the fear of rejection and by taking the risk to jump, to experiment, even if we are afraid. Then we discover that our point of view is valid, and that we can trust ourselves. So our own self-esteem is developed, and we develop the strength to walk alone, even in the face of disapproval and opposition. We have then developed our personality and dissipated in ourselves the glamor of the pairs of opposites.

The four levels of basic needs all have a very important characteristic in common: they are motivational dynamics activated by deficiency: need for food, affection, esteem, etc. As we learn to detach from our emotional reactions and live more from the mind, we are no longer the slaves of our deficiency motivations, and we become more efficient in our perception of reality, more confident, affirmative and creative. We then see life as a field to develop our talents and skills, instead of a fight for survival in a dangerous place, and we enter the next stage, called by Maslow Self-actualization.

### *Self-actualization*

At the stage of Self-actualization we are not threatened or frightened by the unknown. We are problem centered rather than spending our energy fighting against fears, with unfinished business from the past, or protecting ourselves against imagined dangers. At that stage, we have become powerful personalities. We also become prone to a new category of problems called the *glamors of the path*: sense of superiority, savior complex, self-assertion, control, imposition of personal power, criticism, ambition (including spiritual ambition), separateness and pride. It is at this stage that we develop what is called a big ego, or a strong personality, and we want to impose our way on other people.

We begin to come out of these glamors when we agree to listen to feedback and face the strong reactions that we have created against us by using the newly acquired powers of the personality for our own ends. Then we have to face our egotism and put it to the service of others. This is accomplished through self-observation and a constant taking charge of our motives and behaviors.

### *Transcendence*

Maslow calls the next stage spiritual transcendence. Transcendence is a transegoic level that emphasizes visionary intuition, altruism and unity consciousness. Maslow believed that once a person is self-actualized and has transformed the personality to let go of the power of the ego, he will become sensitive to the call of the Soul and become very creative. The key is to become decentralized from the personality and begin to see the larger picture and put one's talents to the service of the greater whole.

At this stage the person has become mentally polarized, so the main problem is no longer glamors originating at the emotional level, but *illusions* originating at the mental level. Illusions could be defined as false ideas or false principles, such as: we can make money easily without working for it, we can control others through force, men are better leaders, women are more loving than men, the Aryan race is superior to the other races. Illusions are the effect of errors of perspective and of interpretation of ideas that come from the intuition, due to the lack of development of the abstract mind. That new set of problems is resolved by the calling in of the

intuition to illuminate the mind through a structured process of meditation. But we will not go into the study of the problem of illusions, as it relates to a higher order of problems that most of us do not have to deal with yet; we will have to face it after we deal with the dissipation of the main glamors in our daily life.

**References:**

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