

## Alice Bailey Talks

### Talk to Arcane School students given on Friday, September 24, 1943

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AAB: The keynote of what we are going to read today in connection with Rule I is group work. A great deal the Tibetan is saying in connection with these rules runs counter to the teaching given by the Theosophical Society in its interpretation of what it thought initiation and discipleship were. When the Theosophical Society first started, they had very little real teaching as to the significance of initiation. The word “disciple” was used a great deal. The members in Great Britain and New York in those days were very Christian, and everybody who went to church considered themselves disciples of the Lord. That meant that the whole standard for initiations was very much lower and easier than anything the Tibetan has given us.

Take Mrs. Besant’s books, *The Outer Court* and *The Path of Discipleship*. I would guarantee that anyone in this room would say I am trying to do just what they describe. But are we initiates? The term so often used was purification, and it meant largely physical purity – no smoking or drinking, vegetarianism and the like. They laid emphasis on physical discipline and very little was taught as to the true preparation for initiation and as to what probationary discipleship really meant. The whole thing was so stepped down that it didn’t mean very much. It is not initiation; it is not even preparation for initiation; it is just decent living and kindness of heart. I think we are going to begin to define far more clearly than we have ever done before, in the interests of the ABC of initiation, the distinctions between the probationer, the disciple and the initiate. And we are going to know exactly what those distinctions are. Therefore we are going to be far more intelligent in our handling of the people who come to us for help. We are going to be governed in our work as School workers by our capacity to say, “this person is just a probationer and needs to learn the rules of right living.” Then there will come a more advanced person and we will say, “this person is a disciple and has come to us because he or she needs the finishing touches that will turn one from a disciple into an initiate.” They are going to get from us those finishing touches that will turn them from disciples into initiates.

Why can we do that for them? Because, as I told you last week, the intense preoccupation for years and decades of many of us with the things of the spirit indicates that at some time we have taken the first initiation. A very long period of time can elapse, several lives even, between the first and second initiations. But we have undergone an initiatory experience that is evidenced by our interest in the esoteric mysteries and by our capacity to understand more or less. It is the recovery of old knowledge for most of us. And therefore, when I say that to you that I am putting upon you the responsibility of initiation, remember that there are hundreds and thousands of people in every part of the world who have taken the first initiation. They fall into two groups: 1) those like ourselves who have decided to assume that responsibility and 2) those who are endeavoring to live as Souls but don’t know why. Their past experience has not seeped through.

The Masters do not regard the first and second initiations as initiations at all. To them the first real initiation is the third. The first initiation we take is the focusing in the physical body through the medium of the physical plane that something we call the Soul, which is the birth of the Christ life in our hearts, the result of the purification of the physical body. Then there is the second initiation, which many of the advanced students in the School are preparing to take. It is the hardest of them all because of the potency of the emotional nature that has been built up to such a degree that what you are really doing is breaking away from your Atlantean consciousness. It is a hard thing to do because that is the focus of most of our lives. We are feeling all the time. The Tibetan, I think, is the first one to say that the third initiation is the only one taken by the integrated personality when physical purity, emotional control and mental clarity have been achieved. That is why we are told there are only five initiations. There are seven initiations from the standpoint of the Atlantean consciousness; from the standpoint of the Aryan consciousness there are only five real initiations because the first two are concerned with the liberation of the personality. That really is a very important thing

to grasp as you study the Fourteen Rules because they are based on those premises, and we will never understand what they are all about unless we get that clearly into our consciousness.

The second thing the Tibetan says is that it is possible for people as a group to take initiation together. That requires a good deal of thinking out. What is the esoteric purpose of all the little spiritual groups that are forming all over the world? The purpose is that those little groups and groups such as this can together go forward, if they so decide. You can only do that by determining where you stand, finding out what you individually are inside yourself, in complete silence, and deciding what is for you the next great step. And then, knowing where you stand on the ladder of evolution, you take your place in the group and you work from there, remembering that there may be those in the group who know more than you do and who can lift you, and there may be those in the group who know less than you, and it is your function to lift them.

A group is a very interesting organization. It is a living thing. It is a field for the interplay of forces, of energies, ideas, and emotional reactions, all playing back and forth between all of us, an enormously valuable training ground where the fusion and blending is very real, a place where great things can take place within the group because they are going on simultaneously within the individual members of the group. Have you ever thought about this – that in an ashram of any of the Masters there are no secrets and no privacies? The greater person can always in consciousness include the lesser. There is nothing hidden in an ashram; they know just what you think, how you feel; they see your aura, your mental content, what your emotional reactions are. Everything lies open to your fellow disciples. Your motives are clearly seen by the senior disciples, and there is nothing hidden from the Master if he chooses to look at you that way. He seldom does; you just aren't important enough. It isn't possible for most of us to do that yet because we are so selfishly centered. We can't bear to have people criticize us publicly and point out our faults. We want to be liked. You are not in an ashram to be liked or to be commended, but to further the Plan and only that. You have a wonderful opportunity to prepare yourselves to be members of the Master's ashram if you are not already. You won't care what anyone says about you. If you can't take it, and if the time ever comes to have a group of your own, you will go through hell, because any person who has the temerity, not by any planning but by the magnetism of one's spiritual life, to gather around one a group will be made the goat, will be pilloried, discussed and criticized, and unless you learn not to care in group interplay such as this, you are going to be smashed until the point comes where you just don't care what anybody says or thinks. I speak from the standpoint of painful experience. I don't care now what any one of you thinks, because if you are a working disciple in the world, there are certain values that supersede the lesser values; they are more important than what you think or I think. There is work to be done, humanity to be helped and a load to be lifted off the shoulders of the Master. And the lovely thing is that the Master never knows it or pays the slightest attention.

I got a letter from somebody this week who wrote to tell me that she thought I ought to know that she was a disciple of a Master. She was in great mental distress because she had worked with the Master for so many years, but never once had he said a nice word to her or a word of praise. Can you work that way? That is how you will have to work if you work with a Master. He hasn't time to pat you on the back and be nice to you. Here, in a group like this, you can learn to work with people, without commendation, with everything known and exposed, with criticism. When you have learned to do that you are released, you are free then for work, and that is another value of the group. The first value is that you can go forward as a group together; the second is that you have nothing secret, but everything is dragged out into the light. I hope that happens to all of you because it is a very revealing process, and I am terribly anxious for all of you to work in a Master's ashram. It is a very hard road. It means that consciously you work twenty-four hours a day, because you work all day long for the Master, fourteen and sixteen hours a day, and you work all night too out of the body. That means that time doesn't matter. You don't keep hours in the Master's service ever.

M: Don't you come to the point where you are not conscious of time, you don't think of it, you just do nothing else but work?

AAB: That is what the great disciples are doing no matter what ray they are on – the teaching, governing or political ray. Churchill and Roosevelt don't keep hours if there are things to be done. They just go and do them. Someday here at headquarters we will have a bunch of people like that, and then we will set the world on fire. It has got to be a spontaneous thing, not a planned thing, and we will do it unconsciously.

[Reading]

Rule I.

*Within the fire of mind, focused within the head's clear light, let the group stand. The burning ground has done its work. The clear cold light shines forth and cold it is and yet the heat – evoked by the group love – permits the warmth of energetic moving out. Behind the group there stands the Door. Before them opens out the Way. Together let the band of brothers onward move – out of the fire, into the cold, and toward a newer tension.*

AAB: The thing that has impressed me has been how very wisely, without any intention, we built the Arcane School in its early days. The first thing we laid emphasis upon was the light in the head. “The clear, cold light” is the light of the mind illumined by the Soul. The only way in which the Arcane School and this group can move forward toward a newer tension will be through the warmth of the group love, and, unless we love each other rightly and stand together without criticism, there will be no energetic moving forward. I want the energetic moving forward, for that is what the Hierarchy wants.

[Reading]

*Within the fire of the mind, focused within the head's clear light, let the group stand.*

In this sentence, you have the idea of intellectual perception and focused unity. Intellectual perception is not mental understanding, but is in reality the clear cold reason, the buddhic principle in action and the focused attitude of the Spiritual Triad in relation to the personality. I would call your attention to the following analogies:

Head	Monad	Atma	Purpose
Heart	Soul	Buddhi	Pure reason
Base of spine	Personality	Manas	Spiritual activity

In these words you have, therefore, the position of the personality indicated as it stands at the penetrating point of the Antahkarana as it contacts the manas or lower mind and is thus the agent of the purpose of the Monad, working through the Spiritual Triad which is – as you know – related to the personality by the Antahkarana.

The heart as an aspect of pure reason requires careful consideration. It is usually considered the organ of pure love but – from the angle of the esoteric sciences – love and reason are synonymous terms, and I would have you reflect upon why this should be. Love is essentially a word for the underlying motive of creation. Motive, however, presupposes purpose leading to action, and hence in the group-life task of the incarnating Monad there comes a time when motive (heart and Soul) becomes spiritually obsolete because purpose has reached a point of fulfillment and the activity set in motion is such that purpose cannot be arrested or stopped.

AAB: If you really supersede motive, which is a fluctuating thing, and substitute for it undeviating purpose, you won't need to talk about motive; you will go right on because purpose cannot be arrested or stopped.

The Will aspect is the final dominating thing. Here is an interesting thing. I ask myself what my purpose is in life, what Roberto Assagioli used to call “the inner program.” I do not think I wonder about my motives anymore as I have been at the game so long, but purpose is a different thing. Have I an undeviating purpose?

Does everything that happens in my life contribute to that purpose? Is there anything that hinders the expression of that purpose? Is there anything else that I can do so that my individual purpose can go forward? What is the purpose of this group? What is there in this group that hinders the working out of that purpose? Are the will and purpose of the individuals in this group subordinated entirely to the group purpose and, if so, what is that purpose? What is there in this group that hinders the working out of the purpose of the Hierarchy? Why is this group not more effective in the outer world? Where, what, who is the hindrance? All this teaching is of no use to us unless we bring it down first to ourselves as individuals, then as individuals in the group, and then to the group in relation to what the Hierarchy wants done today.

RK: Concerning the word “purpose,” I recall that you said the root “pur” meant fire.

AAB: Pur, freedom from limitation, the work of the burning ground. You come right down to the fact of the burning ground that underlies all evolution. Anybody like myself who shoulders the training of people for discipleship takes an awful risk, because when you get people who are driven by their Souls and something drives them into the School, and you recognize them as good material for spiritual development, what you are doing is to drive them onto the burning ground. I know of no case where the person was earnest and willing to take this step that something did not happen in their lives. Occasionally it is possible (and that is a good thing for workers to remember) that you overestimate people and drive them onto the burning ground before they are ready. You expect too much of the aspirants. Students want to take the step, but don't know what they are up against. They don't know either the penalties or rewards of discipleship.

RK: I should like to suggest that perhaps phrases such as “Kill out desire, kill out this and that,” are meant to frighten people away who are not ready.

AAB: I think that is very sound.

G: Isn't this superseding of motive by purpose something that is very hard on us? It seems to me that if purpose supersedes motive before one is ready, it will have the effect of making the individual intolerant.

AAB: I think you can wait too long in the motive area because the very moment you can function in spiritual will you can work with purpose. Motive is why you want to do it. Purpose is understanding of the Plan. The moment you are completely focused on the Plan, motive is no longer necessary. We are most of us engrossed with incidental motives that don't affect our basic life tendency. I don't see much wrong with the basic life tendency; I think we are all oriented straight. I see a great deal wrong with our will. We are not enough under the spiritual will that will exact from us the limit of what we have to give. We compromise too much with ourselves. We do what we can for the work, but it isn't the basic and major incentive of every action, all day, always.

RK: The Tibetan says, “Purpose is the magnetic line along which the fire will travel.”

AAB: The moment you put your foot on the burning ground, along the line of purpose the fire comes.

FB: We confuse spiritual purpose with the very high-grade purpose of the personality, which is the result of our high and good motives and the circumstances of our training, and we go forth to make the purpose of our personality strong to carry us, and then it breaks. We didn't get on the burning ground at all, but were sidetracked. I don't see any way of getting at spiritual purpose but by the use of the concrete mind after you have gotten an understanding of it.

AAB: That is why they lay the emphasis on pure reason, buddhi.

FB: The great power is love, group love.

G: I suppose he had in mind the danger of taking this personal purpose and then letting that drive through instead of spiritual purpose. If it is spiritual purpose, then motive is no longer of any use.

ES: Would you elaborate on the question of what is the group purpose?

AAB: I asked you that. What would you say is the group purpose?

ES: I think we could say that the group purpose was bringing about the emergence of that which is constantly being held before us and the group of world servers.

FB: Like the carrot and the donkey.

AAB: That is a little vague. What is the thing that is held before us?

B: The bringing into the world of the reflection of the Hierarchy.

AAB: That in a way is the objective of the individual disciple. What is our motive as a group in the new world cycle?

ES: Work with the people of goodwill as a project and all its ramifications.

AAB: I think that is all secondary.

HR: The first thought that came to me is that we are entrusted with something. We are custodians of something.

AAB: What is the main purpose?

HR: All the goodwill work seems to be just a material expression of that of which we are custodians, that we should bring through from the Hierarchy a revelation to humanity.

FP: To create an unobstructed channel for the inflow of the spiritual will on the one hand, and on the other to try to create the right vibration to be able to receive and record that will so that it may work out in service.

AAB: Now we have something; we are on our way.

M: Creative vibration.

AAB: It is not the progress of the individual in the group that is of great importance, but the progress is an incident of the group life. It is possible for us as individuals to put such pressure on ourselves that we break through as individuals into the world of the Master, but we don't do that as individuals; we do that because we are part of a working group of disciples, and our own personal growth and development are of no importance, but we don't want to hold the group back and we want to have something to give the group and so we put pressure on ourselves and get the last ounce out of ourselves, and by doing that we have lifted the whole group. Suppose each one of us in this room had the strength of will that would make us go forward no matter what is against us. We go forward, we drive ourselves, and we succeed in breaking through and find ourselves part of an ashram. When you have done that, you will release a disciple in the ashram for a higher work. When a Master takes a higher initiation, it makes it possible for the senior disciple to take the fifth initiation. Some years ago the Master K.H. passed on and took the sixth initiation, and immediately the Tibetan became a Master, and then somebody took the Tibetan's place as senior disciple of K.H. and there was a general stepping up, and someone entered the ashram because there was a vacancy. There can be no

vacancy in an ashram. Who will fill the vacancy? A disciple on the verge of moving on. You pat yourself on the back and say, "I have stood steady," and all the time you should be moving on.

B: When you move forward you get into trouble.

AAB: It is only an initiate of a very great elevation that is allowed to stand like St. Paul who said, "Having done all, then stand." That stage of life, of reaching the point where you can say, "I have done all," is very far advanced. The technique of standing, which is a spiritual technique, is something that none of us have any right to use at this time in world history. It is the energetic moving forward that is required of us. These rules are not for people who are still living as Souls, but for people who are living as would-be initiates.

FP: Isn't that standing a matter of rhythm? You stand and sum up what you have done and then go on again. There will always be the rhythm of moving and standing, but the trouble is that we stand too long. There seem to be incarnations, culminating incarnations, and there you stand.

AAB: The Hierarchy is now standing, and that is its duty at this time. They are stopping their own moving forward; having done all, they are standing. It is for us to move forward. We are ourselves the burning ground. I think one of the most important things, and I would like you to think this out, is that disciples have to face the ownership of themselves. You don't really own yourself because you are influenced by what everybody says, by what you read in the newspapers, by the attitude of your friends, your background and your traditions and by your life trends in the past. You don't own yourself because if you really owned yourself you might, if you sat down and thought it out from the standpoint of the Soul, completely reverse everything you think today.

RK: I think it is extremely important and significant that owning yourself is implied in what the Gita says, "I am the unborn," and that always meant I am not borne, not carried, but am self-determined livingness.

AAB: I never got this idea about owning myself until five years ago when I was so ill. I got out of bed to get something and knew no more until night. When I came to, it suddenly dawned on me that I did not own myself, and I said never again. I own myself. I won't do anything that will dispossess me of me. Though in illness it is a different thing altogether.

In another way it means that you are always on the job, and you are not going to let anything interfere with your owning yourself, for only in full possession of your faculties are you able to serve adequately. I think this is something for you to think about. It is an aspect of the will, the will to be, the first aspect. I do not know much about it, but it is something I have been thinking about.

This business of the slowly emerging will is very interesting. I think it is the next step for disciples. We will have to develop it somewhat in the Fourth Degree as time goes on. A Master owns himself and yet owns nothing, owns nothing and yet possesses all things.