

Merging Self with Group Work

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This year, as we celebrate the Festival of Easter, we stand at the midway point between the direct touch of humanity by Shamballa in the year 2000 and the centennial conclave of the Hierarchy to be held in 2025. We stand in the midst of a 25 year period that began with a direct impact of the “Shamballa Force” upon awakening humanity, inaugurating a time of tremendous change. This period will culminate with the centennial conference of the Masters to be held at the close of the first quarter of the new century. At this conference the present cycle of “The Stage of the Forerunner” will come to a close and, in all probability, the Masters meeting together in conclave will decide on the next steps to be taken in preparation for the externalization of the Hierarchy and the reappearance of the Christ.

The Tibetan tells us that each time Shamballic energy “strikes into the human consciousness some fuller aspect of the divine Plan appears.”¹ The divine Plan is given impetus, and that potent energy, “which holds all things together in life...[and] is, in reality, life itself”² (the energy issuing forth from the Circle of Life – the Council Chamber at Shamballa) touches the collective human psyche, propelling humanity forward on the Path. A touch of divinity such as this brings together the energy of divine will and the creative force of active intelligence, which we embody as a race. It produces, as the Tibetan phrases it, “certain radical and momentous changes in the consciousness of the race.”³ Its impact completely alters “people’s attitude to life and their grasp of the spiritual, esoteric and subjective essentials of living.”⁴

As we come together in this *Subjective* Group Conference at Easter, we gather in the wake of this tremendous spiritual impulse. As disciples, we are challenged to assimilate the meaning of DK’s words and to deepen our response to the touch of Shamballa. We are exhorted to recognize the importance of the opportunity at hand. We stand at a unique moment in history and – as part of the awakening body of souls who seek to serve the divine Plan – we are being prepared to act as intermediaries between humanity and the approaching spiritual Hierarchy.

The Tibetan has suggested that we might expect dramatic change under the impact of Shamballic energies now released upon the world. Our very attitude towards life and our grasp of “the subjective essentials of living” will be completely altered. He refers to this elsewhere in different terms, hinting that the challenge at hand is a shift from individual to group work. He advises his disciples to learn “to think in terms of *the* Ashram – the Ashram of the Christ, representing Sanat Kumara.”⁵ He suggests that preoccupation with personal plans and goals must eventually give way to selfless service on a higher turn of the spiral.

Thinking in terms of the Ashram reflects the theme for this year’s conference: *Ashramic Work and Self-Forgetfulness*. It points towards a lofty goal: the “true self-forgetfulness” that participation in ashramic work ultimately requires. Complete self-forgetfulness is not easily attained and must be achieved in stages. It demands “forgetfulness of the Soul’s goal as well as of personality goals.”⁶ It requires relinquishing established attitudes and patterns on several levels, for – in the end – effective ashramic work goes forward in the light of the Spiritual Triad.

Each of us, of course, stands at a different place in this quest for spiritual fulfillment, and few of us are at the place of final achievement. Some are early on the Path – actively purifying and coordinating the personality. Others are building the first span of the rainbow bridge – getting in touch with the Soul, learning to respond to Soul guidance and direction. Some are cultivating Soul-personality fusion; others are constructing the second span of the bridge, mastering the building techniques of intention, projection, and visualization. Each is at his or her own appropriate place on the Path and it is entirely right that this is so. As the Tibetan reminds us:

The work ... requires a diversity of quality and of potencies in order to be effective in manifestation upon the outer plane... A group of disciples such as this is consequently a miniature hierarchy, and a *hierarchy exists in its various degrees in order to permit of a wide range of effective relationships.*⁷

Whatever our contribution may be, whether it is that of a senior disciple in touch with the inner Ashram – receiving impressions and transmitting ideas into the group mind – or that of a junior disciple “not so advanced upon the Path of Discipleship” working to establish “a close connection with ordinary humanity,”⁸ we are blessed to find ourselves a part of this miniature group of spiritual workers. It is our collective effort (our united group achievement) that invokes the resurrecting impulse available to us under the full moon of Aries. It is our combined energies that give momentum to the “forces of restoration” active in the Easter period following the spring equinox.

These new and living restorative forces are under the direction and the control of One Whom we might call...the Spirit of Resurrection...[One] Who will restore livingness to people’s spiritual aims and *life* to their planning...It is this resurrection life that will be poured into humanity at Easter time.⁹

This reference to the Spirit of Resurrection was made in the spring of 1945, the year in which the Christ finalized his decision to return to Earth and walk again among us physically. It was the year in which the Great Invocation was given to humanity in its final form. The Tibetan advised his disciples that “the resurrecting life,” which could be invoked at that time, could “engender anew the vitality needed to implement the trends of the New Age and...guide humanity out of the dark cave of death, isolation and selfishness into the light of the new day.”¹⁰ A concentrated effort was being made by the Hierarchy to bring the World War to a close and to clear the way for the new cycle of restoration and enlightenment that could follow.

Towards this end the energies of Shamballa were invoked and the “chosen Emissary” of the Council Chamber at Shamballa – “the Spirit of Resurrection,” known as the “Sun of Righteousness” – was empowered to “carry this life-giving energy that counteracts death [and] gives incentive to life.”¹¹ This Spirit was the hope of the nations of the world.

Again today – at this midpoint in the first quarter of the new millennium – the world is enveloped in war, challenged by economic strife, and faced with natural disasters on a planetary scale. Again (as in 1945) the energies of Shamballa must be mobilized to resolve the situation. Once more the energy of divine Will is needed to evoke “response from the members of the New Group of World Servers and from disciples everywhere.”¹²

Remarkably, Shamballa has touched humanity twice since the close the Great War – the war to end all wars – pouring the energy of divine Will upon struggling humanity. Once in 1975, and again in the year 2000, the human family has experienced the direct impact of that “energy which brings about synthesis [and] holds all things within the circle of the divine love.”¹³ The spiritual power, which issues forth from Shamballa, is present with us.

So it is that we stand today, a miniature hierarchy in the making – disciples from around the world enrolled in a school for esoteric study. We are among those intended to become agents for the transmission of spiritual power and the resurrecting impulse that issues forth from “the center where the will of God is known.”

It is in the sign of Aries (in this season of Easter) that this great spiritual force streams forth most potently from the Center of Life. Aries is the primary conduit for the expression of this First Ray energy. It is “the initiator of impulses” – the zodiacal sign most closely in touch with the “major star of direction” – “the Pointer” – in the Great Bear from which “the will to unify” and the energy of synthesis flows. It is transmitted to the Earth via a triangle formed between the Earth and the planets Vulcan and Pluto. Vulcan and Pluto both convey First Ray energy of will and power. This blended stream of spiritual force pours down from the heavens upon the informing life of our planet, giving guidance and direction to the Lord of the

World in Shamballa. It is this same potent force that produces in humanity “conscious evolution, direction and the founding of Shamballa upon the Earth.”¹⁴

It is this stream of energy that we must tap into when we enter into meditation, and it is the Purpose and Plan that this life stream embodies – the Ashramic intent engendered by its impact – which must occupy our attention – supplanting the concerns of the personality. It is to these high objectives that we shift our attention as we enter into group work. It is for this reason that we are asked to work intensely to achieve self-forgetfulness – to build a point of tension that takes the place of the many “extensions” and personal interests of the lower self.

To achieve self-forgetfulness we must first contact the greater Self and, as the Tibetan phrases it, “lose sight of the little self, its reactions, its desires, and intentions”¹⁵ through the power of the mind and will. As we do so we might keep the keyword for the soul in Aries in mind: “I come forth and from the plane of mind I rule.”

The Tibetan counseled self-forgetfulness again and again in his writings:

“Be...on the outer plane, what you are interiorly.”¹⁶

“Lose sight of the little self in the need and the opportunity of the moment.”¹⁷

“Lose sight of yourself in loving other people and feed not personality satisfaction.”¹⁸

At times he focused on the need of the group itself, as a unit, and the necessity to lose sight of everything except for the work to be done:

[Among the] group requirements that must be met and preserved by the group, as a group [is]:

Fusion. By this I mean the ability of the group to work as a unit. This is dependent upon the achieving of right individual attitudes and (when working) the attainment of the capacity *to lose sight of everything except the work to be done* and a deeply sensed love of your co-workers.¹⁹

Whatever the case, whether to hasten the development of the individual or to aid a group of disciples to build group integrity, fusion, and understanding, the cultivation of self-forgetfulness was part of the prescription – as were harmlessness and right speech. In one instance, the Tibetan combined all three behaviors in a single affirmation:

“May I fulfill my part in the One work through self-forgetfulness, harmlessness and right speech.”²⁰

Notice that the reason for affirming these changes in personal behavior was to further the work to be done: “May I fulfill my part in the One Work” through forgetting the little self, through doing no harm to others, through controlling the words that come out of my mouth.

People around the world are building these “right behavior patterns” into their lives rhythmically, silently, as they sound this dedication each day at 5:00 p.m. – linking up with the New Group of World Servers – strengthening their hands in the task of preparation for the new world to come. The Tibetan encouraged his disciples to sound these words inwardly each day – promising “magical” results:

This can be done in a few seconds of time wherever one may be and in whatever company, and *will not only aid in the magical work of the forces of light*, but will serve to stabilize individuals, to increase their group consciousness, and to teach them the process of carrying forward interior subjective activities in the face of and in spite of outer [happenings].²¹

The message is clear: “Lose sight of self in group endeavor. Forget the self in group activity.”²² We are intended to work together in this crucial time of bridging between the era now passing away and the new age to come. We are asked to do everything we can to lose sight of our own identities to make the work of the approaching Hierarchy possible.

In this type of group work, the feelings, reactions, wishes and successes of the individual most emphatically do not count. Only that is regarded as of importance that will further group effort and enrich the group consciousness.²³

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- ¹ Alice A. Bailey, *The Rays and the Initiations* (New York, Lucis Publishing, 1960), 716.
 - ² *Ibid.*, 715.
 - ³ Alice A. Bailey, *The Destiny of the Nations* (New York, Lucis Publishing, 1949), 13.
 - ⁴ *Ibid.*, 13.
 - ⁵ Bailey, *The Rays and the Initiations*, 374.
 - ⁶ Alice A. Bailey, *Discipleship in the New Age, Vol. I* (New York, Lucis Publishing, 1944), 123.
 - ⁷ Bailey, *The Rays and the Initiations*, 213.
 - ⁸ *Ibid.*, 213.
 - ⁹ Alice A. Bailey, *The Externalisation of the Hierarchy* (New York, Lucis Publishing, 1957), 457.
 - ¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 457.
 - ¹¹ *Ibid.*, 458.
 - ¹² *Ibid.*, 459.
 - ¹³ Bailey, *The Rays and the Initiations*, 716.
 - ¹⁴ Alice A. Bailey, *Esoteric Astrology* (New York, Lucis Publishing, 1951), 483.
 - ¹⁵ Alice A. Bailey, *Glamour: A World Problem* (New York, Lucis Publishing, 1950), 78.
 - ¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 603.
 - ¹⁷ Bailey, *Discipleship in the New Age, Vol. II* (New York, Lucis Publishing, 1955), 603.
 - ¹⁸ Bailey, *Discipleship in the New Age, Vol. I*, 236.
 - ¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 60. Italics added.
 - ²⁰ Alice A. Bailey, *A Treatise on White Magic* (New York, Lucis Publishing, 1934), 261.
 - ²¹ *Ibid.*, 261. Italics added.
 - ²² Bailey, *The Externalisation of the Hierarchy*, 413.
 - ²³ Bailey, *Discipleship in the New Age, Vol. I*, 43.