

Can Man Attain Still Higher Mental Powers? The Psychologic Law of Conscious Knowing & the Psychurgic Law of Conduct

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Can man attain still higher mental powers? Man may, indeed, *evolve* into a being with higher mental powers and become a different species than the present homo sapiens, but that is not now my theme. I ask if it is possible or probable that man may be able to attain by his own *volitionally directed efforts* a higher degree of mental power, amounting perhaps to new human faculties.

I do not hesitate to say that such a discovery has already been made and remains only to be applied in practice. Psychurgy has found it not only in (a) its methods of the present highest mental powers (intellection, esthesis, conation, subconsciousness) but also, and especially, in (b) the utilization of the sub-mental (not subconscious), preconscious (to us), and non-individualistic Consciousness, and in (c) the super-mental Awareness. The evidence of these powers will begin to dawn in ablest minds as soon as those minds are freed from yokes and dungeons, and are courageous enough to follow, particularly, the path of New Scientific Validation. A certain phase of that development—the moral, ethical, and religious (m. e. r. or “meric”) aspect—has very much impressed me.

The Psychurgic Law of Conduct points to some such climacteric in human development. This great law implies that if man were to do just as well as he *knows* and *can* in following the guidance of the Law of Conscious Knowing, he would attain higher mental power. If this is true, what might he not expect if he were to make the Law of Conduct the meric basis of his life and never once violated it? According to this insight, it is interesting to note that *character* becomes the stepping stone to these higher powers! It is one of the highest results of mind-activity.

Whether for one’s highest welfare (morality) or for the welfare of others (ethics) or for one’s highest responses or reaction or

attitude to the whole (religion), one's ultimate reliance for attaining good and avoiding evil is upon one's mind. The best guidance of one's mind cannot be attained unless one will *do as well as one knows and can* in order to set in motion the trains of consequences (effects) that come from right acts and to avoid those that come from wrong acts; and also to avoid enregistering in one's mind the disapprovals of conscience (which are pathological inhibitions of the best mental functionings).

To know just what I mean, let us begin farther back in biological history. I need not emphasize that but a very small part of the Life-Process on earth—but a very little of the biologic and psychologic phenomena of organic life—is under volitional direction of life's offspring. Most of the goings-on in any individual creature take place without its Conscious Knowing or Will. This earth of ours had swung into its place in our planetary and sidereal system long before organic life began and of course long before any creature (or person) had taken any part in the process of which it is now partly conscious. The ontogenetic history of any given creature had nothing consciously to do. Its growth took place without that creature's conscious volition (similar to the way a newt renews a torn-off leg or a new tooth sprouts or the *vis medicatrix naturae* heals a wound). The fetus had no volitional direction over the growing of its liver or brain; the growth was directed by something else than its conscious effort, something which could build structure—as if a teleological force were working according to the architectural plan or type of that species. The creature begins its ontogeny in the phylogenetic and subconscious *deeps* that have not risen into that creature's Conscious Knowing but remain underneath its consciousness. At the natural ontogenetic period for such a thing to happen, a Conscious Knowing dawns in the mind—no matter how, so far as my present thesis is concerned, but perhaps it occurs when the creature finds itself imitating and repeating the instinctive acts by which it responds to stimuli and by which esthesias are satisfied or avoided. The act by which pleasant esthesias are attained and unpleasant ones avoided are repeated so often by the subconscious processes that the creature finally notices the association of the acts with the stimuli, which are remembered associatively, and thus Conscious Knowing begins.

Conscious Knowing is the first and only kind of *knowledge-guidance* by which the creature has control over its acts (conduct), and only to that extent does it ever have directive control over itself or its environment; and this is the meaning and use of mentation. Mentation is the *tool* by which that creature begins to master itself and environment and destiny. By that same power of Conscious Knowing our sciences have been discovered, the arts invented, and the works of artistic beauty created; it is the creator of modern progress; it is the most potent thing in the world. In its highest and most potent form, it is that kind of mind-activity by which Mind and its utilization of Consciousness become Scientific Method (which is the world's most successful kind of goings-on).

Up to the beginning of Conscious Knowing, the esthesias blindly seek their satisfactions in the dark—no light of Conscious Knowing guides them (warning of this danger and pointing out that opportunity). To offset this great disadvantage, nature makes these creatures incredibly prolific so that once in a while one in a million propagates its kind. But when directive guidance of Conscious Knowing begins, only a few offspring are needed. The more extensive and accurate that Conscious Knowing becomes and the more skill the creature gets in doing what it knows, the more life-promoting that guidance becomes. The question is: How can man get higher mental powers and a closer human touch with Consciousness in order to give better powers in carrying out Scientific Method?

Since a person has no other conscious guidance than his own knowledge, it follows that this knowledge should be accurate and true, i.e., validated. And that true knowledge should be obeyed (unless he does not want to live). To *obey* his Conscious Guidance is the *one and only path* to a desirable life (in all the ways and senses in which a person may desire to live); and to *disobey* it is to be untrue to life and repudiate its guidance—to do so leads to destruction. To obey Conscious Knowing is therefore right; and to disobey it is wrong; and there is no other conceivable kind of right or wrong. The nature (and limitations and powers) of Consciousness itself are the ultimate *standard* of right and wrong. In the guidance of Conscious Knowing the individual knows whether he really knows or not, and knowing that *not to do what he really knows* will inevitably bring life-destroying consequences,

it becomes evident that to disobey the guidance of Conscious Knowing is the only sin.

Not only should a person do as well as he knows and can, but he should voluntarily strive to get *as much more* knowledge as he can, being sure that it is really knowledge. (This requires education, research, and validation). He should strive to attain *skill* in doing these things (psycho-technical training). He should apply this knowledge to selecting the esthesias that need to be satisfied and to determining *to what extent and when* they need to be satisfied—this is *normalizing* and *evaluating* the esthesias. He should carry on research for discovering more Conscious Knowing.

This is the moral, ethical, and religious (meric) revelation which Mind (aided by Scientific Method) has achieved (as interpreted by myself), and I presume it is applicable to all creatures in all worlds in all ages. This is the Evangel that Consciousness and Mind, as directed by Scientific Method, would teach all the children of Life (according to my interpretation), and the inward urge to expound these teachings lies deep in my conscience:

- do as well as you *know and can*
- get *knowledge and skill* so that you may know more and have more ability to do what you know
- carry on research for more knowledge for humanity and
- train yourself in these habits until they constitute character

Now if you really will do this without fail, so as not to incur the pathogenic effect of the “smitings” of conscience, you will attain a high *character* (which is one of the *highest* mental powers); and also every intellectual and esthetic and conative functioning will be augmented.

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I have several times in my life tried to expound this great psychurgic Law of Conduct, but have not been successful, nor have I expressed my greatest meaning. Once, in the typed book “The Concept of Omnicosm” I tried to imagine what I would say to the peoples of all the worlds if I were selected as their sole

spokesman for the next ten thousand years, and if they were ready to follow what I said. What could I say, I asked myself, that I would be willing to have all these people follow, including my children and their descendents. Would I recommend this or that religious belief or creed or bible or philosophy, seeing how constantly these teachings have been changing throughout human history and how much grievous error they have taught? I tried in many ways to extract from Mind its unbiased verdict.

Once, I personified my highest ideals and insights and caused them to speak *as if* they were the Supreme Ruler of all worlds, just to see what I would say. What could I say if I knew that for the next ten million years the peoples of ten million worlds in thousands of other sidereal systems than ours could have no other guidance? What would a person have to say to his fellow creatures throughout space if he were delegated to say it and could not avoid the responsibility? Try it!

At another time, I dramatized my conception of the Supreme Mind of the Cosmos speaking in the first person singular to all creatures. What could it say that is applicable to all degrees of evolution and universally applicable and basic? That effort made my mind rise to a higher level. It had to reconsider its total mental content of knowledge, and it was eager to know if all supposed knowledge was really true; and one of the basic things that this Great God of my personified Highest and Best said was this:

DO AS WELL AS YOU KNOW AND CAN (to attain for yourself and all others all normal esthesias); and GET THE KNOWLEDGE and SKILL (to do all that is required for these purposes); and SEEK, BY ALL DISCOVERABLE METHODS OF DISCOVERING and VALIDATING, MORE AND TRUER KNOWLEDGE; and SEEK TO BREED MEN AND WOMEN OF SUCH TYPES AS YOU WOULD LIKE TO SEE PERPETUATED. Do *as if* you were by your own nature just what you conceive the Great God to be (but without the power and knowledge you conceive him to possess) and *never violate* that high fealty to Truth according to your ability and you will be godlike, and may you not have access to, and possess more of, the powers of GOD?

If you really do as well as you know and can, you will consider it a privilege to learn more knowledge of the sciences, and especially will you carry on research, discovering knowledge for

yourself and the world to utilize. This will cause you to act as you feel the Great God would act if he were incarnate in your body. Then to the extent of your evolutionary degree of mind-embodiment and ability you will be a God, but you must never once fail to do as well as you know and can, otherwise you will lose your power to promote your own life and you will lose respect for yourself (for you would not respect an incarnate God who would do such a thing). Such a God would lose respect for himself if he were to do such a thing. To do less than as well as you know and can is not fully to utilize the power of Mind and Consciousness, which is the godhood in you. To do that which you know to be wrong, by these standards, is to start a train of consequences that will lead to less and less life and happiness; the consequences of your acts will be your only punishments and rewards.

In this attempt to judge what God would say I am definitely aware that it is only *my conception* of God that is speaking through my brain. I am not attempting to prejudge the question as to whether there is or is not a God. Certain it is that God is not an anthropomorphic creature like a man sitting on a store-box of a throne with Poseidon's tripod in his hand; certain it is that he is not a Jehovah-like or Jupiter-like being full of wrath and hurling thunderbolts; certain it is that God is no longer to be anthropomorphized. If there is a God, he is the immanent Life of the Cosmos, whose basic nature is Consciousness. What kind of God would it be that is not conscious! If Consciousness is a prime factor in cosmology, if it is as co-eternal as matter and motion and space and duration, then we have a clue to the coming and higher conception of God as an operative conscious force in the Cosmic Process. If such a Power is conscious, if it works immanently, how does it differ much from the best in the historic conceptions of God, however meager these may be? I am not saying Consciousness is God but that it operates *as if* it were.

If you have been negligent, have not done as well as you know and can, then you will have acted in an entirely human manner, you will have knowingly done wrong and made mistakes, and you will suffer consequences detrimental to the completeness of your life (not as punishment afflicted by God but because of natural and inevitable consequences). If you are one of these negligent ones, not fully awake and aware to the rich opportunity of life, then do

not despair: Begin at once and forever after do what you believe the Great God would do if he were incarnate in your body. Assume godhood (to the extent of your knowledge and ability); be like what you conceive the incarnate God would be, and you will soon find yourself preparing to get more true knowledge as fast as you can, and you will be very careful that it is true, and you will live up to these teachings in all you do to the extent of your ability. In addition to carrying out this part of the Law of Conduct, you will further carry it out by being just, charitable, kind, loving, and polite; you will take care of your wealth and will faithfully do your own predilective part of the world's work. You will do it because it is your delight to get your self-expression in that way and not because a Jehovah commanded it. You will not overdo the making of an effort, for Conscious Knowing (science) teaches that you must also have rest and recreation and sleep and contentment and full freedom to work or not without hurry or constraint.

If you do these things—if you live this kind of psychurgic life by *acting out the full nature of Mind and Consciousness*, guided by validated knowledge and its normalization of the esthesias and trainings in the mental skills—it will not matter much whether there is a God or not insofar as your own meric growth is concerned. If you do not drop the scepter of your Conscience in regard to the Law of Conduct, it will be *as if* there is a God, at least in you, ruling to the extent of your knowledge and ability. It may be that when once you learn the New Psychology and are trained in psychurgy and when once you have learned Cognostology, you will *discover* that the Cosmic Consciousness that is immanent in your Sub-Consciousness and in your Mind is the actual presence and functioning of God.

You will then regard with a higher reverence the commandment of your own Conscious Knowing, that *not to do* as well as you know for the attainment of the best esthesias for yourself and others, and *not to do* this as well as you can (which should include skill in those arts relating to your predilective work and self-expression) is wrong and will place in your mind the prohibitive and inhibitive qualms of conscience (which is pathogenic in the very center of mental power); and you will realize that there is no other kind of wrong.

Conversely, you will realize with rejoicing that *to do as well as you know and can* is right, is totally right, and that there is no other

kind of right. You will fully realize that you must not let yourself believe that you know unless you really do know on the basis of your own immediate and direct experience; the testimony of others cannot give this kind of certainty with moral and religious conviction and authority; it must be based on your own validated experience without using “accepts” from a mediator.

Does this sound as if it were too difficult an exaction for human attainment? That the task is beyond your reach? Does it seem as if these teachings demand too much of you? If you poke red-hot coals with your finger you will suffer the natural thermal consequences and get some of your tissue roasted and suffer pain; and this law is inexorable, and you will not be punished in some other way—you will not be punished at all, you will suffer consequences. If you go out into the fresh morning air you will be invigorated, not as a gift from God but as the natural consequence of breathing fresh air. If you follow the psychurgic Law of Conduct you will reap the blessed consequences, and if you fail to follow it you will reap the life-destroying consequences. It is exactly as the laws of chemistry and physics and psychology. But understand that it will not be difficult to follow this Law if you really *do it*—if you actually *live it*, for it is in your power *not to fail* to do as well as you really know. And if you do this, it is my belief that you should (if you have high natural ability and knowledge), attain a *far greater power than any man or woman has ever yet had*.

The full meaning that is in my mind will become clearer in my books, but even then I am aware that I have not said quite what I wish; namely, that probably no person has yet risen to the full stature of the Great Person that is possible (and easy if actually the Law is followed). If he will do that which he knows and can, he will attain powers that are at present beyond him; though in any matter attempted, if he does not succeed he will not actually “fail”; his life will be a success, because no failure can be as great as attaining a high standard of being, of human-hood, of truth-hood.

Everyone who has attempted to write his ideas of a perfect being has attained higher ideals. An incarnate God could not be mean and silly and ignorant and such, but just the opposite, and the attempt to describe such a being calls upon one’s highest and best. Try it yourself. Portray an ideal character, such as God incarnate would be, and you will be astounded to watch that portrayal grow

in beauty and context, and rise above your own abilities and previous ideals. A well known agnostic said: “Every race has created a God and the God has always resembled his creators.” He also said, paraphrasing Robert Burns, “An honest God is the noblest work of man.” While he did not say this in disrespect, I am sure that he did not say it with the veneration and weaning it had for me.

To formulate your ideals tends to make them *grow*. To the mind that is just evolving into civilization from savagery, the strongest ideal is the personification of perfection. To the mind that is burgeoning from civilization into enlightenment, personification of the Whole Nature of Consciousness and Mind and Knowledge and Character is not less inspiring—and is far more exacting. And it may happen that it is not getting farther away from the conception of a Supreme Being, but in closer touch with that Consciousness which must be the main characteristic of a Supreme Being that is the life of the Cosmos. It is certain that unless the Law of Conduct is followed the greater powers of mind, which I foretell, cannot be realized.

Has any person ever really tried the full and strict guidance of Conscious Knowing? Have we any idea of the glorious results to which it might lead—to the Consciousness which has created the sciences and arts and given us all our joys? To what might it not lead if really tried? “Not-trying it” is to refuse to do in any one instance as well as you know and can, to neglect to learn what you could.

There will come a time when our present civilizations with all their horrors and cruelties will be submerged in the past, as is Atlantis beneath the ocean. And to the shores of a more glorious humanity there will flow, from our psychurgic era, the beginnings of an Era of Enlightenment.