

INSTITUTE OF CURRENT WORLD AFFAIRS

Arica Weeks 4-5.

234 East 23rd Street
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Dear Mr. Nolte:

The training has suddenly begun to move ahead with tremendous velocity. We have been working with a variety of new exercises as well as assimilating a vast amount of information and theory.

To help with what now appears the herculean task of distilling all this information and experience into communicable form, I have done a "Mentation" on the subject of this series of newsletters. My goal is to communicate as much information in the most objective terms possible. My means for doing this are words, diagrams, my typewriter, the photo-offset process, etc. The charisma of the newsletter is the style in which I present the information, the way in which it is organized, the extent to which it is subjective or objective. My capacity to do it depends upon my ability to distill and organize both objective information and subjective experience in words. My orientation is towards an exchange of energy, in the form of ideas, with the reader. To do this requires the elimination of all extraneous and/or confusing data. My method involves such activities as taking notes, keeping a daily journal, organizing my material into categories and then deciding which categories are suitable subjects for discussion in an Institute newsletter. My impulse is to communicate as much of the experience as I can, taking into account the reader's need to receive the material in comprehensible form, as well as my own need to make sense out of the experience without doing violence to the experience itself. Among the possibilities are the successful communication of this selected material, or a confusion of the issues. The form is simply what the eyes behold: black type-script on white 8½ X 11" pages, the ICWA letterhead, my salutation to our dear Mr. Nolte, and so forth. The substance of the newsletter is dead vegetable matter containing a collection of ideas, concepts, impression which the reader will or will not understand, and with which he may or may not resonate.

Towards the end of my last letter I discussed the concept of "Deviations"--the notion that the energy of the microcosm is rotating out of "sync" with the energy in the cosmos--and mentioned that we were about to begin work on our individual deviations. One's deviations are computed astrologically, a fact which tends to engender a good deal of scepticism. An individual's deviations depend solely upon his rising sign. That is, which of the twelve constellations was coming up over the Eastern horizon at the moment of his birth. (This is a simple astronomical calculation requiring merely the longitude, latitude and time at which he was born.) Given the rising sign, a

person may have from zero to twenty-four deviations in the twelve mentations (each of which corresponds to an astrological "house" or sign of the zodiac).

At the time that the deviations were computed and "passed" individually to each member of the group, I had not yet received my exact birth time from Fort Jackson Army Hospital in South Carolina. I therefore had to figure out a set of deviations with one of the trainers--a relatively simple process, since once you have two deviations the rest line up automatically. My first set is expressed by the following diagram (note that the true mentations are given in the interior circle, and the deviations written along the periphery):



From the onset, my feeling about the deviations was that they were a kind of Rorschach upon which the individual could project and thereby objectify various patterns of thought and behavior. In working the deviations we were continually reminded that they are not "us" but merely voices, clowns playing word games in the service of the ego (which is itself not in reality). Once they were identified and interpreted, we assigned to each deviation a

a humorous name to be used as a mantram whenever it might rear its nasty head (which would be often now that the process of exorcism had begun).

In this first set of deviations, Charisma appears in Substance. Now, when Substance is clear, it hears the vibrations and understands the actual material substance as well as the true essence of a given person, object or idea. If Charisma has lodged in the ears (its rightful home is the knees and elbows), one mistakes the external trappings, the ornaments, the appearance and style of a thing for its real substance. In Possibilities, I had Goals which means that instead of sensing all the possibilities inherent in a given situation, object or person, my perception was limited to those possibilities which were goal-oriented. Since Possibilities, instead of being in my nose where they obviously belong, had taken up residence in my liver (Assimilation), I was continually leaping from one method of doing things to another. Rather than being oriented by my genitals towards life and life-giving substances, I was at the mercy of my impulsive heart. And, to make matters even worse, I tended to see sex as a means for attaining my goals (Orientation in Means).

After working with this set of deviations at some length, I felt that about three-quarters of them were useful descriptions of recognizable, undesirable behavior. In the meantime, I was anxiously awaiting the arrival of my correct moment of birth from South Carolina. It came two days ago, and yesterday I received a brand-new set of seventeen deviations, not one of which corresponds to the previous twelve. I have reviewed them carefully and find, once again, that about three-quarters of them are helpful descriptions of various personality traits and behavior. Moreover, in going over the charts of friends, I have found that approximately three-quarters of their deviations describe my behaviour as well. Oddly enough, I find this reassuring. It allows me to divorce the system from its more mystical components, and view it merely as a tool for objectifying and understanding certain aspects of human behavior and personality.

Except for an occasional session of "Deviation Theater"--a delightful exercise during which two people carry on a conversation while two other people, posing as their alter-egos, direct them to act out their various deviations--most of our work in this area is done on our own after school. We write a lengthy "criminal record" of each deviation, trying to relate it to as many specific incidents as possible, and, by so doing, to completely familiarize ourselves with its mode of operation.

During school hours we have been doing a number of exercises designed to awaken an energy center known as the "Kath." There are three energy centers in the body. The Kath, located four finger widths below the navel, is the Moving Center which connects us with the earth; the Oth, or Loving Heart, is the Emotional Center; and the Path, located in the head, is the Mind Center.* Ideally, all the centers should be active, but the degree to which they are actually awake is largely a culturally determined phenomenon. Some

*A fourth center, the Kath...

peoples live primarily in their Kathas and Othas and are asleep in their Paths. Twentieth Century Americans, on the other hand, are in touch with their emotional and intellectual centers-- their Othas and Paths--to the exclusion of their Kathas. When the Kath is asleep we are not "grounded" on the planet, and are therefore unable to receive its vital energy.

The gym is a crucial aspect in the process of Kath Awakening because Kath energy can flow only across a clear, strong, relaxed body. Gym and African Dance serve to strengthen, stretch and loosen us. Another hour a day is spent doing "Eurythm" exercises designed to rid the body of its years of accumulated tension by isolating specific muscles or muscle groups and gradually working the kinks out of them. Try, for example, smiling as broadly as possible to a slow count of six, and you will notice that the muscles extend in little jerks rather than in one smooth movement. This jerkiness in the extension or contraction of a muscle is due to accumulated tension which acts to block the even flow of energy through the body.

Our daily hour of mantram has been mostly devoted to chanting "RAM" in very deep voices which will resonate in our Kathas. Occasionally we do a round or two of RAMS in the Oth, or, to the overwhelming joy of those heady sopranos among us, have a brief go at RAM in the Path. But these respites are rare.

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Two and a half weeks into the training, Oscar informed us that for the first month we would be "pressurized," "brought to a boil." I was in a strong simmer, a state of extreme resentment and irritation at the time. Everything was boring, nothing was being done properly, the trainers were inadequate, I was being ripped-off, Oscar was a hall of mirrors, etc. etc. The boiling process reached a crescendo at the end of the fourth week. We were frantically working on our deviations, had done our first twenty impossible hours of Kine Rhythms (one of my fantasies, that of all of us hurling our rocks, en masse, at the heads of the impeturbable trainers, turned out to be almost universal), even our mantram class had turned tedious with the incessant RAMing. But then, suddenly, it all began to change. Last week we started learning about Protoanalysis, Ego Fixations and Levels of Consciousness. The energy of the group increased steadily while its structure, which had been highly static, began to undergo real changes.

We are moving.

Toward the One,

Winifred Rosen
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