

*Chapter 9***How To Think Constructively**

**C**ONSTRUCTIVE thinking depends upon the ability to direct the attention, and thus the thoughts, persistently to a predetermined subject. That is, not only must thoughts and feelings be selected which build as desired, but the consciousness must be engaged by them to the exclusion of other thoughts and feelings which are detrimental. It would seem proper, therefore, first to consider how the thoughts can be properly directed, and then to consider the thoughts and feelings which should thus be engaged for the most constructive results.

Already in chapter 2 the difference between Spontaneous Attention and Directed Attention has been shown to be the difference between permitting such stimuli as are present to hold the attention, and the critical selection of that to which the attention is given. And in chapter 3 it was shown that most of the thinking of man, as well as of animals, derives from Spontaneous Attention, and because uncurbed by the critical faculties is called Fantasy Thinking; which is in contrast to Directed Thinking. And that Directed Thinking, with the Attention Directed by volition, consumes energy so fast that it is not merely the most useful, but the hardest work in the world.

To understand why this latest product of evolution, Directed Thinking, is such hard work that most people shun doing more of it than is necessary to survive, we must briefly discuss the late trend of material science in the discovery of the processes of Objective Consciousness, and the nature of the etheric energies which flow over the nerves. Objective Consciousness, as was explained in chapter 1, embraces only such mental states as communicate their energies, through etheric motions, from the unconscious mind to the physical brain or nervous system in a manner that can be recognized.

In fact, as set forth in Course 1, *Laws of Occultism*, it is only by utilizing etheric energies drawn from organic substance, that any discarnate entity can exert physical force; and only by means of such etheric energies that the soul can make contact with, and control its physical body. And material science now has not merely recognized this etheric energy to be radiant and electrical in character; but it has advanced a theory as to its production by the physical cells of organic life.

These cells are of protoplasm, just as the substance of the astral body is thought organized psychoplasm. And each of these cells has a nucleus of protein, which is comparatively acid. Surrounding this nucleus is the cytoplasm, which is comparatively alkaline. Separating the acid nucleus and the alkaline

**All Objective Thought  
and Feeling Expend  
Electrical Energy**

cytoplasm of the cell is a semi-permeable membrane. Electrolytes are thus formed of the humors of the body in such a manner as to make of each cell a miniature electric battery. The semi-permeable membrane separating the nitrogen fraction from the hydrocarbon fraction of the cell, and the membrane surrounding the cell, are adapted to storing and conducting electricity.

We have long been familiar with the idea that the heat and light produced in burning wood, oil, coal or gas is merely the release of the heat and light radiated by the Sun and stored in the plant. Also that the heat of the human body, and much of its energy, is derived from the release of solar heat from such carbon compounds. The green leaves of plants are able to store these solar energies in the process of photosynthesis by which they manufacture the carbohydrates from the carbon dioxide of the air and water.

But the function of the nitrogen compounds in releasing high-frequency energies is a later discovery. And material science now holds that these high-frequency energies, which are of far greater intensity than the heat radiations due to oxidation of the carbon compounds, furnish the electrical, or etheric energy which runs the body.

Nitrogen as it occurs in the air, due to the firm binding of its atoms in pairs, is one of the most inert chemical elements. But when these pairs of atoms can be rent asunder, nitrogen becomes one of the most active of all chemical agents, forming with the oxygen of the air the unstable oxides of nitrogen, such as enter into the nitro group.

Carbon compounds united with this nitro group form the most powerful explosives known. Glycerine, for instance, when the nitro group is added, becomes nitroglycerine; toluol, a coal product, when the nitro group is added becomes the explosive T. N. T. Iodine and chlorine are elements essential to human life; and the iodide of nitrogen is so sensitive it may be exploded by a delicate electric charge or a slight mechanical disturbance; while the rays of the sun, a slight jar, or the lightest contact with the fringe of an oiled feather will detonate chloride of nitrogen.

Part of the energy of T. N. T., nitroglycerine, and gunpowder is derived from the energy of solar radiation stored in the carbon compounds. But glycerine charcoal, etc., by themselves can not be exploded. The high-frequency energy content of such explosives is due to the nitrogen compounds. And in protoplasm, carbon compounds—sugars and fats—are joined with nitrogen compounds, called proteins.

Scientists hold that the temperature of the surface of the Sun, about 6,000 C, is insufficient for its radiations to tear apart the paired nitrogen atoms of the atmosphere. Lightning, terrestrial electricity, and nitrifying bacteria, however, are able to do this. The Fixed Nitrogen Research Laboratory at Washington reports that one hundred million tons of nitrogen are thus fixed annually by lightning and carried to the earth's soil by the precipitation of rain, snow and hail.

And as having a bearing upon the production of certain types of psychic phenomena through the use of high-frequency etheric energies generated in the body, if temperatures sufficiently high can be obtained even enough electrons can be knocked off of atoms to change them into different elements. Dr. Bengt Hedlen, for instance, in the Institute of Physics at Uppsala University, through an electrical discharge attained a temperature of 500,000 C, causing copper to lose 18 of its 29 electrons, and thus converting it into sodium, which has only 11 electrons revolving around its nucleus.

Because lightning puts more energy into the fixation of nitrogen than the

Sun's radiance puts into the carbon atom, the oxidation of a nitrogen compound, such as protein, emits a shorter wave than the oxidation of a carbon compound, such as the fats and sugars. That is, each cell of protoplasm, in addition to gathering heat, emits waves of high frequency, capable of knocking electrons off of atoms and thus creating an electric charge.

Such electrical charges, Dr. Edwin J. Cohn, Professor of Biological Chemistry at Harvard, found to be present on the giant protein molecules, which previously had been considered electrically neutral. Measuring these charges, he points out that the movement of such an electro-magnetic molecule operates like the armature of a dynamo. It produces an electric current. And these electric currents are the etheric energies which flow over the nerves and enable the mind to control the body.

It is thus held that protein molecules are able to release the high-frequency energy of the lightning which fixed the nitrogen that plant life took from the soil. This is in accordance with Einstein's Law of Equivalence: that the energy of an atom is given out in the same quanta as those received by the atom. And these short-wave radiations have properties with which we have become familiar in the radio. In fact, Dr. Cohn used the same technical developments in the measurements of the electrical properties of the giant protein molecules that have led to the improvement of the radio.

Of all the cells of the human body, those of the nervous system are best adapted to the production of short-wave radiations, as well as to carrying electric currents. And the gray matter of the frontal lobes of the brain are the best adapted of the nerve cells in this respect. These, because of their high specialization, are the ones chiefly employed in objective thinking.

However, this discovery of the electrical properties of protein proves that the nervous system of man is, as occultists long have held, a radio broadcasting set. And it also means, because the scientists have found these electrical phenomena of the nervous system to be reversible, as when the cells recharge in sleep, that the nervous system is a delicate receiving set, capable of intercepting shortwaves which reach it from other broadcasting sets.

Telepathy, which material science very reluctantly is being forced by the experiments of its own savants to accept, thus finds its explanation. And also, as telepathy more frequently is due to the broadcasting and reception of ether waves rather than those astral, it becomes apparent why the ancients classified thought-transference as one of the seven physical senses.

Chemists, for some time, have been aware that the long-wave heat radiations resulting from the oxidation of the carbon compounds were inadequate to account for the "hair trigger" violent adaptations of the higher forms of animal life; or even those rapid changes from inaction to action commonly observed. They knew that in some manner the iodine nitrogen compound secreted by the thyroid gland was involved in energy production, and that another nitrogen compound secreted by the adrenal glands gave energy of the most explosive type. In proportion to the size of their hearts, for instance, lions and tigers, which from a state of rest move into terrific speed, have unusually large adrenal glands.

To initiate the explosion of dynamite, or yet more powerful nitrogen compounds, it is customary to use a still more sensitive primer or fulminate. It has already been mentioned that iodide of nitrogen is such a sensitive detonator; and observation indicates that adrenaline is even more powerful than thyroxin in the human body to release the short wave lengths which lighting or nitrifying bacteria have stored in the protein molecules.

Because, through his thoughts and feelings, man has the ability to increase or decrease his mental and nervous tension, which means the rapidity with which the nitrogen compounds release radiant energy, and so control the comparative shortness of the wave lengths emitted, he can thus tune in on various levels. And as etheric energies of the nervous system are ready transformers and conductors of corresponding astral broadcasts, he can tune in not merely on broadcasts through the ether, but on the astral broadcasts from the planets and from minds that no longer are of earth.

In fact, whether he is aware of it or not, he does thus tune in on the energy of any planet that makes an aspect in his chart by progression. If he has a progressed aspect to Mars, for instance, as explained in chapter 6, the Aggressive thought-cells in his astral body receive, through the aerial mapped by the aspect, an additional supply of energy. Because they have more energy, they can impart it to the nerves of the gonads and of the adrenal glands. This local electrical stimulation releases hormones in the blood. These reaching the cells of the body increase their electrical discharge.

These electrical discharges over the nervous system, unless there is a deliberate effort made to cultivate other thoughts, stimulate thoughts of the Aggressive type, which keep the nervous system constantly tuned to pick up still more of the Mars broadcast. But as the brain-cells generate high electrical charges under the processes of thinking and feeling, it is within their power to reverse the process. That is, properly Directed Thinking, instead of being stimulated by the electrical currents coming from the body cells, can initiate a current which stimulates another hormone, which in turn has quite a different effect upon the body cells.

This, in turn, tunes the nerves and energies flowing over them in on invisible energies of a frequency corresponding to the thoughts which initiated the electric flow. In other words, whether the electrical current is a response to an external stimulation which determines the quality of thought, or is a response to a type of thinking deliberately selected for that purpose or some other, when once initiated it tends to gain volume and perpetuate itself through the action of the hormones of the endocrine glands, and the energies of similar frequency picked up radio fashion, by the nervous system.

To be able, therefore, to determine in large extent, what planetary energies, what thought-energies radiated by others, and what character vibrations from objects, are picked up, radio fashion, by the nervous system and added to the thought-cells, to give them special types of energy, requires the ability to do Directed Thinking. And Directed Thinking, which is the only avenue to Constructive Thinking, requires that the brain shall develop and use a high electrical potential.

Each cell of physical life, whether a portion of a larger plant, animal or man, or independent of such an organization, is a generator of electric charges and radiates short wave length energies. Through etheric motions it is kept in contact with the four-dimensional thought-cells which constitute its intelligence. It is these four-dimensional thought-cells thus associated through short wave-length etheric radiations with the physical that, as cited in Chapter 1, Course 9, *Mental Alchemy*, enable blood corpuscles, epithelial cells, and various physical organs intelligently to continue their special kind of work even after they have been removed from the body of an animal. In the Rockefeller Institute for Medical Research, for instance, a chicken heart has been not only kept alive but beating in a glass tube of nutrient solution, and constantly growing, for 25 years.

So long as the electric equipment is able to perform its function of furnishing short wave radiations the thought-cells, which have gained their experience for such work in less advanced forms, are able to keep contact with the physical; and to exercise control of its movements through directing the flow of electrical energies. But when, for any reason, the battery runs down, the essential conditions of contact between the three-dimensional and the four-dimensional plane are no longer present, the thought-cells can not exercise control, and the physical is pronounced dead.

As explained in full detail in chapter 4, not only the thought-cells which constitute the intelligence of physical cells and physical organs, but the thought-cells and groups of thought-cells which are embraced within the astral body of man, possess energy in a state of tension seeking release such as is called desire. Also even those desires which have been repressed and not recognized by the objective mind, give rise to tensions in the nervous system. These tensions are due to differences in electrical potential. That is, the thought-cells and groups of thought-cells within the astral body, to the extent they have permanently, or gain temporarily, an energy supply, are able to impart that energy to the physical, causing electrical charges of high potency to be generated in certain regions of the nervous system.

Electrical currents carry the reports of the various physical senses—hearing, feeling, seeing, tasting, smelling—to the brain. These are stimuli received directly from the three-dimensional world. And in addition, the more powerful thought structures of the unconscious mind impart the energy of their desires to electrical currents which flow to the brain. At times, due to the additional energy supply received from the planets when progressed aspects form, as explained in chapter 6, these thought structures are able to bring a tremendous force to bear upon certain nerves, causing them to generate electric charges rapidly.

These electrical energies, generated through impact with the physical world and through energy releases from the thought-cells of the unconscious mind, reaching the brain, tune its physical cells to thoughts of a corresponding nature. That is, the attention is directed, not to some critically selected subject, but to thoughts relating to the stimuli. The thinking which results is called Fantasy Thinking.

In order for the brain cells to vibrate sufficiently to register as objective consciousness, electrical energy is expended. The cells of the gray matter of the brain are the most effective electric batteries of the body. Yet all conscious thought consumes electric energy, and tends to exhaust the electrical charges formed by these cells. And like any electric battery if the circuit is kept closed it tends to run down. If you keep your foot on the starter of your car, you are aware that the current weakens, and if this is continued your battery goes dead. So, not only with the brain, but with every cell and organ of the body, if it is to continue to perform its function it must be given an opportunity to recharge.

Yet if, before a battery is dead, the circuit is broken, it recharges itself. For a battery thus to recharge, it is necessary for it to have resting periods. And all the organs of the body are provided with such periods of rest in order that they may not become completely polarized, or dead. The nerve cells that operate the breathing, for instance, thus rest, from sixteen to eighteen times per minute. The heart and its nerves take from seventy to ninety short rests between beats per minute; and the various other glands and organs take brief rests between their periods of rhythmical activity.

## **The Electrical Function of Rest and Sleep**

The brain, because its effective use requires a longer period of activity not broken by short periods of loss of consciousness, has developed the power to generate moderately strong electrical currents over a considerable length of time. Yet, for it to recharge, it also must have a period of rest commensurate with the work it has done. Commonly, this period of rest is about eight hours out of each twenty-four. This period of rest, during which the cells of the brain recharge, is known as sleep.

A rabbit kept awake, but otherwise kindly treated, always dies, usually on the fourth or fifth day. Other animals and human beings, prevented from sleeping, also die. They die because the circuit has been closed so long the battery has completely run down. It has had no opportunity to recharge.

Rabbits and such animals as have been kept awake by scientists to determine the electrical effect of loss of sleep, have been given the minimum amount of stimulation to keep them awake. Rut college students, used for the same purpose, have been tested in connection with degrees of mental activity. The more intense the mental activity and the more concentration required the sooner exhaustion was observed.

In electrical terms, this means that to keep the attention directed to some pre-determined line of thought, the brain cells related to this line of thought must generate, or mobilize, an electrical potential higher than the electrical potential generated, or mobilized, by the brain cells receiving stimulation from the desires of dissimilar thought-cells or from incoming nerve currents. In other words, the thoughts to which the attention of the objective consciousness are given, must be able to command and use electrical energies of higher voltage than other thoughts which compete with them for attention can command. Or, to put it in another way, the thoughts which can muster the highest electrical potential, by virtue of the greater energy they can impart to the brain cells, are the ones which gain objective attention.

Yet at all times there are energetic thought-cells within the unconscious mind whose desires strive to gain recognition, and at all times stimuli from the outside world coming in over the nerves that tend to give electrical impulses to brain cells and thus gain recognition. These are the sources of Spontaneous Attention and the guiding influences in Fantasy Thinking. And that they may not thus gain recognition, and dominate the thinking, the thought-cells within the astral body which relate to Directed Attention must be able to mobilize in the brain cells used in the Directed Thinking, an electrical energy not merely strong enough for recognition, but with a potential sufficiently high that it can overcome, and displace, the electrical energies stimulated by Spontaneous Attention.

We all know that the greater the distractions, the more difficult it is to keep our minds on our work; and that when some crisis in the life had developed, it may be almost impossible to give sufficient attention to ordinary duties to perform them properly. Such stimuli, from the outside or from within, under these circumstances, are strong enough to generate electrical charges of sufficient power to be able to displace those which we are able to generate by Directed Attention.

When, under such circumstances, we do keep our thoughts effectively upon our work, it is at the expense of a tremendous amount of vital force, that is, of electrical energy, and we quickly tire. Directed Thinking requires not merely an expenditure of electrical force to vibrate the brain cells properly as in Fantasy Thinking, but it must employ in addition, electrical energy suffi-

**Directed Thinking  
Requires High  
Electrical Expenditure**

cient to overcome other electrical impulses which compete with it for objective attention.

It is because it must consume so much electrical energy in overcoming these resistances, even more than such thinking is a recently acquired biological process, that Directed Thinking is the hardest work in the world.

Self mastery and the intelligent conditioning of the desires, as well as the ability to think problems through and to act upon conclusions derived from reason, rather than acting from blind impulse, depends upon Directed Thinking. It is therefore of utmost importance to every person to be able to employ it. But it can not be acquired merely through wishing or willing. Like all other human activities, it is a Conditioned Process.

To acquire proficiency in it, therefore, it should be practiced regularly. Yet because it is such hard work, consuming much energy, unless this practice is properly approached, it is painful. Work in general, as distinct from play, of itself is painful; and the harder it is, the more painful it becomes. Therefore, unless associations are employed which give a feeling of pleasure, the painfulness of the process tends to cause it to be shunned as much as possible.

However potent painful conditioning energy may be to cause the thought-cells containing it to attract events from the four-dimensional plane, objective consciousness, for its own preservation tends to repress and forget that which gives pain. For Directed Thinking to get attention sufficient to become habitual, therefore, whenever it is employed it should be considered in connection with the satisfaction it gives to numerous other strong desires; that is, as explained in chapter 5 in reference to Sublimating Desires, through artificial association it should be made as highly pleasurable as possible. Thus to be able to direct one's thoughts and one's destiny should give high satisfaction to the Drive for Significance. And because it can be made a means by which any of the other nine types of desires can more fully be released, dwelling on these in connection with a period devoted to Directed Thinking will tap their desire energies. And when through such associations Directed Thinking becomes sufficiently pleasurable, the pleasure will make it habitual.

Because it consumes so much electrical, or vital, energy, intense Directed Thinking soon leads to exhaustion. People, when they are tired do not think as clearly as when rested, because there is insufficient electricity at their command. High executives, for this reason, usually refuse to make important decisions when fatigued.

We can not expect to keep our brains intensely at work over long periods of time. But with the desires of the thought-cells relating to Directed Thinking sufficiently conditioned with pleasure to keep their main objective before the attention, it is not depleting to keep the mind enough occupied with beneficial thoughts, that non-beneficial thoughts, and destructive thoughts will not be able to intrude into objective consciousness.

This implies that the individual has cultivated a number of harmless yet pleasurable interests, to which, when his brain is not engaged in work, he can turn his attention, and which have enough desire energy that it requires a minimum consumption of electricity to keep thoughts relating to them before objective consciousness. An individual can not think of nothing and at the same time remain awake. If his attention is not occupied with beneficial thoughts it is sure to be engaged with those less constructive.

And as he can not work too continuously, both sleep and recreation are essential if he is to keep his thinking consistently constructive.

## Cultivating Directed Thinking

## Common Hindrances to Constructive Thinking

All action, as so thoroughly set forth in chapter 4, is due to the release of desire energies stored through Conditioning in the thought-cells and thought structures of the astral body. The direction in which the action moves, whether that action is on the four-dimensional or on the three-dimensional plane, is toward seeking satisfaction for the desires. But the channel through which this satisfaction is sought is determined by the manner in which the desire energy has been Conditioned to find expression. When desire energy has been so conditioned that it repeatedly finds expression, and therefore at least some satisfaction, in a certain action, this constitutes a habit.

When desire energies within the thought-cells or thought structures of the astral body acquire a tension, or potential, sufficiently high to gain the attention of the objective consciousness, their energies are imparted to the etheric energies of the brain cells. They generate electrical charges which initiate nerve currents that produce glandular or muscular activities.

Visual images, auditory impressions, and other perceptions, as explained in chapter 3, are the customary means by which the unconscious mind communicates information to the physical cells, physical organs and glands. It is not within their province to distinguish between an image more directly from the three-dimensional world and an image formed in the imagination. The reactions of fright or anger are just as strong when one mistakes a friend for a dangerous foe as if the dangerous foe were actually present.

Nor do the desire energies of the thought-cells and thought structures of the unconscious mind discriminate, unless they have been Conditioned to do so, between gaining satisfaction through imaginary accomplishment or through real accomplishment. Their energy is released quite as fully through either channel; and having been expended is not available for further activity.

In either case the desire energies cause electrical charges to be generated in the brain and nervous system, and electrical currents to flow. But if the satisfaction is obtained through imaginary exploits, the electrical currents initiate less pronounced muscular contraction and spend their energy chiefly in those emotional discharges that affect the glands.

Not only is the desire energy of the unconscious mind expended in imaginary accomplishment; but the physical vitality, or electrical energy, of the nervous system also. The person who day dreams is using up both thought energy and electrical energy which could be used for some actual accomplishment. And if his emotions are intense he is quite as fatigued as if he had been doing practical work.

Many people find that if they tell their plans to others that they never realize them. They thereafter begin to lose interest in the project about which they have talked. These people get so much satisfaction about what they are going to do, that it drains the desire energy which is seeking satisfaction in the contemplated project, and none is left for the actual work. That is, they have conditioned their desire energies to find release and some measure of satisfaction, through the mental pictures and the emotions which accompany a discussion of their future realization. To the extent the energy is thus spent is there less desire left for actual accomplishment.

Yet other persons, if they tell their plans, almost invariably carry them through. They have Conditioned the Drive for Significance so that, once they have committed themselves to others, its whole force is thrown behind the project. After stating they were going to do something, if they should fail to do it they feel they would not only lose face with others but with themselves.

Such acknowledgment of inferiority is more than they feel they could stand. Consequently, once they have told others what they are going to do, they do it or die trying.

Because actual accomplishment is always at the expense of desire energy and the electrical energy generated by it, it is a sheer waste of valuable assets to permit the finer sentiments and emotions—when through reading, through hearing music, through witnessing a good movie, or through other stimulation they have been aroused—to expend themselves merely in feeling and the accompanying glandular reactions.

Such emotions and sentiments as well as those less pleasant were developed for the purpose of meeting actual situations and doing something about them. Their energies can find sufficient release in the feeling which accompanies the mental images to give them some degree of satisfaction. And, like the energies released in day dreaming and in talking about what is to be done, unless they have been Conditioned to express in action, it is much easier thus to give them satisfaction than to direct them into channels of actual work.

But constructive thinking demands that when an emotion or a sentiment is felt that its energies be used in doing some constructive thing. Furthermore, the body will be more healthful if given a task such as will utilize in a constructive manner, the activities for which the glands have mobilized its forces.

When, therefore, music, the screen, or reading has been of such a character as to give the impulse to do something noble, take special pains to decide right then to do some good deed. And having thus decided, be equally sure later to find some good deed to do, even though it be unimportant, and to carry it through. The importance of the worthy deed is not so significant. The significant thing is that, if every time a noble impulse is felt, or an aspiration to high endeavor, this desire energy of the thought-cells and thought structures is released, not merely in wishing to do something fine, but in real action, this Conditions such energies to find habitual satisfaction only through deeds, and such a habit once formed, because it uses desire energy so effectively, is sure to lead to real accomplishment.

Painful thoughts and their attendant emotions should be avoided as much as possible, through displacing them with pleasant thoughts and emotions. When, however, anger, fear, sorrow, lust, despair, or other painful emotion has been permitted, that is, when the tension of powerful desires is released in such a manner that they create a widespread and painful disturbance of the nerve centers, it is unwise to permit them to dissipate their energies merely in mental images. Such nerve currents mobilize the whole body for a certain type of action. And if action results, it not only ameliorates the tendency to chemical imbalance and consequent disease but it Conditions the habit of accomplishing something with such desire energy as finds release.

Whenever the body is mobilized to meet an emergency, as is the case when an emotion is present, that energy can be employed either in actions that are detrimental or in actions that are beneficial. Therefore, when irritation or anger, in an unguarded moment gets the mastery, find, as quickly as possible, some constructive work to do. Hard physical labor in which the thoughts must be applied to the work is a good way to expend such energy; or concentrated application to some mental problem that needs solution. That is, an attack on some physical object or mental problem which when defeated will

### **Energies of Emotion Should Be Utilized in Action**

prove beneficial, is substituted for the attack on a human enemy. And when the obstacle is defeated, whatever it is, to further condition the energies, the full glow of triumph should be felt.

Under the emotion of fear the body is mobilized to run away. Despair is a fear so great that it presents no images of possibly averting disaster. Sorrow and grief are fears for self satisfaction due to loss; and worry is a succession of small fears that conditions will not be successfully met, or that in the past they have not been met to best advantage. These, and all other negative desires, as explained in chapter 8, through directing the attention and therefore the energies into images of things to be avoided, tend to bring that to pass which is most feared. In this they are in direct contrast to caution; which is an intellectual appraisal, unaccompanied by emotion, of a situation for the purpose of deciding the best course of action.

Yet fear, as well as anger, mobilizes energy for action. And these energies should be used courageously in some constructive work. Yet thoughts about self and the effect of things upon oneself, which then tend to intrude, draw the attention to negative images. Therefore, if difficulty is experienced in diverting the energies of a negative emotion, such as fear, into productive channels, so strong an interest should be developed in assisting others, or in some unselfish work, that the mind is taken from thoughts about self.

Discordant emotions arising from the reproductive impulse, because in their essential nature they are creative, should be expressed in beneficial creative work of some kind. When they are present the body becomes mobilized for creative work. And the energy may be used to advantage in designing a house, in artistic work, in music, in writing, in mechanical invention, or in some other channel which is clearly creative in nature.

### **Displacing Painful Thoughts**

It is better not to permit painful thoughts to enter the mind, or for discordant emotions to be present. If one realizes that progress is only possible through acquiring ability to overcome difficulties, and that the only manner in which this ability can be acquired is through experience in overcoming difficulties, there will be less of a tendency to harbor painful thoughts when difficulties are present.

Situations, whatever they are, should be analyzed intelligently, to discern the best course of action. Such examination of the various factors, even if those factors menace life or happiness, so long as the process is a product of impersonal Directed Thinking to that end, is accompanied by very little feeling. It has little power to Condition the thought-cells, or to release emotional energy.

But after the period deliberately chosen for the purpose of carefully analyzing the best manner of meeting a difficulty has passed, and a decision as to the best course of action has been made, the attention should be kept away from the painful images which it suggests.

Yet, as the objective mind can not remain a blank and retain its consciousness, the only manner in which its attention can be freed from the painful images which tend to intrude when grave difficulties arise, is to give the attention so thoroughly to more pleasant interests that these completely occupy the thoughts.

Irritation, lust, fear, despondency, discouragement, worry, sorrow, or any other painful thoughts or emotions are increased by giving attention to them or to their objects. The problem of preventing such thoughts, therefore, is that

of having constructive interests of some kind, including recreational activities, which have acquired sufficient pleasurable Conditioning energy that when the attention is Directed to them it requires little volitional energy to keep them before consciousness.

For each type of painful thoughts there is a specific type of thinking and specific interests which are best to use in displacing it. These Mental Antidotes are given in detail in Chapter 3, Course 9, *Mental Alchemy*. But at least each person, whether familiar with these or not, should have, or cultivate, some activity to which he can turn, in times of stress, with the assurance it possesses enough attraction to take his mind off himself and his problems.

Painful thoughts of all kinds thrive on introspection and consideration of self. In the office, or about the home, therefore, when annoyances or irritations develop, the sooner the attention is turned from them to whatever work needs to be done the better. And when worries intrude, or there has been a loss that tends to give rise to grief, the more completely the attention can be given to some positive work the better. And because the negative emotions arise from thoughts of effects upon self, nothing is better than to become so busy and occupied in helping some other person, or in assisting some worthwhile cause, that there is no time for thinking about self.

For the most effective type of living, those thoughts and activities should be selected which, after thorough analysis, are considered to be most highly beneficial. But these thoughts and activities should not be painful. As explained in chapter 5, any type of thinking and any kind of activity may be conditioned, through association with the various other desires, so that its presence will give a feeling of pleasure. This feeling of pleasure attracts the individual still more strongly to the thoughts and activities, tending to make them habitual. And in addition, it causes the thought-elements and thought-cells then built into the astral body to be harmonious enough to work from the four-dimensional plane to attract fortunate events into the life.

Whether in thinking or in acting, it is poor technic to be scourged to it by a sense of duty. Instead, as much pleasure as possible should be taken in such as is deemed beneficial.

Most people know that worry, fear, anger and despondency are destructive, and set their will against them. But this avails little, because Fantasy Thinking is so habitual that they can not keep their thoughts Directed to other things.

Will power itself is merely a habit that has been conditioned of carrying to conclusion those things resolved upon. Every resolution carried out as determined Conditions a strength of will. Therefore, we should never make resolutions that are beyond our abilities to carry out. All matters of consequence in life that call for decision should be carefully analyzed in detail. Writing out all factors that favor each side of a decision helps prevent desires, other than that to give a correct appraisal of the situation, from warping the judgment. In arriving at a judgment, sensation and emotion should be held in abeyance.

But when the decision has once been made, the integrity of the character depends upon following out this predetermined course of action to the letter and in the face of all obstacles. To permit impulse, passion or pain to divert the efforts from the course decided upon is to dethrone the will and cause the character to revert toward the animal state in which spontaneous desire is the sole director of effort.

People of fixed wills have thus cultivated a habitual mood of resolute de-

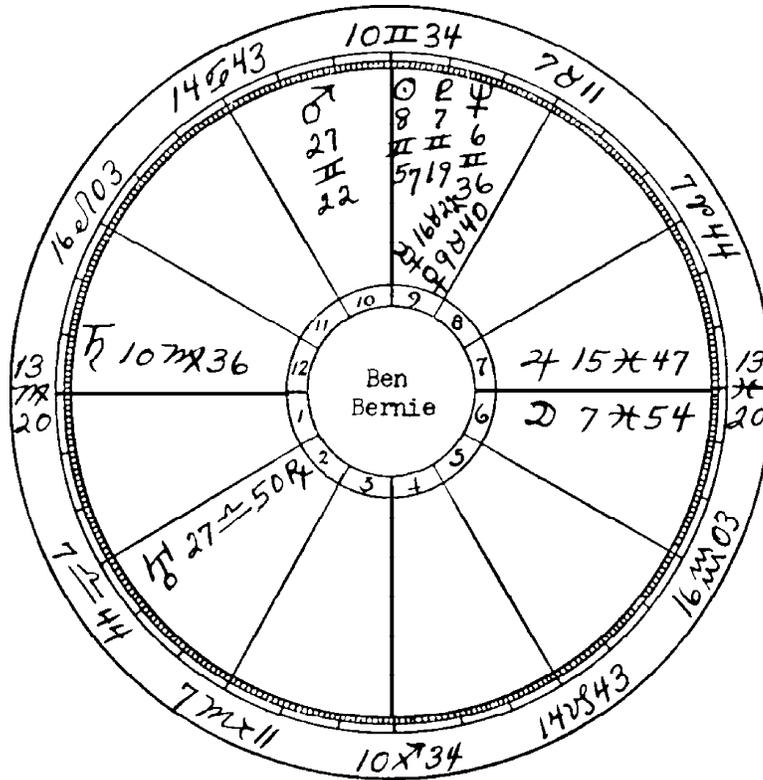
## Developing Will Power

termination. Thus also, people of energetic will, through Conditioning, have cultivated a permanent mood of energetic activity. This mood vitalizes whatever they attempt to do.

To develop such an energetic will, and to live to better advantage, we should make a daily practice of Directed Thinking. Whatever requires our attention should chain our thoughts to the exclusion of irrelevant images. When we talk, our minds should be keenly interested in the conversation and never permitted to wander off in day dreams. When we read, we should think only about that which we are reading. When it becomes desirable to think about something else, we should put other thoughts and effort from our minds and concentrate the attention on it. When working, all the attention should be directed to the work; and when playing all the attention should be given to play. Nothing should be done half-heartedly. Either put all the energy of the mind into it, or do not do it at all.

With such constant training in Will and Directed Thinking, but not through merely willing to do so without the Conditioning process, one can acquire the ability to entertain, even under the most trying circumstances, only Constructive thoughts and emotions. These, in turn, displace those which hinder spirituality, usefulness and happiness.





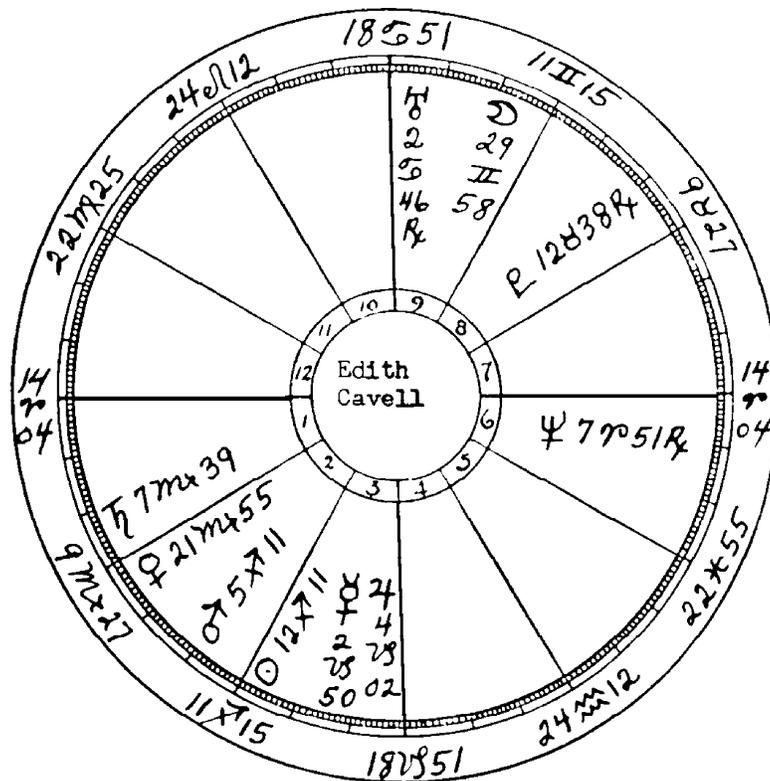
**BEN BERNIE**

May 30, 1891, noon E.S.T. 73W57 40N45.

One of the "Jazz Kings"; organizer and leader of an orchestra which gained much popularity, especially in the field of dance music interspersed with comedy, which was widely heard over the radio (Pluto in 9th).

1935-1936, his orchestra played and broadcast from the popular "Cocoanut Grove," where diners danced: Mercury square Uranus r, semi-sextile Mars r, ruler of house of business (10th).

1937, disbanded his orchestra to engage in a different type of musical entertainment for the radio: Sun sesqui-square Moon r, Sun semi-square Neptune p. Sun semi-square Pluto r (radio), Mars square Uranus r (the disrupter).



## EDITH CAVELL

December 4, 1865, 2:30 a.m. L.M.T. 1E18 52N38.

1895, entered hospital to nurse the poor: Sun conjunction Jupiter t. Sun trine Pluto r, Venus opposition Moon r.

1906, left England to become matron of hospital in Brussels: Mars conjunction Jupiter r, Mercury opposition Moon r.

1914 on holiday in England when war broke, returned to Belgium to head Red Cross Hospital, affiliated with group smuggling to safety her countrymen: Sun inconjunct Uranus p, Mercury square Neptune r, Mercury sextile Saturn r.

1915, after operating successfully a year, was executed as a spy by German soldiers, a martyr and a heroine: Sun inconjunct Uranus r, Mars sextile Saturn p, Mars inconjunct Pluto r.

