

Talk by Alice Bailey to Arcane School students January 7, 1944

AAB: Since our last meeting I have had a very interesting time, and I thought the best thing I could do was to talk a little bit about certain things so that we can orient our work for this winter and spring. One by one people have come to me about this group meeting. Some want me to give a lecture at which no one speaks but me, which isn't what I personally have in mind. Other people want to stop the discussions when they come down to practical, individual application; they want to keep things on the impersonal plane. One of the faults of esotericists is that they aim to be so impersonal and abstract and holy that they never get down to the practical application of these very advanced truths that we have had committed into our custody. They want to keep it up there, dealing with the abstract subjects of initiation and discipleship. Another person says, "You have a great deal of information that you have never given us; you haven't let us in on the things you know." It just isn't so. I don't think I know anything that I haven't told. I started at the age of fifteen with a group of bad boys in our village that no one could handle. I took them only on the condition that I have them alone and that no one else be present. I told them all I knew at that time. Then I went on and worked among British soldiers in India, and I told them all I knew at that time. Then I worked in the Episcopal Church in California and in the Women's Auxiliary for years, and I taught them all I knew. Then I came into the Theosophical Society, and I got a great light and started lecturing and gave them all I knew. Then I began working with my own group, and I chose *A Study in Consciousness* by Annie Besant, keeping six pages ahead of the group. Then I began working with the Tibetan, and I have kept back nothing. I have no deep fund of knowledge that I haven't given out either in lectures or classes or in School papers. If the thing that people want is for me to tell what is my personal relationship with K.H., I basically don't bother him. I go about my work and do what I have to do. Suppose I were a very high initiate; you wouldn't understand what I had to tell you unless you also were a very high initiate. And I came back to this point in my consciousness. Here we are in this room, a group of people who have been put in custody of a certain body of teaching that fits in with all that has preceded it in the way of occult and esoteric information down the ages, and anybody who has studied deeply along this line the work of the last fifteen hundred years knows that the Tibetan's work gives the next step. Then we come up against this. Here we are, the most advanced students in the School. I say this with appreciation, but at the same time with horror, and I feel that it is just too bad. I apply this to myself. Remember that the best that you and I can do from the standpoint of a Master of the Wisdom is a very poor thing, and the standard of relative values is the hallmark of an esotericist. When you meet so-called esotericists approaching people from a high plane of self-assertion, you can know that that person hasn't the faintest glimmer of esotericism but only a smattering of unimportant facts.

One of the things I believe we have to work out consciously in our lives is this whole subject of what an esoteric school is. We are brought right up against it when we consider the future work of this School. I just don't know how long I have. Who among all the people that we have been training in the School is an esotericist who can carry on? Who is a real esotericist? How are you going to gauge an esotericist? How do we know what constitutes an esotericist? I am writing along that line to Alan Murray, but is his emphasis that of a correspondence school in which we will teach occult information and teach people how to meditate in order that they may become Soul conscious, or can he run an esoteric school? What differentiates an esoteric school from a highly spiritual metaphysical school? Those are the questions we have to face up to and arrive at some understanding, because this work has to go on.

I want to find out what you think about these meetings. I think we have been getting places. I think there is a great deal we can do, but I had this feeling, and I don't know how to make it clear. We can come together each week on the basis of having a good occult time together, which undoubtedly we do have. You can come here to pick my brains, to find out things. I can answer questions. I won't

tell anything that I haven't told hundreds of times before. Sometimes I tell you things that I am not quite sure you recognize as esoteric information. It would be very interesting if every one of you wrote down what was the most esoteric thing said by me or anyone else, and I will tell you at the next meeting whether the thing was esoteric.

There is an inner sense, the esoteric sense, which is dependent upon the construction of that inner spiritual mechanism through which the disciple works, and we have to develop it. I have said again and again over the years that a Master could walk into this room, sit down and talk to us and say things that were deeply esoteric, and we wouldn't recognize it and would say that is old stuff. Esotericism is not giving you something new each time we get together. It is discovering new meaning in old truths; it is indicating the subjective value that lies behind the familiar. It seems to me that we would do well if we would endeavor in these meetings, at which we will continue to read some of the published writings of the Tibetan because I think they fuse us, to approach everything he says not from the obvious, but from the standpoint that behind these words lies a succession of meanings, each more inner than the one before; and the distinction between you and me and a Master is indicated by our reaction to such a verse in the Gita as, "Having pervaded the universe with a fragment of myself, I remain." You and I would give it one meaning, an initiate of high degree would get a totally different meaning, and a Master would get a vision that had nothing to do with the obvious, something that we know nothing about but that would open up to him a way out of the universe to that which pervades.

Some others would like to turn this meeting into a meditation meeting. My feeling about that is that everyone is so individual and so fixed in his own orientation that until we are a more fused and blended group we might all meditate and have a grand time, but it wouldn't be group meditation. Here is the distinction. We have meditation groups in the little room there, and there is a group leader. Usually the group leader is chosen because that leader is more experienced than anyone else in the group. Therefore the group leader sets the pace and level at which the meditation takes place. I go into the meditation room and I have the sense of a lot of people taking their cue and being conditioned by the ability or inability of the group leader. The group leader is the stimulation and the sentient focal point. We couldn't have a meeting of that kind. I suppose that I could lead a meeting and sound the note, and you would all be trying to follow me, but what would be the use of that? Not for us. We have outgrown that stage. The thing that we have to get is the faculty to meditate as a group, but we haven't got it yet. We come here to learn something, perhaps to give something.

W: Aren't we here to discover subjective values so that we will be able to serve?

AAB: That is the goal, but we haven't decided on the values. There is no uniformity of functioning yet, and if you are accustomed to group meetings as I am you can tell the four or five that are meditating in unison; you can tell those who are floundering and those who are meditating on their own. I am really putting before you an almost impossible picture, but I wouldn't put it before you unless I thought you could get it.

I wanted to put all these values in front of you and see if we couldn't get some grasp of the esoteric significance that lies behind everything we say and do and begin to build the Arcane School into an esoteric school. We do that by building a thoughtform. We had an interesting phase in the Arcane School some years ago when the Headquarters Group made up their minds that an esoteric school had to be run by a group, that it was a group activity and that the group had to do this and that. In essence the School was to be run by a committee of aspirants, and they got nowhere. Why? For the simple reason that it was not based on Hierarchical method. What is the Hierarchical method? What is a Master's ashram? Here we are, a group of people trying to learn what an ashram is. Each one of you more or less is in process of radiating a certain measure of influence that is the nucleus of the

time when you will yourself gather your own ashram, because an ashram is gathered by a Master of the Wisdom through his radiation. The Hierarchical method in an ashram has the Master at the center. Then there are initiates of the next rank to him through whom he works, then the next rank of initiates, and all the way down until you come to accepted disciples and then those whom the Tibetan calls “those who are knocking on the door.” You would think that because of these various grades and distinctions that there could be no real unity, but each member in the ashram works under the spiritual impression of the ashram’s thoughtform that is built up by the whole group working under the impression of the Master. Now an esoteric school has to be the same kind of thing, and there is our problem. HPB tried so hard to have an esoteric school. She called it the Arcane School in the early days, but the Theosophical Society wouldn’t have it, and that is why I took the name Arcane School.

The first thing an esoteric school requires is love. What ties the Master to his group of disciples is that the whole group is a focal point for love of the universe. Unless you have that consciousness, you will never get the sense of esoteric values that you have to have. When I say love, I don’t mean being sweet. I think people can be very loving, and yet be very harsh when necessary. I think it would be very interesting if we would work out what the conditions are that we have to build up here at Headquarters so that we can have an esoteric school in which everybody plays his part in proportion to his capacity and ability, but there is no sense of difference, no sense of distinction. The accepted disciple who works in a Master’s ashram may see another person walking around and meet him in class and yet not know what grade he is in. Only the Master knows those of the same grade. One thing that is pernicious is this grade business. The grades are only known to those who are in the grades. I tried to get that idea into the School, but it just didn’t work. I thought that people in the disciples’ degree could keep quiet about it, but they couldn’t. We have to recognize the facts. In this group we are all so different, we all have our own inner lives, we all know something. We could be the most potent group almost anywhere because if you and I and the group here are really esoteric and can work as an ashram training ourselves to work in a Master’s ashram eventually, our radiation as a group would reach out to the secretaries, and they would be changed. I wonder if you have any idea how potent this group really is, the whole School I mean, everywhere. Our influence is not so much through the School members as through the Tibetan’s books.

I have a page here that I will read. It has two sentences in it that are extremely occult. [Reading from *Discipleship in the New Age, Vol. 2, p. 30*]:

There are, as you know, three sources of inspiration that indicate to the disciple – struggling on the physical plane – his goal.

Here we are, a group of disciples. What is our goal and from whence do we get our information? Why should you take my word for all this? [Reading further on p. 30]:

1. His own soul, through direct contact, as the result of alignment.

We are told something about that, and we do know our individual goal. I am quite sure that we, all of us, know what we have to do with ourselves as individuals and with ourselves as servers. [Reading further on p. 30]:

2. The Master, through impression, as a result of sensitivity.

A lot of people in the School, usually senior students, wish that the Master would tell them something, give them a lead, but they don’t develop sensitivity. How then can the Master reach them until they develop sensitivity, until they are able to distinguish between the inner vibrations that come from their own Souls and those that come from the high thought of other minds? You

develop sensitivity by being sensitive to your own Soul, to thought currents of the highest kind that are in the world, and when you have that sensitivity, then your Master can indicate to you the goal. I am sure that there is many a time when a Master may impress the mind of a disciple and the disciple does not know it – for several reasons. He is afraid of psychism or he is so humble, which means that his thought is centered upon himself. I want you to have the attitude that, for the sake of being useful in the world, you are going to be sensitive. You will make mistakes. [Reading further on pp. 30-31]:

3. The Ashram group, through service, as a result of interplay.

Later, as the initiate-disciple makes progress and as he builds the Antahkarana, the energy of the one Life, emanating from the Monad, brings in the fourth type of inspiration. To these spiritual sources of inspiration must be added lesser ones, such as mental impression, telepathically registered and coming from a multitude of thinkers and minds. These work both as individuals and as members of a group. There is also emotional inspiration to which – in its most easily recognizable appearance – we give the name of aspiration.

Aspiration is something invoked by the Soul, something that is drawing a response from me. I need that higher thing to get the response. [Reading further from p. 31]:

All these are, esoterically considered, evocative of desire, to be transmuted into will if (and only if) “the energy of the will-to-good is the emanating principle and the actuating result of the inspired impulse; it must constitute the motivating impulse at the center of the disciple's being.”

The will-to-good or the will-to-God, if you like, and then there has to be the actuating result of the inspired impulse. [Reading further from p. 31]:

Thus spoke one of the Masters not long ago to a disciple who sought to grasp the synthetic effect of inspiration. It is the Will and its immediate evocation that is the major need of this particular group of my disciples.

Where the will-to-good is present you will have synthesis, and in that you have a clue to what we have to develop in this group. The will-to-good as a group – that is the thing that needs most careful thinking out. It is not goodwill. Goodwill is one of the lower results of the will-to-good. By carrying in your minds this idea of will-to-good as the basis of synthesis, which will produce inspiration based upon your contact with your Soul, you will develop sensitivity to the Master and the inspiration of the group.

I firmly believe that this group here is an outpost of K.H.'s ashram just as a disciple is an outpost of the Master's consciousness. The Tibetan's ashram is part of K.H.'s ashram. I would like you to give thought to that. It is a tremendous responsibility. I wouldn't do it if I didn't believe that we could make the grade, all of us.

Have you got that synthetic picture? A disciple gets inspiration from his own Soul, from the Master; he responds to inspiration from the ashram. He can only do that when he finds himself in his own group down here on the physical plane. That invokes in him an effort toward the will-to-good, and he needs the group will-to-good in order to fortify the will-to-good that is developing in him. When a group like this gets together, you have a group that is an outpost of a Master's ashram. If we can hold that thought, maybe this winter and spring we can really get somewhere. And when the Full Moon of May comes, we will move into that Full Moon with a consciousness and an expectancy that we have never known. [Reading further from p. 35]:

A Master, when studying a group considers, first of all, the various lines of force that relate the individuals in the group to Him, to the inner Ashram and to each other. He looks for the constancy of the interplay, for the brilliance of the group light, as a whole, and for its emanatory influence, its radiation and its magnetic effect in the world.

Do you work with magnetic effect in the world? What during this next year will be the magnetic effect of this group working as a group toward some end? You might ask what can we as a group accomplish, what is the thing that we can do? Can you begin to work as an ashram works, use the power of thought, originate pressure? Can you orient or direct thought currents along specified lines out into the world? A group can create thoughtforms that would bring about definite changes in the consciousness of humanity. An ashram such as that of K.H. is an animating source of Hierarchical impression upon the world. We cannot be an animating source of Hierarchical impression on the world until we are sensitive in the right way and until our esoteric consciousness is developed – not as individuals but as a group. It is such a new thing that it is difficult to talk about it. I have done a lot of talking here, but I want to get these broad general goals before us.

R: We will have to develop that fire you were talking about.

AAB: We are not ready for the fire yet; we haven't built the furnace. You will have lighted a potential fire, but we want concentrated fire that will do things.

LM: We have moved out from the desert and across the seas.

RK: I think that we have done more than either of you imply. Instead of asking what should we do, we should recognize that there is a great reality trying to precipitate through us if we can get out of the way as individuals. In the very first edition of *White Magic* the Tibetan gave a formula for the training of universal usefulness. He said, "May the all embracing life that expresses itself through love lead us, one and all, nearer to the center, closer to each other, and further on the way that leads to bliss and life abundant." The clue here lies in "lead us." We can meditate together if we recognize who the leader is. The leader is not here. It is an invoking of our identities instead of striving so much. We have to become fused and impressible.

AAB: It is a good thing to have the whole situation and goal dragged out into the light so that we get a picture of what we should do.

N: If we hold the intention of the will-to-good, if we fuse that tension of the will-to-good into the group, we will become effective. I believe that all of us individually must have arrived through this effort, and every one of us has some kind of radiation that brings people toward us and that enlightens or lifts them. If we could do that in group formation, I believe we would begin to work.

AAB: We were talking about Christ, and you said that Christ was not an individual but a focal point of consciousness of the entire human family, and we get there through the ashram. It is the goal of consciousness.

LM: He is that and everything else we have ever thought. He doesn't have to be a person.

AAB: It is the Christ spirit. He couldn't be a person. I think that was the great contribution that Mrs. Besant made when she distinguished between historical, mythic and mystic Christ.

RK: You were speaking of contacting the Masters, realizing that there is a labor shortage, and considering what we might do.

FG: What we really want is the group impression.

RK: We will lose our sense of self-reference if we recognize that there is something happening, and this is an outlet for that, and we have to be very straight and keep not our minds but the group mind steady in the light.

AAB: I think it would be very valuable if, when we are all here, we had a minute or two of alignment to see if we couldn't make that contact with the Soul and then hold it as steady as we can when we are together so that the impression can come through.

C: If we are not fused, we can't do any of the things we are talking about.

RK: If we all undertake to think for two minutes of the Tibetan's formula, if I can think of nothing but that, I can make a picture, and he must have quite a picture in his mind.

AAB: I really think we are going to get somewhere this winter and spring. You have come steadily; there is no discord, no disharmony.

WB: So much talk about what the group has to do, what we are going to do – in the case of each individual none of us girds himself to go out and do good, and yet we have plenty of opportunity. So things will come to the group.

AAB: If the group is sensitive and has a radiatory effect, we can't help having an influence. We will have people coming into the School from all sides.

M: This means power flowing through us and out of us without our being conscious of it.

AAB: The moment you are conscious of being a channel, the channel closes up.

RK: What is the office of the esoteric sense? When WB spoke about what the group is to do, it is "to do the will of the Father."

AAB: "If any man shall do my will, he shall know."

FB: AAB said one thing that struck home because I have been focusing on the book problem. She said that our influence in the world was primarily through the Tibetan's books. That is of tremendous significance along the line of being a potent group in the world. The Tibetan has said that the new book, *Discipleship in the New Age*, is of such significance that it has aroused the keen interest of K.H. and M. One of the things this group might do is to become a pressure group for this particular book to bring it to the front.

AAB: In this book are the instructions of a Master put into print for the first time in history for the help of the aspirants of the world – one of the most definite ways in which the fact of the Hierarchy will be brought to the world.

M: Your series of popular lectures on the Hierarchy was one of the most significant things you ever did.

AAB: It is the clue to the whole political situation, the clue to everything. It has been presented so badly that we have an uphill job in making the subject of the Hierarchy reputable.

M: Some eight years ago a group at one of the colleges was studying *Cosmic Fire*.

AAB: I suppose really and truly that the work of the Tibetan through his books has no parallel in the world. So many groups everywhere are working over his books, and when the war is over we shall have translations ready for printing in Holland and Italy. The French are also translating them.