

THE CYCLE OF IGNORANCE

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COMMUNICATION TO ALL BRETHREN (INFORMATION)

Brethren, As it is,

The Cycle of Ignorance is a deceptive sequence of mental decisions and realities, which keeps the mind from following a logical train of intuitive awareness. It contains false premises and false assumptions, which mislead, and end in confusion and disillusionment.

(graphic)

The Cycle is based on an apparently logical series of unconscious agreements, which tell a person to follow a particular path, in pursuit of certain goals, with the promise of satisfaction, fulfilment, well being, joy, contentment, or similar rewarding consequences, at the end of that path.

If I do that, I shall find satisfaction. If I achieve this, . . . if I acquire that, . . . if I reach this goal, . . . if I attain that position, . . . if I realise this ambition, I shall find fulfilment.

The person follows the path, seemingly logical step by seemingly logical step and completes the Cycle, arriving back at precisely the point where he began. Dissatisfaction, but promise of satisfaction, if . . . Frustration, but the promise of fulfilment, if.

The promise has not been fulfilled, either because the goal has not been achieved despite all efforts and apparent intentions, or because its achievement did not after all produce the reward. It produced perhaps a momentary glow of self-satisfaction, a sense of immediate adequacy or success, but not the deep-rooted and lasting sense of fulfilment which was expected.

However, built into the Cycle, as part of its structure, are the necessary justifications to cover either of these possibilities.

Ah, but.., if that had not happened, ... if they had not done this,.., if things had been different, . . . if he had co-operated, . . . things didnt turn out as I expected, ... . if only Id done this,.., . if only Id had more of that, ... . if only...

So although there is a period of disillusionment, the promise remains as strong as ever, and the logic as convincing as ever; so the person continues his pursuit, in renewed hope of ultimate success.

The goal might change, if it has been achieved and failed to produce the reward; or it might remain the same but with more scope. The ambition might change, and be replaced with another; or it might expand to yet more distant horizons. The search might change direction; or enlarge its field of vision. But the Cycle continues.

The Cycle of Ignorance is the compulsive pursuit of the Luciferian dream; the illusion, the mirage on the far horizon.

True progress is also cyclic; but it follows a spiral course upwards. Whereas the Cycle of Ignorance, because of its built-in lies, about what is going to be, what can be and what ought to be, does not move upwards, but remains on the same level, and goes round and round in the same vicious circle.

But why is there no progress within the Cycle of Ignorance?

Because the person who follows a mythical hope in the future, and clings to it, and relates everything he does to it, and fixes his attention on it; never takes a real step in the present.

He behaves like a gramophone needle fixed in a groove. Because his attention is fixed in the future, reaching for it, grasping for it, he never satisfies himself within the present; therefore he feels compelled to go on repeating the same cycle over and over again, in the hope that one day he will be satisfied.

IF THERE IS NO ACCEPTANCE OF THE PRESENT, THERE CAN BE NO MOVEMENT INTO A NEW PRESENT, ONLY AN ENDLESS REPETITION OF THE OLD PRESENT.

The person in this state is out of the Game; not free of the Game, not detached from the Game, but locked outside it; anchored to all the realities of the Game; the values, the agreements and the limitations of the Game; but unable to fulfil himself within those realities.

And the ignorance is cumulative. Every time the person completes one cycle and finds himself, unsatisfied, unfulfilled, at the point of distant promise once again, he has tied himself more tightly outside the Game.

The secret of the Cycle of Ignorance, is its power of illusion. It is illogical; and yet, on the surface, it seems flawless in its logic. Equally it is unchanging; there is no progress, no movement within it; and yet, superficially, it seems to change.

Now things will be different; now my luck will change; now I'll find what I'm looking for; says the prisoner of the Cycle, convinced that he has brought about a basic change in his situation, which will give him the satisfaction he seeks. There is no basic change; only a new set of circumstances; a new car, a new house, a new wife, a new country, a new job, a new idea, a new social status, a new financial status, a new drug, a new treatment, a new government. His problems are the same, his needs are the same, his lacks are the same, his compulsions are the same. But because he has outwardly convinced himself that there is a meaningful change, he continues his pursuit, locked within the Cycle of Ignorance.

The Cycle of Ignorance is a fantasy world; no logic, but the illusion of logic; no change, but the illusion of change.

Any lie in the form of a future possible condition: This will bring me satisfaction; that will solve all my problems; this will give me joy; that will give me contentment: can lead a person into the Cycle of Ignorance. But the lie above all lies, which maintains the Cycle, is the belief that fulfilment is to be found within a purely human and materialistic structure.

Even the person who strives towards a state of fulfilment based purely on his own mental state, rather than his material circumstances which indicates some awareness can be trapped in the Cycle of Ignorance, through non-acceptance of his present mental state, through rejection of himself as he is in favour of himself as he would like to be, and as he promises himself that he will be. But the person who believes that his well being depends upon things outside himself, his material circumstances, his social status, his acceptability to others; he is bound to be trapped in the

Cycle. He sets human and materialistic ambitions for himself, thinking that they are the keys to happiness, and then locks himself in the Cycle, in pursuit of these ambitions.

As long as he fails to attain them, he is frustrated and dissatisfied, but he always has a good reason for continuing his pursuit. If and when he does attain them, he discovers that they do not give him the lasting sense of fulfilment which they promised. So he must either give up in despair or go in search of something else; or the same thing extended, expanded. (One million pounds in the bank may not be the answer, but two million must be.) Usually he does not give up. He brings his armoury of justifications into play. This time it will be different; this time I'm on the right track; that is what I really need to satisfy me. So the Cycle continues. Promise, pursuit, disappointment; promise, pursuit, disappointment; promise, pursuit, disappointment.

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To break free of the Cycle of Ignorance, you must go to the point where the Cycle begins; the point where the promise manifests; the hope, the anticipation, the superficially altered circumstance, and the renewed expectation of a particular result; the renewed demand for a specific outcome.

Then, instead of telling yourself; now it will be different, now I'm on the right track; see the basic sameness of the situation. See the lack of change since you were last at this point of promise. Instead of telling yourself how much things have changed, allow yourself to see how much they have not changed.

Expose the promise; invalidate it; see the lie; invalidate the hope; silence the protest; invalidate the expectation and the demand; instead of validating all of them, as you have done each time around the endless Cycle, thereby fixing yourself all the more tightly within its confines.

Locked in the Cycle of Ignorance, your attention is so firmly fixed on the promised reward of fulfilment, and the particular goal or ambition which you have identified with that reward, that you can see little else with reality; and each time you complete the Cycle goal or no goal, but without receiving the promised reward you increase the power of your fixation on it.

This is the power of failure, when you are in compulsive pursuit of success. It creates a sense of failure, and then another, and then another; and each additional sense of failure, forces you to fix more of your attention on the promised but elusive dream.

Imagine gambling on a fifty-fifty chance, and losing; then staking double the amount in order to cover your loss, and losing again; then double again, and again losing; and so on, always doubling and always losing. That is the Cycle of Ignorance.

Only by detaching from the promise, and from the demand of its fulfilment; by accepting what is, instead of agonising yourself in a futile demand for what might be, or should be, or apparently could be, but is not, can you detach from the Cycle of Ignorance. Bring your attention from out there, in a future fantasy land, back to in here, now, the situation as it is.

But the longer you have continued to pursue the fantasy, the more difficult it is to detach from it. The more you have already invested in your dream, the harder it is to abandon it. Not only would you be invalidating the aims and ambitions which you have mistakenly linked with the dream, but also, all the time and energy, which you have expended in your fruitless pursuit of them.

This is so, both consciously and unconsciously. A person who has spent many years with his sights set on becoming wealthy, because he has decided that therein lies the secret of happiness, has quite consciously invested time and energy, on a practical level, in order to achieve this end. The longer he continues to fail, the harder it is for him to abandon his ambition. To do so would seem to make worthless all that he had invested. And even if eventually he succeeds, for the same reason how can he admit that being wealthy does not give him the satisfaction he expected? Instead he must go on amassing more and more wealth, in the futile hope that one day it will.

Equally, a person who has quite unconsciously expended quantities of mental and physical energy and again time of course in building an image of superiority for himself, because that, for him, seems to be the secret of ultimate success, finds it hard to give up, and accept himself as he really is. Again, unconsciously, he clings to the value of all that mental and physical effort, reluctant to brand it: Wasted in pursuit of a myth.

In the Cycle of Ignorance, a person digs himself in deeper with every circuit he completes. It is the perennial rut; easy to slide into, but progressively harder to get out of.

And although the nature of the Cycle is, by definition, an unchanging state, a static situation, ultimately it is a downward spiral. Because Time is not static. The Universe is not unchanging. And if we are not going forwards with Time, then we are going backwards. If we are not expanding with creation, then we are contracting. If we are not rising, then we are falling. Which is why the rut becomes deeper, at every turn of the Cycle of Ignorance.

The downward spiral of blame and hostility, is a perfect example of the Cycle of Ignorance. Man lives by the promise that blame will help him to attain salvation; that it will enable him to separate himself from evil, to be free of it, cleansed of it.

He feels that by blaming others, he becomes, or will eventually become, blameless himself. And he invests great quantities of energy and thought and brilliance and time to becoming a master in the art of blame. Whenever evil strikes, he blames, believing that by so doing he can destroy it, or at least escape from it. He never does either; but each new situation is different enough on the surface, to convince him that: this time, blame will work. It does not; but there is always a next time.

No change; no movement; but in relation to the change inherent in the inexorable movement of Time, a change for the worse; a movement downwards.

And man is locked in this downward spiral, simply because he is ignorant, of the nature and the effect and the significance of blame. If he knew not just intellectually with his mind, but with his heart and his soul, with his feeling, with his emotions if he knew the truth about blame why he feels it, what it does to him, what it does to other people, what it leads to if he knew, how and when and where it manifests, all the devious ways in which it operates under the guise of something else, something apparently quite harmless like tolerance for instance if he was not ignorant of all of this, he would not blame; he would have no cause to blame, no desire to blame, no instinct to blame.

Man sincerely thinks that blame will ultimately do him good, that through it he will triumph. He cannot know that it can only do him harm, and that through it he is fast destroying himself.

He has duped himself with a lie; and as long as he believes that lie, he cannot break out of that particular Cycle of Ignorance.

He thinks that he changes, that he evolves, that he is different, that he solves his problems one by one, that he progresses. But the changes are superficial; material, ideological, theological, technological; they help to convince him that things really are different; so that he continues in the same basic pattern, the pattern of blame. Nothing changes there. The instincts are the same; the results are the same. The rut is the same rut only deeper, because Time moves on, and man is left behind.

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THE CYCLE OF IGNORANCE IS STATIC AND UNCHANGING.

Only knowledge, deeply felt knowledge, can break the Cycle of Ignorance. And therefore, by its very nature, it precludes any means of breaking it.

As long as we are ignorant, we are locked in the Cycle of Ignorance; and the Cycle itself perpetuates ignorance.

With a conscious Cycle, where we are aware of the goal for which we are fruitlessly striving, we can go to the point where the promise manifests, and invalidate it.

With an unconscious Cycle, such as the spiral of blame by which humanity imagines it is reaching towards blamelessness, we can learn the Universal Law, and use that knowledge in order to break free.

But to be free altogether of the pattern of the Cycle, seems impossible, as long as there is any ignorance at all in us.

So it seems. But there is a secret. There is a way to be free of it. And the way lies in the true nature of acceptance.

If you can realise for yourself, the truth that the only validity is the present; and totally feel and know the reality of this; then you will have no difficulty in breaking free of the Cycle of Ignorance.

In the present, only the present is valid. Now, only now is meaningful.

The past is finished, done. It has validity inasmuch as it has created and led to, brought about and culminated in, the present. That is its validity; that is its part in the present. To bring it otherwise into the present, is invalid. To stand it in front of the present, and evaluate now on that basis, is a lie, and an invalidation of the true nature of both past and present.

It is as though you contemplate sitting in a cane chair. If you evaluate the chair as it is, and recognise that the previous state and nature of the cane is valid only inasmuch as it led to the making of the chair, as it is, then you are seeing the chair clearly; and if it seems to you strong and well made, you sit on it. If on the other hand it seems to you weak and insecure, you do not sit on it. But if, although the chair as it is seems strong, you picture the frail nature of cane in its natural state, and you set this in front of the chair in your evaluation, and you think to yourself: Cane, as it grows, could never bear the weight of a human body. Its too fragile; and you evaluate the reliability of the chair with this in mind, then your assessment is invalid. Whatever you do is based on a distorted image.

By all means use your past experience, in order to understand the nature of the present. But do not let it diminish or change the importance of the present. Do not let the past trap the present, and distort your vision of it.

The past is finished and done.

The future, on the other hand, is not yet with us. It is in the hands of Destiny. It has a validity, inasmuch as it will become the present; but now, it is not. To stand it in front of the present, and evaluate the present on that basis, is as invalid as it is to do the same with the past.

To see the chair as it is, together with the chair as you judge it will be in twenty years time, old and broken and without strength, and to assess its reliability on that basis, is again invalid.

So the secret, is a complete awareness of the present, and a complete understanding of the true position of both the past and the future.

Non-understanding of the past and future, is one basic cause of the human predicament.

Past and future are the two sides of the eternal conflict of the human mind; because it is the images of the past, and the images of the future, the memories of the past, and the expectations of the future, that are brought into the present by the mind; and the present is assessed and evaluated with these in front of it. They are not used, relevantly and meaningfully; they take precedence.

So the present becomes a conflict; regret of the past and fear of the future, against justification of the past and hope for the future. And behind and between and beneath and within the great mass of images that go to make up this seething conflict, the pure and simple clarity of the present, as it is, is lost.

We should not forget the past, nor should we refrain from looking with anticipation into the future. Memories of the past, lessons and experiences from the past, are not themselves wrong or destructive. They are, on the contrary, often a necessary part of our understanding and experience and assessment of the present.

To see the present clearly we must often relate it to certain relevant aspects of the past. For example, to assess the cane chair, we shall need our past experience of chairs to help our assessment.

Similarly, hopes, aims, visions and speculations of the future are not themselves destructive. They also are often a necessary part of our awareness of the present; particularly in the matter of making plans and decisions. To decide and to act properly in the present, we must often use our judgement of what the future might hold.

But we should not allow either our memories or our anticipations to cloud our vision of the present, only to enhance it. We should not allow them to distort our awareness of the present, to relegate it, to displace it, to reduce its importance, or to take precedence over it.

And the criterion is this. If the past or the future becomes a subjective influence on the present, instead of simply an objective adjunct, then it will distort or displace it.

In the present, we know by what we feel; and to know the present we must feel the present. Feelings about the past and the future can only confuse and mislead. If they are there, allow them, feel them, don't hide from them, but recognise them for what they are; unreliable and irrelevant to what is. Feelings are only valid in relation to what is. When they emerge in relation to what was or what might be in the future, they can serve only to cloud the issue.

Feel the present. See the past and the possible permutations of the future, whenever it is appropriate. But feel the present. If you find yourself feeling the past or the future, don't fight it, but simply recognise that to that extent you live in the past or the future, and therefore out of the present, and therefore out of the Game.

To resist it, to try to suppress it, will serve only to strengthen its hold on you. But to recognise it, and accept it, as another aspect of what is, within you, is the first step towards breaking its hold and being free of it.

So do not discard your memories. Use them. But recognise that when memories become vain regrets or nostalgic longings, or the basis of bitterness, blame, rejection, disappointment and despair, if we give them validity, they will lead us into the Cycle of Ignorance.

And do not abandon your anticipations. Use them. But equally recognise that when anticipations become empty promises, desperate longings, agonised obsessions, or frustrated ambitions, if we give them a validity, they too will lead us into the Cycle of Ignorance.

The secret is an understanding of the true significance of the present, despite all images of past and future. If we can see these images, live with them, accept them, use them as they should be used, and yet relate our entire selves, our emotions, our attitudes, our responses and our reactions, with reality, to the present, then we are free of the Cycle of Ignorance.

The goals on which you have fixated your attention are compulsive subjective images of the future, clouding your vision of the present. Invalidate such images of the future as being a significant part of the present, and you invalidate those goals.

And the time and energy which you have already spent in futile pursuit of those goals, constitute a whole series of obsessional images of the past, also clouding your vision of the present. Invalidate such images of the past, and you invalidate the burden of importance of all that time and energy.

And if you are, at this moment, fixed in a Cycle of Ignorance, with a specific conscious ambition, which you have identified with the attainment of ultimate satisfaction, and which gives you pain, because you cannot bring it into the present and transform it from a fantasy into a concrete reality, then go to the point where the ambition is most real to you, where you feel it most strongly; the hope of it, the desire for it, the promise of it, the demand for it, the frustration of not having achieved it. Look hard at it. Look hard at that goal, that obsessional image of the future. See it clearly; know it well. Assess its value, in terms of its meaning and significance, in terms of its actuality.

Then turn the coin over. Fears are the opposite of goals. Where there is a goal, there is an equivalent fear on the other side of it. What a man hopes to gain, he also fears to lose. What he demands to have, he also fears to be deprived of. What he aims to be, he is afraid of not being. Where he desperately wants success, he is equally desperately afraid of failure.

So when you have looked at the goal, the ambition, the demand, the hope, look at the fear on the other side as well. Look at the opposite image of the future; the image of failure. See that clearly too; know that well. And assess the value of that, in terms of its meaning and significance, in terms of its actuality.

Look at your fantasies; your images of the future; both the black side and

the white side. Then, when you have made them as real as you can make them, look back into the past. Look hard at all the time and energy you have spent trying to achieve the goal, and at the same time trying to avoid not achieving it. Look at the images of the past which relate to that simultaneous hope and fear. See them as clearly as you saw the images of the future. And assess their value, in terms of their meaning and significance, in terms of their actuality.

Then, having seen the past and the future, and having allowed the full extent and reality of their images to come upon you; having given them their full scope; having brought them into the present, as far as it is possible to bring them; look at now. See what is. Know what is. See it as it is, and know it as it is; not as it was, not as it will be, not as it could have been, if. . . not as it might still be, if. . . but as it is.

Then, what has been in the past, can be left behind in the past; truly left behind, not pushed aside because it is unacceptable, but discarded, because it has been accepted. And what might be or might not be, what could be or could not be, what should be or should not be, in the future, can also be left in the future; truly left, not ignored as too much to hope for, or shut out as too terrible to think about, but discounted, because compulsive hopes and ambitions and demands, have been seen to be irrelevant; the worthless counterparts of fear and hopelessness. All this can be dismissed, in favour of the intense reality, the actuality, and the significance, of what is now.

4

The human mind is composed of images of past and future.

As long as we are submerged within the conflicts of the mind, we shall see the present, and therefore assess and respond to the present, only through a murky haze of irrelevant images. When we know the truth of the present, the past and the future, know it and feel it, as a reality for ourselves, then we are above the conflicts of the mind, and free of the Cycle of Ignorance.

Time is our enemy, only if we stretch our attention from one end of it to the other.

But if the whole of us is in the present, allowing the past existence only inasmuch as it has created the present, and allowing the future existence only inasmuch as, instant by instant, it will become the present, then Time is on our side.

And the present demands so little, because it is so small; while the past and the future are vast and unwieldy, and demand far more than any of us has to give.

If we serve the present, our existence is a constant living. If we serve the past and future, our existence is an eternal dying.

The great step, the great demand, is that we should break the chains that bind us to the endless agony of past and future, so that we can step free into the joy of service of the present.

Slavery is pain; freedom is joy. And yet, to break from slavery into freedom, demands all the courage and endurance which a being has to muster.

The secret is there. The door stands open; but only for those who have the courage to go through it. For those who have that courage, the rest is simple; because outside of the vast and overwhelming territory of what was



and what will be, is only the tiny instant of what is.

So be it.

- Robert

ROBERT DE GRIMSTON

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