

REALIZATION THROUGH IMAGINATION

As given by Vitvan

(Selections from the book, 'The Will to Life')

If one in the relative concept of life cannot reach that inner recess of his own Be-ing in which he can become conscious of God as a living presence, the best and most effective method to employ in order to attain that state is the proper use of the imagination. Imagination is a faculty of the egoic consciousness and has, therefore, the creative force of God in it. It is the greatest power in the personal consciousness of man, for it is the one force operative there which is not relative to his sense of separateness from God.

It seems that, in the divine order of creation, when the individual aspect of the Self-identified itself with its manifested state of consciousness or form (which ushered in the advent of man), it was not entirely cut off from its divine source. This force of imagination seems to be the one connecting link between the man-concept of the ego and the ego itself, and its great power is due to the fact that it pertains to the immortal Self and not to the human soul. Therefore, if one cannot reach the sublime heights of spiritual realization through meditation, the control of the mind, or internalization of his powers of cognition, let him employ the imagination.

If a man will feel, live, and act the life which he is striving to realize, he will soon come into the perpetuation of that higher ideal as a realized fact in his consciousness. Even in the relative plane, when we feel, live, and act any thing or condition, it is a reality to us. The reality of life depends upon our consciousness of it. That consciousness of life may be viewed rightly or wrongly by others, but to us it is the only life we know. Apart from this consciousness of Be-ing, we have no evidence to prove our existence. Since our consciousness of certain conditions is our life in this relative plane, it is very easy for us to be that which we desire to be. Let us simply become conscious of it through the help of imagination. If, for instance, happiness is our goal, we can bring our consciousness into the realization of happiness by imagining that we are living, breathing, feeling, and acting that condition.

When we combine the analytical faculty of our mind with the power of imagination, we create an irresistible force that will carry us to any desired goal that is true to our basic nature. When, by analysis and imagination, we become conscious of our Be-ing as inextricably bound up with the All Be-ing, we can manifest whatever quality we attribute to the All Be-ing. To the degree that we succeed in doing so in our imagination, we shall become actually conscious of the oneness of life and thus manifest, even in our relative concept of life, the qualities we attribute to the one life.

In our life of separateness, things react upon us according to our imagination regarding them. The totality of these reactions of the imagination make up the life of the ordinary man. If this is true in the sense of separateness, how much more so is it true in regard to our greater consciousness of life? The force and power of the imagination will help us to live in the greater consciousness of life and will mold our conditions in accordance with the vision of this higher life maintained in our imagination. It certainly is the desire of every one to realize a greater life than that of which he is conscious. This desire is due to the primordial urge of Be-ing, ever striving to realize more of itself. Relatively considered, no one is contented or satisfied with his limited state of consciousness; life more abundant is the legitimate demand of his Be-ing.

Imagination is the Master Key with which to unlock the door of the treasure house of life, both relative and universal. Our present relative concept of life is almost entirely due to the imaginary values we have put upon our environment. Even so, it is this very power of imagination that will lift us out of these seeming conditions and liberate us from our present reactions to those conditions. The greatest battle which can be fought in any personal life is for the control of the imagination. Until we learn to control it, it controls us. The success or failure of everything in the personal life of *man* depends on his ability to control his imagination. In his failure to control it, he is a slave to every will-o'-the-wisp and shadowy creation resulting from his sense of isolation from God. Through the imaging faculty, one can form those greater impressions of consciousness which will expand the consciousness from a lower to a higher concept of itself. The control of the imagination is the secret of Self-mastery.

The value that we put upon a thing causes it to appear great or small to us. The value that we put upon a thing or condition determines our joy, peace, and happiness or misery, depression, worry, fear, doubt, and disease. This study in regard to values and their reactions upon us can be carried one step farther, a step that will lead to a higher realization and to final liberation. The kernel of that study is this. None of the values are real. Without exception, they pertain to the illusory life of the personality and none of them can exist even in that relative life except by the power of imagination. Then, since all values are imaginary, why not reach out for the egoic consciousness by giving it a value of higher quality? It is an imaginary value, to be sure, but one that will counteract the imaginary force of the lower quality of values which we have been giving to the illusory shadows of life up until now.

One might object that, if all is imagination, if every value conceived in our sense of separateness is imaginary, then is not the high consciousness of the immortal Self also imaginary? And if so, then is it not also unreal? And if unreal, what is the use of anything? What is the use of striving for a realization of the higher consciousness of the immortal Self? To such we answer that even if these considerations were true,

the fact remains that we are living in a certain relative state of consciousness. Is it not better, therefore, to elect the state which will bring us the greatest sense of peace, contentment, and joy, rather than one of chaos, misery, worry, doubt, and fear? But this is merely begging the question. For while it is true that the relative concept of life, together with all valuations pertaining to it, is due to the imaging force of consciousness, the Power which conceives the sense of separateness and which conceives the relative values within that sense of separateness, *is* before there could be a sense of separateness or any values pertaining to it. Therefore, this Power-to-conceive, and the realization of it, is not imaginary. As a man in a forest will pluck a sharp thorn in order to pick another thorn out of his hand and then throw them both away, so does the one immersed in the darkness of the sense of separateness from God use an imaginary value of higher quality to overcome and eliminate imaginary values of lesser quality in his relative concept in order to effect his liberation from all imaginary values. Behind all our relative concepts of God and all our imaginary values pertaining to Him, He eternally *is* the Power-to-conceive, the Power-to-imagine. Our relative concepts of God, and the imaginary things and conditions within those imaginary concepts, are veils concealing the Most High. One after the other we remove these veils of illusion until, finally, the great Universal Self appears to us as the Power which conceives all concepts and which images forth all things.

Without imagination, there would be no creation at all in this relative concept of life. Everything that we construct, whether a symphony, a painting, a railroad, or a skyscraper, is born first in imagination. Let the positivist and the gross materialist reflect for a moment on this. What is there in life, as we know it in the relative sense, which has not been produced by the imagination? It is the power of imagination that rules the world. It rules our relative life; nay, it creates our relative life. This imaging force is the force of the spirit in the life of man. Therefore, it is the most dynamic force and faculty he possesses. It gives life even to a shadow and acts upon us with such force that the shadow assumes the vitality of a living thing.

In healing ourselves and others of the effects of wrong imaginary values, we find that the most effective instrument is imagination. If we are averse to suffering, there is no need to suffer. We can avoid all suffering through the knowledge of the reality of our Be-ing, and through the force of that Be-ing which manifests in our relative concept of life as imagination. There is nothing which so influences our destiny and wields so marvelous and wonderful an influence over us as imagination. All our creations, mental, emotional, and physical, depend upon its universal potency. When we contemplate this marvelous force, it seems as though every idea and the materialization of every idea is revolving in the sphere of imagination and doing its bidding. The whole fantasy of appearance is, in reality, nothing more or less than a dream picture becoming real and vibrant with life and activity, through the magic touch of imagination.

All the codes, conventions, and standards of conduct reflect the pride which humanity takes in its high sentiments, lofty aspirations, and fine feelings. Loyalty between man and man, and between man and woman, fidelity to ideals, patriotism to country, and self-sacrifice on the battlefields of life, are all due to the great power of imagination. It would be impossible even to conceive of these higher and finer sentiments without help of imagination. When it is clearly perceived that they are created by the power of imagination, what a liberating force is placed at the command of man in effecting his own emancipation! With the help of imagination, one can picture the greater life as an ideal which one is striving to manifest in his consciousness. With the widening of the mental horizon, one naturally desires to have a greater grasp of this ideal, which is at first only a fanciful creation of the imagination. Gradually, as we perceive new life and power in that fancy, it becomes a reality to us. To our consciousness, it takes on more and more of the force of reality, even as a photographic print in the developing fluid gradually grows into more definite outline and detail.

All people naturally desire conditions which they imagine will give them greater happiness and comfort. But before they have the reality of those conditions, they try to realize them in imagination. This gives them a foretaste of happiness, which inspires them to the full consummation of the desire. It is this force of imagination which is the motive power of all progress in the constitution of our natures. One condition gives us the incentive to realize another of a higher quality. In this relative plane, we are ever prone to draw comparisons. Any 'thing' or condition comparatively better than that which we already have is preferred to it. It would be manifestly impossible for us to draw a picture of an unrealized condition without the help of imagination. Our religious devotion, aspiration, whether rational or irrational, can always be traced to our desire to better our condition. This desire we partly satisfy in the fanciful creation of our imagination and the desire itself is originally born of that power.

So deceptive have the perverted values of the mind of man become that imagination has been deprecated and regarded as nothing more than a producer of useless figments. This disparaging attitude toward the power of imagination has caused humanity to neglect it, and thus to remain in ignorance of its real nature. There is a subtle racial pride that is responsible for this attitude. We like to think that all the evil things in life are due to superstition or imagination, and that all the grand and idealized things of life are products of our own shrewd initiative and deliberative skill. Yet this is absurd and will not bear the scrutiny of close analysis and investigation. Imagination can, indeed, become a devastating force, inimical to the constructive phases of relative life. This is only when imagination gains ascendancy over the mind and enslaves it to the un-regenerated tendencies within the consciousness of man. But even as it is the most devastating and destructive force in human life, so also, it is the most powerful and constructive force at

our disposal. When we give a higher quality to imagination, it becomes the most productive power within the reach of man.

It is by persistently dwelling in thought on a certain quality which we attribute to a thing or a person that we become like that thing or person in our consciousness. No quality of thought can exist without imagination, so any thought or imagination that inspires a higher quality and better conditions will make us higher and better. No condition which lies beyond the ken of our consciousness can be a reality to us; only that of which we are conscious exists to us. The condition which we now realize is real to our present state or stage of growth. The condition which we strive to realize is also real to us, though we may not yet have manifested it in our consciousness. Imagination brings us the realization of it by transforming our whole nature into its quality. Our body and mind, which are really one, are the projection of the reflex action of the state of our consciousness and they are changed by our imagination in the same measure that imagination changes our consciousness. To bring about any physical change in our body, it is necessary to set up a strong imaginative activity in our whole consciousness. Nothing changes our concept for better or worse as easily as this power of imagination. And when we imagine that our ideal is an acting and moving power within us, we change for the better.

The author has witnessed many miraculous healings brought about through the power of imagination. In San Francisco, a woman lay on a hospital bed. She was so ill that she had to be turned from one side to another with a sheet. When an earthquake was shaking the building and terrible excitement and turmoil broke loose around her, she jumped out of bed, ran down three flights of stairs into the street, and was so roused by the excitement that she never went back to the sick bed again. What produced the miraculous change, if not the power of imagination? A man imagines that he is ill and he is ill. But an imagination's stronger potency transforms the former image and he becomes strong and well. A man returned home from an arduous day's labor, so weary and tired that he could not remove his own boots. The gentle-hearted wife, out of compassion for the tired husband, unlaced his boots and removed them, bathed his tired and aching feet, put him in bed, and gave him his supper. While he was eating, fire broke out in the house. Forgetting his weariness, the man sprang out of bed and worked strenuously for hours, carrying heavy furniture out of the house. He was up all that night, yet the next day he was not weary or tired. He was transformed by the power of imagination. Verily, imagination rules our lives. So once this mighty force is conquered and made an obedient servant to our spiritual Will, it becomes the most dynamic force possible to conceive.

It is through the power and force of a trained imagination that the Hindu wonder-workers of India perform their surprising feats. An image in their minds is made to assume a material appearance. At first that form

is invisible to others but through strong concentration and imagination, the wonder-worker brings it into so objective a sense of existence to himself that it becomes manifested to others. We do not at all consider these performances spiritual or indicative of a spiritualized state of consciousness, but they do indicate the great possibilities of the force of imagination.

Imagination is the motive power in man. By its use, he can control the effects of any reaction upon him. He can control his entire destiny and mold his relative life in accordance with his fondest desires. He can, by cultivating this great power, resurrect his consciousness out of the concept of separateness.



*"Of many thousand mortals, one, perchance, striveth for Truth;
And of those few that strive, nay, and rise high,
One only, here and there knoweth Me, as I am:
The very Truth ♦ The Song Celestial."*

From Chapter VII
The Way to Life, by Vitvan