

**AD: On reading a Degree: from OHIO March 24 1984 [file 5 transcript p.27]**

*[[Here Anthony talks about reading a Degree symbol... in the context of talking also about reading PB paras... amazingly his way of "seeing" or "hearing" the degree image or para is so similar that I have included some of this dialogue in section on Reading PB paras... red highlights are also above in red in outline form... Don't miss last para on 360 degrees]]*

AD: in order to understand a symbol that your planet is fixed on, what is required is that you look at the symbol very intently but you don't THINK about it, you don't bring up any associations that the symbol may have.

So, if we took an example like-- well, I'll use one of mine that I'm familiar with, my Uranus is based on 13 Pisces and it says "an ancient sword in a glass case in a museum." Now what does that mean? You say, "What in the world could that possibly mean? What is the idea? What is--?" In other words what I'm saying is that this degree represents an idea in the intellectuality of the Earth. It's an idea that belongs to the Earth. ALL these ideas belong to the Earth. These ideas are put together in such a way that make you what you are. Now if I could find out the nature of every idea of which I am constituted, then I will have some understanding of the meanings with which I am born. They are actually born, I am born with them. They're part of my heritage. Now I look at the degree and I say, "well, a sword in a museum." I could read the psychological definition that Jones has, alright? But it doesn't satisfy me. And if you read it you'll see why. You'll see that he's explaining the psychological behaviour which IS a manifestation of the idea. But I'm not to the idea yet. So I try contemplating that. I contemplate the degree, I keep thinking about it, but I think by not thinking. No association. No thought. Hey, look, did you ever see a real handsome man and you just look? I see a beautiful woman, I just look. No comments are necessary! Just look! See what's there! Now, that's very hard.

FS: So are you visualizing this sword in the museum in the case?

AD: Well, I visualize it first, I memorize it, you know, hold it, retain it in my mind.

FS: Or are you seeing the words (and/as)symbols?

AD: First the words naturally. The words stand for some kind of meaning and once I have memorized the words then I'm preoccupied with the meaning and I forget the words. But I try to gaze at that meaning without bringing in any associations because any associations I bring in will be from my past and that's dead. I'll get no fresh knowledge that way. Anything I superimpose on it will be the ashes of memory. The idea is to look at it and see it for what it is without superimposing any of your psychology on it. Now a symbol is very strange because it has multivalent meanings. It doesn't have one meaning but it is a whole cluster of meanings, and one of these may strike you immediately. And that would come to you like a kind of intuition. You start grasping to try to bring it into the reflective consciousness. So a symbol like that, it turns out that what it ultimately really means is discrimination. The sword is a symbol of discrimination, and so one of the ideas that's included in the way I function is the fact that I must always discriminate between two things and try to get to the essence by understanding the difference between two things. Now that leads me to an idea--discrimination in this sense is a kind of idea.

Then I do that with the next and the next. I do that with each symbol until I begin to get to the idea that each symbol more or less is trying to portray. But then if I do another chart that very same symbol will alter. Because like I said, the symbol has a cluster or variety of meanings. It's a matrix of possible tendencies and which tendency is going to become available to you, depends upon the configuration of the whole chart. That would stand out rather than another meaning. So what I'm trying to get at is that

when I read PB and I contemplate, I just try to keep my mind still. I try not to bring in any associations and thoughts. **When the mind DOES get quiet then a meaning, so to speak, comes to the surface.** And very often the meaning is not articulate in the beginning. It's more or less the FEELING or the presence of an idea, and then I have to make it articulate for myself. So it's really learning to keep quiet and not throw, project out there.

FS: So what you're really trying to do, when you see it, is NOT to think.

AD: Yes, that's what I call thinking. That's what I call thinking.

FS: Are you calling that also contemplation?

AD: Yes. But **thinking, real thinking, is contemplation. What most people call thinking is not thinking, it's a regurgitation of everything that you've already experienced so it's in the realm of the known. How could you call it thinking? Thinking for me is always fresh,** novel, new--whereas if I pull out something from the past (inaudible) that's memory, that's not thinking.

FS: Okay, you see the image, the pictorial image of this sword and what you're really trying to do is to STOP thinking, but your focus is on, your attention is focussed on, that visual symbol?

AD: Unfocused.

FS: Unfocused? I don't understand.

AD: Now look, if it's focussed it's like the whole psychological apparatus comes in. Let's say--

FS: But it's attention.

AD: Yes, it is attention, but it's very peculiar. **It's a sort of unfocussed attention. It's a kind of diffused attention. Insofar that it's a diffused attention, if an intuition comes, I'll be there. Whereas if it's a focussed attention, an intuition comes, I'm going to block it, I'm even going to deny it, I'm going to say, "I'm not interested in you." In other words what I'm saying is a focussed attention is a predetermination as to how you're going to see something. Whereas an unfocussed attention there's no determination, there's no judgment. What's there is there.**

FS: Now is that the same process then that PB is talking about in--it doesn't sound like the same thing. Where we're talking about going through the different levels, you're exhausting the thinking--

AD: No. a lot of people in class would ask me, how did you get it? Now I have no method, I just tried to describe the technique I employ when I concentrate on a chart and try to understand the basic meanings that a person's endowed with when he's born. Like let's say you walk into a room, you scan everything in the room, like in an instant, but you focus on nothing and intuitively you know, "wait a minute, that doesn't belong there." You see your attention isn't focused and so you're susceptible of intuition. **Whereas a focused attention is really a prejudgmental set of the mind. So when I read a symbol in a chart, I try to keep that kind of attitude.** Now a few people have begun to pick up on this in the class but strangely enough one of the kids that goes to Linda's class--somebody I don't know, I've never met--he comes to class and he's operating the same way I am. So it is a technique which we evolve unconsciously, without even realizing that we're doing it. And I tell them this is the way I work. The same thing when I read something of PB. If I already have focused my mind, put it in a set, predetermined condition, then anything I read is already predetermined. I already know what I'm going to read, if I could use that term. Whereas a mind that's open, receptive, unfocused doesn't cling to any of its memories, keeps them at a distance, that mind is capable of receiving an intuition...

... FS: But there are notes where he talks about taking a theme, that's one way, taking a theme, and reflecting?

AD: Yes, but that's not contemplation. We're talking about something very very specific. If you're reading a novel and you get in a very concentrated state of mind and then you take the novel away, the story away, and you remain in that state of mind, you remain in that state of mind, NOW contemplation can take place. **If you can keep that state of mind, then a theme will come up and suggest itself to you and you contemplate that until you BECOME that theme. You actually ARE compassion, which is quite different from concentration on a thought. Because when you concentrate on a thought all you could do is become united with the thought of your mind. But the idea of compassion is a universal. (quietly) IT'S A REAL BEING. It's a god. That's what you experience if you contemplate. You experience the being of that god. And those 360 degrees, each one of them is a god. And you can experience them AS SUCH in contemplation.**