

MIND DEVELOPMENT COURSE 3



Educating the Will

By Gregory Mitchell

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Educating the Will

CONTENTS

| | |
|--|-----------|
| Foreword..... | 3 |
| Introduction | 5 |
| Concentration Exercises | 6 |
| Remedial Exercises | 16 |
| The Mood of Concentration | 21 |
| The Moral Discipline of Mind Development..... | 23 |
| Phases of Assimilation | 24 |
| Mandalas | 25 |
| Clarifying Problems | 27 |
| Ultra Meditation..... | 31 |
| Isometric Exercises | 34 |
| Improve Understanding by Modeling | 36 |
| Defeating the Decay of Memories..... | 39 |
| The Trinity | 42 |
| Memory, Certainty & the Will..... | 44 |
| Further Concentration Exercises | 48 |
| Achieving Your Objective..... | 54 |
| Revision..... | 57 |
| What's Next? | 58 |

Foreword

By Peter Shepherd

Will is the impelling factor, the directive intention, by which we get things done in life. It is the primary expression of our state of being, the source of our initiatives. The quality of the manifestation of our will is determined by our understanding - the “why?” and the “how?” - of the world around us.

Our will is manifested through the choices we make. Choice, therefore, is the pivotal factor in a self-controlled destiny. Choice begins from the moment we separate from the consciousness of our parents - choice of what we will do, wear, eat and feel begins from the moment we awaken each day. It is only through choice that we discover what works and what does not, and in this way we learn by experience.

When choice is consciously made, experience becomes Self-created. When we live without consciousness, our actions simply reflect our conditioned patterns of thought (habits, fixed ideas and accepted beliefs) or other people’s instructions, and we are no longer in charge of our own life experience.

Decisiveness is a great help to practical success as well as to strength and clarity of mind. For example, a distinguished man was asked to what he attributed his phenomenal success in life. His top recommendation was to make a list early each morning of the things which he wanted to do during the day. He said that with the aid of this practice he was able to do much more; not because he worked harder but because he had ceased to waste time in idle speculation as to what he should do next, and whether he should do it now or leave it to later or the next day. He discovered that these troublesome questions had the power to sap his strength and resolution, such that he got much less done before.

Wishing and willing are quite different things. Suppose I consider whether I will or will not pick up my pen. I cannot wish in this matter - I must decide either to pick it up or leave it where it is. Wishing is an acknowledgement of inability, a dependence upon external events. Willing is the use of your own power. The person who has educated his will does not grumble about the things fortune brings to him through no apparent action of his own, but is content to make the fullest possible use of the opportunities that do prevail. He or she does not dwell again and again on the same thought or argument. If something does require to be thought over, it is brought forward and all the facts bearing upon it are considered, so that a clear conclusion is derived; and then the matter is dismissed from the mind.

The great Indian sage Sri Ramana Maharshi stated: “An average man’s mind is filled with countless thoughts, and therefore each individual one is extremely weak. When, instead of these many useless thoughts, there appears only one, it is a power in itself and has a wide influence.”

We know that many great scientists and inventors ascribed their unique discoveries to their ability for strong, focused, thinking. This was the case with Isaac Newton,

Thomas Edison, Louis Pasteur and many others, who were conscious of and able to apply their extraordinary powers of concentration to exclude all else but the object of their investigations.

The idea of sharpening or concentrating our minds has definite aims and means, which have been thoroughly investigated. The fruits of this research are presented here, in the Mind Development course called 'Educating the Will.'

Introduction

This course teaches the skills of concentration as a means of educating the will. Often, when we put our mind on something, we think of something else and this, in turn, reminds us of something else. The mind wanders from one thing to another by associations, until the original thing is forgotten.

“Unless we notice, we cannot be in a position to choose, or act, for ourselves. It is a transition from one state of existence to another. The significance of this is largely neglected, because we fail to understand its relevance to freedom. Noticing, is the opening of the door to possibilities. How can we train ourselves to grasp this kind of opportunity?” J. G. Bennett

What is concentration?

'Concentration' means putting all one's attention on something, and keeping it there for as long as one wishes to. So if you concentrate on a book, you are aware of the book and you are not thinking, looking or listening to anything else. If you are concentrating you are awake and aware. In much of everyday life, most people are effectively day-dreaming - at worst they are sleep-walking automatons. Their minds flip mechanically from one thing to another, never resting on anything for very long or intentionally. This process may go on for the whole of their lives and they never learn or achieve anything of consequence.

Unless we can wake ourselves up from this mechanicalness and sleep, we cannot begin work on ourselves and we cannot get things done in life. We must learn the mood of concentration - of actually BEING in the Here-and-Now, noticing and observing, and focused on our actions.

You will be more aware, because concentration is the ability to put your awareness on things. This means you are more relaxed - since you are more aware there will be fewer things to startle you. Also, as you can concentrate on things, the subconscious mind will be less able to affect you. Really, only the 'sleeper' is affected by the subconscious mind. When you wake up, you are free of it.

Concentration is a means to develop the will, so that life may be lived purposely and creatively, rather than as a reaction to the flow of sensations. Because you will not flit from one thing to another, like a butterfly, you will be able to choose to focus your mind on things, e.g., study or work, and will increase your skills and knowledge in these areas. Most importantly, you will be able to focus more clearly on your vision of what you want to achieve.

In short, your mental life is both intensified and broadened. The ability to concentrate is, therefore, a valuable skill which will enhance all other skills. Almost all the drills and exercises of Mind Development help develop your ability to concentrate. But are there are ways to improve your concentration directly? Yes, and this course teaches the best of them.

Concentration Exercises

Often, when we put our mind on something, we think of something else and this, in turn, reminds us of something else. The mind wanders from one thing to another by associations, until the original thing is forgotten. For example, we decide to study Mind Development one evening. We may think, “How much better it would be if I could increase my ability to communicate at work. Perhaps I would get promotion and become well off. I could have a big house and invite all our friends to the housewarming. What car would I get?” We picture these things and enjoy the day dream. By this time though, our favorite television program is starting, so we put off the study until another time!

We need to learn to keep our minds on what we are doing, otherwise, like a butterfly, our minds will flit off onto something else. Such is the mental process when you are not in conscious control. It is not *you* that produces the welling-up of dream-like images, nor is it you that produces the drifting flow of associated thoughts, it is the mind doing its thing. But you *can* take over control and direct the mind’s images and thoughts. If you do so, you will get a new sense of power, which is the power of concentration, operated by the will. You will also get a new knowledge and experience of “I.” A third gain is that you will have learned how to think.

The drift of thoughts that occurs in our minds is not necessarily a bad thing nor a disorderly one; it is the relaxed condition of mind, and we can use it for resting when we are mentally tired, as we do each night whilst dreaming. Thinking, however, is intended for acquiring knowledge or applying knowledge.

Attention vs. Mind-Wandering

Many people who have wrongly accused themselves of lack of concentration had actually been trying to *fix* their attention on one thing, and failed to do so. What they lacked, however, was the *control* to order their thoughts and restrict them to a certain, specific path. Too frequently their attention wandered off aimlessly.

To concentrate on a subject under consideration or a problem, does not mean to examine as if one were hypnotized, requires a mental operation in which the mind moves freely as it touches upon this aspect and that which is *relevant* to the subject. A person with good powers of concentration can shift their attention from point to point and return at will to the original center. A person with poor concentration wanders to distant matters: golf, his income-tax statement, a love affair, or anything at all. The person who attends poorly is the slave of association, rather than its master. One disconnected thought leads to another, and in a little while this individual forgets what he or she was originally considering.

If you concentrate properly on a book, your attention is caught by its component parts: by its binding, its general appearance, its weight, its title and so on. These

characteristics serve to attract one's attention which in the well-trained mind moves logically from one feature to the next.

The act of fixing your attention rigidly on the object would not be concentration but self-hypnosis. The kind of concentration we are developing in this course involves the synthetic working of the whole mind, directed to one end, and all its movements are controlled by will.

The vagaries of a wandering mind explain many of the failures of our modern life. Resolve to be the master of your thought processes, not its slave. If you practice thoroughly the following exercises you will soon begin to feel a firmer mental grip. Feelings of futility or superficiality will soon leave you, because directed attention permits you to attain sound knowledge, and sound knowledge leads to clarity and certainty.

The Five Roads of Thought

There are five methods by which ideas are held together in the mind - these are what we call the Five Roads of Thought.

1. Classification

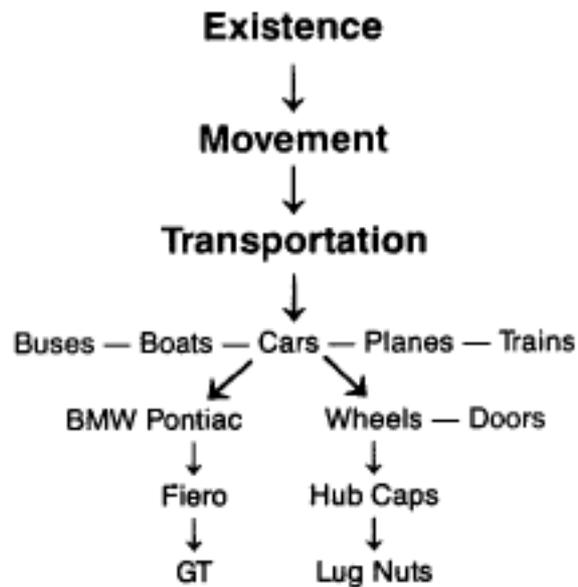
Things that resemble one other closely are of the same Class. For example, an elephant, cow, horse or camel are all animals. An elephant is also a mammal, a four-legged creature, and vegetarian. These classifications are a higher level of abstraction than 'elephant.'

In thinking of an idea or object in terms of classification, you may consider what class the object belongs to, in other words, what is it an example of. Also you may consider what other things belong to that same class – that is, in the case of an elephant: other animals, mammals, four-legged creatures, vegetarians, etc.

2. Specific examples

This road leads to a more specific or concrete example. Most ordinary words that people use are at a medium level of abstraction: for example, apple would break down into Granny Smiths, Golden Delicious, and Cox, etc. Furniture would break down into sofa, table, chairs, television, etc. And camel would break down into Bactrian, dromedary and llama, because it is a subspecies. Our elephant could be Indian or African, or it could be wild, used for logging, processional or in a zoo.

This is the hierarchy of thought. Taking the word 'transportation,' a higher level of abstraction is 'movement,' and still higher is 'existence.' A lower level of abstraction leads to more specific or concrete examples. Examples of transportation are buses, boats, cars, planes and trains. These also have even more specific examples, as illustrated in the following hierarchy...



Many people are good at going to the more abstract level, because they live in their head, but they have the greatest difficulties in getting from the abstract to the concrete, e.g. they may class a motorcar as a class of transportation and at a later date they will concretize and end up with a motorbike. People who cannot concretize are unable to use and apply their knowledge, they have problems making decisions and they find it hard to implement goals.

“Chunking up” is what we do in the first Road of Thought. It means the ability to see connections between different things, and in doing so to group them into related categories or classes. Cars become a means of transportation, which becomes ways of moving, which becomes ways of existing. We see isolated instances of something, and we notice they are related, so we group them. We create a generalization.

Some people have trouble seeing these relationships. In other words, they have trouble “chunking up.” They have trouble learning generalized lessons from the events of their life, and because of this they keep making the same mistakes over and over. They might, however, learn from someone else's ability to perceive generalizations, even if they have trouble making them for themselves.

Other people have trouble “chunking down.” Chunking down is the ability to take an idea or concept and apply it to specific situations. It's what we do in the second Road of Thought. For example, you may see a car you have never seen before, and because you have never seen this specific car, you can't tell that it is a car. Few people would make this mistake, because you've seen many cars, and you know that when you see something with doors on each side, four wheels, a windshield, fenders and bumpers, and a steering wheel, it's a car, even if you haven't seen that particular car before. But people do have trouble chunking down in other less obvious situations, and that's one of the things that is happening when someone agrees with a certain rational principle that would be helpful if applied in their life, but they can't

readily perceive the situations where it would be applicable. The person understands the principle intellectually but cannot “chunk down” the theory to apply it to a real-world, practical situation.

3. Parts

When you contemplate an object or idea, you may go on to think of its Parts. For example, thinking of an elephant, you may picture its trunk, ears, tusks, tail or feet, after picturing the elephant as a whole. You may also consider what the object or idea is itself a part of, such as the elephant may be part of a herd of elephants..

4. Qualities

You may then go on to consider the Qualities of the object under contemplation. The elephant is clearly large, rounded in shape, very heavy, tends to move ponderously, is loyal to its mate, and so on. And you may go on to consider what other things or ideas have that same quality.

5. Contiguity

If you frequently think of two things as connected or going together, they will tend to form a permanent association in your mind. You may associate the elephant with India or Africa, its activities such as dragging logs, with a famous film or cartoon featuring elephants, or with wildlife conservation issues. Or you may have personal experiences with elephants which come to mind, such as a visit to the zoo. Or it may stimulate connected ideas in your imagination.

Objects going together in the mind are thus connected either by *comparison* (the first 4 roads) where you have reasoned how one object resembles and differs from another; or they are connected by *contiguity* (the 5th road) where one thing is closely connected or follows on from another, as determined by experience and imagination.

The Roads of Thought will most commonly be applied to nouns (cow, house, oak tree, picture, bicycle, shop, moon, head, book, football, French, peace, emotion, humor, love, psychology, cooking, sport, etc.) but may also be applied to all parts of speech – verbs (to run, to play, to joke, etc.), adjectives (green, crazy, old, etc.), adverbs (hurriedly, secondly, etc.), and short phrases (run away, my identity, etc).

The following table gives further examples of the Five Roads of Thought...

| | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| <p>CLASSIFICATION</p> | <p>A. The connection between an object or idea and the class to which it belongs. E.g. cow (Class: animal), Englishman (Class: man), dwelling (Class: house), tea (Class: drink), French (Class: language).</p> <p>B. The connection between two objects or ideas that have a principle characteristic in common. E.g. cow and horse (Class: animal), chair and table (Class: furniture), red and blue (Class: color), daisy and buttercup (Class: flower), train and ship (Class: transport), box and bag (Class: container), snow and ice (Class: frozen water), father and son (Class: male family members), palm and oak (Class: tree).</p> <p>C. The connection between two objects or ideas that have a principle characteristic in common but express opposite degrees in regard to it. E.g. hot and cold (Class: temperature), up and down (Class: direction), animate and inanimate (Class: aliveness), elephant and mouse (Class: animal), sage and fool (Class: wisdom).</p> |
| <p>SPECIFIC EXAMPLE</p> | <p>The connection between an object and specific examples of it, or between an idea and its application in concrete situations. E.g. tobacco (Examples: cigarettes, pipe tobacco, chewing tobacco), dictionary (Examples: German, Oxford, childrens, psychological), reading (Examples: education, newspaper, novel).</p> |
| <p>PARTS</p> | <p>A. The connection between an object or idea and the component parts of that whole. E.g. branch (Part of a tree), horns (Part of a cow), pedal (Part of a bicycle), kindergarten (Part of an education).</p> <p>B. The connection between two objects or ideas that are different parts of the same whole. E.g. hull and sails (Parts of a boat), thumb and finger (Parts of a hand), root and branch (Parts of a tree), nerves and muscles (Parts of a body), numeric and emotional (Parts of intelligence).</p> |
| <p>QUALITIES</p> | <p>A. The connection between an object or idea and its descriptive qualities. E.g. lead (Quality: heavy), fire (Quality: hot), ball (Quality: round), coin (Quality: silver), salesman (Quality: empathetic).</p> |

| | |
|------------|---|
| | B. The connection between two objects or ideas that have the same principal qualities. E.g. moon and orange (Quality: round), paper and snow (Quality: white), priest and football fan (Quality: faithful). |
| CONTIGUITY | <p>A. The connection between two objects or ideas due to Coexistence: one normally found alongside the other. E.g. pen and paper, Brazil and coffee, eyes and reading, cat and milk, love and affection.</p> <p>B. The connection between two objects or ideas due to Succession: one following on from the other. E.g. bed and sleep, exercise and health, over-eating and weight gain, war and death.</p> |

The Five Roads Exercise

The aim is to select an object of contemplation and when the mind wanders into an association, make it come back to that selected object before it wanders again. Fill in a circle of associations around it in all directions.

The Five Roads exercise is so named because five questions are used to explore the various aspects of an object under contemplation. You think of everything that you can which is connected to the object by any of the Five Roads of Thought. The attention is momentarily diverted but each time one brings the attention back to the object; it is never lost sight of. One goes around these five roads in turn making many observations and associations about the object of contemplation, but re-focusing on the object at every step, and so retaining concentration.

The questions for the five roads regarding an object or an idea are:

1. **What *Class* does this belong to?** (People, animals, things or ideas which have a principle characteristic in common with the object.) **What other things belong to that class?**
2. **What are some *Specific examples* of this?** (Concrete examples of the object or idea in real world applications.)
3. **What are the *Parts* of this?** (Describing its structure.) **What other things is it a part of?**
4. **What are its *Qualities*? What other things have that quality?** (Descriptive judgments about its appearance, sensations, functions, usage and value.)
5. **What *Goes With* this?** (By 'goes with' we mean things that are usually found alongside the object or idea, or which normally follow on, either sequentially or by cause and effect, such as bat with ball, tea with cup, politician with government, exercise with health, over-eating with indigestion, etc. These contiguities can include the associations that are most commonly made - such

as what we have repeatedly read, been told or learned - as well as the result of our own familiar experience or emphatic memories and ideas.)

Continue with the exercise, repeating the questions until you feel that you have thoroughly searched for every possible idea on each road, while all the time the object of contemplation remains at center of your attention. You can repeat answers, but you should not be mechanical.

These are some subjects to get started with...

Things: cow, house, oak tree, picture, bicycle, shop, moon, head, book, football

Ideas/activities: French, peace, emotion, humor, love, psychology, cooking, sport

The exercise can be continued for hundreds of connections, each time bringing the mind back to the object. You should ensure that you do not give a wrong answer, e.g. classifying a cat as a reptile, stating that a part of a cat is a beak, assigning a quality of blueness, or saying that a cat goes with submarines. When there is misunderstanding in this way, it must not be ignored.

Often students have problems with classification, i.e. what Class does a thing or an idea belong to? Most things and ideas belong to several classes, and this depends upon the level of abstraction that is being considered. This can be checked by consulting the Roget's Thesaurus. A word is first looked up in the dictionary section, where it is given a number or several numbers, and this number will guide you to the appropriate section of the Thesaurus. There you can see which classification or classifications a particular object or idea is filed under, at the first level of abstraction, and what further classes the object or idea may be filed under at higher levels of abstraction.

You should look the word up in a Dictionary and become clear on its definition. Think of specific examples of (the object) in your experience. Alternate this with: "Think of something (the object) is not", repetitively.

To verify the correctness regarding Part, Quality and Contiguity (goes with), you will need to consult an Encyclopedia. A student may be able to give a simple definition of the word in question but still fall down when he is asked to make the Roads of Thought. In some cases an Atlas may also be needed, to give you enough database to get the correct answer. This stage of verification should always be done with reference books, if there is the slightest doubt about your general knowledge. An excellent online resource for verification is <http://dictionary.reference.com>

In the Five Roads of Thought exercise you are controlling your thoughts or ideas with your will. Gradually your will establishes a mood of concentration. After you have practiced this exercise every day for a month you ought to be able to put on this mood - which is a feeling - on the slightest decision of the will, silently saying, "Now, concentrate."

Contemplating a Subject

To speak or write about a subject of which one has acquired special knowledge, there is first a need to see the whole map of the subject. Place the subject in the centre of your attention and follow the roads of connections around it.

1. **Class:** Review your experiences of the subject and how you came to learn it. What is its real purpose and how did it arise? What broader subject does it belong to?
2. **Parts:** Enumerate the various parts of your subject in some logical sequence (which will probably correspond to how it is applied). Determine which are the most important or senior aspects, and which fall under these 'sub-headings'.
3. **Qualities:** Describe the particular qualities of your subject - advantages, limitations, value, innovations, etc. Where does its application lead?
4. **Associations:** Set out all the things that relate to the subject or are relevant to it, interested in it or use it. Consider how your subject fits in with other comparable subjects - how does it resemble or differ? Are there common elements of harmony?

Working cyclically around these aspects, you will be able to make a presentation which is well-balanced and misses nothing of importance.

Contemplation in the Abstract

When you are quite expert at contemplating objects or subjects, you can use concentration skills to help analyze abstract and complex writings. Take, for example, the quotation at the beginning of this section by J. G. Bennett:

“Unless we notice, we cannot be in a position to choose or act for ourselves. It is a transition from one state of existence to another. The significance of this is largely neglected, because we fail to understand its relevance to freedom. Noticing, is the opening of the door to possibilities. How can we train ourselves to grasp this kind of opportunity?”

First of all, make sure you can define every word in the passage. Then, use a variety of small objects to demonstrate the meaning; for example, representing oneself with a key, where one is heading to with an ashtray, things one may or may not notice represented by different coins. When you fully understand the passage use the following questions:

1. What is the passage about?
2. Which sentence sums up the passage best?
3. Think of an example of the idea which each sentence represents. Is the sentence true or logical? What evidence do you have from your own

experience? Try to think of an example that may reveal the sentence to be unrealistic or impractical.

4. Does the whole passage make sense? Are the sentences linked together logically?
5. Is the overall idea useful? Is it important? How can I use it? What parallel analogies of it exist, within your knowledge?
6. Are there related ideas I need to compare this with? What other thoughts does this passage evoke in me?

The following is a suggested approach to answering those questions:

1. The passage is about noticing.
2. The first sentence sums up the passage.
3. Sentence 1: If we didn't notice a special offer in a shop, we couldn't choose to buy it or not buy it (proving example). A possible criticism is: even if we didn't notice the special offer, we could ask if there were any special offers, but this might not be a disproof, as we'd have to notice the idea of 'special offers' in our minds, otherwise we would not think of asking - so, it's true, noticing is very important.
(Do the same with the other sentences.)
4. The passage is a number of facts about noticing, rather than an argument. Bennett links noticing to freedom and higher awareness. So, unless we notice, we cannot choose. If we cannot choose, we are less free. The passage seems logical.
5. The passage is useful because it draws to our attention the significance of noticing - something that on the surface would seem insignificant. It is important because it is the key to being aware and to manifesting our freedom of choice and discrimination. If we don't notice, we are automatons and effectively asleep. It is what this course is about. A parallel analogy would be that of a football player who spots an opening in the defense and makes a goal-winning pass.
6. Related ideas: Noticing is related to visualization and to listening. If we don't listen or we don't notice, we are deprived of knowledge. If we lack knowledge to do with an area of life, we are less able to choose and act.

The above is an example of how the questions may be answered. Other answers may be equally correct. The questions can be repeated cyclically, so further insights could be gained and, of course, the answers would be different each time, just as they are different when concentrating on a physical object.

If you become upset doing the above exercises, find out what memory is associated with the upset and scan this memory repeatedly, noticing more and more detail, especially of your emotions, thoughts and feelings at the time.

Often creative ideas and solutions to problems come to the awareness as if from nowhere. However, these ideas usually only come to awareness after a lot of concentrated and directed contemplation. Logic may not give us an answer to all problems, but it does allow the creative spark to occur. This may occur as an intuitive insight but it will have made possible by the concentrated effort of an awakened mind.

Remedial Exercises

When a student has problems with the Concentration Exercises in general, rather than a particular Exercise, the source of this problem can usually be traced to the home environment, his own attitudes, and the attitudes of people who have an influence on him. The following Exercises are intended to deal with these attitude problems.

Before attempting these Exercises, you should find a place where you can isolate yourself and remove all distractions. Either you should set aside a room for this purpose or you should wait until the end of the day, so you are finished with (and not distracted by) the day's obligations. If you cannot retire to a quiet room, you should make sure that you have privacy. Turn-off the radio and TV, disconnect the telephone, and sit in a not too comfortable chair, in an up-right and relaxed position.

Do not force yourself to start the Exercises immediately. Before starting, you should close your eyes and relax for two or three minutes, to calm your mind. As you are relaxing, you should try to recall a time when you concentrated well. Describe this time to yourself and try to pin-point why you were able to concentrate in that situation. Identifying a time when you did concentrate well, will help you to acknowledge the fact that you can concentrate, at least in some situations.

The skill of Concentration simply means: the ability to focus attention on something and keep working actively there for relatively long periods of time. If a person's mind wanders a great deal when he tries to study or work, he needs more discipline in focusing his attention. It would make little sense to ask a person to concentrate on some arbitrary object or process, when it will have no value for him. One can only concentrate effectively on something when doing so will bring about a wanted result. The Exercises are chosen with this philosophy in mind.

Supplementary Exercise One

Although each assignment should be preceded by a short period of relaxation, combined with identifying a time that you concentrated well, the first assignment is for you to do this as a formal issue and write this up as an essay.

There are 4 Parts to this Exercise:

The first Part is to recall a time when you concentrated well.

The second Part is to describe this memory and write down the description.

The third Part is to try to pin-point *why* you were able to concentrate in this memory.

The fourth Part is to write this up as an essay of 300-500 words, in order to elucidate your findings.

Part 1:

This Part requires 5 minutes, and the procedure is as follows:

Step 1. After a few minutes of daydreaming and relaxation, you should bring your attention to the assignment you are to work on. You should start thinking about the overall topic, reviewing the various elements in a moderately interested way. Reflect on the end-result you want to achieve and the benefits of getting it done

Step 2. During the last couple of minutes of this relaxation phase, you should gradually narrow your attention to the subject at hand, and move towards the beginning of the task you have been set: *To recall a time when you concentrated well.*

Step 3. Once you have picked a starting point, an alarm-clock should be set to go off after 5 minutes. This will prevent you from distracting yourself, by worrying about how much time has gone by.

Step 4. The next step is to give your mind the assignment. Write or say: “The assignment is to recall a time when I concentrated well Begin!” Then you should narrow your attention to the subject at hand and keep your attention focused on the task as you proceed. Note: it is important that you say “Begin” to yourself, and “Stop” at the end of an Exercise - after a few times, the word ‘Begin’ will switch you into a mood of concentration.

Step 5. You should not **try** to concentrate. ‘**Trying**’ to do something, e.g. picking-up a pencil, does not get the job done. Likewise, screwing-up the face, frowning the brow, clenching the jaw, tensing the neck and shoulders and telling oneself to concentrate will not produce concentration. If you are mindful of your task, i.e. to do it with full attention, the result is concentration. Learn to relax the muscles of the face, neck, shoulders and particularly the tongue - and you will find the spare energy released, magnifies the power of attention.

Step 6. Even for a trained mind, sustained attention for 5 minutes or more is difficult. The untrained mind will start to wander after about 20-30 seconds. If you start to think of something else while you are doing this exercise, you should practice ‘Thought-Stopping’, so you can return to the task at hand with greater intensity.

Who controls what is going on in your mind at any given time? You do! Yet many people say things like “I just can’t stop thinking about ...” or “I can’t get my mind off ...”. Paradoxically, these people have tremendous powers of concentration, but it is out of their control. A student, who has problems with concentration, must be taught to recognize once and for all, that he has the power to control what he thinks about. The process of ‘Thought-Stopping’ can be learned. As soon as you become aware that you are thinking of something other than the set assignment, you should simply break-off in mid-thought, say “No!” - and return to the assignment with greater intensity.

Note: A student should learn to be patient and persistent. If he gets upset, or scolds himself for becoming distracted, this is in itself a distraction. Telling yourself not to think about something, means you are dwelling on the very thought that you don't want to think about. A sharp "No!" with no further consideration, is adequate.

Part 2:

The second Part of this Exercise is to spend 5 minutes describing the memory you recalled in Part 1. What I mean here is a description of the sensory elements (visual, auditory and kinesthetic), rather than a merely verbal account. The procedure is as follows:

Step 1. Set the alarm-clock again for 5 minutes.

Step 2. Say or write to yourself: "The assignment is to describe the memory. Begin!" 'Begin' should be said with emphasis. During the next 5 minutes, you should write this description down. Then say "Stop!" at the end.

Part 3:

Pin-point the reason why you were able to concentrate in that situation. The procedure is as follows:

Step 1. Set the alarm-clock again for 5 minutes.

Step 2. Say or write to yourself: "The assignment is to pin-point the reason why. Begin!" During this 5 minutes, write down your findings. Then say "Stop!" to yourself, when the alarm goes off.

Part 4:

The final action is to write this material up as an essay of 300-500 words. The essay should start by describing the memory in detail and conclude by pin-pointing the various 'Whys' which permitted you to concentrate better in that situation.

Supplementary Exercise Two

This second Exercise is designed to improve a student's concentration by using Mental Arithmetic. Psychologists have proven that adults who practice simple mental calculations for 20 minutes a day, over a period of 20 consecutive days, learn to concentrate much better, and improve at mental arithmetic at the same time.

The first Part of this Exercise is to simply recite the addition table in your mind, starting with '1 + 1 = 2', going methodically through each number up to '1 + 9 = 10'. Then continue with '2 + 1 = 3', and so on until you have recited all the sums up to '9 + 9 = 18'. At the same time you should try and notice how your mind seems to work, as you keeps your attention on the task. Learn to sense carefully the level of intensity of your concentration and to tighten it up when necessary.

After a few sessions of mental addition spread over several days, the second Part is to change over to multiplication tables for variety. Start with the 2 times-table and

continue until you can do up to the 12 times-table. You will be complete on this assignment, when you can go through these tables quickly, with no more than 3 or 4 mistakes per 100 calculations. To progress still further, learn and practice the tables up to 20 times.

The Steps are as follows:

Step 1. An initial period of relaxation and locating a memory of concentrating well.

Step 2. An alarm-clock is set for 10 minutes.

Step 3. Write or say to yourself: "The assignment is mental arithmetic. Begin!" - and start the assignment.

Step 4. When the alarm rings, say to yourself: "Stop!"

Step 5. The alarm-clock is re-set for a further 10 minutes.

Step 6. Steps 2, 3 and 4 are repeated. This completes the drill for the day.

Supplementary Exercise Three

The third Exercise consists of writing a précis, something that students over the age of about 40 probably would have done at school. The need to write a précis was withdrawn from the School English Examinations about 1968. Our findings are that practice in writing a précis concentrates the mind and promotes clear and unmuddled thinking.

This assignment involves writing 6 précis. The definition of précis is: the restatement in a shortened form of the primary ideas elucidated in a speech or a piece of writing. In this assignment, you select a passage of 300-500 words from written materials which you are interested in. The first time you do this assignment, write out this passage in a shortened form, reducing it to half the original length. In subsequent sessions, your objective is to reduce a passage to one third of the original length. It would take between 20 and 30 minutes to do such a task, so the task should be broken into either three 10 minute sections or two 15 minute sections.

You start the assignment with a 5 minute period of relaxation and locating a memory of when you could concentrate well. An alarm-clock is set for either 10 or 15 minutes. Start by saying: "The assignment is to do a précis. Begin!". Work until the alarm goes off, then say "Stop!" You may have to repeat this 3 or 4 times to complete the task. Aim to work for 15 minutes, rather than 10, by the 5th or 6th précis.

In all these practice sessions, it is important to pay attention to what close concentration feels like. With a little practice, it becomes possible to transfer this sensation to other more practical tasks. You will find that you can block out distractions more easily by accessing this feeling and focusing more closely on the object of your attention; whether this be something you wish to read, a person's voice or an idea in your mind.

Personality as a Barrier

Personality is often cited as a barrier to progress in these dimensions. This is something of an illusion. The deeper self, or as Jung would say, the 'Core-Self' *behind* the mask of social personality, will reveal itself through the vehicle of a Definite-Self, in a precise and functional form, under the pressure of study and work, directed by the Core Self (and at a deeper level still, the Will of the transpersonal Higher Self).

The Definite-Self is a personality or an identity created by the Core-Self, and which is under the control and direction of the Core-Self, whereas personality, in the ordinary sense, is outside of control. Personality may be defined by the central attitude that goes with it. Both Jung and Gurdjieff speak of a Core-Self surrounded by a number of satellite selves or 'sub-personalities'. When the satellite selves are in conflict with the Core-Self and with each other; when the Core Self requires one thing, and a particularly dominant satellite self requires another, thinking will be shallow and the Mood of Concentration will not be manifest.

Our Core-Self, by and large, is concerned with the larger, long-term issues of life and many of its goals serve the survival and well-being of Man, whereas our satellite selves tend to be occupied with trivial issues, such as whether we go to the cinema or watch TV, or what color to choose for our next car. When this state of affairs prevails, thinking is at a low ethical level, and the mind is dispersed in most affairs. In the trained mind, there is a much greater alignment between satellite selves and the Core-Self. This is what we call the Definite-Self. The mind is polarized; in short, it has become an instrument for skill in action.

The Mood of Concentration

Concentration may be described as a mood or a particular state-of-mind, or as a set of skills which can be acquired by training, and then demonstrated.

According to Gurdjieff: **Work does not begin on the ordinary level of life.** Unless we *do* something to raise ourselves from this status quo of mechanicalness and unawareness, we cannot effectively improve ourselves. We can think about it, but we cannot make progress. It is simple, but it is important. This simple mistake of neglecting the basic requirement of disciplined application, is very easy to fall into. **ONE MUST ACTUALLY BE HERE TO WORK.** To be here, one must actually do something to bring oneself here.

To the man-in-the-street, Concentration is understood to mean a narrowing, limiting, or fixating of our thoughts and activities. The tendency to be one-pointed about a very narrow range of interests and affairs, and to withdraw from the mainstream of life, is more than just a simple misunderstanding of the concept - in fact, it is a total inversion of the true situation. When we have the power of Concentration, the whole of our life becomes polarized to a chosen purpose: animated by increased powers of thought, love and will; inspired with a higher sense of Self than we have known before. In short, our mental life is both *intensified and broadened*.

Willing and attending are closely related to the act of choice. We cannot choose among alternatives if we do not know they exist; we must attend in order to know. This understanding provides the basis for an act of will: the making of a choice. The better the understanding, the more productive will be our choice.

Our ability to pursue chosen goals irrespective of obstacles placed in our path is one measure of our freedom. Unless such motivated action is possible we are at the mercy of outer circumstances such as our environment and the influence of others in our society. The man who can be trusted is the one who can command himself. This requires him to know what he is facing and to have the power to deal with it. These capabilities are evident in a successful ruler but they are equally necessary for the growing individual faced with balancing and utilizing the contradictory sides of his own nature.

According to Assagioli, there are five stages involved in the training of the will:

1. The individual starts with a purpose or aim. Having formulated the aim, he experiences intent within himself to achieve it. This intent must be compatible with his motivations, conscious or unconscious. These motivations must be evaluated by whatever ethical principles the individual employs. Then he needs make sure the ethical principles, motivations, intent and purpose are indeed aligned.
2. In the second stage the individual makes a choice among alternatives. He decides what he will do.

3. He then affirms his decision, telling himself that “it will be so.” This affirmation may be repeated from time to time as the need arises.
4. Now he must outline a practical plan of activities designed to achieve his goal. If necessary he will outline a sequence of interrelated steps, each of which is necessary to achieve his goal.
5. The final stage is to execute the plan. This requires two important qualities: concentrated attention to the given task and the ability to persist.

Concentration is not an end in itself, but a means to develop the Will, so that life may be lived causatively, rather than at effect; and it is a means to develop the capacity to notice, so that you may discover opportunity and perceive that which is *actually there*. The Mood of Concentration arises from polarizing your entire life - all your actions, your feeling and your thinking towards success in some line of human endeavor. Choose at least one thing in life - a hobby, study or art, or a congenial way to make your living. Keep up that activity with will and purpose, year after year, and gradually you will become a master of that activity, and you will find that you possess a personal instrument in which you can enjoy power.

‘Wishing’ is the enemy of Concentration; it is a distraction and it causes nothing. The power to Concentrate arises from the Will and purposive action. The Mood of Concentration, the attitude behind the power, arises in part from a period during which a student is the apprentice to a Moral Discipline.

The Moral Discipline of Mind Development

A Moral Apprenticeship is a system of rules to promote mindfulness, until the student is *sufficiently able*, through training, to make his own judgments; in which case, rules become guidelines only, rather than restrictions. When this occurs, a student is able to transcend these rules creatively, rather than rebel. At this stage in his development, a student will have reached a maturity of responsibility whereby he no longer strives to concentrate: he is concentrated. The following is a Code of Ethics for the guidance of Mind Development students:

1. Never attempt to fake reality in any manner.
2. Never seek or grant the unearned.
3. Never desire effects without causes.
4. Only enact a cause when you are willing to accept full responsibility for its effects.
5. Never make any decisions, form any convictions or seek any values, out of context, apart from or against the total sum of your integrated knowledge.
6. Above all: do not seek to get away with contradictions.

INTEGRITY is action with foreknowledge of one's purposes.

INTEGRITY is loyalty to rational principles.

PERCEPTION is based on one's fundamental relationship to reality. If one rejects one's own reason and practices blind faith to an authority, then judgment and perception of reality are distorted and a trance-like illusion of reality is induced.

REASON is the faculty that identifies and integrates the material provided by Man's senses. It is a faculty that Man has to exercise by choice. Thinking is not an automatic function: Man is free to think or to evade that effort. Thinking requires a state of full focused awareness. The act of focusing one's consciousness is volitional. Man can focus his mind to a full, active, purposefully directed awareness of reality - or he can unfocus it and let himself drift in a semiconscious daze, merely reacting to any chance stimulus of the immediate moment.

When Man unfocuses his mind, he may be said to be conscious in an animal sense of the word, since he experiences sensations and perceptions. But in the sense of the word applicable to Man - a consciousness which is aware of reality and able to deal with it - an unfocused mind is not conscious.

Psychologically, the choice 'to think or not' is the choice 'to focus or not'. Existentially, the choice 'to focus or not' is the choice 'to be conscious or not'. Metaphysically, the choice 'to be conscious or not' is the choice of life or death.

Phases of Assimilation

There are three phases in the assimilation of a new pattern of behavior, if it is to be completely owned, i.e. to become second nature. A new pattern of behavior must be assimilated at the levels of thought, emotion and effort. Once you are able to complete all the above assignments, and to do this in a quiet, safe space without distraction, you should repeat these assignments, with an increasing gradient of distraction.

To increase the level of distraction, sit in the living room and turn-on the radio or television, or sit in a public place where there are other people, and repeat the above or similar Exercises. The frustrations of distraction will test your assimilation at the levels of thought and emotion.

The third phase of assimilation, the level of effort, involves the strategy of leading your attention into a subject you don't particularly want to focus on, rather than the rather artificial assignments above, and allowing the subject to take over your mental field of view. E.g. if you tend to put off paying your bills, studying for a course or writing a report, then put your attention on these real life issues. An appropriate assignment for the third phase would be to prepare for a job interview, by anticipating what questions might be asked, and composing answers that would help to win the job, and spending 20 minutes on this activity with fully focused attention.

The Acquisition of New Skills

Many people believe that one is born with the ability to concentrate or read rapidly, and skills of that nature. If you have such a belief, complete this next exercise, so that you will gain an insight into the three-stage process that one has to go through to master a new skill.

Focus on one of your skills, then write down a short sentence describing your competence, e.g. "I am good at playing chess". Now write the same sentence with your other hand. Ask yourself, "How does the second sentence look? How did it feel to write it?" Both writing and concentration are skills. You were not born knowing how to do these things. You had to learn them, step by step, and there were three stages in acquiring these skills: the **awkward** stage, the **applied** stage, and the **automatic** stage.

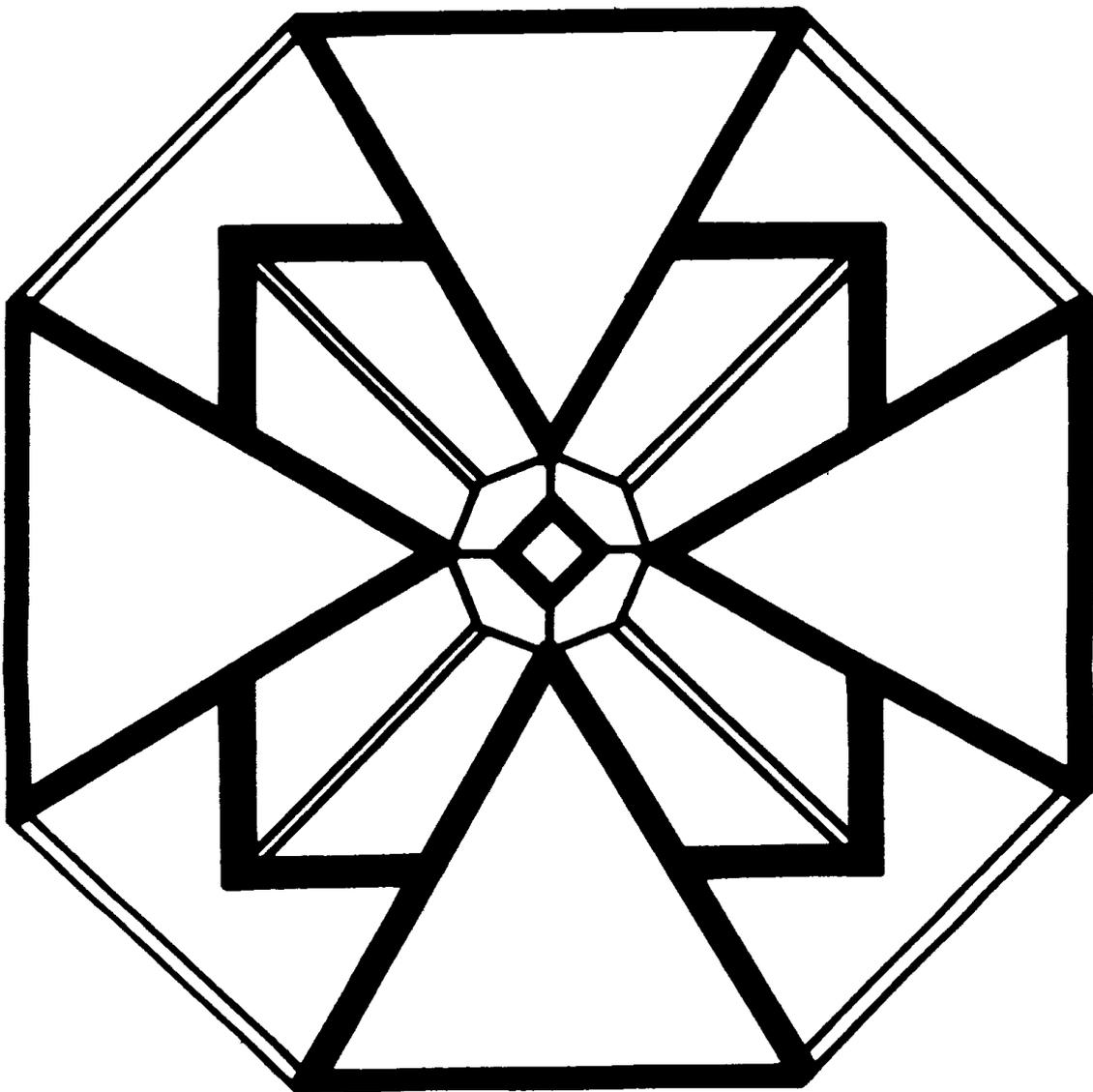
When you first try to learn something, usually you do not do it very well; it feels awkward. For example, the first time you rode a bicycle, you probably fell off! You may have said: "I will never do that again", or somebody reassured you and told you it's quite normal to fall off a bike a few times at the start. Because you wanted to ride the bike, you probably kept trying and because you did, you progressed to the next stage.

At the next stage, you apply the techniques that you have learned and gradually you get better results. If you persist, you will eventually arrive at the point where you do not have to think about what you're doing, it comes naturally. At the automatic stage you could probably ride the bicycle, plan your route, and sing or hold a conversation with another cyclist, all at the same time.

What do the three stages of skill acquisition have to do with concentration? When you start practicing concentration exercises, you may feel awkward and not able to do them very well. Your mind may persist in wandering, or you may not be able to regain your train of thought after becoming distracted. This is because you are at the first stage of skill acquisition, but you have yet to acquire the skill. The answer is simple: continue to practice at the level of competence you have achieved, and gradually move forward in ability until you can perform at the highest level without effort.

Mandalas

Mandalas, such as the one below, are a useful aid to concentration. Through the use of a Mandala, a student gains the insight that he has to go through a phase of boredom before things become interesting again at a new level of intensity. The (usually dominant) left-brain finds such an exercise boring and soon tires of it, handing over to the right-brain, which however is fascinated by such spatial, holistic tasks. Focus only on the centre of the design and allow your peripheral vision to play with the pattern. Avoid any temptation to analyze the design.



Clarifying Problems

The mark of a successful individual is not whether or not they have problems, it is whether or not they have the same problems they had last year! In other words, do they understand problems? And are they solving them? Or are they just worrying and fretting and doing nothing?

Everybody has problems. Whenever we have a goal, there are barriers to achieving that goal - otherwise it would be too easy and no fun. The goal blocked by the barrier is a problem. Overcoming the barrier and attaining the goal is the game of life. This is also called problem solving. Without problems as challenges, life would be boring indeed! Problems are the essence of life. Difficulties arise when you are at the effect of a problem - when a problem has you, not when you have a problem. Then you experience stress and worry.

When a problem has you, you don't realize that you are creating it. You don't know that you, and only you, have to do something about the problem - that is, if you want to solve it. You are waiting for something to happen or someone else to solve the problem for you, or for it to fizzle out. You aren't looking clearly, facing up to the reality, seeing the truth and therefore being able to solve the problem. And it isn't fun. This is also called not taking responsibility and being at effect.

When you have a problem, you know that you made it because you wanted something - you have a goal - and there are always barriers to attaining every goal. So you have a goal opposed by a barrier - a problem! So you know you have to do something about the problem - to overcome the barriers and move forward toward the goal. And you have to do it (no one else can). And you are doing it! You are solving the problem. And it's fun! This is also called taking responsibility and being at cause.

There are always problems in life. The question is are you going to have problems or are problems going to have you? Better to let your problems become challenges, a game you can enjoy.

First you need to identify the problems in your life and there are inevitably lots of them! The following technique will help you identify some problems that you may not even be aware of, perhaps because you have just got so accustomed to them...

| | | |
|----------------------|----------------|----------------------|
| Doing | 1 | 3 |
| | 2 | 4 |
| Not Doing | Want to | Don't want to |

Step 1. Ask yourself the following questions:

- a) "What are you doing in your life that you want to do?" The answer should be written in box number 1.
- b) "What are you not doing in your life that you want to do?" In other words, what do you wish you were doing and you are not? Your answer should be written in box number 2.
- c) "What are you doing in your life that you don't want to?" Your answer should be written in box number 3.
- d) "What are you not doing in your life that you don't want to do?" Yes, this is a double negative, but it is an important question, because it identifies those things that a person really does not want to do and is not making a part of his life, e.g. he does not want to work for somebody else, and in this way he limits his options. Your answer should be written in box number 4.

Step 2. These questions should be asked several times cyclically, until you have run out of answers. Each answer should be written down in the appropriate box.

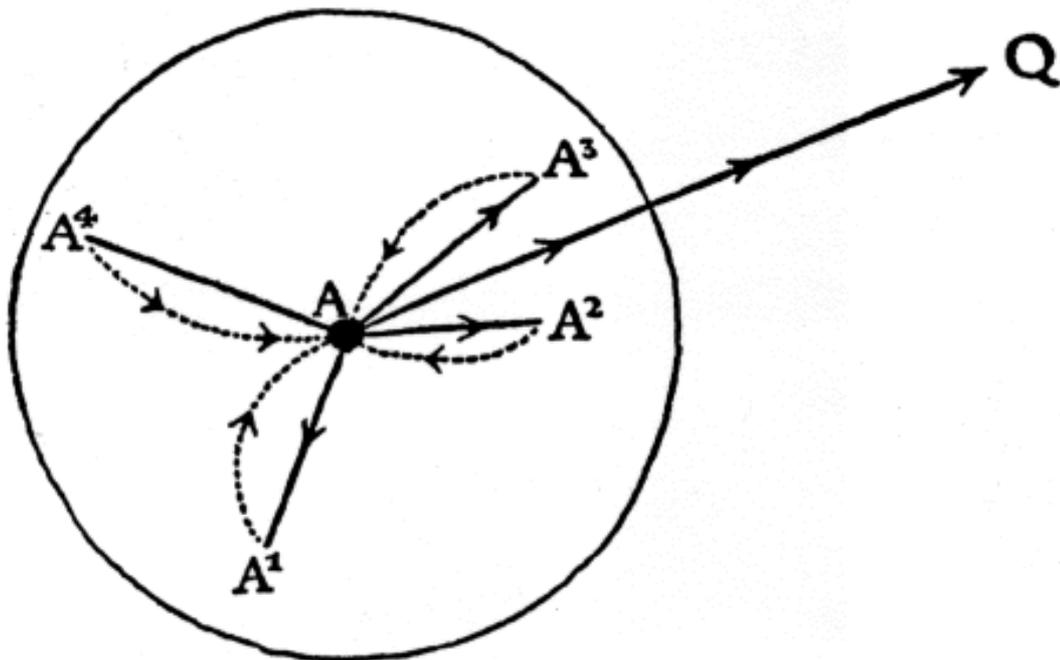
Step 3. Circle the answers that you have written down in boxes 2 and 3. These are the problem areas of your life. Box 4 may also represent an unresolved problem. With this data - an increased clarity on your situation - you will be able to focus on the problem issues and take action on the real underlying source of the problems.

Step 4. If the problem is attention-destroying thoughts, you should assign these thoughts a worry time. If you are unfit, realize that you can promote mental fitness by becoming physically fit and exercise gives you more energy, not less. Also you should talk yourself into eagerness instead of exhaustion, since most people are about as tired, as they make up their minds to be.

If you have practical problems, take action to resolve the problem, rather than worry and complain about things. Most problems have simple solutions: you can lose weight by eating less, you can stop smoking by simply stopping. Simple enough but not easy to do, otherwise you would have done it already.

To resolve the impasse you need to look at the opposite intention that is holding you back. I like eating and I like smoking, yes, but why? Normally the why is unmet needs, that the compulsion has become a substitute for. What is not being faced up to here? Look for the real underlying problem and sort that out first. Try to gain more clarity about it, to identify your thought-distortions that have been making the problem seem more of a barrier than it actually is.

To gain further clarity, use the Five Roads of Thought with the problem as the subject. Shift your attention from one aspect of the problem to another with relaxed but controlled concentration. Form a circle of related ideas, much like a mandala, and note them down. The 'circle' stands for the area in which the mind moves freely among the intimately related aspects of the problem.



It is clear you cannot solve anything by fixing your attention on the problem itself, which is represented by 'A' in the diagram above – for example in this case the problem of how to go about building an extension onto your house. If you make the attempt you simply become more uncomfortably aware of the fact that there is a problem – no extension yet exists! Since every problem is made up of related aspects, each aspect must receive attention in turn. So the mind moves freely among the intimately related phases of the problem. In the diagram this is represented by moving from A to A¹, which is an examination of the financial costs. This means that for the time being you put aside the overall problem of how to build the extension and first discover how much money you can spare.

When you have ascertained this, you move immediately back to A and almost instantaneously find yourself at A², the issue of design: how many rooms, is an architect necessary and so on. Back again at A you have an improved picture of the problem but your attention switches to the next issue, planning permission, and so on through A³, A⁴, etc. These all amount to an answer to the question (Q).

With this kind of free ranging contemplation, aspects will become apparent that you earlier on had neglected to include in your 'knowledge map' of the issue. The eventual solution is simply a more accurate knowledge of the objective truth of the situation, without blind spots caused by prejudice, assumptions or fears. From that knowledge you can see clearly the way ahead.

Then what is then required is intentional daily effort, focused toward an objective that has been clarified in all respects and that you genuinely feel is both worthwhile and a resolution of the problem. Observe yourself in the process and when you become distracted bring yourself back on task. Refocus and begin again.

When you are working toward a goal, something that you want to achieve, it helps greatly to do two things. Firstly, to get a very clear picture in your mind of where you are going, and what it will be like when you get there. Feel it with all your senses, as if you have already achieved it.

Secondly, measure your progress, not by how far you still have to go to reach that target, but instead, how far you have already come. Realize how important your first steps are. Keep doing that and you will get there. There will be more advice about how best to attain your objectives later in this course.

Ultra Meditation

The man who attends poorly lacks control of his mental processes; he is the slave of association, instead of its master. One disconnected thought leads to another, and in a little while this individual forgets what he was originally thinking about.

With only a few hours of practice, the method that I describe below will permit a person to control their mind for a considerable period of time and a valuable product of this practice will be a vastly enhanced level of concentration, that can be applied to all fields of life. It will also lead to a still mind that is not remote and dissociated (the usual result of meditative techniques), but is *intimately in contact* with both its environment and the Core Self.

This exercise takes practical advantage of the butterfly nature of the Western untrained mind, and it puts the driver back into the seat, so that the higher levels of Mind Development become fully effective. It is based on the Five Roads of Thought Exercise practiced earlier.

The Five Roads Exercise is so named because we use five questions to focus the mind on the object under contemplation. This concentrates the mind, so that we continually bring our attention back to the object. Your mind will wander, but it does so under your volition, and you continually bring it back to the object being considered. The five questions differentiate the abstract nature of the object, and each question draws the mind back to consider the unified whole. This differentiated unity is the truth of what exists.

Colors can be used with advantage for the Five Roads, as shown below. Either we choose an external object, or when we are more able, we can form a mental image of an object for our focus of concentration. The five questions used in this exercise are:

- 1. Think of a *class* (the object) belongs to - imagine *Green*.**
- 2. Think of a *specific example* of (the object) - imagine *Pink*.**
- 3. Think of a *part* of (the object) - imagine *Red*.**
- 4. Think of a *quality* of (the object) - imagine *Yellow*.**
- 5. Think of something *associated with* (the object) - imagine *Orange*.**

The Steps are as follows:

1. Choose an object - either mental or external - as a focus of concentration.
2. As you think of a Class imagine Green; then return your attention to the object. Similarly for Specific Example (Pink), Part (Red), Quality (Yellow) and Associated With (Orange).
3. The aim is to continue this Exercise for 10 minutes. Distinguish connections in ever widening circles around the focus of concentration. Once you have exhausted

the possibilities of the object you have chosen, then choose a new object and repeat Steps 1 & 2, aiming for a target of 10 minutes.

Initially it may take several seconds to answer a question; however, like practicing mental arithmetic, your mental processes will become faster and faster. Do not worry if the same associations come up again and again, as the speed at which you form the association is the more important dimension of this exercise. Note: Some students may find it easier to do the Exercise out loud, initially.

After a little practice, the colors will act as triggers and will open and close switches in the brain. Once this occurs, the colors will replace the questions: to imagine Red will be equivalent to 'Think of a Part', and so on. This will make the process quicker - to visualize a color takes about $\frac{1}{4}$ second, whereas to ask a question of yourself takes about 1 second.

The Exercise will improve your memory and your powers of communication. For instance, if you have an object or idea in your mind and you imagine green, for as long as you imagine yellow your mind will continue to give you qualities of this object or idea. Then when you imagine red, your mind will start to generate a parts list. It is evident this is a useful ability in life, as when public speaking and answering questions, in the type of job where you have to 'think on your feet', and in creative writing, amongst many other applications.

Some people are better visualizers than others, so to make the Exercise easier, I suggest that five pieces of colored celluloid are obtained and Sellotaped into a strip. You hold up the strip and look through the different colors in turn as you consider each question. This will quickly form an association between each color and its Road of Thought; then the celluloid can be dispensed with.

Metronome Training

When you have demonstrated competence with the above techniques, it is necessary now to use a Metronome to pace this Exercise. A Metronome, which is of course usually used for pacing musical rhythm, can be most useful for high speed mental practice. It 'entrains' the mental processes involved and allows 'over-learning' to occur more efficiently. Over-learning is necessary for skills to be programmed into the neural circuits of the brain, so that the skill is then permanent, stable and instantly accessible - like the skill of riding a bicycle. If you set the Metronome for 30 beats per minute, you will be able to switch Roads of Thought once every two seconds. In this way a steady and smooth rhythm can be maintained, and the usual slow-down that occurs after a little while can be avoided. Once you have become comfortable at 30 beats per minute, the rate can be increased by occasionally adding an extra beat per minute, each time the previous rate has been comfortably maintained. Advanced meditators using this method have exceeded 100 beats per minute, and as a result have excellent powers of concentration and communication.

Why is speed important? The quicker this Exercise is performed, the more the brain is aroused, and larger areas of the brain are involved; therefore there are less

redundant brain circuits available to cause distractions and mind-wandering. Studies using the EEG show significant increases in the production of Alpha and Theta waves as the student increases the speed of the task. And there is a critical speed, which varies from student to student, above which there is a massive increase in synchronized brain waves in the Alpha and Theta frequencies. This occurs when the two sides of the brain are synchronized and working together co-operatively. This is a state of mind observed in people with a high level of spiritual awareness, and in some of our most advanced and creative thinkers.

Isometric Exercises

Isometrics exercise involves tensing muscles against other muscles or against an immovable object. Because there is no movement, isometric exercises involve muscular contractions in which no shortening or lengthening of the muscle occurs. There is a constant and balanced force or strain placed on the muscles. A typical example is pushing against a brick wall. Although there is a build up of tension in the muscles there is no actual movement.

When the muscle is in isometric tension, this allows for an increased strength of the motor nerve impulse to the brain, which is effective in integrating the peripheral nervous system. This has a further benefit, which is why Isometric exercises are included here in Educating the Will. When the mind and body are better integrated, your intention for action is communicated readily to the body and it seems easier to get things done, to break through the resistance of sloth and to put plans into action.

To obtain the benefit of the exercise, **the contraction should be held for 6 seconds and repeated 6 times**. This allows time for peak tension to develop and metabolic changes to occur in the muscle. The intensity of each isometric contraction should increase. By the 6th contraction, greater range of motion and neural input should occur. Take a short relaxation in between each contraction.

Seated Exercises

1. Sit upright in a dining chair by the table. Lengthen your back, widen your shoulders, and hold your head up and forward. Keep other muscles relaxed, beside the ones that are being exercised.
2. Press the back of your heels against the chair legs
3. With your elbows on the table, finger-tips together, press hard in an effort to force the palms apart.
4. Hold the opposite fist and squeeze hard.
5. With your arms stretched out, one hand on top of the other's upturned fist, resist the movement of the fist up towards your head. Then repeat the exercise with the fist downturned but still trying to move it up toward your head. Then do the exercises with the other hand held as a fist.
6. Link your hands across the chest and pull outwards.
7. The palm of your left hand is held against your left cheekbone, resisting the effort to turn your head toward the left. Then repeat with the other hand and direction.
8. Link your hands behind your head and resists the backward movement of your head.
9. With your palms flat on the table, press downward.

10. Place your hands on your knees (with knees together) and press both inward and downward. Then push upward with your knees. Finally push outward with your knees, with the palms moved to the side of your knees.

Lying Down Exercises

11. These exercises are done lying down on the carpet.
12. Face down, with your hands by your hips, press down against the floor.
13. On your back, with your hands by your hips, press down against the floor.
14. On your back, with your elbows out at right angles, hands pointed upwards, press down with your elbows against the floor.
15. On your back, cross your ankles, then push up with one and down with the other. Then press the ankles toward each other.

Standing Exercises

16. Standing with knees half bent, press down with your hands on the knees.
17. With your back flat against the wall, knees bent at right angles, push backward with your thighs.

Improve Understanding by Modeling

Problems in real life may have a very large, if not unlimited, set of elements. In the 'real life' situation, options and answers are fuzzy rather than clear cut: framed by possibility, probability, necessity and implication.

Unless the right side of the brain is involved when perceiving and attempting to understand situations, content and context are ignored; the left brain then operates at a high level of abstraction, giving subjectively logical conclusions that however have not been tested against content or with reference to the context of reality.

Our researches have shown that working with models - such as plasticine models - to represent real world situations, improves communication between the two sides of the brain markedly. Furthermore, such practice improves powers of visualization and co-ordination between mind and body. A balance is obtained between subjective ideas and objective reality.

We have all come across the 'bright' student who can trot out the answer to any question but when it comes to applying that knowledge such a student can do absolutely nothing. The subject has been learned without genuine understanding.

Plasticine for modeling can be found in toy shops. Have plenty of plasticine in different colors to help distinguish between different parts of the model, and use a large kitchen-table surface.

Each part of the situation you wish to demonstrate is modeled in plasticine, and a small paper label with one or two words is added for additional clarification. By looking at the completed model, an uninformed observer should be able to see exactly what the model represents and how the parts of the model are related, so as to demonstrate a real world situation or a theoretical principle.

The following is an example of a logical problem that can best be solved by Modeling. Work through this now, to get some initial practice with modeling.

The facts: Five men of different nationalities live in five separate houses of different colors - red, yellow, blue, green and ivory. Each has a particular pet, a favorite drink, and a favorite brand of cigarettes. We have the following information about them:

- a) The Englishman lives in the red house.
- b) The Ukrainian drinks tea.
- c) Coffee is drunk in the green house.
- d) The Spaniard owns the dog.
- e) The Norwegian lives in the first house on the left.
- f) Kools are smoked in the yellow house.
- g) The green house is to the left of the ivory house.

- h) Chesterfields are smoked next to the house where the fox is kept.
- i) The Old Gold smoker owns snails.
- j) The Lucky Strike smoker drinks orange juice.
- k) The Japanese smokes Parliament.
- l) Milk is drunk in the middle house.
- m) The Norwegian lives next door to the blue house.
- n) Kools are smoked next to where the horse is kept.

Objective: From these facts, figure out who owns the zebra and who drinks water? The solution can be found by modeling all the noun phrases described above, labeling them, and placing them in the spatial relationship indicated by the clues above.

Try to solve this problem now by using plasticine models.

Solutions: Surprisingly, this puzzle has two solutions, depending on whether you place the green house immediately to the left of the ivory house, or to the far left by making a circle. Either the Japanese owns the zebra and the Norwegian drinks water, or the Englishman owns the zebra and the Japanese drinks water.

Note that this type of problem may not always be resolvable using the classical left brain algebraic or verbal logic.

The representation of a variety of abstract ideas using models will be a test of your ingenuity. The very act of working out how to represent situations and relationships, and theoretical concepts, will both test and eventually clarify your understanding.

For example, you may require to make a model of a man thinking about a dog. To make a stick model of a man and of a dog placed together does not truly represent the situation. It might mean 'a man walking a dog.' One way is to use the cartoon trick of putting dialogue in a 'balloon.' If the dog is put in such a balloon with a line going to the man's head, then the meaning becomes clearer. The label 'thinks' placed by the balloon will then complete the description.

Abstract ideas can similarly be represented by placing a model within a balloon. For example 'justice' may be represented by the blindfolded figure of a man with a sword in one hand and scales in the other, placed in a circle. 'Honor,' by two men about to fight a duel, standing back to back with pistols in their hands. 'Truth,' simply by a tick within a circle. In each case the label should accord with the model. Some concepts will require a great deal of thought!

It should be remembered that simplicity is the guiding principle. Just by demonstrating objectively in this way, improved understanding can be achieved, even in areas where one might feel one had a full working knowledge. It is not

necessary to achieve any kind of artistic merit, it is merely the representational quality which serves the purpose - stick men or women are good enough.

It is important to realize that although it may take a few hours in some cases to represent a situation or some aspect of study, this time is well spent. At the end you will know that you really understand the situation or concept. Incomprehension and confusion is removed when the model is successfully prepared. New solutions will become apparent and the understanding gained will remain with you.

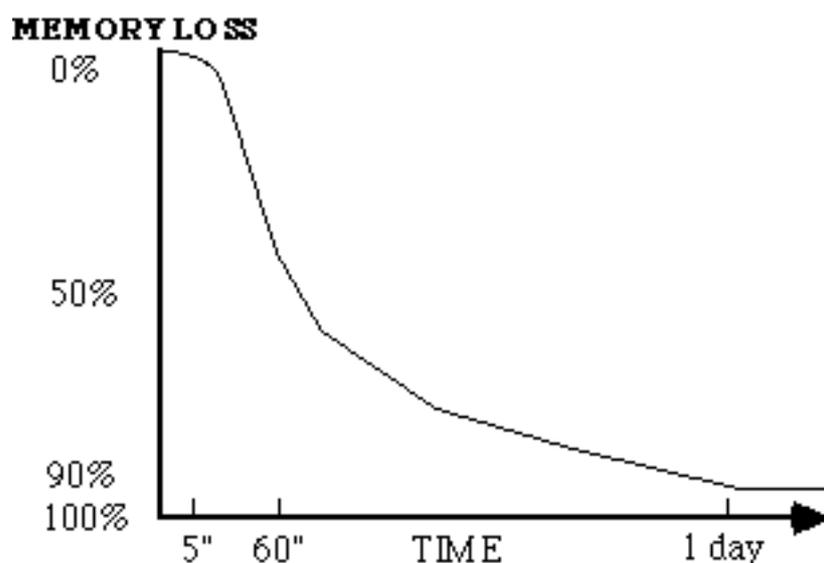
Anything can be demonstrated, if you work at it. If one can represent something in model form then one understands it; it is irrefutable proof of comprehension and it brings about the ability to think and act with the chosen ideas.

20 or 30 demonstrations of situations in your personal life using modeling will enhance your powers of visualization and extend your internal attention span considerably. Do a new one each day and include issues that are particularly problematic for you. After several hours practice of this type, translation from an abstract mode of representation to a concrete mode of representation is facilitated. In many cases, the solution to a problem can be arrived at because it becomes much easier to make a mental movie of a problem. When the elements of a problem are laid out spatially then missing elements necessary for a solution can be perceived.

Defeating the Decay of Memories

Without memory there is no knowledge, without knowledge there is no certainty and without certainty there is no will. This memory training material is put in the course to make a bridge between the work on concentration and the further Mind Development courses on study, memory, logical thinking, intuition and creativity.

The decay of memory capacity is such that an hour after obtaining new information, approximately fifty percent of the facts that were initially clear in the mind may have been forgotten. A day later nearly everything related to the memory may have evaporated. A graph drawn to show the way in which people forget would show a sudden, dramatic downward curve starting about five minutes after the initial exposure to information. This assumes that full attention was given to the spoken or written materials, with understanding; obviously if little attention was paid or the material was not understood, there would be little to be remembered! The amount of forgetting passes the fifty percent mark at one hour and falls to 90% after a day. The curve then levels off at about 90 - 99%.



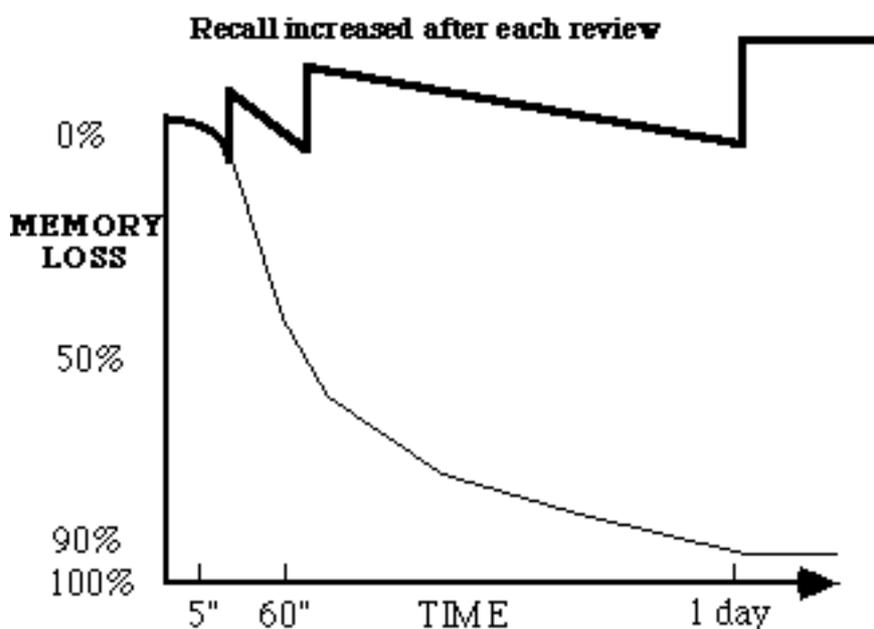
Suppose instead one could turn this curve around and increase the amount of remembered facts with the passage of time. Studies have been carried out by Dr Matthew Erdelyi of New York University which showed that volunteers trying out his ideas, found themselves remembering twice as much information the day after the learning had taken place than five minutes after. From these studies practical techniques have been evolved which enable anyone to reverse the usual forgetting curve and remember things better as time goes by.

The method is as follows. Suppose you have to attend a lecture or meeting where it is not possible to take notes or make a recording, yet it is vital to recall the salient points which were discussed. To ensure effective recall you must set up a program in your mind which will act as a store for information. Therefore, as the session proceeds make a mental note of key points which are raised by repeating these

subject headings to yourself in numerical order. Repeat this list from the beginning as each new heading is added. In this way you can keep a running total of all the successive points that have been raised. This is possible because your inner thought-stream is much faster than the vocalized speech that you are listening to, so you can fill in the gaps with your review programming. It also helps to accompany each heading with a visual representation of the subject matter, particularly if that image is striking or humorous, i.e. memorable.

Five or ten minutes after the session ends, find a quiet place where you can sit down and relax, then go through these key topics in your mind. Do not worry if in this short space of time quite a lot of the material seems to have been forgotten. Spend a couple of minutes on this exercise and never strain yourself to recall elusive items. Just make an educated guess about anything you cannot recall at that time. Repeat each of the topics to yourself just once and make a written note if you can. This helps the initial neurological consolidation of the memories from short term to permanent long term recordings.

About an hour later, have a second recall session, exactly as before, going through all the topics without undue strain, repeating them to yourself. New aspects and data will reappear by association. The third session should take place about three hours later, the next after six hours, preferably before going to sleep. This makes maximum use of the consolidation occurring during the dreaming process. Repeat the recall procedures three or four times on each of the second and third days, spacing the sessions out evenly through the day.



Matthew Erdelyi found that his subjects recalled information most easily if they were able to call up mental images associated with a particular topic. It seems that the mind handles images, especially vivid and unusual ones, far more effectively than it deals with words, numbers, or abstract concepts. You can make use of this

fact by briefly forming a picture of each major topic when it is initially described and later as you review the topic; this will enhance retention and recall.

If you get stuck at any point make use of the picture association to jog your memory. Remain relaxed and think of the first thing that the previous item you were able to remember reminds you of. This should produce an association of some kind that can be used as a trigger, leading on to the next link in the chain.

After perhaps up to ten such links have been pulled out of your mind, one of the missing topics will reappear, like a rabbit out of the conjurer's hat.

Try this review system as an exercise at the earliest opportunity in a real-life situation. Compare the gain in remembered facts with what you were normally able to hold in your mind over a period of three or more days. Your memory and your ability to learn are much, much greater than you may have supposed. The effect of such a review program is to reduce greatly the rate of forgetting. Instead of the memory dropping off rapidly by about 80% over the first 24 hours, it can be reinforced by reviews at the critical consolidations periods and at subsequent intervals, and it can be raised back towards and then above, that which was initially retained.

The same technique can be applied whenever you study materials that you intend to remember. It may be thought that with continued study of a subject, the reviews would accumulate and take over most of your study time. Actually, this is not the case. Supposing a person studied every day for one hour a day, and in addition set up a review program for this study. On any one day he would need to review the work from the study session just finished (immediately after, a few hours after and before going to bed), and also material from one day, one week, one month and six months before.

| Review of work done: | Time taken: |
|--|--------------------|
| Same day | 5 minutes |
| 1 week before | 3 minutes |
| 1 month before | 1 minute |
| 6 months before | 1 minute |
| Maximum review time on any one day: | 10 minutes |

Thus a person spending one hour a day on study would need to spend only a maximum total of 10 minutes a day to complete all the necessary reviewing, and improve his memory many times over. Thus a few minutes devoted to review makes the hours spent studying effective and worthwhile.

When you have acquired the discipline of organized review of previously studied materials, and received the benefits, the procedure will become automatic and easy.

The Trinity

Although this is one of the shortest chapters in the course, it is perhaps one of the most important. The three meditations that I shall shortly describe have cognitive implications with particular reference to memory.

At sometime, circa 1955-60 I was making a study of Zen techniques and their relevance to the development of the mind. About half way through my studies I met a self-styled Professor and Master of Zen. He taught me three meditations that have served me well for more than 40 years.

Meditation One

This meditation is very simple: every 5 minutes spend 5-10 seconds reflecting on the events of the past 5 minutes, then once an hour spend a slightly longer period reflecting on the content of the last 60 minutes. This exercise is contra-indicated if its performance is dangerous either socially or physically.

At that time, one could not buy, as far as I know, a wristwatch with an alarm, so much to the bafflement of my friends, I carried a portable, clockwork, alarm clock in my pocket on a length of string. By using a similar discipline, you will find after a month or two that you will have an immediate sense of 5 minutes and 1 hour, and the exercise of this meditation will become automatic, as it has done for me.

This meditation works on a similar principle to the one described in the previous chapter, Defeating the Decay of Memory.

Meditation Two

This and the subsequent meditation are performed in bed during the 20 minutes or so it normally takes you to get to sleep. There are two parts to the second meditation:

- a) 5-10 minutes should be spent reflecting on the events of the day, starting from when you got up until the moment you start this meditation.
- b) The second part of this meditation is to go through the events of the previous week in reverse order. By this, I mean each day should start from the time you went to bed and end with when you got up in the morning and brushed your teeth, and likewise, the days should be dealt with in reverse order. In short, if today is Friday then the sequence would be Friday, Thursday, Wednesday and so on until you reach the previous Friday, then stop. Each day should take about a minute.

Meditation Three

- a) For the final 5 minutes before you sleep, ask yourself to “Recall something” and ask this once every 5-10 seconds. Items of content will come from both semantic memory (memory of learned information) and episodic memory (memory of past

experiences). This does not matter. Do not strain for something, just except what comes up. You will become better at this in time.

b) Finally spend 3 or 4 minutes asking yourself to “Recall recalling something.”

Because Meditations Two and Three are done just before you fall asleep, there will be no interruptions caused by new content, so when you wake up in the morning you will find that you will have a much clearer memory of yesterday and the week of events that led up to it. An added bonus will be that some semantic memory is rehabilitated also. Good luck with it!

Memory, Certainty & the Will

Further exercises to develop memory, certainty and the will:

1. Learning backwards

This approach to learning is very effective when applied to sequential skills such as learning to sing a song, playing golf and operating a machine. In traditional learning we learn the beginning steps in a sequence, then learn each successive step until we come to the end, whereas in learning how to operate a machine it is perhaps best if we first learn to turn it off.

Imagine you are learning a sequence ABCDE in the normal way. We would learn A and when we have learnt this move on to B and then to C. In each case you will be moving from something you knew well to something you were only just learning. Because you are moving into a new area you are likely to make a mistake or take a wrong turning. This is very difficult to unlearn. So let us look at the reverse direction.

First you would learn E and then you would learn D. This means you are now moving forward from what you are just learning to something you already know well. Therefore the chance of making the wrong turning is very much less. Next we learn C and again move forward with confidence.

The principle is that if you know where you are going, having been there already, it is much better than moving from what is known towards the unknown. Some choir masters have traditionally used this approach: teaching the last phrase first and then the penultimate and then the one before etc. This way the choristers move forward with full confidence into territory they already know. In my own case, when I was a young man, I only had a mediocre voice. My singing teacher, however, taught me the selfsame method, as a result I was able to sing with certainty and drama and more to the point, get paid for it. I have also heard that some people are beginning to teach golf in this way. You start with the end of the swing and then move back to end up with the beginning of the swing. Try to apply this method when it seems appropriate and you will be surprised at the results.

The psychologists Chase and Ericsson (1982) point out in a study of “skilled memory” that it seems to be possible to increase the speed with which short-term memory operates, but it requires intensive and consistent practice. The best results have been achieved through improvement in the initial organisation of information. Reverse learning chunks information in such a way that recall is quicker.

2. Card playing

Improving memory for cards is primarily an exercise in paying attention and rehearsal in short-term memory; but some long-term preparation will help those who are prepared to put the effort into it. Obviously, long-term preparation includes a good knowledge of the rules and conventions of the game and, if you play regularly

with the same group, some understanding of their usual bidding strategies and personal characteristics of their play. In addition, deliberate memory strategies employing the proven principles of imagery and placement in order can help in remembering which cards have already been played and which are still to come.

Lay out the four suits of cards in their proper order, suit by suit, on a table at home where they can lie undisturbed for a week or so. Devote about 5 minutes a day to concentrating your full attention on that display of cards, fixing them in your mind so that you can see them, row by row, when you look away, thus self-testing your mental image of them. Become very proficient before moving on to the next step.

Get another pack of cards and draw them one at a time at random, laying them down face up on their equivalence on the table. Keep doing this at intervals, for as long as it takes you to learn to place any card from the second pack on top of its equivalent, literally with your eyes closed.

Once this is firmly established in long-term memory, use it to bolster your short-term memory in an actual game of cards. When you pick up your own hand and sort the cards you hold, try to see them in relation to that mental picture of the whole deck set out on your table. Then, as each of the remaining cards is played, envisage it placed in its proper order in your mental picture of the whole deck. Once you have mastered this technique, you should readily remember which cards have been played and see “which ones are still to come.”

3. Cumulative perception

The only equipment required is a set of children’s game cards. The “Old Maid” card game is especially good. Other types of cards will also work well. The necessary requirement is a colourful card with a great deal of detail, and a variety of incidental objects on a single card. The card needs to be written, drawn, stylised in cartoon form, rather than being used as a purely photographic image.

Colour photographs are not useful for practice with this technique in its beginning stages. Progression, to real or photographic images, comes later. Also, cards that are too simple, cards with a very simplistic, geometric design, or a simple colouring book style of illustration, are too simple for use with this technique. So choosing a card somewhere in between, with variety, detail, and yet still a cartoon stylised construction, is the ideal. I suspect with a little bit of research, you should be able to find cards with the appropriate kinds of illustrations.

This is a straight-forward method; the process involves holding the card in one hand, so that it can be easily turned to expose it to view or to turn it away from view, as needed.

Begin the practice session by exposing the card to your view for about one second. During this time, choose one of the outstanding objects on the card and try to continue seeing it as you turn the card away out of view. Now, speaking aloud, with the card out of view, describe the object you have selected in a few words.

Then, look at the card for another second. See the first object, plus one new object from the card.

Turn the card away as you did before and continue to visualise the two objects that you choose to retain, and describe them both aloud, beginning with the first object, and then the second object.

Now view a third time, adding a new object add this to your mental picture and visual the selected objects with the card out of view. As before describe all three items aloud, beginning with the first object.

If for example, you were looking at a card with a picture of an opera singer standing on stage, the first thing you might see is an opera singer, the second, an opera singer in a bright red dress, the third, an opera singer in a bright red dress wearing a Viking's helmet with two horns coming out of the side. Each time you are adding a new object, combining it with your list of previous objects, and recounting the entire list out loud. The process continues until you find yourself beginning to forget objects during oral recall. When this happens, put the card back in the deck, and end the session.

You can begin again whenever you wish, but ideally, at least one hour should elapse before starting again. When you begin the next time, you may use the same card, or a different one, but always begin each session with object number one, and work up adding objects beginning with one and increasing from there. If your progress is normal, you may discover a seeming barrier at about 12-15 items. Persevere. You will break through rather suddenly in one session and progress upward rapidly.

The next common barrier is at about 40 objects. This barrier too can be broken, and the upward limit, depending on the complexity of the card, is usually 200 details or more. When you have reached this point you should be able, as a test of your abilities only, to look at a card for only a few seconds, close your eyes, and continue seeing the image clearly. Now you can begin expanding your practice to include real objects, photographs, shop windows, people's faces and complex works of art. As you continue to progress, what to practice with will become increasingly obvious.

Cumulative perception devotes equal time to both hemispheres, and invites each to co-operate with the other. Many scientists now believe that hemispheric interference is one of the primary causes of forgetting. Since 90% of adult life is linguistic, logical, and left brained, the right hemisphere, which possesses little understanding of spoken or printed words, has nothing to do most of the time. The result: right hemisphere boredom.

Each hemisphere seems to be equipped with a mild electrical interference mechanism, the one that tends to go out of control in epileptic patients. The right brain can use this mechanism like a tiny eraser, to rub away recently acquired information from the left brain's blackboard of short-term memory. So, while the near-sighted left brain is wearing down a piece of chalk as it writes down what it is reading or hearing, the right brain reaches over and erases the information just far

enough up on the left brain's blackboard to be out of immediate view to the left brain. That is why it is possible to sit down to an hour long meeting, lecture or sermon and be unable, five minutes after it is over, to answer someone who asks what it is all about. Fortunately, the solution to all this is very simple. Give the right brain something to do. In cumulative perception, the right brain stays constantly occupied, concentrating on the image on its own mental blackboard.

The rest of the time, when you are not practising cumulative perception, the key is visualisation. As you read, paint mental pictures of the words, something the right brain can see and follow the action with. The left brain cannot handle painting, designs and cartoon creations in our imagination; it can only copy some of what it sees. If you are in a meeting, let the words you hear be a guide for the pictures you paint in your mind. Make them elaborate, four feet of cartoons with sound and smell and temperature changes. When the right brain sets down its eraser, and picks up its paint brush, something incredible happens. Short-term forgetting stops.

And this leads to the exciting part!

As you continue to use cumulative perception, random access memory begins to become second nature. Many memory experts call this the Soft Breakthrough, because it happens almost imperceptibly at first, instead of hitting you like a mental bolt of lightning. Everything you find important is given its own unique mental file. Just like the executive whose desk has been buried in paper for years, who suddenly discovers that miracle invention, the filing cabinet, a filed, organised mind suddenly begins to perform impressive recall tasks on demand.

Do not let anything keep you from pursuing this memory technique as this is central to the success of later courses in Mind Development.

Further Concentration Exercises

Exercise 1

Sit down in your room and look round carefully, noting all the things contained in the room in sequence. Now close your eyes and make all those things appear before your mind in imagination, until all the procession of objects has passed by. If you forget one, take a look again at the whole room and begin again to visualize the series of objects.

Exercise 2

Take a walk in your imagination along a street that you are familiar with, noticing all the details that you can remember, as you pass along the street; then return by the same route. If your attention wanders, make it come back and begin the walk over again from the beginning.

Exercise 3

Pass in imagination through your previous day. Remember getting up, washing, having breakfast, any conversation you had, your trip to work, what happened in the morning at work, and so on. Then similarly work through a well-remembered experience from your past, working through from beginning to end of the experience.

Exercise 4

Select a particular sight or sound in your present environment, such as the TV. Ask yourself, what are the causes which result in the TV being there and functioning and playing programs. Consider the history of the TV, how it was purchased, where it came from originally, how it was manufactured, where and by whom, how its materials were procured. Imagine all that has contributed to make it what it is. It doesn't matter much whether your imaginings are strictly correct, what's important is to provide a series of coherent imaginings without losing concentration.

Exercise 5

Picture in your mind your place of work, in as much detail as you can, all the external and internal features. It is not success in recalling that is important in these exercises, but rather the development of mind that comes from trying.

Exercise 6

Look at a collection of objects on a table and then picture this scene in your mind. You may find it indefinite, but as you look at one small portion of the image, that part will become clear while the rest will tend to fade. Take that part which is clear, such as a vase, and form it repeatedly in your mind until you know it well. Then

review the scene and take another part adjacent to the first, say a plate, and concentrate on that part in the same manner. Next recall the vase again and put the two together - and understand the connection the two parts have (since it is not possible to hold two disconnected images or ideas before the mind at the same time), such as they are both chinaware. Now review the scene again and deal similarly but separately with a further adjacent part such as a knife, and then picture the vase, plate and knife together (the knife being connected by contiguity). As you gradually build up a coherent view of the scene in your mind, you will find a great increase in your grasp of imagination.

If these concentration exercises seem to you like a great deal of work, consider the vast number of exercises a pianist will practice to render his fingers supple, obedient and expert. Give the same, or in fact far less, effort to mental training and you will surely be delighted with the results! But there should be no sense of physical strain in your practice; the mind functions best with a relaxed but alert concentration

Strengthening the Will

The success of concentration is proportional to the amount of willpower in a student. Quite naturally the question arises: "How do I begin to develop this essential force in myself?" Willpower is dependent upon the ability to dominate one's impulses, feelings and speech in everyday life. Only when this power is developed will it become possible to be master of the thoughts in your mind.

Your willpower, then, grows in proportion to your capability to control strong impulses of speech, emotion and action which occur at any moment; i.e. your ability to BE in the present moment and not be carried along by habitual stimulus-response, reactive patterns of behavior. This is not a lack of spontaneity, of free expression in the moment, but rather a lack of 'driven' robotic behavior, which seems spontaneous but in fact has its roots in the imprints of past trauma and corresponding safe solutions.

There are three aspects that we will now practice: control of emotions, of speech and of behavior:

1. Control of emotions. Suppose that under certain conditions you have the habit to respond with some particular emotions. For example, the sharp ring of a telephone makes you quiver; you know this. So, in future try to anticipate the ringing and prepare yourself to observe the response that your body-mind normally gives; with practice you will come to be unaffected by the sound. Next, take another automatic emotion or reaction that you know to appear in certain circumstances. Eliminate these just like the one connected with the telephone, and so on.

2. Place speech under control. Suppress every unnecessary and meaningless word that you are accustomed to utter every day. There are thousands of them and their flows of communication contain a lot of energy; choosing to retain this energy gives you an inexhaustible source of force. If you want to say a sentence to someone which has no special value or meaning, refrain from it. A trickle of force is immediately potentiated, and soon you will feel it as you practice this simple method more and more. An obvious warning: suppress only something which is really unnecessary. If your friend asks you a sensible question or the boss speaks to you on a matter of business, it would be nonsensical to remain silent. First and foremost cut the words that you pronounce thoughtlessly and that don't require your presence; they just spurt out. Instead, speak on your own initiative - with rationality and integrity.

3. Control of behavior. Gradually, by practicing this degree of self-restraint you will begin to feel that your inner 'battery' is being charged. How will this feeling manifest itself? You feel yourself to be much more composed, self-assertive and less nervous and anxious. So, for some time, practice giving yourself these little injections of force, until you see that you are now able to

undertake some larger renunciations. The greater the desire overcome and dominated, the greater the power which enters your battery. Therefore, miss out watching a TV soap and use your time more usefully; forego a portion of ice-cream or a cigarette and think what it is they are acting as substitutes for. When desiring to leave work early, overcome it by completing the tasks you need to do enthusiastically. In summary, don't just give in to desires like a controlled puppet; you take the strings and instead do what makes sense.

Make plenty of variations and changes in your exercises for each day. Hopefully you will see that when your 'battery' is charged, you are more capable of performing something which needs greater strength of will. It will come to you more easily than before when your battery was continually run-down, having been exhausted by the immediate fulfilling of all of your desires as they appear: reacting emotionally, talking irrationally, or being self-indulgent. You will have more 'presence' when you speak with the support of your full energy, rather than being run down by robotically replaying desires, words and feelings which are not truly your own.

An appropriate analogy is the activities of an athlete, who lifts weights and thereby exercises and strengthens his body's powers. Undoubtedly there is toil, just as with your self-restraint, which aims at the development of willpower. Therefore, these everyday exercises of limiting your speech, emotions, impulses and desires can be strongly recommended. You can do anything in life if you want to - you have only to find the willpower to do it. It is difficult to apply willpower, however, to some vague or ephemeral desire. You must be sure that you really want the final result. But what you really want to do or learn or create - **you can!**

It will help if you pinpoint your reasons for wanting an outcome. Ask yourself **why** you want the envisioned final result - why do you want it strongly enough to make the required effort? You may be surprised at the real reason.

Unfortunately, wishing you could be, do or have something, does not make it so. You need to change "I wish I could", "I would like to" or "I ought to" to "**I will!**", then you're on your way to strengthening your will power.

If you have reservations, if you feel you can't do what is required to get what you really want, change your mind and say: "I won't!" This is the honest truth, because in fact, you can be anything, do anything or have anything if you really want to and are prepared to make the effort. But **it's your choice!**

OK, so you've had failures in the past. You've made mistakes. So what! It's a fact of life that surmounting obstacles and making mistakes is part of accomplishing anything of value. Without mistakes, it's hard to learn or achieve anything worthwhile. Mistakes give you the opportunity to add to your picture of how things work and to adjust your operating basis. Now you know what's needed and wanted, you can do things **better than before!**

Let your motto be: "Of course I can do it!" The main thing then, is to **begin**. You will never get to your goal unless you take your first step - the hardest one, usually,

but by far the most essential one. Always keep your final goal in mind - not the vast, 'insurmountable' task ahead - but the final objective. This is your incentive, your motivation for action. It must be clear as a bell in your mind, and it must be what you really want. So, **BEGIN!**

Begin with confidence, then you will have no trouble in continuing, and you will succeed. It's worth reminding yourself that after you've done anything once, it's much easier the next time. Once you've strengthened your will power and applied it to any project, it will be much easier to tackle the next one. You will be stronger! You've got the **will power habit!**

Assertiveness

To make things happen in the world you will need to communicate your needs and desires, and sometimes we back off from this. We need to be more assertive. Assertiveness involves directly telling someone what you want or would prefer, in such a way as to appear neither threatening nor punishing, nor to put down the other person. It is not aimed simply at getting what you want if that means trampling over the rights of others. It is being open about your feelings - both negative and positive - and expressing your own rights, without timidity or worrying about "what the other person will think." The ability to express feelings constructively, and to be open to others about what you want, maximizes the chances of your getting the kind of relationship you want, the society you want, the life you want. You will be more confident, less punishing of others, less frustrated, less anxious.

Being assertive is about...

Expressing positive feelings:

- Expressing affection, expressing appreciation
- Giving compliments, receiving compliments
- Making requests, asking for help, offering help
- Initiating conversation, listening actively

Expressing negative feelings:

- Expressing justified annoyance
- Expressing feelings of hurt

Standing up for your rights:

- Making complaints
- Refusing requests
- Expressing personal opinions
- Refusing to be put down
- Standing your ground



Challenges

To further develop your willpower, **give yourself challenges!** Back yourself into a corner occasionally - purposely make it hard for yourself. Raising the level of necessity has been the inspiration for many accomplishments. For example, set yourself a deadline, and make up your mind that you must meet it - no ifs and buts! Tell your friends about something you intend to accomplish by a certain time: it will force you to do what you promised. Set up challenges for yourself - to dare to do such a thing - and then **do** whatever it is that you have to do. The next chapter will give you some excellent guidance on how to go about achieving your objectives in life.

Achieving Your Objective

If you use the following method every time you wish to accomplish something, your chances of failure will be minimized and your chances for success will be greatly improved.

If you were an engineer and were given the assignment to design a bridge in order to span a river, you would first want to find out everything you can about the conditions which exist now. You'd need to know the width of the river, its current flow, the state of the earth on either side where you will build the tower foundations, the depth of the river mid-stream and the solidity of the bed of the river. After you had learned all the facts regarding conditions as they are now, you would be in a position to begin working on your plans for the bridge.

Achieving an objective, such as the successful building of a bridge, needs to be tackled in three phases:

1. The Objective. Strange as it may seem, few people really know what they want in life. They might not be exactly satisfied with things as they are, but when you ask them what *specifically* they want you invariably get a vague answer. To successfully achieve an objective you need to be specific - to know just what it is that you want, like the engineer knew he wanted to build a bridge and exactly what kind of bridge.

If you are not satisfied with your job then be specific and work out exactly what kind of work you would prefer. Picture the job clearly in your mind so that you can actually visualize yourself already working in it. If your objective should be a new home, decide exactly what kind of property and the location and what it is like to live there. If you want new friends, be specific - what kind of friends? Perhaps those who share interests with you, who live close by, or someone to share activities with you or to build a close relationship.

2. The Resistances. The engineer's study of existing conditions uncovered the resistances he would have to deal with in order to build the bridge successfully. So you need to work out every resistance which stands between you and the attainment of your objective. Actually write them down, and try to think of them *all*. This gives you a clear picture of the challenges you face.

3. The Plan of Action. This corresponds to the engineer's design for the bridge. If you have a clearly defined objective, and you have listed every resistance which stands between you and your objective, then it will be much easier for you to perceive an effective plan of action. If we have failed to consider all possible resistances, then when the plan is put into operation, we may be unexpectedly blocked by a problem or situation that the plan did not account for.

This approach can be used to good advantage in selling a product. The sale is the objective; the resistances are the many reasons a customer might find for not

wanting to buy your product; and the plan of action is the script you design in order to overcome all of these resistances.

Sometimes an objective may be too large to achieve in one go. For example, international distribution of your product may be an ultimate objective, so in this case it is necessary to establish one or more preliminary objectives, that will set the ground for the ultimate one. The ultimate objective needs then to be set aside and the first preliminary objective considered all-important. You consider the resistances and the plan of action for that specific objective.

Whenever an objective looks like too much of an uphill struggle, you need to break it into smaller, achievable parts. For example, you may love music and want to compose your own but you cannot imagine the tortuous grind of dozens of elementary lessons before you can play an instrument acceptably, yet alone master it to the point of it being an expressive tool. The trick here is to recognize the ability to compose music as the major objective and to consider each individual lesson as a preliminary or minor objective. Each lesson is tackled as if it was a major objective, however, and all later lessons put out of mind, so that it does not now seem too difficult to take the one lesson at a time and become accomplished in playing the exercises as instructed. Indeed, instead of being a burden, each lesson will be a pleasing attainment of new competence.

As examples of how to apply this approach, here are a couple of worked through objectives...

OBJECTIVE: Obtaining a job position as computer salesman

| RESISTANCES | PLAN OF ACTION |
|--|--|
| Lack of knowledge regarding salesmanship | 1. Read magazines and recommended books on the subject or attend a course. |
| Lack of experience in selling | 2. Obtain part-time work on a commission-only basis, to practice what has been learned and gain some experience. |
| Lack of contacts with possible employers | 3. Use Yellow Pages or the Internet to build up a list of all companies making or distributing computers. |
| How to succeed at job interviews to obtain the first job | Apply the principles of salesmanship in letters to prospective employers - then SELL your services. |

OBJECTIVE: Taking up a career as a journalist

| RESISTANCES | PLAN OF ACTION |
|--|--|
| Lack of writing technique | There are many good books on writing and journalism available; also night school or home-study courses. |
| Insufficient time for study and practice | We all have all the time there is - no one has a minute more than you have. It is a matter of making priorities, so you find time to do the things you really want to do. |
| Lack of finances for instruction | Desire will find a way. As soon as you generate sufficient enthusiasm for your objective, you will find the needed money, either through an adjustment of your budget or by acquiring extra money through overtime or work on the side. |
| Fear of scoffing and criticism by friends and relatives if a new career is attempted | Scoffing and criticism can spur you on if you accept it as a challenge to prove that you really can do the things you set out to do. These people will be the ones most impressed when you succeed. |
| Obtaining a position or obtaining freelance contracts after becoming a writer | Editors and publishers are constantly on the lookout for new talent and contents, so stories by unknown writers will be considered. If your manuscript comes back, re-write it and submit to another publisher, until you succeed. Nearly all the top people in creative fields were rejected a few times before their careers took off. |

Apply the above methods to one of your past undertakings. You will readily see why you succeeded or why you failed. You will then know that you possess a means of practically ensuring the success of any contemplated venture.

So next, apply this three-phase approach to successfully achieving one of the things - your first priority - that you most want in your life. Use the Five Roads of Thought at every stage to acquire a rich knowledge base and to inspire new insights into the challenges that you perceive. With your concentrated thought, applied to your Will, there's nothing you cannot accomplish. I wish you rich rewards.

Revision

Use the space in the right column to fill in the missing word, or underline the correct answer from the choices given. Answers are given at the bottom of the page.

| | |
|---|--|
| 1. Concentration means putting all one's a-----n on something, and keeping it there for as long as one wishes to. | |
| 2. If one loses concentration, the mind w-----s from one thing to another by associations, until the original thing is forgotten. | |
| 3. Descriptive judgments about appearance, sensations, functions, usage and value, relate to the Q----- of an object. | |
| 4. 'Unless we notice, we cannot be in a position to ch----- or act for ourselves'. | |
| 5. Original ideas come to the awareness only after a lot of concentrated and directed c-----n. | |
| 6. If you become upset during these exercises, find out what m----- is associated with the upset, and scan it repeatedly. | |
| 7. Integrity is action with foreknowledge of -----. | difficulties the rules one's purposes |
| 8. Wishing is the ----- of concentration. | enemy aim power |
| 9. A new pattern of behavior must be assimilated at the levels of thought, emotion and -----. | love effort truth |
| 10. The 3 stages in acquiring a new skill are: the awkward stage, the a---- -----d stage, and the a-----c stage. | |
| 11. To further develop your willpower, give yourself ch-----. | |
| 12. Being assertive means to express your feelings ----- | to your self constructively aggressively |

Answers: 1. - attention (see p. 5); 2. wanders (see p. 6); 3. Quality (see p. 11); 4. choose (see p. 5); 5. contemplation (see p. 15); 6. memory (see p. 14); 7. one's purposes (see p. 23); 8. enemy (see p.22); 9. effort (see p. 24); 10. applied, automatic (see p. 24); 11. challenges (see p. 53); 12. constructively (see p. 52).

What's Next?

We hope you enjoyed your first run through Educating the Will. Remember that the 'cyclic' approach to study is a good one - if you go back to earlier exercises now, you'll see them in a new light and get much more out of them. It's a good idea to choose a particular lesson and concentrate on practicing its principles in your life for a few days, until it is completely mastered and assimilated. For each exercise, consider: How can I use this for work/rest/play?

You now have practical experience of how good concentration enables you quickly and effectively acquire knowledge, and how important such knowledge is in equipping you for the challenges of life. The next course in Mind Development builds on what you have learned in Educating the Will to provide a full education in how to study effectively.

Super Student

Many people have bad experiences at school and perhaps later in life, when attempting to study a new subject. It is easy to quickly get bogged down with new terminology, and often new concepts and procedures seem unclear. This situation can quickly get out of hand as the student gets left behind and the subject either becomes an ongoing struggle or it is abandoned. But none of that is necessary; it is possible to succeed with the study of any subject.

With this course you will learn how to study a subject with maximum comprehension, with excellent recall, and with the ability to apply what you have learned effectively.

You will also learn how to take notes at rapid pace from books or live lectures, and how best to represent that information with key words, mind maps and flow charts that aid memory and understanding.

These abilities will be useful for your home studies, at college or work, and for your study of further Mind Development courses. You will indeed be able to succeed at studying effectively those subjects you are interested in, even those that were difficult before. The course is available in July 2004.

[Click here to order the Super Student Course](#)

Tools for Transformation offers further excellent courses in the Mind Development series to radically boost your progress on your path of personal growth. You can obtain fulfillment of your mental potential, a new clarity of your purpose and identity in this life, and tremendous spiritual enlightenment, if you choose to really follow through on these courses!

Effective Communication

The Mind Development Course which precedes Educating the Will is “**Effective Communication.**” This course teaches powerful communication skills that enable you to be more effective at work and in those situations of everyday life where better communication can make all the difference.

The **Effective Communication** course offers a series of practical exercises which develop the skills of communication and help the student to apply the fruits of his or her learning *here and now* - both to his or her personal growth and to the practical issues of personal relationships and business.

Improvement in our ability to communicate externally is reflected by a similar gain in communication between parts of the brain. The practice exercises enable development of *all areas of the brain*, even those which have been long under-used. They affect, particularly, the integration of the right and left hemispheres of the brain. Each hemisphere governs a different way of thinking and seeing the world. By doing the exercises thoroughly, the student can bring both halves of the brain *into mutual communication*, so that he or she is freer to think holistically and experience the world from an expanded point of view.

Communication is the vehicle for all further techniques, so communications skills are a vital aspect of Mind Development. The **Effective Communication** course includes practical exercises to enhance the person's capacity to listen attentively and comprehend. Following that, questioning skills are practiced, which have relevance to communication, memory and understanding. This will help the student to *maintain control of communication* in practical, social and business situations. You will also learn about practical problem solving and how to achieve your goals in life.

[Click here to order the Effective Communication Course](#)

Super Vision

The first course in the Mind Development system, preceding Effective Communication, is “**Super Vision**,” a home-study course to improve the mind's capacity for visualization and integration between left and right brain, boosting memory, creativity, natural eyesight and drawing ability. This is a new way of seeing - and being.

The practical exercises offered in this course help to develop visual perception, which is one branch of non-verbal communication, and address the subject of breathing and relaxation. Adequate oxygenation of the brain and a relaxed state of being is necessary for further developing the mind.

The eyes and the ears are the main channels through which one gains information about the world. As with listening skills, training in visualization and looking makes you more aware. When you are more aware, the subconscious mind has less influence. This means you are more relaxed, less anxious, less easily upset, a better memorizer - and your vision is improved.

[Click here to order the Super Vision Course](#)

No one need accept that they must remain as they were shaped, by the conditioning of their childhood and culture. The benefits of Mind Development are all-encompassing and life transforming. There will be 12 courses in total in the Mind Development series. Click here to read about what is in store...

[Further Mind Development Courses...](#)