

GOTTFRIED DE PURUCKER, ‘CONSCIENCE AND INTUITION’

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I do not know – and yet I am glad to see that the fact I speak of is so – why people are so much interested in knowing what conscience is and where it is located in the human constitution and how you can make it function. We know that while man is a stream of consciousness, he is a septenary stream, and each aspect of the septenate again has its divisions, which is one reason why men differ amongst themselves so greatly and so widely; and it is a pity that this is not better understood. Men would differ more but quarrel less. Quarrels are stupid; kindly “scraps” make firm friends — if they are kindly!

Now, as I understand the matter, our conscience to which we all too infrequently pay heed, to our loss, is that friendly, warm-hearted whispering from above, which we feel as showing us the right and the wrong, and it comes from the stored up ethical wisdom in our being. It is not in the disputatious brain-mind: it is in the heart. It is the highest part of the human ego, the treasury of ethical experience, the accumulated wisdom of past lives, garnered and treasured in our higher parts; and as far as it goes its voice is infallible and powerful; but it does not go far enough to make its voice in our soul an infallible guide, because we have not had past human lives throughout eternity and we are not infinite beings, humanly speaking.

One man’s conscience is strong; another man’s conscience is weaker. Two reasons why: the one may be more evolved and may have learned to hearken more attentively to the inner monitor. Therefore its voice is familiar, strong, and steady, and as we say, warm and sweet. We love that, and one reason why we love it is because it is so personal to ourselves. It is the highest part of each one of us as a human being, whispering to us admonitions of right, and denying to us the ways of wrong-doing. It is the buddhi-manas part of the human being, garnering experience of past ages of births and rebirths, the echo of past sufferings and heartaches from which we have gleaned wisdom and treasured it on the tablets of the Self. That is the conscience.

But higher than conscience is intuition: Intuition is infallible. Its voice is immeasurably infallible, because it is the whispering within us as it were of the truths of the Cosmic Spirit. It is a ray direct from the Divine Spirit in our hearts. Our conscience won’t tell us the truth about a fact of Nature, nor whisper into our minds guidance along the paths of scientific or religious or philosophical discovery, because it is the garnered ethical wisdom familiar to the soul of each one of us. But the intuition will tell us instantly, it has instant vision of truth. Its voice is neither familiar nor unfamiliar. It is utterly impersonal. Its atmosphere is neither “hot” nor “cold.” It is neutral in this respect; and it is the voice of the Ātma-buddhi-manas within us, the Monad as H. P. B. called it.

Do you get the distinction? The conscience is our own treasury of spiritual-ethical wisdom. It is infallible as far as it goes, as far as we can hear its voice; and we can hear it ever more by practice, by training, by hearkening to it, by just recognising it and following it. But because it is only our own gathered treasury, it is not infinite, and therefore not in the true sense always infallible. But so far as concerns each one of you as individuals, when your conscience whispers to you, follow it, because it will whisper only when you are in danger, or when you are seeking to do aright: whereas the voice of the intuition is the voice of the Spirit within us, and it is infallible. It has no frontiers. It *is*, so to speak, a ray direct from the Mahā-buddhi of the Universe; and we can allow intuition to become ever stronger within us, enlightening our minds and opening our hearts, by not being afraid

of it, afraid of having hunches, by not being afraid of following our conscience, and our intuitions when they come to us. They are coming to us all the time.

Most men are ashamed to act intuitively. They don't want to make mistakes. Prudential, yes! But it is only prudence, and uncommendable, cowardly and weak, and small, if it is merely because you don't want to begin to make a fool of yourself until you have learned more. The strong man is not afraid of making a fool of himself occasionally, because he knows that that very fact will stimulate him, awaken him, make him think; and after awhile he will not make a fool of himself. He will learn to trust his inner powers. That is the way to cultivate the intuition, by cultivating it; not being afraid of what is within you. Suppose you do make mistakes – what of it? By practice in its exercise the mistakes will grow fewer and fewer.

Make a companion of your conscience. The man or woman who has not heard the voice of conscience whispering in his soul, who has never felt its presence, is not truly human. You know what I mean by that companionship: we call it a voice which whispers to us. It is a light which lives within you always and which tells you what is right — and to follow it; what is wrong — and to abandon it. Make a companion of your conscience, stimulate it, open your hearts and your minds to it. Your lives will be beautified, strengthened, made happier than now they are, because you will be following the voice within which is the accumulated Wisdom of the Ages.

Furthermore, just in proportion as you learn to know your conscience which is your own self, the higher part of you, and trust it and follow it, the more will intuition brighten your lives, bringing you knowledge direct, knowledge infallible.

The Dialogues of G. de Purucker, Vol 3, pp. 74-75 and 78-79 (first edition 1948)

G. de P. — The real human reminiscence inheres in the migrating entity, in the Reincarnating Ego. Therefore the memory of the human being inheres in the human essence which is the Reincarnating Ego.

(...)

Student — Thank you. Then it is not the brain-mind that is remembering, that has the memory —

G. de P. — Oh no. The brain-mind is a mere instrument, and in fact one of the feeblest instruments of the human being, but the one, strangely enough, in our present stage of evolution to which he is the most straitly or strictly attached. The brain-mind nevertheless is a very important instrument of consciousness, but it is for all that a low, material instrument. The brain-mind *per se* cannot reason clearly. Its operations are quasi-instinctual. The real faculty of genuine reasoning is something higher. Strictly speaking, reasoning is vision — vision of truth. The brain-mind merely reflects what the intellect reasons or intuits.

(...)

Student — I would like to return to the question regarding memory. We hear very little about memory, and to me it is one of the great mysteries. You stated before that the memory resides in the Reincarnating Ego. Now am I right in saying that this is the same as intuition, and that if intuition is spiritual memory, then I take it that the instinct, the physical memory, is something that would reside in the life-atoms as they return to the body during incarnation. Am I correct?

G. de P. — You are correct. What you say is perfectly true with one minor exception. Instinct is not 'physical memory' as you state, but is rather the psycho-astral memory of which the physical

memory is a reflection, and this psycho-astral memory resides in the essence of the astral or ethereal life-atoms. You remember what the great Plato had to say about all this, that all the workings of consciousness were reminiscence, recollection, remembering, of the activities of the consciousness in other lives. Therefore intuition, I really believe, could very readily be called the unlocking of the doors of the memorized treasury of past lives — intuition being immediate consciousness, instant recognition of truth or of things or of individuals.

But there is another side of intuition again, and I may describe it imperfectly perhaps as the native working of the spiritual consciousness. But again, even this last, as I reflect upon it, could properly be called the reminiscence of a grander life-cycle passed in former manvantaras. Yes, I believe that you are right on all points.
