



The Power of Imagination: The Neville Goddard Treasury

By Neville

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An anthology of the greatest writings of modern mystic, Neville Goddard, who has enthralled a new generation of readers with his simple but radical principle that *your imagination is God*.

This broad-ranging anthology assembles the greatest works of Neville Goddard, who, writing under the sole name Neville, became one of the most quietly seismic spiritual philosophers of the modern age.

From the late 1930s until his death in 1972, Neville promulgated one basic, extraordinary idea, which he restated with freshness and verve in more than ten books and hundreds of lectures: The human imagination is the Jesus Christ of Scripture, and the world around you is the out-picturing of your emotionalized thoughts.

Here is an unparalleled journey into the ideas and methods of a profoundly practical spiritual thinker whose vision of life can challenge your concept of what it means to be human.

This volume features a rare personal portrait of Neville by journalist and philosopher Israel Regardie.

Includes these classic works:

- **Introduction: Neville: A Portrait** by Israel Regardie (1947)
- **Your Faith Is Your Fortune** (1941)
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The Power of Imagination: The Neville Goddard Treasury By Neville Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #56196 in Books
- Published on: 2015-03-03
- Released on: 2015-03-03
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 8.99" h x 1.49" w x 6.03" l, 1.00 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 592 pages

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Editorial Review

Review

"Neville may eventually be recognized as one of the world's great mystics." —**Joseph Murphy**, author of *The Power of Your Subconscious Mind*

"Neville may be the positive-thinking movement's most radical and subtly influential voice." —**Mitch Horowitz**, *Time.com*

"His work has impacted me in a very profound way; in fact, he's been a great mentor to me in the past few years." —Dr. Wayne Dyer in *Wishes Fulfilled*

"The words of spiritual teacher Neville Goddard retain their power to electrify... Neville captured the sheer *logic* of creative mind principles as perhaps no other figure of his era." —*Science of Mind* magazine

About the Author

Born to an English family in Barbados, **Neville Goddard** (1905-1972) moved to New York City at seventeen to study theater. In 1932, he abandoned his work as a dancer and actor to dedicate himself to a career as a metaphysical writer and lecturer. Neville influenced a wide range of spiritual thinkers, from Joseph Murphy to Carlos Castaneda.

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INTRODUCTION

Neville: A Portrait

by Israel Regardie

NEVILLE: A PORTRAIT*

By Israel Regardie

Near Broadway on 49th Street in New York City is the Old Actor's Church. Should you go there on Wednesday, Friday or Sunday night of any week, either winter or summer, I can promise you more than a pleasant evening. It will be a highly instructive evening. You will hear Neville discourse on Truth. A young man, not more than 36 years of age, he is a dynamic, handsome and most charming personality. He has a winning smile—thoroughly and completely disarming. His presentation of truth is forceful and sincere. Charged with feeling, and reflecting his own integrity and purposefulness, he communicates himself readily from the pulpit.

Four to five hundred men and women flock to the Old Actor's Church on each of these nights that he talks.

How much of his evident popularity is due to his charm and how much to his dynamic orations, is not for me to say. Some, however, have hazarded an opinion. Some suspect it is the former. Nevertheless this judgment does not in the least detract from the value and worth of what he is impelled to teach. His method and content of teaching are entirely too good and provocative readily to appeal to so many and to such different varieties of people. However that may be, his readers and the listeners must be the judges. He does get a crowd—and he satisfies most of them.

Neville is not a native American. He comes from the Barbadoes, British West Indies, having been born in a planter's family in the year 1905. Evidently he felt a cane-sugar plantation was no place for him. A wider sphere of action for imaginative flight and spiritual understanding were necessary to him. His spirit craved other than a small island off the mainland of the U. S. So at the age of 17 he came to this country to study Drama.

“A Man's Faith Is His Fortune,” he wrote at a much later date—it was the title of a book of his. Evidently he had unbounded faith in himself to have set off youthfully on the unknown possibilities of a career in an unknown land. His confidence has stood him in good stead, since it has brought him through, to a position where he has become a public figure. No doubt there are greater heights of achievement and fame awaiting him in the future.

The year 1925 found him beginning his theatrical career at the Hippodrome, which not so long ago was torn down, removing from New York one of its old landmarks. The destruction of this building was also a milestone to Neville's life. It coincided with his departure from the world of the theatre. He entered a totally different public life. Yet it was a life which at the same time bore certain resemblances to his old dramatic career—as we shall see.

He has had a wide and varied experience for a young man, this Neville. In 1925 he sailed for England with a dancing partner, and travelled widely in that country. It was there that he became openly interested in the study of the occult and mysticism.

Whilst in England, he met Arthur Begbie who introduced him to the world of psychical research, giving Neville his first taste of the spiritualistic seance. It left him, I should say, a little bit flat, but nonetheless, he knew afterwards, that he was definitely embarked upon a long journey. Of that he was sure, in spite of his dislike of the atmosphere and the procedure of the seance. Shortly after his return to America in 1926, to continue his theatrical career, his interest in mysticism became keener and keener, coinciding with a waning interest in the theatre.

I want to emphasize that Neville was a success in the dramatic world. He did not retire from the stage to metaphysics because he was a flop. Not at all. His salary from the theatre at times ran to \$500 per week—a sum not usually earned by failures. This is important to know. It will help dispel the popular notion that only failures and “life-dyspeptics” go in for metaphysics.

It was around this time that he became associated with one of the several so-called Rosicrucian bodies. I should like to write at length on this subject of Rosicrucians and Rosicrucian organisations. However, I shall have to leave that for another occasion despite the fact that it is a fascinating subject for research, and a lovely topic for a disquisition on the foibles of human nature. Anyway, he not only became a member of this body and studied with it, but embarked upon a definite spiritual and moral discipline, imposing upon himself a regime of abstemious living, sexual continence, and a vegetarian diet. It was enough surely, to break a stronger person than him. From a husky strapping fellow of 176 pounds, he rapidly fell in weight to about 135 pounds. Not only was his efficiency impaired, but he became subject to fainting fits, and had long spells of weakness and languor. At the same time, probably because of the dietary and this irrational mode of life,

and undoubtedly because of the neurological disturbances which would accompany such a procedure, a number of psychic experiences occurred to him, including involuntary astral projection and momentary clairvoyant glimpses.

His was a successful theatrical career. I repeat this and emphasise it. He had featured in six Broadway plays, and had travelled all over the country from one theatre to another, and his income ran into several thousand dollars per year. But because of his mystical predilections, and his declining interest in the theatre, he finally withdrew from the theatrical career that he had so laboriously struggled to build up. It became a closed episode of his life. Yet the experience of the theatre gave him something that enabled him in later years to succeed in his newly-chosen work. His personality and his teaching are both highly dramatic.

We are not to imagine that various events in a man's life are out of relationship with one another. A Barbadoes plantation, dramatic school, theatre, professional dancing, and teaching metaphysics—while these seemingly point to a discrepancy in the continuous line of his life, that appearance is only due to our lack of insight. It is one of the characteristics of our age that we seek for superficial consistency, failing to realise that there may be deeper levels of reality, hidden from view, where the true line of continuity may be seen. A man's life is in reality a continuum. Regardless of the number of breaks that may appear in the line of his life, a true continuity does exist. We must not imagine for one moment that growth and development persist anywhere in nature in a straight line. The process of growth involves the idea of a spiral, of an apparent occasional backward trend, of appearances and disappearances, of surges and retreats, of endeavors and new endeavors. The Hegelian dialectical concept may well be the true story behind all human endeavor. There is a forward movement succeeded by its utter negation. Hard upon this, however, there is a manifestation of an entirely new order. Such a cycle persists throughout the whole of nature, and man is certainly no exception to the world order. If we bear such a concept in mind, we will be enabled to understand far more readily the intelligent direction of our lives—and in particular, the work and life of Neville.

In this Rosicrucian body, Neville remained for many years as a student and probationer. But his was finer stuff than this. This cult with its narrow pseudo-occult-religious dogmatism, its lack of imagination and real spiritual achievement, left him cold within. For him there was really nothing there. Life initiated him into its mysteries far more successfully than this occult order. Gradually, he drifted away from it, finding his way, in response to an inner need, into the private sphere of an eccentric Ethiopian rabbi named Abdullah. Here he studied the Qabalah, a Jewish form of mysticism, and obtained illuminating insights into the books of the Bible. As he himself says in *Your Faith Is Your Fortune*, "The Bibles are psychological dramas representing the consciousness of man." And again, "If man were less bound by orthodoxy and more intuitively observant, he could not fail to notice in the reading of the Bibles that the awareness of being, is revealed hundreds of times throughout this literature." He developed an utterly new approach to the whole problem of man and his relationship with the pulsating world of spirit around him. Entirely satisfied for the first time, he became a devoted disciple of this giant Ethiopian rabbi. His imagination became tremendously stimulated, envisioning life in an entirely new way.

No longer was he confined to the sterile formalistic occult philosophy of this moribund Rosicrucian body. Now he conceived of God and man being entirely one. And it altered the whole course of his life. The core of man's being was God—even though man in his blindness and ignorance did not know it. Outside of man there was nothing that man had not himself created. The entire world was a picture world, projected from within. The Ethiopian soon restored balance to his eager groping mind. Overboard went his fanatical vegetarianism, his continence, and his crankiness—and he became that rare anomaly, a human being. And he is very human this Neville, very human indeed. With the development of this phase of his personality, he was able to loosen his hold upon the hem of Abdullah's skirt, to become a teacher in his own right.

It was in February 1938, then, that he commenced his very successful career in New York City. At first he

met in a small room in a public building in New York, where dozens of petty little lecturers held their sway, nightly. Merely a handful of people attended his lectures at the beginning. But as his ability grew, and he gained confidence in talking and expounding, so his audiences grew. Now, as I mentioned above, you may go to the Old Actor's Church three nights a week, and find a tremendous and enthusiastic audience. He has not yet achieved nation-wide fame, but no doubt this will come in time.

In his talks on metaphysics, he reveals the Bible as a psychological rather than as a historical document of the law governing the expression of life. He has a genius for interpretation, and unconsciously employs an exegetical technique that would surprise many a psychoanalyst and professional interpreter of dreams. For example, he takes Dumas' novel, *The Count of Monte Cristo*, and interprets it as would a psychoanalyst a dream. His interpretation of the story reveals that Edmond Dantés is really Everyman, adrift on the stormy seas of life, trying to steer himself into some haven of security, and attempting to find a refuge against the storm. The old priest with his wisdom and understanding, whom Dantés discovers in the prison, really represents man's awareness of being, that ancient unconditioned self, locked up since time began within the bosom of man. And at the end, after Dantés escapes in the sack intended for the body of the old priest—now dead, because Dantés possesses his insight—and finds the buried treasure, he is able fully to express himself, and impose his will upon the world. "Edmond Dantés becomes the Count of Monte Cristo. Man becomes Christ."

In another place, he analyses the nature and character of the Apostles. He concludes that they represent the twelve qualities of mind which can be controlled and disciplined by man. When discussing the story of the disciples' feet being washed by Jesus, he states that "the foot symbolises the understanding which must be washed of all human belief or conceptions of itself by the Lord."

The story of Daniel, again, is the story of every man. Those lions that Daniel found in the den are the lions that beset our pathway through life, the problems of money, health, and relationships with other people. These beset all of us. Most of us, in the face of such predicaments, become so preoccupied with the problem, so brow-beaten by poverty, sickness, or marital difficulties, that we are unable to find a solution to them. The problem obsesses us. It fascinates us. Daniel decided to turn his back upon the lions, resorting to prayer. That is, he turned his gaze inwards, to his I AM consciousness, his real self which alone is capable of solving such problems. And so Neville concludes his exegesis by insisting that here too is our way out, and that what worked for Daniel, will work for us too.

I ought to mention at this juncture that during the course of his lecturing career, Neville has written and published a considerable number of pamphlets dealing with specific points of his system. Some of them explain his attitude towards particular themes and problems of the Bible. His applications of this theory extends to every phase of Biblical theme, from that of the world's creation to the Crucifixion of Christ, from the meaning of circumcision to the significance of each one of Jesus' twelve disciples. Latterly these essays have been gathered together and incorporated into a single volume entitled *Your Faith Is Your Fortune*. It is upon that volume that I have drawn extensively in order to present what I understand Neville to mean.

However, just as sometimes one feels that the psychoanalyst uses more ingenuity than insight in elaborating a meaning from an involved dream, so occasionally one feels that Neville is hard-pressed extracting psychological meaning from certain sections of the Bible. That is the difficulty in using, for the thin end of one's psychological wedge, a book which is so crammed with heterogeneous and diverse stuff that is clearly not psychological. However, he presents in a simple and practical manner the advantage of realising the identity of man's own consciousness with God. As he himself writes, "I AM the eternal Nothingness containing within my formless self the capacity to be all things. I AM that in which all my conceptions of myself live and move and have their being, and apart from which they are not."

Neville's choice of the phrase I AM to imply that underlying god-like essence in man, is dependent upon several reasons. The most obvious is the self-assumed name of God, which was given to Moses before that fateful visit to Pharaoh—I AM that I AM. This phrase is also repeated throughout Scripture in the same abstract sense.

But apart from this, Neville uses it because if we would define ourselves at all, we must use I AM before we can further qualify it in any way. Before I can say what I am, I must first have said I AM. Before I can assert that I am a man of such and such an age, of a certain race, residing in a certain country, of a certain profession and status, I must say I AM. Not that I am this or that, but that simply I AM. I can condition or formulate this limitless expanse of abstraction by enclosing it within the limitations of sex, age, race, country, profession, etc. But it still remains there, unconditioned, unformed and unlimited. So also is the basic self of man. It can express itself through a variety of masks, play an infinite number of parts, adopt a maximum of possible rôles. But it remains nevertheless, unconditioned and unformed—I AM.

In reality Neville is an atheist. It is conceivable that both he and his audiences would be shocked to learn of my conclusion. Yet he himself clearly and definitely states that outside of man, there is no God. "If man would give up his belief in a God apart from himself, recognise his awareness of being to be God, he would transform his world from a barren waste to a fertile one of his own liking."

Here he allies himself in philosophic principle with the old Buddhist reform. Gautama was a rebel against orthodoxy, against Brahmanism, against the Hindu church. And in passing, let me say that there is more than one correspondence too between Neville's formulation of God, and, let us say, Vedanta philosophy. I refer the interested reader to Swami Vivekananda's book *Gnana Yoga* for a first-rate presentation of Vedanta, which will certainly bear comparison with the ideas contained in *Your Faith Is Your Fortune*. In the chapter on Christian Science, I have given a resume of Vedanta philosophy.

The Buddha had realised that so long as man relied upon God and the church with its priests for help of any kind, man leaned upon an already broken reed. In fact upon a reed that had no tangible existence. It was a palpable lie. If help was to be obtained, in order to solve any of the urgent problems that press upon one in the world of everyday life, only one thing could be relied upon—man, and his inner consciousness. That is the ultimate reality. All else may be explained away, may be challenged, may be denied. This alone remains.

By realising this fact, one is enabled to draw upon secret reserves of strength, of inspiration, find a hidden source of salvation which could be demonstrated and applied to every experience in the hard cold world of reality. This fundamentally is Buddhism and the creed of Buddha. God, or the Wisdom of enlightenment, is inherent in the mind of each one of us. It is the "essence of mind which is intrinsically pure." Unfortunately it has become obscured. The problem is to clear away this obscurity, this delusion under which the mind works, to discover the light of true consciousness which exists beneath.

And so with Neville. Atheist that he is like Buddha, in denying validity to some extra-cosmic personal god—an aged senior with beard, capriciously pulling strings in some far-off corner of the universe—he states categorically that in man is an unconditioned consciousness which is uncreated, unmade, unformed, and unbound—God. If one can only find God in oneself by an ecstasy of feeling, in interior states of prayer and meditation, one also becomes free like God. Poverty, sickness, and need fall away. They are only the products of conscious thinking and feeling, the products of the mind that has divorced itself from its divine roots. These things are the results of denial—the denial that man's consciousness in its deepest levels, in what we call the subconscious level, is God and able to create and destroy man's world. It can destroy the present world in which we all live, of sickness, sorrow and need of one kind or another. And it can create happiness, health, and fullness and plenty of every conceivable kind, on every plane of existence.

Many people, by accepting and applying the principle that he has disclosed to them, have experienced what they at first thought were miracles. This is no new doctrine that he has taught. It is ages old. Both the doctrine and its implications have been known and taught since time began. But they are new to some people. They have heard it for the first time. And, credit must be given to him, Neville “can put it over” extremely well, with simplicity and with force.

On the other hand, some other people find themselves intellectually in sympathy with his teaching, yet discover that they are unable to “make it work.” They struggle and struggle, and still no results are forthcoming. These fall by the wayside, attacking him and his system—even becoming vindictive. Some of these suggest that when some of Neville’s disciples obtain satisfactory results, they do so only because they have been hypnotised by Neville.

The sort of person who can make this sort of statement, has not in the least understood the fundamental psychological factor in Neville’s teaching, nor the fundamental fact about Neville himself. It is a very simple fact. Neville is a dancer.

I have watched Neville dance. He is superb. He has a magnificent body. I have already remarked that he has charm and is very handsome. When he dances, his muscles move with that lithe suppleness which one associates with the trained athlete. His every movement suggests power in repose, the effortless ease of the cat, with its undisguised sensuality and force of movement. As an artist, he knows the value of alternate relaxation and tension. Above all, he knows the dance. His metaphysics and his system, are a dance,—a dance of words, a dance of mind, a dance of feeling. And unless you can dance with him, his system is likely to be unproductive. His system is in reality strictly personal—an offshoot of his own personality. To make it work as he has done, you too must become like him.

An artist in every fibre of his being, he has the capacity to sink himself whole-heartedly and imaginatively in the task at hand. He is an artist, and has passion and fire on hand at every moment. The artist in him is truer than his desire to expound publicly the system he does expound. He has the ability spontaneously to apply his own teaching. It is quite another story, however, to teach the practical elements of his system to those who are not artists, who have not his imaginative or emotional capacity to engage in this ecstatic dance of the mind which evidently means so much to him.

Possibly, in his audiences, there are individuals here and there having the necessary artistic and mystical temperament—identical, really—not only to absorb the truth as Neville presents it, but make immediate application of it. To “demonstrate” successfully, as the cliché goes. The average person with his commercial prosaic mind, his unimaginative sterile attitude to life, uninspiring employment and home, is incapable of realising that inner-spiritual being, which Neville implies by “I AM.” Such a person cannot evoke that intensity of feeling, that temporary madness that Neville demands of all those who would apply his teaching successfully. A fiery white-hot passion is but a phrase to them. Consequently, in being unable to whip themselves into such an emotional frenzy, which can be focused in certain pre-determined directions, his words fall on barren ground.

Yet, in one sense this is not their fault. Life has dealt hardly with them, I do not blame them in any way. I am full of sympathy for them in their plight. Of all the metaphysical systems with which I am acquainted, Neville’s is the most evidently magical. But being the most magical, it requires for that very reason, a systematised training on the part of those who would approach and enter its portals. It requires a dynamic alteration of viewpoint—a revolutionary turning around of the mind. An entirely new and radical attitude to life and living must be developed, not merely intellectually, but emotionally. Above all, it demands that the student must learn the gentle art of relaxation—not by turning the back on body and ignoring its demands, but by learning the simple technique of so doing. Neville knows the art of relaxation instinctively. He is a

dancer, and a dancer must, of necessity, relax. Hence I believe he does not fully and consciously realise that the average person in his audience does not know the mechanism of relaxation, does not know how to “let go.” It is true he speaks of relaxing. “Close your eyes and feel yourself to be faceless, formless and without figure. Approach this stillness as though it were the easiest thing in the world to accomplish. This attitude will ensure your success.” But for the average person, this is hardly adequate. A little more detailed scientific instruction is imperative.

Not only so, but the average individual does not know how to evoke powerfully his feelings and emotions. He does not understand the means whereby he can arouse this passionate intensity so necessary to complete identification with or recognition of the Unconditioned faceless, formless consciousness of which Neville speaks.

To some extent it is possible to succeed more easily with women than with men. Women are essentially more emotional than men. The average male is entirely repressed from an emotional point of view. From early boyhood he is taught, either directly or indirectly, that it is “sissyish” to show his feelings. By early adolescence, his feelings are pretty well hidden. So that when he achieves true adulthood, he has no feelings at all. His emotions are totally repressed into the dark hidden depths of his unconscious life, and he is completely and thoroughly inhibited. Even his mind must suffer from such violence. Never must we forget that the emotional life is the mainspring of every other phase and aspect of our lives. What wonder that we become ill and impotent and needy, both physically and mentally?

This is the problem of the average adult approaching all forms of metaphysics—the problem of the male primarily, but to some extent true of the female too. In the face of such repression, where violence has been done to the emotional life, and all feelings have been inhibited, a serious question arises. What course of practise may be engaged upon that will evoke from out of the depths, the emotions so necessary to the cultivation of this passionate intensity which conduces to spiritual experience and the ability to “demonstrate”?

Neville, if not totally adequate to this situation, is at least wise. Whether he did this deliberately or intuitively, it is not possible to determine. But his step certainly serves a useful purpose. He knows that the average person approaching his lectures has had a religious training of some kind. This may have been forgotten and strayed from. But invariably it remains in the individual’s unconscious in some form or other. Emotional intensity is of necessity associated with this early infantile training in religion. There were the first prayers that mother taught us all when we prayed in love and reverence with her. Early experiences in Sunday school and the first feelings of awe and wonder and love that arose with them—such memories are retained, never forgotten, and are stored within. Hypnotic experiment reveals the tenacity of even the most trivial events in our minds. Neville therefore casts a magical cloak of religion about his system, advocating the study of the Bible as revealing this psychological drama of which he speaks. In using the Bible, he draws directly upon the level of consciousness which goes far back into time for most of us—to infancy when the emotions were still powerfully active in our small childish worlds. In drawing upon this level, which he does through the use of the Bible, he draws by association upon all the power and energy which are tied up in that stratum of our minds. This he stimulates and whips into dynamic activity, so that it will accomplish the purpose of which his system speaks.

Whether this technique is wholly successful—or even desirable—is another story. Occasionally it works; very often it does not. Sometimes the listener is so completely inhibited and repressed, that even the stimulus of the Bible is unable to awaken the magical power of the unconditioned consciousness to achieve what he wills and to make manifest that which he envisions.

Of all the popular teachers of metaphysics, Neville possibly is the most broad-minded. Some many months

ago when I was engaged in some practical experimental work with hypnosis and suggestion, I extended an invitation to Neville to be present. After the experiment was over, I put it to Neville that the crucial factor in all metaphysics and New Thought was auto-suggestion. We had just witnessed a hypnotic demonstration in which an individual performed certain physical and intellectual feats which, in his waking state, would be quite impossible for him. Through meditation and prayer, the devotee of metaphysics is also able to perform many things which he could not have done otherwise. It seemed to me that there must be some connection. In the case of hypnosis, hetero-suggestion is responsible. In metaphysics, self- or auto-suggestion may be the underlying factor.

Now, it did not strike Neville as at all contrary to his principles of truth that this should be so. In fact, he accepted my idea willingly, remarking that man has become, by reason of defective early training, hypnotised out of his knowledge that he is God-like in nature. Therefore, what could be more reasonable than to employ suggestion, not as a means of superimposing additional ideas on an already heavily-burdened psychological apparatus, but to awaken and to evoke from within what is already there, and has been there for ages—dormant, latent, and unseen. Hence his system really amounts to little more than this—when all the extraneous details are eliminated, and the cloak of the Bible and a terminology are flung off. It seems that he demands complete relaxation, in order to become aware of the deeper levels of the mind, the Unconscious. When in that ecstatic state brought about by the contemplation of phrases and versicles in the Bible, you must drop into the Unconscious the suggestions or desires that one wishes to be fulfilled. “Such simple acceptance of your desires,” he says in his recent book, “is like the dropping of fertile seed into an ever-prepared soil. When you drop your desire in consciousness as a seed, confident that it shall appear in its full-blown potential, you have done all that is expected of you.” This, in effect, is a perfect statement of the rationale of auto-suggestion.

In another place, he speaks of the efficacy of faith, as an important adjunct to successful demonstration. For example, he writes, “The beliefs in the potency of drugs to heal, diets to strengthen, moneys to secure, are the values or money-changers that must be thrown out of the Temple . . . The thieves who rob you, are your own false beliefs. It is your belief in a thing, not the thing itself, that aids you.”

Here is a very wide agreement with modern psychological knowledge. Every doctor knows that fully half of his patients would respond equally well to a regime of sugar-coated pills as to specific medical therapy. Even surgical operations have the effect only of providing the patient with what he longs for unconsciously, and thus enabling him to get well. It is the suggestive value of these factors which is effective. Psychoanalysis has much to teach us about the hypnotic or suggestive value of any therapeutic agent. It is effective, provided the patient’s emotions can be shifted or transferred away from the formation of symptoms. The phenomenon of transference is just as ever-present in the lecture hall as it is in the consulting room or clinic.

Daily and hourly we give ourselves countless suggestions, and we permit others to do the same for us. Life for many people consists of suggestion and counter-suggestion. Every few minutes over the radio, in the subways and street cars, in newspapers and magazines, suggestion is thrust at us until we succumb to its insidious appeal. Modern selling and advertising seems to consist almost exclusively in how cleverly one can suggest to the members of the general public, that they must purchase things not wholly necessary to them.

It is not faith that renders effectual the drugs and medicines and so forth that the advertisements blare out to us. They inform us that these things are effectual and because of long continued emphasis, we come to accept those suggestions. When we are in trouble and use such advertised articles, they succeed not because of any inherent virtue they possess, nor because of faith. But they succeed only because the advertisements have suggested to us that they will succeed.

Though emphasised by Neville, faith and belief seem to be a façade for our lack of understanding why

suggestion sometimes works and why at others it fails. It is not faith in the old religious sense that is effectual as it is necessity and the feeling that one is *in extremis*. When the rules of applying auto-suggestion are closely adhered to in every way, success must inevitably follow. Therefore, we say such a person had faith. Moreover, we must remember that faith is an emotional quality. It evokes an intensity of feeling which is one of the indispensable factors in the successful unconscious reception of the suggestion or the desire or the mental image. Faith has no scientific validity in itself. It is simply convenient as an emotional excitant. And when all other things fail and despair has set in, then faith stimulates the whole nature to respond to the next healing or saving situation that will arise.

So far as Neville's teaching goes, the theory is inevitably bound up with the practice. In philosophy is the means by which demonstration may be manifested. God is the beginning, end, and middle of the theory and practice. And since this is so, we can do no better than to consider a bit more carefully what he means by God.

The book *Your Faith Is Your Fortune* attempts at the outset to present the supreme problem with which all philosophies, religious or otherwise, are confronted. If God is infinite, omnipresent, eternal and omnipotent, how does He bring that world into being, and what part does that world play so far as He is concerned? Christian theology based upon the Bible, attempts to solve that by a miraculous creation from nothing. God created the world and everything in it—and that is that. Insofar as Neville is influenced by the Bible and Christian teaching, he follows more or less the same miraculous theme, adapting it however, to his particular conception of God. "The world is your consciousness, objectified," relates equally to the original creation of the world as it does to the constant renewal and creation of our own particular worlds. "The conceiver and the conception are one, but the conceiver is greater than his conception." God is the conceiver and the whole of creation is his conception. Naturally, God is greater than his conception, which though part of him and of his own substance, is yet identical with him.

"In the beginning was the unconditioned awareness of being, and the unconditioned awareness of being became conditioned by imagining itself to be something, and the unconditioned awareness of being became that which it had imagined itself to be; so did creation begin."

This quotation from one of his pamphlets *Before Abraham I Was* really sets forth in a nutshell the whole of Neville's teaching. Implicit in this single sentence is contained everything that he believes in. In conversation with him and in his writing, he states, re-states, and emphasises this concept in a dozen different ways with all the fluency and eloquence and feeling at his disposal. The rest of his teaching is merely explanatory of and dilatory upon this one fact. In stating his idea of how the world and everything in it evolved and came into being, we are not to imagine that he is contenting himself with mere metaphysics. Neville is not abstract—nor is he a philosopher. We learn from him nothing new of dialectic, of logical world-processes, nor of ontology. He is not interested in expounding an elaborate cosmological theory. Let me emphasise again, the fact that he is an artist—and the artist's imagination continuously flows forth into creation and activity. So with Neville. He is pre-eminently a practical person. It is his fundamental belief that this primal consciousness, man's unconditioned awareness of being—at once unbound, unformed and free, which conceives or imagines itself to be something other than it really is—mirrors itself in our very act and thought, every hour and every minute of every day of our life.

Before God could conceive of something other than Himself, or fashion within Himself some conception or other, He had first to be moved by desire. Hence the emphasis placed upon desire by Neville. For him, it is the saviour and redeemer. Desire for him is holy and creative, providing the dynamic impetus to the whole of life and living. It is of the nature of Godhead, which will save us from our limitations, break open the bars of our prison, and make us whole once more. "Look upon your desires as the spoken words of God and every word a prophecy of that which you are capable of being. Do not question whether you are worthy or

unworthy to realise these desires,” he says. “Accept them as they come to you. Give thanks for them as though they were gifts . . .” And again “Every problem automatically produces its solution in the form of a desire to be free from the problem.” Thus we see the all-important rôle that desire plays in his system. If the desire is intense enough, and can be reinforced by sufficient feeling and reach a high enough voltage, it must necessarily manifest itself objectively.

If God can be moved by desire sufficiently to evolve conceptions which can, as it were, clothe themselves in form, so also can man, for God is only the consciousness of man, his awareness of being himself. Man is that primal consciousness—man is God. Not as he commonly knows himself, but deep down in his heart, unconsciously. As man knows himself, he is obviously limited in manifold ways. His desires rarely fulfil themselves, for he is essentially impotent. In his unconscious self, however, in the “Secret Place of the Most High,” he *is* unconditioned, formless, faceless and uncreate, and his desires come true. They are always mirroring themselves outwards, projecting themselves objectively—whether he is aware of it or not.

It is essential to stress this differentiation which I believe Neville has failed to do sufficiently. Man is not God, save in the deepest levels of his soul. Man can come to this realisation when he is very quiet and still. Only when the motion of the thinking mind, which is the superficial self, has been stopped altogether, can man know in that silence that “I AM is God.” “He will know that his consciousness is God and that which he is conscious of being, is the Son bearing witness of God, the Father.”

When Neville speaks of consciousness in this way, he would have done better to have used another more specific term. Better might have been the word Unconscious, or even the Subconscious mind, and to have reserved the word consciousness for what he calls the Son, that which man is conscious of being, or calling into manifestation. Unless we differentiate in this way, we run headlong into an unescapable but highly unpleasant conclusion—that we are mad. In our mental hospitals there are hundreds and hundreds of inmates who insist, quite consciously and deliberately that they are God. It is a pathetic experience to see and hear them. We must not say that their statement is any different from ours because their minds are unbalanced, that they are insane. We must avoid this pitfall more rationally. We must define our thinking terms more carefully. Neville’s system contains this clarification, if not explicitly, then implicitly. It only needs to be brought out more definitely.

We are not God in our waking conscious state. But there is some part of our personalities of which normally we are not conscious, which can be called God or “I AM.” This saves us from the horns of the horrible dilemma that we too are insane. By this differentiation we are enabled to retain some degree of sanity and balance.

The entirety of our life is rooted in the Unconscious “I AM.” Truly, as the Bible says, “In him we live and move and have our being.” Without God, or its psychological equivalent, the deep consciousness of Man, the Unconscious, we have no life whatsoever. We only believe that we are masters in our own house, that we are independent, and that we do not need God. But that is because we like to flatter ourselves. We are vain and egotistical. The truth is that we are dependent to a startling degree upon the proper functioning of the Unconscious psyche, and we must therefore see to it that our roots are in the right place. The various events and experiences that occur to us and the things that come to us in the course of daily life, are the result of its out-picturing, the projections of this Unconscious psyche which we harbor within. Even the contents of our conscious thinking and imagination, spring from and depend completely upon the activity of the Unconscious. All thought and ideation and the predispositions to certain types of experience, are constantly being evolved within us, unconsciously. God and the Unconscious are words, then, that bear an equivalent meaning—and irrespective of what it really is in itself, this much is true, that we cannot live apart from it in any way.

We know very little about the Unconscious—and only a little more about the way it works. But we assume that in some way the conscious thinking self evolves out of, but still has its roots in its inchoate darkness. In the child, we can see this growth of an ego occur at an early age, watch speech and understanding develop, and see mind grow where before there was only irrational irresponsibility. Life and the Unconscious existed long before the child could say “I” and when this “I” disappears, as it does for all of us during sleep or coma, life and spirit or God, still continue—as our observation of other people and our own dreams inform us. We assume that this process taking place in the individual, is a rapid-fire recapitulation of a psychic process which occurred thousands, possibly millions of years ago, in the development of humanity, when mind gradually and ever so slowly made its appearance on the evolutionary scene. Mind once evolved out of the unconscious, and even today is still dependent upon it. Man’s present conception of himself has evolved out of his unconditioned awareness of being which, if called upon, can alter that conception in strange and wonderful ways.

God and the Unconscious are one. These terms imply the same reality. And as all things flow from God as his conceptions, so in the same manner, the form of our environment emanates from the Unconscious. As God created the world through the formulation of his own imaginative concepts, so also the Unconscious creates its own world. “Your world is your consciousness objectified.” The tragedy of today is that we do not know this. We are out of tune with the infinite, have ignorantly lost our contact with the unconscious world of inner reality, the true source of life. Today, therefore, we are a people tragically cut off from our roots, from our creative and spiritual roots—and the upshot is that we are impotent and worthless and ill.

The law of creation is “first conceiving, then becoming that conceived—all things evolve out of No-thing. And without this sequence, there is not anything made that is made.” If therefore our world, which is the particular environment of any one of us, is distasteful and hateful to us, we first must remember that it is the reflection of ourselves. “The world is your consciousness objectified.” How to change it follows logically upon the thesis of creation. “Waste no time trying to change the outside,” stresses Neville. “Change the within or the impression; and the without or expression will take care of itself.” If our environment is unfavorable, it presupposes the fact that at some former time we must have conceived it. Either knowingly, or unknowingly we must first have evolved it as a possibility within. We must have mirrored it into being from out of ourselves, and identified ourselves with it.

To create a new world, it is useless to alter the pieces of the puzzle outside. New conceptions must be formulated within, conceptions which the conceiver can handle, as it were, to form into new objective realities without. How does one make these new conceptions? How does one employ this faculty that is ours as the conceiver of all things?

Consciousness or God, is the magical faculty which has all power, and can miraculously alter, change, create and destroy forms, ideas, and beings. “The foundation of all expression is consciousness. There is only one power and this power is God (consciousness). It kills, it makes alive; it wounds; it heals; it does all things, good, bad, or indifferent.” “Consciousness dwells within that which it is conscious of being. I AM man is the Lord and his temple.” It is imperative therefore, to call upon the aid of the deep self, upon God. He magically can rearrange all the component parts of the body, the environment and the surrounding world which is his Temple, to coincide a little better with the heart’s desire. Only God has the vision, the power, to foresee and arrange how events may develop. We can provide the goal by formulating the wish, but the manner in which it will occur and how, is entirely beyond us. That is completely in the hands of the Unconscious. Its wisdom will know best how to dictate the course of future events.

How this could possibly be, is indicated by Jung in one of the psychological essays in his book *Modern Man in Search of a Soul*. There, discussing the nature of the Unconscious, he says that it contains certain primordial instinctual patterns that have come down to us from the past. These patterns mark definite

processes of development and evolution. Moreover, he adds, "If it were permissible to personify the Unconscious, we might call it a collective human being combining the characteristics of both sexes, transcending youth and age, birth and death, and from having at his command a human experience of one or two million years, almost immortal. If such a being existed, he would be exalted above all temporal change; the present would mean neither more nor less to him than any year in the one hundredth century before Christ; he would be a dreamer of age-old dreams, and, owing to his immeasurable experience, he would be an incomparable prognosticator. He would have lived countless times over the life of the individual, of the family, tribe and people, and he would possess the living sense of the rhythm of growth, flowering, and decay."

I do not feel it is an exaggeration, then, or a conviction that in any wise borders on superstition, to assume that the details of the working out of the wish may safely be left to the superior experience and wisdom of our inmost self. The real problem seems to be not that the Unconscious is incapable of fulfilling the wish. More to the point is how to enlist its power on our behalf, how to employ it?

"You cannot serve two masters or opposing states of consciousness at the same time." Neville is adamant on this score. "Taking your attention from one state and placing it upon the other, you die to the one from which you have taken it and you live and express the one with which you are united." Like Daniel we must, insists Neville, turn our backs upon the lions confronting us and forget them—in order to pray.

This is the first step then—to turn one's back on the evidence of one's senses. To ignore the world which one's mind and all the faculties of one's being perceives. We have already seen that he claims the world to be merely the outside picture of an inward spiritual state. It remains therefore, to ignore the immediate problem that one finds ahead of him—whether it be one of money, of sickness, of love, position, or whatnot. Leave it alone, Neville urges his disciples, and turn the attention away from it. Such neglect will cause it to deteriorate, to die, whilst the newly-directed attention is focussed on the construction of new conceptions which will out-mirror themselves in new worldly conditions. Put the old out of mind altogether. Reformulating one's being on an entirely divine basis, affirming oneself to be basically God, will instigate such radical alterations in the environment as one desires.

". . . When this expansion of consciousness is attained, within this formless deep of yourself, give form to the new conception by claiming and feeling yourself to be that which you, before you entered this state, desired to be. You will find that within this formless deep of yourself, all things appear to be divinely possible. Anything that you sincerely feel yourself to be while in this expanded state becomes, in time, your natural expression."

We must, as I have described above, switch our minds away from the consideration of the immediate problem. Neville says that, instead of saying, "out of sight, out of mind," we really should reverse the phrase by saying, "out of mind, out of sight." This concept is peculiar not merely to Neville, but so far as I know, is common to all the metaphysical and modern religious movements of today. It is not a valid concept, however, on any logical or scientific ground. But it is, in effect, just this contradictory illogical phrase that commends it to the metaphysicians. For they say, after St. Paul, that the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. But it does not follow that this world's folly is God's wisdom. So that the modern way of dealing with any kind of problem, staring it right in the face and attempting to find out the hidden psychological meaning for its existence, is totally disregarded on the hypothetical ground that once the attention is removed from it, it must disappear. "This manifestation will remain in sight only as long as it takes the force with which the conceiver—I AM—originally endowed it to spend itself."

Before suggesting that I think this procedure is highly illogical and baseless, I ought to state that I am very much in sympathy with a great deal of the content of mysticism. I am also well aware of the limitations and

inadequacies of the thinking principle, and that the services of a higher or different faculty must be called upon to lead us out of the maze into which the use of the mind alone will land us. Nonetheless, the conscious thinking self has a definite role to play, and it remains for us to extend the field of its operations so that ultimately it may include within its sphere most of what hitherto was called unconscious.

This idea of “out of mind, out of sight,” is one of those common metaphysical fallacies which on the surface sounds so penetrating and seems so true. To get something out of mind is surely to eliminate it from sight. But there is no indication that the mental content thus disposed of, has actually been eliminated altogether. We may not be aware of it—but once an ostrich has buried its head in the sand, it too, is totally unaware of anything that may be in its vicinity. Such reasoning as this was valid in the days before depth-psychology came into being, when it was really thought that to take one’s mind off certain thoughts and feelings, really destroyed them. Nowadays, however, we know that people can so handle various emotions and ideas, as to become totally unconscious of them. We may deny, consequently, that we ever entertained such thoughts and feelings. We have repressed them utterly—that is to say, forcibly forgotten them. So severe and intense is the repression and forgetting that many of us really and truly believe that we never had them. On the other hand, though these thoughts and memories are now unconscious, they are no less realities than if they were fully present in the conscious mind. In fact, they are not only present and real, but a very great deal more potent—sometimes disagreeably so. They have been hidden in the darkness of the unconscious levels of the psyche, which is the kinetic factor in our lives, that which is in reality “the power behind the throne.” It is the machine-shop of the body and mind. These repressions, rather than conscious states, are the true psychological contents that out-picture themselves in the creation of adverse social, economic and family conditions that we loathe so much and try to eliminate from our lives. These are the dynamic conceptions which we so blindly feed to the magical self underneath, the conceiver of all things who, as a result, can only turn these conceptions into realities. Says Neville, “God, your awareness, is no respecter of persons. Purely impersonal, God, this awareness of all existence, receives impressions, qualities, and attributes defining consciousness, namely your impressions.” I will extend his idea, by saying that the Unconscious is no respecter of ideas. It is impersonal, and will turn into realities whatever ideas are thrust into its sphere, good, bad, and indifferent.

There is danger in turning our backs on problems, however much desirable it may appear to do so. There is entirely too much clinical evidence available today, confirming the fact that it is the whole content of repressed ideas and experiences that become projected into the world of reality, forming our sicknesses, social problems, and all else beside. The problem confronting one is itself an out-picturing of oneself. We can learn much of ourselves, about the true self within, from a study of the unsolved problem confronting us. It ought to receive a great deal of study and meditation, to stimulate us to ask “why” many times, before we begin to use these metaphysical methods to eliminate them. Sometimes we would do better to swallow it and accept it—bitter pill that it may be. Nasty medicine often does us more good than simply to have refused to take it.

It is an offense against our own integrity and intellectual honesty first to assume that what is present in our external world picture is but a projection of the mind, and then to ignore utterly that visible projection from within. It seems more rational, before attempting to make new spiritual images within, to inquire why previous pictures were created that would produce such untoward effects that displease us so. What meaning have they? What is the significance of this problem, this environment, this situation? Meaning there must be—otherwise the whole structure of our existence falls around us like an inchoate mass of cards. Our spiritual work hence must be so to enlarge our understanding of life and of ourselves that we divine a meaning in every single and isolated phenomenon. As the Unity leader, Charles Fillmore, writes in his book *Christian Healing*: “The material forms that we see about us are the chalk marks of a mighty problem being outworked by the one Mind. To comprehend that problem and to catch a slight glimpse of its meaning, we must grasp the ideas that the chalk marks represent; this is what we mean by studying Mind back of nature.

Man is mind and he is capable of comprehending the plan and the detailed ideas of the supreme Mind.”

Apropos this technical consideration of ignoring facts, or of denying them, because they are only reflections of inner conceptions which the conceiver of all things has thrust into the outer world, Neville also gives us a commentary upon one of the little stories in the Bible. He calls out attention to the Book of Numbers where, it is said, that “There were giants in the land and we were in our own sight as grasshoppers, and we were in their sight as grasshoppers.”

Explaining that in the light of his particular system, he says: “Today is the day, the eternal now, when conditions in the world have attained the appearance of giants. The unemployed, the armies of the enemy, business competition, etc. are the giants which make you feel yourself to be a helpless grasshopper. We are told we were first in our own sight helpless grasshoppers, and because of this conception of ourselves, we were to the enemy helpless grasshoppers.

“We can be to others only that which we are to ourselves. Therefore, as we revalue ourselves and begin to feel ourselves to be the giant, a center of power, we automatically change our relationship to the giants, reducing these former monsters to their true place, making them appear to be the helpless grasshoppers.”

Convincing as this sounds at first sight, unfortunately, it is not altogether as true as it sounds. I know men who are considered by the world to be very great men. They have achieved much, having position and power and money. Yet within themselves they are consumed by a gnawing inferiority, feeling themselves the helpless grasshoppers of which Numbers speaks. However, no one knows it. No one knows or even suspects their helplessness, their internal conflict, their never-ending doubt and self-torture. They and they only, are aware of it. It goes on all through the hours of the day, continuing in their dreams at night. But never is it suspected even for one moment by their friends, their most intimate friends and colleagues. It is a secret that none must ever share. Never does the world divine it, because they never divulge it.

Like many other public speakers, even successful actors, I am sure Neville has frequently, especially at the beginning of his public career, felt considerably nervous and frightened just prior to delivering a lecture. So far as the audience was concerned, he appeared not in the least frightened or nervous, but calm, collected and poised. I myself have experienced this so many times that it is no longer funny. And a friend of mine, who has delivered thousands of lectures, including radio addresses, invariably becomes nervous and fearful, to the extent that his physiological functions are temporarily interfered with. Yet he is successful, and he is no grasshopper to the world, however much of one he may at times seem to be himself. Some even consider him one of the giants.

Things are not always what they seem. It is not always true that we can be to others what we are to ourselves. I may be worthless and valueless to myself, yet of inestimable worth to hundreds and thousands of people. Life cannot be reduced to a few simple formula capable of application to the world at large.

Nor is it altogether true that as we evaluate ourselves anew and feel ourselves to be giants, do we actually become giants. Many a braggart and egoist has strutted like a turkey-cock about the world, even in the small familiar sphere of our own lives, telling us of his own importance and what a giant he is. This is impressed upon us daily, almost hourly. Yet, all we feel about his evaluation of himself, is sorrow and pity for such a poor fool.

Nevertheless, Neville’s underlying idea is essentially correct. But there is a misunderstanding of levels upon which we must apply his principle. His system demands, as I have suggested above, a better definition of terms, a more exact usage of words. It is not our conscious evaluation of ourselves which means very much. It is what we feel about ourselves deep down in our hearts—and that, unfortunately, is not known to most of us. What we feel in the unconscious side of the psyche—what Neville calls our awareness of being—that is

what people will feel about us. I may feel a worm unconsciously, but no matter how much I may consciously over-compensate for this unconscious inferiority and suggest that I am a giant, the world will know me for a worm. On the other hand, while my conscious evaluation of myself may be very low, my real and unconscious appreciation of myself, as revealed for example in dream, may be terrific—in which event sooner or later the unconscious view will win out, and I will actually become to myself and to the world one of the giants. Those around me in my environment may then feel that I am potentially more than I express, and may really say of me that “He is a gigantic personality if he could express himself—as one day he will.”

Apart from these theoretical considerations, Neville’s technique is fascinating and psychologically instructive. It will be more graphic to consider it in connection with a certain problem. Though I select a specific type of problem, let it be understood that Neville himself believes it to be applicable to any contingency that may arise—and that its limitations are really unknown.

For example, suppose that having attended his lectures and learned something of his principles, you find yourself confronted by a certain problem. A bill has just arrived for \$500 on your house. All your money is gone, no loan can be arranged from the bank or friends—and you just do not know where to turn. You are worried, beset by anxiety and ready, if not to commit suicide, then at least to pull out every hair of your head—an awkward situation to be in, especially if you are getting bald like the author. What to do?

I can almost hear Neville suggest that you should sit down, or lie on your couch, in a comfortable position, close your eyes. Begin to murmur over and over again “I AM, I AM.” Not I am this nor I am that. But just quietly affirming your own awareness of being, the fundamental fact of your consciousness. As relaxation of both mind and body ensues, you will sense a feeling of floating in space. Try and feel through the constant repetition of this deific phrase that you are unconditioned, faceless and formless, the primal consciousness which is the true self underlying the normal activities of mind and body. Develop this state of consciousness until you feel that you are identified with it. With the acquisition of this awareness, imagine that the \$500 which you simply must have, is *already* in your possession.

“To be conscious of being poor while praying for riches, is to be rewarded with that which you are conscious of being, namely poverty. Prayers to be successful must be claimed and appropriated. Assume the positive consciousness of the thing desired.

“With your desire defined, quietly go within and shut the door behind you. Lose yourself in your desire; feel yourself to be one with it; remain in this fixation until you have absorbed the life and name by claiming and feeling yourself to be and to have that which you desired.”

In this relaxed and exalted mood, you should then switch your mind over to the nature of your desire. It will not do, when so elevated emotionally, to affirm “I want \$500,” for that would only emphasise your lack, your need of money. This emphasis would constitute a further suggestion which would manifest itself inevitably in the perpetuation of the material condition. And it is just this that needs to be overcome.

You must remember that Neville defines God as your unconditioned awareness of yourself. When defining yourself, you must first of all state “I AM” before following it up with your name, sex, colour, age, nationality and so forth. Now, in this highly relaxed state of being in which you have affirmed yourself to be God, the unconditioned I AM consciousness, it must follow that the next stage is to condition this abstract unlimited awareness of being in a certain predetermined way. It is useless from a practical point of view to state that a certain sum money is required. But it is good technique to affirm emphatically that “I AM abundance,” or that “I AM substance, the infinite supply from which all demands shall be met.” A complete identification of the primal being with the desire is imperative. This conditions the initial formless consciousness so specifically that it immediately becomes modified according to the terms of the suggestion

or affirmation. And, in accordance with Neville's formulations, this suggestion is the seed that will be vitalised by God to grow into an actuality for all to see.

How would you feel if you had this money now? How would you feel if the problem were now ended? Depressed—or elated? Then try to encourage this sense of ecstasy, of jubilation in having this money. Feel keenly that a check for \$500 has immediately been written, and your mind rid of this spectre which had been haunting you and assuming such terrifying proportions. Feel yourself in the presence of your dearest friend, asserting your problem to be solved, and that you have the money to pay this bill. Imagine and feel piously that he too participates in your jubilation. He shakes your hand vigorously, embraces you, so happy has he become that anxiety and worry are shaken from your shoulders.

“All things gravitate to that consciousness with which they are in tune. All things disentangle themselves from that consciousness with which they are out of tune . . . Consciously define yourself as that which you desire . . . Claim yourself to be that which you want filled full.”

Neville asserts that if we would only encourage such states of consciousness, steadfastly eliminating worry and fear and trepidation, encouraging this sense of joy and happiness, external conditions must of necessity change themselves. “Consciousness being Lord and Master, you are the Master Magician conjuring that which you are now conscious of being.” If therefore you have become conscious of having and being the money which will set you free from your problem, some event would occur to externalise this inner vision. How it would occur is not known to any of us, but a materialisation of the spiritual state would ensue—not in some supernatural manner, like manna falling miraculously from heaven. There would be no violation or cessation of natural law. But in some way, through the people already known to us, possibly through some means already at hand, an offer would be made which would produce that \$500. Many people have claimed to have applied this principle and found it to be practicable—almost in spite of themselves.

His treatment of the problem of time is very interesting in this connection. Let us assume that this \$500 which we discussed above, had to be produced within the space of a few days. It is Wednesday now. By Sunday that money must be forthcoming—or else! What is to be done about it? What procedure should be followed?

At first the procedure would be identical with that described above. Not only is that money to arrive, but it is already here. Suppose that this money were to arrive from out of the blue on Sunday—well, then, imagine how you would feel on Sunday. Here you are tense, fretful and consumed with anxiety. Your mind has been crowded with the contemplation of the dire possibilities and complications of sheriffs, dispossession notices, and so forth, in the meanwhile. In due course Sunday arrives, and someone hands you \$500. What would the state of your mind be? Use every ounce of imagination and feeling that you have. Fantasy freely on the pleasure, the relief from tension, in actually holding in your very hand that \$500. Imagine waving that check gleefully right under Neville's nose. \$500—in your possession! Now all your problems can go to the devil. You are saved.

“You and I have said time and again, ‘Why, today feels just like Sunday,’ or ‘—Monday,’ or ‘—Saturday.’ We have also said in the middle of summer, ‘Why this feels and looks like the fall of the year.’ This is positive proof that you and I have definite feelings associated with these different days, months and seasons of the year. Because of this association, we can at any time consciously dwell in that day or season which we have selected.”

In other words since we associate definite emotional tone-values with certain days or seasons, we can easily conjure up imaginatively those days or seasons in our minds. Sunday has for most of us a well-defined set of images and feelings which can readily be evoked for the purpose of our exercise.

“If today were Wednesday and you decided that it would be quite possible for your desire to embody a new realisation of yourself by Sunday, then Sunday becomes the point in time that you would visit. To make this visit, you shut out Wednesday and let in Sunday. This is accomplished by simply feeling that it is Sunday. Begin to hear the church-bells; begin to feel the quietness of the day and all that Sunday means to you; actually feel that it is Sunday. When this is accomplished, feel the joy of having received that which on Wednesday was but a desire. Feel the complete thrill of having received it, and then return to Wednesday, the point in time you left behind you. In doing this, you created a vacuum in consciousness by moving from Wednesday to Sunday. Nature, abhorring a vacuum, rushes in to fill it, thereby fashioning a mold in the likeness of that which you potentially create, namely, the joy of having realised your defined desire.”

By dwelling now, on Wednesday, on the sense of ecstasy and freedom that you would have on Sunday when the saving shekels arrive, you project yourself forward in time. And since time, according to most metaphysical teaching, is but a creation of man’s consciousness, a form of his thinking and feeling, time itself may be superseded and future events anticipated. For “Now,” as the Bible says, “Now is the appointed time.” Not tomorrow, not Sunday—not even next year. Right now, at this very moment, one may save oneself.

Such states of consciousness demand not merely mental concentration and steadfastness of purpose, and indomitable will and courage, but an ability to feel, a high capacity to evoke at a moment’s notice an enormous potential of emotion. Whether the average person can do this is another matter. Certainly some people can do it. Neville, I am sure, can do it. But he is an artist, a dancer. He has been enabled by his training, by his life’s discipline, to assume a definite rôle. He can adopt a certain part, acting it out as though it were true. His is the ability and capacity to achieve identification with mental images, with a personality other than his own—that is an intrinsic part of his emotional make-up. That is why such states of consciousness are open and available to him—as naturally they are to similarly trained and similarly constituted people.

But John Doe is not, I am afraid, capable of such unrestrained flights of feeling and imagination. His mind has become entirely too prosaic, his feelings too inhibited, his imagination entirely too restrained for such flights into the empyrean. I do not say that in the last analysis that such feats are impossible to the average person. But I do insist that training is necessary—training in the art of “letting go,” in the discipline of feeling, and in the analysis of psychological states. This takes such time and effort that there are few willing to embark upon a way of life that implies the expenditure of much time and labor. But if they do not wish to do so, then such states of consciousness and such spiritual achievements must remain mere dreams, fantasies, visions of another world completely beyond their reach.

Though my sympathies are largely with Neville both as to many of his conceptions and technical procedures—yet I feel that several factors are absent from his method. He is absolutely correct in placing emphasis on “feeling.” By means of this intensity of feeling, all things become possible. But the problem is to provoke such an intensity, a storm, a madness of emotion by means of which a communion with the unconscious self may be established. This certainly has not been adequately dealt with.

Moreover, Neville advises relaxation. One must relax to the point of “floating,” and losing awareness of one’s body. But how shall we achieve such deep relaxation? This is not easy for most of us. What instruction does Neville give?

“You take your attention away from your problem and place it upon your being. You say silently but feelingly, ‘I AM.’ Simply feel that you are faceless and formless and continue doing so until you feel yourself floating.

“‘Floating’ is a psychological state which completely denies the physical. Through practice, in relaxation and willingly refusing to react to sensory impressions, it is found to develop a state of consciousness of pure receptivity.”

I feel inclined to wager large odds that most who hear him or any other teacher of metaphysics, have not the least notion as to how to relax. There is nothing metaphysical in relaxation. By following a few simple rules which operate in accordance with known physiological and psychological laws, a deep state of freedom from neuro-muscular tension can be induced. I propose dealing with this thought on a later page, and suggest an elaborate technique for adequate relaxation.

Moreover and far more important—what shall we do about developing this intensity of feeling? Merely to relax will not do it. One can relax, lose complete consciousness of the body, “float” beautifully away from awareness of sense and mind—and still be as cold-blooded as a fish. Neville’s method is sound enough. But the difficulty is that few people are able to muster up this emotional exaltation or this intellectual concentration which are the royal approaches to the citadel of the Unconscious. As a result of this definite lack of training or technique, the mind wanders all over the place, and a thousand and one things totally unrelated to “I AM” are ever before their attention.

I believe that the ancients had superior methods. Confronted by the same problems, and by the same lack of training, they evolved methods which have stood the test of time. To some people they prescribed a long course of psychological training, having as its logical objective the development of a tremendous power of mental concentration. This training we have come to know as Yoga. To others not temperamentally capable of this, or unwilling to engage upon such a discipline, arduous to the extreme, they worked out other methods.

Anything that will tend to exalt the mind and feelings, is useful. Music, color, poetry, perfumes—anything that will intoxicate the mind and senses within certain limits, is utilisable. It is more difficult to describe invocation, another method they employed. It is simpler to explain it by quoting several examples of them in these pages, so that the reader can develop some idea of their content and power and ecstasy.

The writers of these invocations were well acquainted with what we can call the “I AM” principle, for they employed it throughout. But not alone, as we shall see. This subject, therefore, I will reserve for another chapter, when I shall attempt to describe it at some length.

YOUR FAITH IS YOUR FORTUNE

1941

- BEFORE ABRAHAM WAS
- YOU SHALL DECREE
- THE PRINCIPLE OF TRUTH
- WHOM SEEK YE?
- WHO AM I?
- I AM HE
- THY WILL BE DONE
- NO OTHER GOD
- THE FOUNDATION STONE
- TO HIM THAT HATH

- CHRISTMAS
- CRUCIFIXION AND RESURRECTION
- THE I'M-PRESSIONS
- CIRCUMCISION
- INTERVAL OF TIME
- THE TRIUNE GOD
- PRAYER
- THE TWELVE DISCIPLES
- LIQUID LIGHT
- THE BREATH OF LIFE
- DANIEL IN THE LIONS' DEN
- FISHING
- BE EARS THAT HEAR
- CLAIRVOYANCE—"COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO"
- TWENTY-THIRD PSALM
- GETHSEMANE
- A FORMULA FOR VICTORY

Your Faith Is Your Fortune

MAN'S FAITH IN GOD IS MEASURED BY HIS CONFIDENCE IN HIMSELF

BEFORE ABRAHAM WAS

Verily, verily, I say unto you before Abraham was, I AM.

—JOHN 8:58.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."

In the beginning was the unconditioned awareness of being, and the unconditioned awareness of being became conditioned by imagining itself to be something, and the unconditioned awareness of being became that which it had imagined itself to be; so did creation begin.

By this law—first conceiving, then becoming that conceived—all things evolve out of No-thing; and without this sequence there is not anything made that is made.

Before Abraham or the world was—I AM. When all of time shall cease to be—I AM. I AM the formless awareness of being conceiving myself to be man. By my everlasting law of being I am compelled to be and to express all that I believe myself to be.

I AM the eternal No-thingness containing within my formless self the capacity to be all things. I AM that in which all my conceptions of myself live and move and have their being, and apart from which they are not.

I dwell within every conception of myself; from this withinness I ever seek to transcend all conceptions of myself. By the very law of my being I transcend my conceptions of myself, only as I believe myself to be that which does transcend.

I AM the law of being and beside ME there is no law. I AM that I AM.

YOU SHALL DECREE

So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth; it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.

—ISAIAH 55:11.

Man can decree a thing and it will come to pass.

Man has always decreed that which has appeared in his world. He is today decreeing that which is appearing in his world and he shall continue to do so as long as man is conscious of being man.

Nothing has ever appeared in man's world but what man decreed that it should. This you may deny; but try as you will you cannot disprove it for this decreeing is based upon a changeless principle. Man does not command things to appear by his words which are, more often than not, a confession of his doubts and fears. Decreeing is ever done in consciousness.

Every man automatically expresses that which he is conscious of being. Without effort or the use of words, at every moment of time, man is commanding himself to be and to possess that which he is conscious of being and possessing.

This changeless principle of expression is dramatized in all the Bibles of the world. The writers of our sacred books were illumined mystics, past masters in the art of psychology. In telling the story of the soul they personified this impersonal principle in the form of a historical document both to preserve it and to hide it from the eyes of the uninitiated.

Today those to whom this great treasure has been entrusted, namely, the priesthoods of the world, have forgotten that the Bibles are psychological dramas representing the consciousness of man; in their blind forgetfulness they now teach their followers to worship its characters as men and women who actually lived in time and space.

When man sees the Bible as a great psychological drama with all of its characters and actors as the personified qualities and attributes of his own consciousness, then—and then only—will the Bible reveal to him the light of its symbology. This impersonal principle of life which made all things is personified as God. This Lord God, creator of heaven and earth, is discovered to be man's awareness of being. If man were less bound by orthodoxy and more intuitively observant, he could not fail to notice in the reading of the Bibles that the awareness of being is revealed hundreds of times throughout this literature. To name a few: "I AM hath sent me unto you." "Be still and know that I AM God." "I AM the Lord and there is no God." "I AM the shepherd." "I AM the door." "I AM the resurrection and the life." "I AM the way." "I AM the beginning and the end."

I AM; man's unconditioned awareness of being is revealed as Lord and creator of every conditioned state of being. If man would give up his belief in a God apart from himself, recognize his awareness of being to be God (this awareness fashions itself in the likeness and image of its conception of itself), he would transform his world from a barren waste to a fertile field of his own liking.

The day man does this he will know that he and his Father are one but his Father is greater than he. He will know that his consciousness of being is one with that which he is conscious of being, but that his unconditioned consciousness of being is greater than his conditioned state or his conception of himself.

When man discovers his consciousness to be the impersonal power of expression, which power eternally

personifies itself in his conceptions of himself, he will assume and appropriate that state of consciousness which he desires to express; in so doing he will become that state in expression.

“Ye shall decree a thing and it shall come to pass” can now be told in this manner: You shall become conscious of being or possessing a thing and you shall express or possess that which you are conscious of being.

The law of consciousness is the only law of expression. “I AM the way.” “I AM the resurrection.” Consciousness is the way as well as the power which resurrects and expresses all that man will ever be conscious of being.

Turn from the blindness of the uninitiated man who attempts to express and possess those qualities and things which he is not conscious of being and possessing; and be as the illumined mystic who decrees on the basis of this changeless law. Consciously claim yourself to be that which you seek; appropriate the consciousness of that which you see; and you too will know the status of the true mystic, as follows:

I became conscious of being it. I am still conscious of being it. And I shall continue to be conscious of being it until that which I am conscious of being is perfectly expressed.

Yes, I shall decree a thing and it shall come to pass.

THE PRINCIPLE OF TRUTH

Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

—JOHN 8:32.

Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall set you free.”

The truth that sets man free is the knowledge that his consciousness is the resurrection and the life, that his consciousness both resurrects and makes alive all that he is conscious of being. Apart from consciousness there is neither resurrection nor life.

When man gives up his belief in a God apart from himself and begins to recognize his awareness of being to be God, as did Jesus and the prophets, he will transform his world with the realization, “I and my Father are one but my Father is greater than I.” He will know that his consciousness is God and that which he is conscious of being is the son bearing witness of God, the Father.

The conceiver and the conception are one, but the conceiver is greater than his conception. Before Abraham was I AM. Yes, I was aware of being before I became aware of being man, and in that day when I shall cease to be conscious of being man I shall still be conscious of being.

The consciousness of being is not dependent upon being anything. It preceded all conceptions of itself and shall be when all conceptions of itself shall cease to be. “I AM the beginning and the end.” That is, all things or conceptions of myself begin and end in me, but I, the formless awareness, remain forever.

Jesus discovered this glorious truth and declared Himself to be one with God, not the God that man had fashioned, for He never recognized such a God. Jesus found God to be His awareness of being and so told man that the Kingdom of God and Heaven were within.

When it is recorded that Jesus left the world and went to His Father it is simply stating that He turned His attention from the world of the senses and rose in consciousness to that level which He desired to express. There He remained until He became one with the consciousness to which He ascended. When He returned to the world of man He could act with the positive assurance of that which He was conscious of being, a state of consciousness no one but Himself felt or knew that He possessed. Man who is ignorant of this everlasting law of expression looks upon such happenings as miracles.

To rise in consciousness to the level of the thing desired and to remain there until such level becomes your nature is the way of all seeming miracles. "And I, if I be lifted up, I shall draw all men unto me." If I be lifted up in consciousness to the naturalness of the thing desired, I shall draw the manifestation of that desire to me.

"No man comes unto me save the Father within me draws him, and I and my Father are one." My consciousness is the Father who draws the manifestation of life to me. The nature of the manifestation is determined by the state of consciousness in which I dwell. I am always drawing into my world that which I am conscious of being.

If you are dissatisfied with your present expression of life, then you must be born again. Rebirth is the dropping of that level with which you are dissatisfied and rising to that level of consciousness which you desire to express and possess.

You cannot serve two masters or opposing states of consciousness at the same time. Taking your attention from one state and placing it upon the other, you die to the one from which you have taken it and you live and express the one with which you are united.

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