

Epictetus' Discourses Compared to Bailey's Technique of Integration for the Third Ray

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Summary

Epictetus was a Greek sage and Stoic philosopher during the first and second centuries. Alice Bailey was a theosophical author during the twentieth century. This article compares Epictetus' *Discourses* to Bailey's *Technique of Integration for the Third Ray*, showing that they have passages that are similar in meaning, and it is part of a series of articles that corroborate the following hypothesis: Bailey's Techniques of Integration for the seven rays depict symbolically the archetypal patterns of integration that aspirants are intuitively directed to apply to themselves.

Epictetus

Epictetus (55 AD –135 AD) was born to an enslaved woman and was for many years a slave himself. While still a slave, he studied in Rome with Musonius Rufus, a prominent Stoic philosopher. Epictetus eventually obtained his freedom and must have achieved a recognized position as a philosopher, because he was forced to leave Rome when Emperor Domitian banished all philosophers from Rome around 90 AD. So Epictetus traveled to Nicopolis in Western Greece, where he founded a Stoic school that became famous. He had conversations with many notable people at his school, became friendly with Emperor Hadrian, and was admired by Emperor Marcus Aurelius.

Arrian of Nicomedia (86 AD – 160 AD), a student of Epictetus, was a Roman historian, public servant, and military commander. Sometime around 104 to 108 AD, he wrote the *Discourses of Epictetus*, which was reported to consist of *eight* books originally, but only *four* books now remain in their entirety, along with a few fragments of the others. Arrian explained how he came to write the *Discourses* in a preface attached to them:

I did not write these discourses of Epictetus as a literary composition, in the way that one normally writes works of such a kind, nor did I myself release them to the public, for, as I say, it was not my intention to write a book. Rather, I tried to note down whatever I heard him say, so far as possible in his own words, to preserve reminders for myself in future days of his cast of mind, and frankness of speech. These are, then, as you would expect, the kind of discourses that one person would address to another as the moment demands, and not such as he would compose formally for people to read in the future.¹

Margaret Graver, a Professor of Classical Studies, says that we can be confident that the *Discourses* represent Epictetus' thought rather than Arrian's own thought for two reasons:

first, because the language employed is *koinē* or common Greek rather than the sophisticated literary language of Arrian's other writings; and second because the brusque, elliptical manner of expression, the precise philosophical vocabulary, and the intellectual rigor of the content are quite different from what Arrian produces elsewhere.²

Arrian also compiled the shorter *Encheiridion* (titled in English either *Manual* or *Handbook*) as a brief abridgement of the *Discourses*.

About the Author

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Parts of the *Encheiridion* cannot be correlated with passages in the surviving four books of the *Discourses*, thereby corroborating the view that some of the latter work has indeed been lost. Thus no writings of Epictetus himself are really known, because the two works associated with him, the *Discourses* and *Encheiridion*, were actually written by Arrian. Let us consider how these works are assessed by some modern authors.

Helena Blavatsky (1831–1891), a founder of the Theosophical Society, applauds Epictetus' esoteric philosophy:

The esotericism of our Masters (let us rather say their divine philosophy) is that of the greatest of the PAGANS of antiquity ... Assuredly, I should be the first to choose the position of servant to a pagan Plato, or an Epictetus, himself a slave, in preference to the office of highest cardinal to an Alexander or a Caesar Borgia, or even to a Leo XIII.³

The above quotation mentions Alexander, perhaps referring to Alexander VI, who was a controversial Pope of the Roman Catholic Church during the Renaissance; Caesar Borgia, who was a controversial Cardinal of the Church and the son of Alexander VI; and Leo XIII, who was the Pope when the quotation was written.

Bertrand Russell (1872–1970), a founder of analytic philosophy, applauds Epictetus' moral philosophy:

There is great sincerity and simplicity in the writings which record the teaching of Epictetus. (They are written down from notes by his pupil Arrian.) His morality is lofty and unworldly; in a situation in which a man's main duty is to resist tyrannical power, it would be difficult to find anything more helpful. In some respects, for instance in recognizing the brotherhood of man and in teaching the equality of slaves, it is superior to anything to be found in Plato or Aristotle or any philosopher whose thought is inspired by the City State.⁴

Albert Ellis (1913 – 2007), an American psychologist who developed Rational Emotive

Behavior Therapy, credits Epictetus with providing a foundation for his system of psychotherapy.⁵ James Stockdale (1923 – 2005), an American fighter pilot who became a prisoner of war during the Vietnam War, credits Epictetus with helping him endure seven and a half years in a North Vietnamese military prison, including torture and four years in solitary confinement.⁶

Elizabeth Carter (1758), provided the first English translation of Epictetus from the original Greek text, but many subsequent translations have also been made. This article draws from three translations—George Long (1877), William Oldfather (1925), and Robin Hard (1995)—using quotations that seem to us as being clear and fluent. The particular source for each quotation is given in the endnotes. If a quotation from Epictetus' *Discourses* incorporates a dialog between Epictetus and someone else, the words of the other person are given in italics, even though Long's translation—which is the source of many quotations—employs only regular style for both speakers of the dialog.

Evidence of Inspiration

Two kinds of evidence support the claim that Epictetus was divinely inspired while giving his discourses. First, many Christian thinkers, both ancient and modern, regard his discourses as providing profitable instruction in righteousness:

Origen of Alexandria (185 – 254), an early Christian theologian considered to be a Church Father, writes: "It is easy, indeed, to observe that Plato is found only in the hands of those who profess to be literary men; while Epictetus is admired by persons of ordinary capacity, who have a desire to be benefited, and who perceive the improvement which may be derived from his writings."⁷

The *Encheiridion* was adapted, on at least three occasions, to suit the need of medieval Christian monasteries for a guide to the self-scrutiny and discipline of monastic life. The three known adaptations cannot be dated with certainty, but their latest possible

dates are the tenth, eleventh, and fourteenth centuries, respectively, according to their oldest extant manuscripts. These adaptations are Christianized versions of the original text, such as by changing the names “Zeus” to “God” and “Socrates” to “Paul.”⁸

Blaise Pascal (1623 – 1662), a French mathematician and Catholic philosopher, says, “Epictetus is among the philosophers of the world who have best understood the duties of man ... I find in Epictetus an incomparable art for troubling the repose of those who seek it in external things, and for forcing them to acknowledge that they are veritable slaves and miserable blind men; that it is impossible that they should find anything else than the error and pain which they fly, unless they give themselves without reserve to God alone.”⁹

The Apostle Paul describes the characteristics of inspired scripture in 2 Timothy 3:16: “All scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.”¹⁰ Consequently Percy Gardner (1846 – 1957), a classical archaeologist, infers Epictetus’ inspiration from his profitable instruction in righteousness:

There is no possibility, from the rational and critical point of view, of denying inspiration to Epictetus, while allowing it to the nameless authors of some of the books of the Bible. In old days it was possible to contrast the Bible, taken as an inspired whole, with all profane literature. But directly the critical spirit is introduced into the consideration of the Bible that possibility vanishes. And when we compare the inspiration of many passages in Epictetus, or even of some of Plato’s works, notably the *Apology of Socrates*, with that of *Ecclesiastes* or *Malachi*, we cannot allow that the heathen writers stand at a disadvantage.¹¹

The second kind of evidence is Epictetus’ own claim of being divinely inspired:

Do not so, I entreat you by the Gods, young man: but when you have once heard these words, go away and say to yourself, ‘Epictetus has not said this to me; for how could

he? but some propitious God through him: for it would never have come into his thoughts to say this, since he is not accustomed to talk thus with any person. Come then let us obey God, that we may not be subject to his anger.’ You say, No. But (I say), if a crow by his croaking signifies anything to you, it is not the crow which signifies, but God through the crow; and if he signifies anything through a human voice, will he not cause the man to say this to you, that you may know the power of the divinity, that he signifies to some in this way, and to others in that way, and concerning the greatest things and the chief he signifies through the noblest messenger?¹²

Bailey’s Technique of Integration for the Third Ray

Teachings on the seven rays were part of the ancient Hindu *Rig Veda*, often dated between 1700 and 1100 BCE, and have been disseminated in modern Theosophy.¹³ Alice Bailey (1880 – 1949), a modern theosophical author, states:

A ray is but a name for a particular force or type of energy, with the emphasis upon the quality which that force exhibits and not upon the form aspect which it creates. This is a true definition of a ray.¹⁴

Every human being is swept into manifestation on the impulse of some ray, and is colored by that particular ray quality, which determines the form aspect, indicates the way he should go, and enables him (by the time the third initiation is reached) to have sensed and then to have cooperated with his ray purpose.¹⁵

In Theosophy, an “initiation” is said to be a milestone on the spiritual journey. Thus, according to Bailey’s account, every human being is connected to a specific ray and can receive guidance on the spiritual journey from that ray.

Bailey claims that her “Seven Techniques of Integration” depict “the pattern of the thought and the process of the life” of aspirants guided by each of the seven rays.¹⁶ She admits that her techniques are written in such a way that they

are difficult to understand: “It is difficult to make easily comprehensible the nature and purpose of these techniques”; “Our study of the Techniques of Integration was definitely abstruse and couched in language quite symbolic.”¹⁷ She also says, “these ray techniques are imposed by the soul upon the personality after it has been somewhat integrated into a functioning entity and is, therefore, becoming slightly responsive to the soul, the directing Intelligence.”¹⁸

For Bailey, the personality, or what is called the “lower self,” consists of the mental, emotional, and physical bodies; the soul, or what is called the “higher self,”¹⁹ is the “inner divine voice.”²⁰

If Bailey’s claim is correct, then her techniques depict the archetypal patterns that underlie all inspired methods of integration. For example, the written esoteric teaching of any religion might be a verbal expression of one of these archetypes, but with some distortions due to the limitations of words. Different exoteric religions might be expressions of the same archetype but with varying distortions. Thus, if her claim is true, it should be possible to show that her techniques, in part or in whole, are similar to various recorded methods of integration that are thought to be inspired. Bailey’s claim can be tested with Epictetus’ *Discourses*, because of the previously discussed evidence that he was an inspired speaker.

This article is concerned with only the Third Ray, which is called “the Ray of Active Intelligence.” Bailey’s Technique of Integration for the Third Ray is as follows:

“Pulling the threads of Life, I stand, enmeshed within my self-created glamour. Surrounded am I by the fabric I have woven. I see naught else.

The love of truth must dominate, not love of my own thoughts, or love of my ideas or forms; love of the ordered process must control, not love of my own wild activity.”

The word goes forth from soul to form: “Be still. Learn to stand silent, quiet and unafraid. I, at the center, *Am*. Look up along the line and not along the many lines

which, in the space of aeons, you have woven. These hold thee prisoner. Be still. Rush not from point to point, nor be deluded by the outer forms and that which disappears. Behind the forms, the Weaver stands and silently he weaves.”²¹

Weaving is a method of fabric production in which two distinct sets of threads are interlaced at right angles to form a fabric. The foregoing Technique incorporates the metaphor of weaving, using such words as “threads,” “fabric,” “woven,” “Weaver,” and “weaves.” Weaving entails intelligent activity, which is the defining quality of the Third Ray, so this metaphor symbolizes the essential nature of a Third Ray aspirant.

Bailey writes, “The method of approaching the great Quest, for this [third] ray type, is by deep thinking on philosophic or metaphysical lines till he is led to the realization of the great Beyond and of the paramount importance of treading the Path that leads thither.”²² As will be shown, the foregoing Technique depicts a philosophical or metaphysical approach to the spiritual journey.

In fact, this article demonstrates that the foregoing Technique is similar in meaning to passages in Epictetus’ *Discourses* on philosophy.

Bailey states that each of her techniques can be divided into five phases: “The words, covering the process in every case, are *Alignment, Crisis, Light, Revelation, Integration*.”²³ The following commentary is also divided into these five phases.

Alignment

In the first phase of the integration process, the aspirants bring their personality—consisting of their mental, emotional, and physical bodies—into increased *alignment* with their soul. As a result, their personality becomes slightly responsive to their soul.

Throughout this article, the interpretation of each segment of Bailey’s Technique of Integration for the Third Ray is given in italics and followed by parentheses that contain the corresponding words of the Technique. The Technique’s first paragraph, which uses the first-

person grammatical perspective, depicts an aspirant's pattern of thought during the alignment phase, as explained next.

Observe yourself with detachment

While manipulating the material world but ignorant of the inner realities ("Pulling the threads of Life"), *I observe my emotions with detachment* ("I stand") and see that they were created from opinions that are unverified and possibly false ("enmeshed within my self-created glamour").

Let us consider the symbols used in the Technique. "Threads of Life" signifies the material world, because Bailey speaks of "the many threads that weave the outer garment of the Lord"²⁴ and "the fact that matter is the outer garment of God."²⁵ Thus the initial phrase, "pulling the threads of Life," depicts manipulation of the material world without concern for the inner realities.

The word "stand," or "stands," appears three times in the Technique. In each case, this word is taken as signifying alignment, as in Romans 5:2, "this grace wherein we stand." Bailey supports this association by speaking of an aspirant who "can take his stand and there align himself."²⁶ There are, however, different kinds of alignment. In the interpretation given above, "stand" is taken as signifying detached self-observation. As an example of this significance, Bailey writes, "if you could but grasp the full significance of detachment and stand serene as the observing Director, there would be no more waste motion, no more mistaken moves and no more false interpretations."²⁷ In this quotation, "stand" is associated with both "detachment" and the "observing Director."

Bailey gives this definition: "*Glamour*, in its turn, veils and hides the truth behind the fogs and mists of feeling and emotional reaction."²⁸

She explains how glamour is created from illusion, which is an erroneous concept or belief: "*The Problem of Glamour* is found when the mental illusion is intensified by desire."²⁹

The phrase "enmeshed within my self-created glamour" depicts the recognition that Third Ray aspirants gain of their own inadequacy:

they see that their emotions were created from opinions that are unverified and possibly false. Put differently, they have the following key insight about themselves, as expressed in Bailey's words: "Third Ray people ... are lost in the threads of their own glamorous manipulations and their devious thinking, and hardly know where truth begins and delusion ends."³⁰

Epictetus has comparable notions. He makes these comments to a visitor who has not yet become one of his students:

You are rich, you have children and a wife perhaps, and many slaves: Caesar knows you, in Rome you have many friends, you render their dues to all, you know how to requite him who does you a favor, and to repay in the same kind him who does a wrong. What do you lack? If then I shall shew you that you lack the things most necessary and the chief things for happiness, and that hitherto you have looked after everything rather than what you ought, and, to crown all, that you neither know what God is nor what man is, nor what is good nor what is bad; and as to what I have said about your ignorance of other matters, that may perhaps be endured, but if I say that you know nothing about yourself, how is it possible that you should endure me and bear the proof and stay here?³¹

This quotation exemplifies the interpretation given for the Technique's initial phrase, because the visitor can manipulate the material world in a seemingly successful way, is igno-

rant of the inner realities, such as right values and the nature of God and himself, and is on the verge of becoming a student of philosophy.

Philosophy signifies the love and pursuit of wisdom by intellectual means and moral self-discipline. Epictetus describes the beginning of philosophy in another discourse:

The beginning of philosophy with those who take it up as they should, and enter in, as it were, by the gate, is a consciousness of a man's own weakness and impotence with reference to the things of real consequence in life.³²

In other words, one begins to pursue wisdom when one recognizes one's own inadequacy, but such recognition can be obtained only through self-observation. Epictetus, in the same discourse, considers this recognition to include skepticism regarding one's own opinions:

Behold the beginning of philosophy!—a recognition of the conflict between the opinions of men, and a search for the origin of that conflict, and a condemnation of mere opinion, coupled with skepticism regarding it, and a kind of investigation to determine whether the opinion is rightly held, together with the invention of a kind of standard of judgment, as we have invented the balance for the determination of weights, or the carpenter's rule for the determination of things straight and crooked.³³

As Epictetus explains elsewhere, we do not react emotionally to the things that happen in the world but only to our opinions about those things:

Men are disturbed not by the things which happen, but by the opinions about the things: for example, death is nothing terrible, for if it were, it would have seemed so to Socrates; for the opinion about death, that it is terrible, is the terrible thing. When then we are impeded or disturbed or grieved, let us never blame others, but ourselves, that is, our opinions. It is the act of an ill-instructed man to blame others for his own bad condition; it is the act of one who has begun to be instructed, to lay the blame

on himself; and of one whose instruction is completed, neither to blame another, nor himself.³⁴

Epictetus' notion that emotion is created from opinion generalizes Bailey's notion that glamour is created from illusion. Moreover Epictetus and the Technique agree on this point: aspirants begin their pursuit of wisdom when they start to doubt their own opinions.

Observe the extent of your opinions

I have opinions about everything that surrounds me ("Surrounded am I by the fabric I have woven").

Bailey makes a similar statement: "illusion imprisons a man upon the mental plane and surrounds him entirely with man-made thoughtforms, barring out escape into the higher realms of awareness or into that loving service which must be given in the lower worlds of conscious, manifested effort."³⁵

Epictetus, in an encounter with a government official, shows that everything that we do is based upon our opinions:

Epictetus replied, If you ask me what you will do in Rome, whether you will succeed or fail, I have no rule about this. But if you ask me how you will fare, I can tell you: if you have right opinions, you will fare well; if they are false, you will fare ill. For to every man the cause of his acting is opinion. For what is the reason why you desired to be elected governor of the Cnossians? Your opinion. What is the reason that you are now going up to Rome? Your opinion. And going in winter, and with danger and expense.—*I must go.*—What tells you this? Your opinion. Then if opinions are the causes of all actions, and a man has bad opinions, such as the cause may be, such also is the effect. Have we then all sound opinions, both you and your adversary? And how do you differ? But have you sounder opinions than your adversary? Why? You think so. And so does he think that his opinions are better; and so do madmen. This is a bad criterion. But show to me that you have made some inquiry into

your opinions and have taken some pains about them.³⁶

Realize your own ignorance

I do not see any suitable criterion for assessing the validity of my opinions, because every potential criterion appears to be just another opinion (“I see naught else”).

Bailey has two books that quote the following passage from Blavatsky, who in turn attributes it to the Buddha:

Our Lord Buddha has said that we must not believe in a thing said merely because it is said; nor in traditions because they have been handed down from antiquity; nor rumors, as such; nor writings by sages, because sages wrote them; nor fancies that we may suspect to have been inspired in us by a deva (that is, in presumed spiritual inspiration); nor from inferences drawn from some haphazard assumption we may have made; nor because of what seems an analogical necessity; nor on the mere authority of our teachers or masters.³⁷

The above quotation rejects eight potential criteria that might be used to assess the validity of an opinion. All of these potential criteria are themselves just opinions, because none has been substantiated by a valid proof. Before searching for a suitable criterion, we first have to gain knowledge of our own ignorance: realize that all of the criteria that we have been using are unsuitable.

Epictetus helps another government official to achieve this knowledge of being ignorant:

Well, said Epictetus, if we were inquiring about white and black, what criterion should we employ for distinguishing between them? *The sight*, he said. And if about hot and cold, and hard and soft, what criterion? *The touch*. Well then, since we are inquiring about things which are according to nature, and those which are done rightly or not rightly, what kind of criterion do you think that we should employ? *I do not know*, he said. And yet not to know the criterion of colors and smells, and also of tastes, is perhaps no great harm; but if a

man does not know the criterion of good and bad, and of things according to nature and contrary to nature, does this seem to you a small harm? *The greatest harm (I think)*. Come tell me, ... as to Jews and Syrians and Egyptians and Romans, is it possible that the opinions of all of them in respect to food are right? *How is it possible?* he said. Well, I suppose, it is absolutely necessary that, if the opinions of the Egyptians are right, the opinions of the rest must be wrong; if the opinions of the Jews are right, those of the rest cannot be right. *Certainly*. But where there is ignorance ... there is want of learning and training in things which are necessary. He assented to this. You then, said Epictetus, since you know this, for the future will employ yourself seriously about nothing else, and will apply your mind to nothing else than to learn the criterion of things which are according to nature, and by using it also to determine each several thing.³⁸

The phrase “things which are according to nature,” or a similar one, is included three times in the above quotation, but what does it mean? This phrase refers to a key tenet of the Stoic school of philosophy. Zeno (334 BCE – 262 BCE), the founder of the Stoic school, was quoted as saying that “the chief good was confessedly to live according to nature; which is to live according to virtue, for nature leads us to this point.”³⁹ Ulysses Pierce, a Chaplain of the United States Senate, explains Epictetus’ use of this phrase: “Here is no idealization of the brute forces of nature or longing for a return to the fancied freedom of primitive life. On the contrary, the nature in accordance with which we are to aspire to live is the moral and social nature of man at its highest.”⁴⁰

Crisis of Evocation

Bailey writes, “The soul is a unit of energy, vibrating in unison with one of the seven ray Lives, and colored by a particular ray light.”⁴¹ In other words, each human soul has the quality of a particular ray, which is called its “soul ray.” In the second phase of the integration process, the aspirants sense intuitively their soul ray, which in this case is the Third

Ray of Active Intelligence, because they have increased their alignment with their soul. The inconsistency between their sensed potential and their personal life brings them to an inner *crisis* in which they begin to bring forth the guidance of their soul. The Technique's second paragraph treats this crisis, which also uses the first-person perspective, as explained next.

The discovery of an objective criterion for assessing the validity of opinions must be my overriding purpose ("The love of truth must dominate"), not the glamour of creative work, or the glamour of active scheming or self-importance ("not love of my own thoughts, or love of my ideas or forms"); the systematic application of such a criterion must control my mind ("love of the ordered process must control"), not the glamour of devious and continuous manipulation ("not love of my own wild activity").

Bailey provides the following clue regarding the meaning of "truth" in the Technique:

It should be remembered that the truth in this case is not truth on the abstract planes but concrete and knowable truth—truth which can be formulated and expressed in concrete form and terms. Where the light of truth is called in, glamour automatically disappears, even if only for a temporary period. But, again, difficulty arises because few people care to face the actual truth, for it involves eventually the abandonment of the beloved glamour and the ability to recognize error and to admit mistakes, and this the false pride of the mind will not permit.⁴²

The word "truth" in the Technique is taken as an objective criterion for assessing the validity of opinions, because the foregoing quotation characterizes "truth" as "concrete and knowable," able to "recognize error," and leading to "the abandonment of the beloved glamour."

Four phrases in the Technique depict repudiated forms of love, and are taken as the following glammers that Bailey specifically associates with Third Ray people: "the glamour of active scheming," "the glamour of creative work—without true motive," "the glamour of self-importance, from the standpoint of knowing,

of efficiency," and "the glamour of devious and continuous manipulation."⁴³

Epictetus argues that some criterion must exist for assessing the validity of opinions:

Is everything right that every man thinks? Nay, how is it possible for conflicting opinions to be right? Consequently, not all opinions are right.—But are *our* opinions right? Why ours, rather than those of the Syrians; why ours, rather than those of the Egyptians ... —There is no reason why.—Therefore, the opinion which each man holds is not a sufficient criterion for determining the truth; for also in the case of weights and measures we are not satisfied with the mere appearance, but we have invented a certain standard to test each. In the present case, then, is there no standard higher than opinion? And yet how can it possibly be that matters of the utmost consequence among men should be undeterminable and undiscoverable.—Therefore, there *is* some standard.—Then why do we not look for it and find it, and when we have found it thenceforth use it unswervingly, not so much as stretching out our finger without it? For this is something, I think, the discovery of which frees from madness those who use only opinion as the measure of all things.⁴⁴

Consequently both Epictetus and the Technique agree on these points: one ought to discover a suitable criterion for valid opinions and then apply it to oneself.

Light

Because of their crisis of evocation, the aspirants take stock of their situation and search within themselves. Eventually they enter the phase of *light* and see clearly their need to change their direction, method, and attitude. The first part of the Technique's third paragraph treats this phase. Its first sentence has this meaning: *Disciplines go forth from soul to personality* ("The Word goes forth from soul to form").

Let us consider the meaning of each of these words. *Soul* is Bailey's term for the inner divine guide, and *disciplines* are trainings ex-

pected to produce specific patterns of behavior. Bailey writes, “We know that the soul imposes its own disciplines upon its agent, the personality.”⁴⁵ “*The Word*” is taken as these innate disciplines, because it is said to go forth from the soul. Bailey speaks of “the personality or form,”⁴⁶ showing that she uses these two terms as synonyms.

Epictetus has comparable notions. He speaks of inner guidance in the following passage:

But who tells you that you have equal power with Zeus? Nevertheless he has placed by every man a guardian, every man’s Daemon, to whom he has committed the care of the man, a guardian who never sleeps, is never deceived. For to what better and more careful guardian could He have entrusted each of us? When then you have shut the doors and made darkness within, remember never to say that you are alone, for you are not; but God is within, and your Daemon is within, and what need have they of light to see what you are doing?⁴⁷

In Greek mythology, Zeus is the chief god, and a Daemon, or Daimon, is an intermediary between gods and human beings. Unlike the demons spoken of in the Bible, the Greek Daemon need not be evil. Anthony Long, a Professor of Classics, clarifies Epictetus’ notion of Daemon:

Epictetus’ *daimon* is his and every person’s normative self, the voice of correct reason that is available to everyone because it is, at the same time, reason as such and fully equivalent to God. Although Epictetus sometimes speaks as if the presence or availability of this voice pluralizes the person, or makes the person distinct from his *daimon*, we should regard that language as a metaphor or, better, as a way of articulating the idea that in listening to and obeying one’s normative self, one is at the same time in accordance with the divinity who administers the world.⁴⁸

Epictetus’ “Daemon” resembles Bailey’s “soul,” as shown by the following comparisons. Epictetus says, “Zeus ... has placed by every man a guardian, every man’s Daemon,” whereas Bailey writes, “The soul is an expres-

sion of the mind of God.”⁴⁹ Epictetus describes the Daemon as “a guardian who never sleeps, is never deceived,” whereas Bailey writes, “Guidance can come, as you well know, from a man’s own soul ... This, when clear and direct, is true divine guidance.”⁵⁰ Epictetus says, “God is within, and your Daemon is within,” whereas Bailey writes, “Man’s spirit is one with the life of God and is within him, deep-seated in his soul, as his soul is seated within the body.”⁵¹

Epictetus does not consistently use “Daemon” to denote the inner divine guide, but instead employs either “Zeus” or “God” in subsequent quotations reproduced in this article. For example, he provides this invocation, “Lead me, O Zeus, and thou O Destiny, The way that I am bid by you to go,”⁵² which is comparable to Bailey’s invocation, “May that soul of mine whose nature is love and wisdom direct events, impel to action, and guide my every word and deed.”⁵³

Epictetus’ next quotation, which refers to the Greek mythological account of Eurystheus imposing difficult challenges onto Hercules, mentions training and exercise:

Does he [a philosopher] call upon any other than Zeus? Is he not convinced that whatever he suffers, it is Zeus who is exercising him? Hercules when he was exercised by Eurystheus did not think he was wretched, but without hesitation he attempted to execute all that he had in hand. And is he who is trained to the contest and exercised by Zeus going to call out and to be vexed?⁵⁴

Consequently both Epictetus and the Technique agree that the pursuit of wisdom is not simply a life of contemplation and tranquility, but it also includes disciplines, or trainings, that are imposed by the inner divine guide.

Bring stillness to your outer activities

The third paragraph proceeds by depicting the series of four disciplines that are imposed. The first discipline is: *Bring stillness to your outer activities* (“Be still”).

Bailey comments on this portion of the Technique:

It is this *enforced* quiet which brings about the true alignment. This is the quiet not of meditation but of living. The aspirant upon the Third Ray is apt to waste much energy in perpetuating the glamorous forms with which he persistently surrounds himself. How can he achieve his goal when he is ceaselessly running hither and thither—weaving, manipulating, planning and arranging? He manages to get nowhere. Ever he is occupied with the distant objective, with that which may materialize in some dim and distant future, and he fails ever to achieve the immediate objective. He is often the expression and example of waste energy.⁵⁵

Epictetus also recommends withdrawing from distracting activities:

For this reason also philosophers advise men to leave their native country, because ancient habits distract them and do not allow a beginning to be made of a different habit ... Thus also physicians send those who have lingering diseases to a different country and a different air; and they do right. Do you also introduce other habits than those which you have: fix your opinions and exercise yourselves in them. But you do not so: you go hence to a spectacle, to a show of gladiators, to a place of exercise, to a circus; then you come back hither, and again from this place you go to those places, and still the same persons ... For if you are not yet in this state [of exercise], fly from your former habits, fly from the common sort, if you intend ever to begin to be something.⁵⁶

Bring stillness to your emotions

The second discipline is: *Learn to be emotionally indifferent to what is not in your power* (“Learn to stand silent, quiet and unafraid”).

Consider Bailey’s description given elsewhere: “The soul stands free, unattached, unafraid, and is not controlled by that which exists in the three worlds. This is the true spiritual indifference.”⁵⁷ Here, the “three worlds” denote the mental, emotional, and physical worlds of the personality.⁵⁸ The Technique’s words, “Learn to stand silent, quiet and unafraid,” are quite

similar to Bailey’s description, “The soul stands free, unattached, unafraid,” which she in turn equates with “spiritual indifference.” Bailey also equates “spiritual indifference” with “emotional indifference”:

I wonder, my brother, if it is possible for me to indicate to you the life of *spiritual insulation* which is in no way the life of *personal isolation*? In this state of “insulated being” lies, for you, the solution of many of your problems. This insulation is brought about by emotional indifference to your environment and to people, but it is a spiritual indifference, founded on spiritual detachment and dispassion. When it is present, there comes the fulfillment of obligation and the performance of duty, but no identification with people or circumstance.⁵⁹

Bailey provides a criterion for what ought to be the objects of indifference: “[the aspirant] braces himself for the final stage of indifference or repudiation of all forces except those which he—consciously and with purpose—is seeking to use upon the physical plane.”⁶⁰ Accordingly, the Technique’s second discipline is interpreted as learning to be emotionally indifferent to the things that satisfy this criterion.

Epictetus also advocates being “indifferent” to things that are not in our power:

Things themselves (materials) are indifferent; but the use of them is not indifferent. How then shall a man preserve firmness and tranquility, and at the same time be careful and neither rash nor negligent? If he imitates those who play at dice. The counters are indifferent; the dice are indifferent. How do I know what the cast will be? But to use carefully and dexterously the cast of the dice, this is my business. Thus in life also the chief business is this: distinguish and separate things, and say, Externals are not in my power: will is in my power. Where shall I seek the good and the bad? Within, in the things which are my own. But in what does not belong to you call nothing either good or bad, or profit or damage or anything of the kind.⁶¹

Epictetus clarifies the things that are in our power, and those that are not:

Of things some are in our power, and others are not. In our power are opinion, movement towards a thing, desire, aversion (turning from a thing); and in a word, whatever are our own acts: not in our power are the body, property, reputation, offices (magisterial power), and in a word, whatever are not our own acts ... Straightway then practice saying to every harsh appearance, You are an appearance, and in no manner what you appear to be. Then examine it by the rules which you possess, and by this first and chiefly, whether it relates to the things which are in our power or to things which are not in our power: and if it relates to anything which is not in our power, be ready to say, that it does not concern you.⁶²

Thus Bailey and Epictetus have a similar criterion for what ought to be the objects of indifference: for Bailey, “all forces except those which he—consciously and with purpose—is seeking to use upon the physical plane”; for Epictetus, “whatever are not our own acts.” Moreover, this criterion is objective, because it places objects into distinct categories that are concrete and knowable. The justification of this criterion is the following: we can “stand silent, quiet and unafraid,” which are the words of the Technique, only as long as we are indifferent to those things that are not in our power; for otherwise we will necessarily be agitated, because we will be subject to other people who have the power to procure or prevent what we desire or would avoid.

Epictetus illustrates this criterion’s exercise:

As we exercise ourselves against sophistical questions, so we ought to exercise ourselves daily against appearances; for these appearances also propose questions to us. *A certain person’s son is dead.* Answer; the thing is not within the power of the will: it is not an evil. *A father has disinherited a certain son. What do you think of it?* It is a thing beyond the power of the will, not an evil. *Caesar has condemned a person.* It is a thing beyond the power of the will, not an evil. *The man is afflicted at this.* Affliction is a thing which depends on the will: it is an evil. *He has borne the condemnation brave-*

ly. That is a thing within the power of the will: it is a good.⁶³

After becoming aware of something that ought to be an object of indifference but emotionally affects us, our task is to change our opinion about that thing. Thus this criterion for objects of indifference is actually the sought-after criterion for valid opinions. As shown by the above quotation, Epictetus does not give the label “evil” to an unpleasant external circumstance, but considers it to be an object of indifference. He does give this label to what might be called “moral evil,” which is someone’s irrational response based on assenting to false opinions. Moral evil, not external evil, is the only kind of evil for which a human being is accountable, because it is the only kind that he or she has the power to eliminate.

Epictetus sometimes refers to this criterion as a “divine law”:

Such as a man ought to study all day, and not to be affected by anything that is not his own, neither by companion nor place nor gymnasia, and not even by his own body, but to remember the law and to have it before his eyes. And what is the divine law? To keep a man’s own, not to claim that which belongs to others, but to use what is given, and when it is not given, not to desire it; and when a thing is taken away, to give it up readily and immediately, and to be thankful for the time that a man has had the use of it.⁶⁴

A *law* is a generalization that describes recurring facts or events that have been observed in nature. By calling his criterion a “law,” Epictetus is claiming that it has more validity than a mere opinion because it can be substantiated by observations. In particular, for anyone who applies his criterion, Epictetus says, “I guarantee that he will be steadfast, whatever be the state of things about him.”⁶⁵

Long, however, has reservations regarding Epictetus’ criterion:

But how can we be sure that this distinction [between what is in our power and what is not] is rigorously applicable? Why not suppose that I am incapable of premising my

happiness on the moral point of view, or, alternatively, why suppose that material well-being is so precarious that I should eliminate it completely from my recipe for happiness?⁶⁶

Long's concern is that this criterion seems difficult to apply consistently, but is the obstacle in it or in the one who tries to apply it? Bailey speaks of "emergence from the instinctual stage into that of intellectual awareness, and on to that intuitional illumination which is the present goal of consciousness."⁶⁷ If aspirants have only an "intellectual awareness" of this criterion, rather than "intuitional illumination," they are unlikely to apply it consistently to counteract their own strong desire for material well-being. Consequently additional disciplines are needed to bring about intuitional illumination.

Make your mind the center of your effort

The third discipline is: *Make your mind the center of your effort, so that it rules your emotional and physical bodies and then is ruled by your soul* ("I, at the center, Am").

For two reasons, the term "center" in the Technique is taken to be the mind, or mental body. First, the mind could be regarded as a "center," because Bailey writes, "I begin with the mental body as it is for the student of meditation the one that is the center of his effort and the one that controls the two lower bodies."⁶⁸ Second, the mind can reflect the presence of the soul, because Bailey also writes, "When the right method of training is instituted, the mind will be developed into a reflector or agent of the soul."⁶⁹ The notion that the mind can reflect the presence of the soul is consistent with the wording of the Technique, "I, at the center, Am," because this "I" denotes the soul.

The symbols in the third discipline appear to depict two ideas: the mind is the center of the aspirant's effort; and the goal of this effort is having the mind controlled by the soul. According to Bailey, having the mind controlled by the soul is an attainment that requires two steps: "First, the mind controls the brain and the emotional nature. Then the soul controls

the mind."⁷⁰ Consequently the Technique's third discipline is interpreted as making the mind the center of effort so as to accomplish those two steps.

Long states, "'Governing faculty' (*hegemonikon*) is the standard Stoic expression for the mind."⁷¹ In other words, the original Greek word *hegemonikon* denotes the mind, so its literal English translations, such as "governing faculty" and "ruling faculty," also denote the mind. Accordingly, Epictetus speaks of making the mind the center of effort in the following quotation:

You must be one man either good or bad: you must either labor at your own ruling faculty or at external things: you must either labor at things within or at external things: that is, you must either occupy the place of a philosopher or that of one of the vulgar.⁷²

Epictetus, in just a single paragraph, mentions three practices that involve the mind as the center of effort:

And there is no pleasing (good) habit, nor attention, nor care about self and observation of this kind, How shall I use the appearances presented to me? According to nature, or contrary to nature? How do I answer to them? as I ought, or as I ought not? Do I say to those things which are independent of the will, that they do not concern me?⁷³

These practices are "attention," "care about self," and "observation," and are different kinds of self-awareness. Let us try to understand the nature of these practices.

First, "attention" is the translation of the Greek word *prosokhe* and signifies self-monitoring to avoid erroneous emotional responses, as Epictetus explains in another discourse:

For we must be content if by never remitting this attention we shall escape at least a few errors. But now when you have said, Tomorrow I will begin to attend, you must be told that you are saying this, Today I will be shameless, disregarding of time and place, mean; it will be in the power of others to give me pain; today I will be passion-

ate, and envious. See how many evil things you are permitting yourself to do. If it is good to use attention tomorrow, how much better is it to do so today? If tomorrow it is in your interest to attend, much more is it today, that you may be able to do so tomorrow also, and may not defer it again to the third day.⁷⁴

Second, “care” is the translation of *epistrophe*, for which Richard Sorabji, a Professor of Philosophy, gives this explanation: “*Epistrophe* ... was taken up by the Neoplatonists to describe a turning in on oneself, and a turning back to one’s source which is within oneself.”⁷⁵ In another discourse, Epictetus states that one can discover one’s innate preconceptions about the good through turning one’s thoughts into oneself:

Turn your thoughts into yourselves: observe the preconceptions which you have. What kind of thing do you imagine the good to be? That which flows easily, that which is happy, that which is not impeded.⁷⁶

Here, “turn” is the translation of *epistrephein*, which is the verb form of *epistrophe*. Thus *epistrophe* appears to signify turning one’s thoughts to one’s inner divine guide—what Epictetus calls the “Daemon” and Bailey calls the “soul”—and receiving ideas from that inner guide in one’s mind.

Third, “observation” is the translation of *parateresis*. Its context in Epictetus’ quotation shows that it is intended to signify such self-interrogations as, “How shall I use the appearances presented to me? According to nature, or contrary to nature? How do I answer to them? as I ought, or as I ought not? Do I say to those things which are independent of the will, that they do not concern me?” These self-interrogations have the same purpose: to discover whether one is following the criterion for objects of indifference, which was described for the preceding discipline.

Thus Epictetus’ practices are: self-monitoring to avoid erroneous emotional responses; turning to and receiving ideas from the inner divine guide; and self-interrogations to discover

whether one is following the criterion for objects of indifference. These three practices are consistent with and actually implement the Technique’s third discipline.

Look up at the inner divine guide

The fourth discipline is: *Look up at the soul to invoke its intuitional illumination* (“Look up along the line”), *and not along the many lines of desires, which you created through opinions that you assented to in the past* (“and not along the many lines which, in the space of aeons, you have woven”) *and hold you prisoner* (“These hold thee prisoner”).

This discipline distinguishes between two kinds of symbolic lines. “Look up along the line” means look up at the soul, because Bailey writes, “Lift up thine eyes, Oh, Chela, and cleanse thine heart and see the vision of thy soul.”⁷⁷ “The many lines which ... hold thee prisoner” are taken to be what Bailey calls “the clinging chains of attachment”⁷⁸ or what she also calls “lines ... of desires.”⁷⁹

Bailey describes a similar approach to psychotherapy:

The patient (if I might so call him) is taught to take his eyes, and consequently his attention, away from himself, his feelings, his complexes and his fixed ideas and undesirable thoughts, and to focus them upon the soul, the divine Reality within the form ... This eventually regenerates the mental or thought life, so that the man is conditioned by right thinking under the impulse or the illumination of the soul.⁸⁰

Epictetus provides instruction related to the initial portion of the fourth discipline:

But you are not Hercules and you are not able to purge away the wickedness of others; nor yet are you Theseus, able to purge away the evil things of Attica. Clear away your own. From yourself, from your thoughts cast away ... sadness, fear, desire, envy, malevolence, avarice, effeminacy, intemperance. But it is not possible to eject these things otherwise than by looking to God only, by fixing your affections on him only, by being consecrated to his commands. But if you choose anything else,

you will with sighs and groans be compelled to follow what is stronger than yourself, always seeking tranquility and never able to find it; for you seek tranquility there where it is not, and you neglect to seek it where it is.⁸¹

The above quotation refers to Greek mythological accounts of Hercules and Theseus, and it uses “God” to denote the inner divine guide, so “looking to God only” resembles “Look up along the line” in the Technique. Epictetus’ next quotation is related to the discipline’s final portion:

But now when it is in our power to look after one thing, and to attach ourselves to it, we prefer to look after many things, and to be bound to many things, to the body and to property, and to brother and to friend, and to child and to slave. Since then we are bound to many things, we are depressed by them and dragged down. For this reason, when the weather is not fit for sailing, we sit down and torment ourselves, and continually look out to see what wind is blowing. *It is north.* What is that to us? *When will the west wind blow?* When it shall choose, my good man, or when it shall please Aeolus; for God has not made you the manager of the winds, but Aeolus. What then? We must make the best use that we can of the things which are in our power, and use the rest according to their nature. What is their nature then? As God may please.⁸²

The above quotation refers to the Greek mythological account of Aeolus ruling the winds, and its statement, “we prefer ... to be bound to many things,” resembles “the many lines which ... hold thee prisoner” in the Technique.

Revelation

By applying the foregoing disciplines to themselves, the aspirants enter the fourth phase and receive the *revelation* of the path and what they need to do in connection with it. Each aspirant receives the revelation of only his or her next step ahead, which, when taken, enables the subsequent step to be revealed. The middle part of the Technique’s third paragraph,

which uses the second-person grammatical perspective, depicts the revelation phase.

Bring stillness to your mind

Bring stillness to your mind by examining your thoughts and, if need be, substituting nobler ones to replace them (“Be still”).

Bailey describes the beginning of the revelation phase for Third Ray aspirants:

The aspirant slowly begins to work with the Plan as it is, and not as he thinks it is. As he works, *revelation* comes, and he sees clearly what he has to do. Usually this entails first of all a disentangling and a release from his own ideas. This process takes much time, being commensurate with the time wasted in building up the age long glamour.⁸³

In the above quotation, “the Plan” refers to the divine plan, which can be defined as the “blueprint of the evolutionary development of consciousness.”⁸⁴ Bailey gives similar instruction to a Third Ray aspirant:

Your basic life intent causes me no concern. It is your life technique that lies at the root of all the difficulty. It is governed so oft by expediency. Give not so much time to intricate and devious thought. Seek to live mentally much more simply. Ask and look for nothing for the separated self and eliminate all thought along the lines of lower self-endeavor.⁸⁵

The foregoing quotation describes the kinds of thoughts that need to be eliminated: “intricate and devious thought,” and “all thought along the lines of lower self-endeavor.” To eliminate these kinds of thoughts, one needs to examine one’s thoughts and see whether any thought falls into the forbidden categories. Bailey emphasizes that this elimination is achieved through substitution rather than suppression:

The silence of thought is to be cultivated and, my brothers, I do not mean silent thinking. I mean that certain lines of thought are refused admission; certain habits of thinking are eradicated and certain approaches to ideas are not developed. This is done by a process of substitution,

and not by a violent process of suppression.⁸⁶

Epictetus describes a similar exercise that aims at achieving mental serenity:

But, in the first place, do not allow yourself to be carried away by its [the impression's] intensity: but say, 'Impression, wait for me a little. Let me see what you are, and what you represent. Let me test you.' Then, afterwards, do not allow it to draw you on by picturing what may come next, for if you do, it will lead you wherever it pleases. But rather, you should introduce some fair and noble impression to replace it, and banish this base and sordid one. If you become habituated to this kind of exercise, you will see what shoulders, what sinews and what vigor you will come to have. But now you have mere trifling talk, and nothing more. The man who is truly in training is the one who exercises himself to confront such impressions. Stay wretch, do not be carried away. The struggle is great, the task divine, to win a kingdom, to win freedom, to win happiness, to win serenity of mind.⁸⁷

Long clarifies Epictetus' meaning of the term "impression":

What we need to appreciate, in studying this text, is that the term impression (*phantasia*) covers anything at all that 'appears' to us—any thought or object of awareness, ranging from the simplest perceptions such as 'here is a dog' to such complex thoughts as 'money is highly desirable' or 'death is not an evil.'⁸⁸

In the foregoing quotation from Epictetus, if an "impression" is taken simply as a thought, then his suggested exercise appears essentially the same as the earlier instructions given by Bailey.

Meet the opportunities that come your way

Meet the opportunities that come your way, rather than making opportunities for yourself by rushing from place to place ("Rush not from point to point").

Bailey elucidates this portion of the Technique:

[The Third Ray aspirant] must no longer make opportunities for himself but—meeting the opportunities which come his way (a very different thing)—apply himself to the need to be met. This is a very different matter and swings into activity a very different psychology. When he can do this and be willing to achieve divine idleness (from the angle of a glamoured Third Ray attitude), he will discover that he has suddenly achieved *alignment*.⁸⁹

Bailey gives similar instruction to a Third Ray aspirant:

Dwell no longer on the past but make the relatively few years which are left you of this life, years of usefulness and of purpose in my work. This will require the acquisition and the recognition of a spirit which is unembarrassed by ambition but which is pledged to *the perfecting of each day's relationships*. Preoccupation with the beautifying and the spiritualizing of the day's affairs will give you no time for any reaction to glamour; your mind and desire (your kama-manasic nature) will be—with definite purpose—physically oriented; your demonstration of right living upon the physical plane will be to you the factor of major importance.⁹⁰

Epictetus also gives similar instruction:

Remember that you are an actor in a play, the character of which is determined by the Playwright: if He wishes the play to be short, it is short; if long, it is long; if He wishes you to play the part of a beggar, remember to act even this role adroitly; and so if your role be that of a cripple, an official, or a layman. For this is your business, to play admirably the role assigned you; but the selection of that role is Another's.⁹¹

Epictetus' next quotation illustrates the preceding one:

An example of another kind. "Assume the governorship of a province." I assume it, and when I have assumed it, I show how an

instructed man behaves. “*Lay aside the lat-iclave (the mark of senatorial rank), and clothing yourself in rags, come forward in this character.*” What then have I not the power of displaying a good voice (that is, of doing something that I ought to do)?

*How then do you now appear (on the stage of life)? As a witness summoned by God. “Come forward, you, and bear testimony for me, for you are worthy to be brought forward as a witness by me: is anything external to the will good or bad? do I hurt any man? have I made every man’s interest dependent on any man except himself? What testimony do you give for God?”*⁹²

This quotation contains a fictitious dialogue between Epictetus’ authorial persona and an imaginary interlocutor who speaks as though he were God with the power of assigning roles on the stage of life, so it may seem confusing because only Epictetus is actually speaking.

Identify with the inner divine guide

Shift your sense of identity to the soul, rather than be deluded by wrong identification with the personality (“nor be deluded by the outer forms”) or phenomenal world (“and that which disappears”).

The term “outer forms” is sometimes used as a synonym for personality.⁹³ “That which disappears” is taken as the phenomenal world, because Bailey says that “cyclic activity lies behind all phenomenal activity and appearance.”⁹⁴ She also gives this definition: “*Delusion*, the process of wrong identification, in which the self deludes itself, and says ‘I am the form.’”⁹⁵ Thus this portion of the Technique has the literal significance of declaring that

identification should not be made with either the personality or phenomenal world; but it also carries the implication that identification should be made with something else. A complete interpretation is given above and is nearly the same as Bailey’s instruction of shifting

“Attachment to environment and to personality conditions (identification with form) into detachment from form and ability to identify with the soul.”⁹⁶

The above interpretation is also related to the following instruction given by Bailey to a Third Ray aspirant:

Live, therefore, as a soul and forget the personality. Give not so much time to the consideration of the faults and mistakes of the past. Self-depreciation is not necessarily a sign of spiritual growth. It is often the first result of a

soul contact and means the revelation of personality limitations covering many years. That has a temporary value, provided you again turn your eyes to the soul. Forgetting the things that lie behind let the light of your soul lead you where it will.⁹⁷

Epictetus describes a similar shift of identity:

For universally, be not deceived, every animal is attached to nothing so much as to its own interest. Whatever then appears to it an impediment to this interest, whether this be a brother, or a father, or a child, or beloved, or lover, it hates, spurns, curses: for its nature is to love nothing so much as its own interest ... For this reason if a man put in the same place his interest, sanctity, goodness, and country, and parents, and friends, all these are secured: but if he puts in one place his interest, in another his friends, and his country and his kinsmen and justice itself, all these give way being borne down

Epictetus is among the philosophers of the world who have best understood the duties of man ... I find in Epictetus an incomparable art for troubling the repose of those who seek it in external things, and for forcing them to acknowledge that they are veritable slaves and miserable blind men; that it is impossible that they should find anything else than the error and pain which they fly, unless they give themselves without reserve to God alone.

by the weight of interest. For where the I and the Mine are placed, to that place of necessity the animal inclines: if in the flesh, there is the ruling power: if in the will, it is there: and if it is in externals, it is there. If then I am there where my will is, then only shall I be a friend such as I ought to be, and son, and father; for this will be my interest, to maintain the character of fidelity, of modesty, of patience, of abstinence, of active co-operation, of observing my relations (towards all). But if I put myself in one place, and honesty in another, then the doctrine of Epicurus becomes strong, which asserts either that there is no honesty or it is that which opinion holds to be honest (virtuous).⁹⁸

The above quotation mentions Epicurus (341 BCE – 270 BCE), who was an ancient Greek philosopher and founder of the school of philosophy called Epicureanism. The above quotation also exhorts us to place the “I and the Mine” in the “will” rather than the “flesh” or “externals.” What does it mean to place our sense of identity in the “will”? Here, “will” is a translation of the Greek word *prohairesis*, which is sometimes translated as “volition” but literally means “pre-choice” or “choice before choice.”⁹⁹ Long provides this explanation of the above quotation:

Epictetus now connects the universality of self-interested motivations with people’s sense of their identity: we are drawn to ‘wherever “I” and “mine” are placed.’ If morality and other people’s interests are to have a secure claim on me, they must not be in any competition with what I want for myself; but that can be assured only if I identify myself and my interest with the moral point of view. This is what Epictetus means when he specifies volition (*prohairesis*) as the only basis for personal identity that can guarantee dutiful behavior ... Suffice it to say that, in his present use of the term [*prohairesis*], he is referring to every person’s share of divine reason, with all that that endowment provides for the correct understanding of the facts and values and choices essential to human excellence and happiness.¹⁰⁰

Bailey considers the soul to have the following quality: “*the spiritual will*,—that quota of the universal will which any one soul can express, and which is adequate for the purpose of enabling the spiritual man to co-operate in the plan and purpose of the great life in which he has his being.”¹⁰¹ Epictetus uses the term *prohairesis* in differing ways,¹⁰² but his use of this term in the foregoing quotation is consistent with it being the spiritual will, because he associates it with virtues—“the character of fidelity, of modesty, of patience, of abstinence, of active co-operation, of observing my relations (towards all)” —that are consistent with Bailey’s definition of the spiritual will. Accordingly, shifting one’s sense of identity to Epictetus’ “will” appears equivalent to shifting one’s sense of identity to the soul’s spiritual will.

Integration

Integration is the fifth and final phase in the pattern of guidance depicted by Bailey’s Technique. This phase refers to uniting personality with soul so that they act in unison and function as a single organism. The final sentence of the Technique’s third paragraph depicts the integration phase.

After shifting your consciousness behind your mental, emotional, and physical bodies (“Behind the forms”), stand in spiritual being (“The Weaver stands”)—which means center your consciousness in the soul—and from thence convey love and understanding to humanity (“and silently he weaves”).

This sentence consists of three phrases. The first phrase, “Behind the forms,” resembles Bailey’s description of withdrawal from the personality: “The stage wherein the consciousness shifts completely out of the lower personality and becomes the true spiritual consciousness, centered in the real man, the ego or soul.”¹⁰³

The second phrase, “the Weaver stands,” can be explained. Bailey says that “the aspirant upon the Third Ray” eventually achieves “the quality which might be expressed as the determination to stand in spiritual being.”¹⁰⁴ Accordingly, the “Weaver” is the aspirant, and

“The Weaver stands” means that the aspirant does stand in spiritual being.

The third phrase is “and silently he weaves.” The word “silently” suggests that the prime endeavor is to stand in spiritual being, rather than to think or speak, and “he weaves” is the outgrowth of that endeavor. Bailey conveys similar instruction:

Learn to stand in spiritual being, remembering ever that to *be* is a greater realization than to know or to act. The constant steady effort to dwell in the Secret Place of your own soul and from thence to go forth into the world of men, pouring forth love and understanding, should be your prime endeavor.¹⁰⁵

“Pouring forth love and understanding,” according to the above quotation, is the outgrowth of standing in spiritual being. Bailey gives these definitions: “*Love* ... negates all that builds barriers, makes criticism, and produces separation”; “*Understanding* ... connotes the power of recession or the capacity to withdraw from one’s age long identification with form life.”¹⁰⁶

Let us turn to Epictetus, who describes the goal of his teaching:

Show me, then, one who is in the process of formation, one who has set out in that direction ... Let any of you show me the soul of a man who desires to be of one mind with god, and never to cast blame on god or man again, who wishes to fail in no desire, to fall into nothing that he wants to avoid, never to be angry, never to be envious, never to be jealous, who thus desires (why beat about the bush?) to become a god instead of a man, and though he is in this body, this corpse, is determined to achieve communion with Zeus.¹⁰⁷

“Communion with Zeus,” in the above quotation, resembles “stand in spiritual being” in the interpretation given for the Technique. In addition, “never to cast blame on god or man again” indicates love, and “never to be angry, never to be envious, never to be jealous” indicates understanding.

Epictetus provides a similar account in another discourse:

He then who has observed with intelligence the administration of the world, and has learned that the greatest and supreme and the most comprehensive community is that which is composed of men and God, and that from God have descended the seeds not only to my father and grandfather, but to all beings which are generated on the earth and are produced, and particularly to rational beings—for these only are by their nature formed to have communion with God, being by means of reason conjoined with Him—why should not such a man call himself a citizen of the world, why not a son of God, and why should he be afraid of anything which happens among men?¹⁰⁸

“Have communion with God,” in the above quotation, resembles “stand in spiritual being.” The question “why should not such a man call himself a citizen of the world?” indicates love, and the question “why should he be afraid of anything which happens among men?” indicates understanding.

Conclusions

What are the purposes of the two authors that we have been comparing? Epictetus is quoted as saying: “I have this purpose, to make you free from restraint, compulsion, hindrance, to make you free, prosperous, happy, looking to God in everything small and great. And you are here to learn and practice these things.”¹⁰⁹ Bailey’s “Technique of Integration for the Third Ray” depicts a pattern of guidance that is said to lead to integration with the soul. Thus both Epictetus and Bailey had the same purpose: encouraging the work of self-culture.

By showing that Epictetus’ discourses have passages that are similar in meaning to those in Bailey’s Technique, the foregoing demonstration clarifies both sources. Epictetus’ discourses are clarified, because we can see how cardinal points in his discourses fit together to form a coherent technique. Bailey’s Technique is

also clarified, because we can see how her symbolic statements can be expressed in a more comprehensible way and be applied.

Bailey, in her autobiography, claimed that her writings were inspired by what Theosophy calls the “Masters of the Wisdom.”¹¹⁰ If her teachings on the seven rays were accepted on the basis of that claim of authority, then her teachings would be like a revealed religion, because they would be regarded as based on revelations given to humankind from super-human beings. Can Bailey’s teachings be transformed into a science? In other words, can these teachings be tested in a scientific way, so that they can be accepted on the basis of empirical evidence rather than a belief in the authority of an external source of information? Any scientific test entails formulating a hypothesis, collecting evidence, and analyzing results, although procedures vary from one field of inquiry to another.

Let us consider the following hypothesis: Bailey’s Techniques of Integration for the seven rays depict symbolically the archetypal patterns of integration that aspirants are intuitively directed to apply to themselves. This hypothesis can be tested by comparing Bailey’s ray techniques with various methods of psychological or spiritual integration that are thought to be inspired. The foregoing demonstration, which shows the similarity between the Third Ray technique and Epictetus’ discourses, corroborates this hypothesis, because of the earlier evidence that Epictetus was an inspired speaker.

Previous articles show similar correspondences for the other rays. The initial chapters of the *Bhagavad Gita*, which provide instruction in karma yoga, are similar to the First Ray technique.¹¹¹ The *Second Epistle of Peter* is similar to the Second Ray technique.¹¹² The *Tao Te Ching* is similar to the Fourth Ray technique.¹¹³ Emerson’s *Essays* are similar to the Fifth Ray technique.¹¹⁴ *Ecclesiastes* is similar to the Sixth Ray technique,¹¹⁵ and the *Book of Habakkuk* is similar to the Seventh Ray technique.¹¹⁶ Thus there is increasing evidence that the above hypothesis is valid, namely, that Bailey’s ray techniques do symbolically depict the archetypal patterns of integration.

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