

Papers tabled not to be shown to third parties.

THE CLAYMONT SOCIETY

One-Day Seminar -Saturday 19th September 1981

9:30 a.m. Session - Paper I

HOW CAN WE BECOME SENSITIVE TO THE SUBSTANCE OF THE WORK?

Everything that exists is material, is a substance. We always are rather inclined to think of Work as being what we do, and we say "I work" or "I don't work," and we think of Work as this or that kind of effort. But if it were only that it would be the same as everything else. What Work really is, is not what we do, but it is a substance that is always present, and we can be more conscious of it or less conscious of it--a very, very fine substance, much too fine to be able to do anything with it. There are some fine substances that we can do something about, like the fine substance of attention, or the fine substance of sensation. But Work is much finer than that, and yet it is also a substance.

It is in fact very much like blood. Let us pause a minute and reflect on the role of blood in our body--and not only in our physical body.

There is indeed the blood of our organic existence, of our physical body; but there is also the blood of our second body, the blood of our spiritual existence, which is what is called Hanbledzoin in Beelzebub<sup>1</sup> and there is also a third kind of blood, which in Beelzebub is called the Theomertmalagos,<sup>2</sup> or the World of God. So that when we speak about the Great Work--The Work--we speak about that. It is the presence of that in us that is Work. And our work is

<sup>1</sup>A and E., p. 568/9 and p. 727.

<sup>2</sup>A and E., p. 764 and 768 and p. 867.

to open ourselves to be conscious of and to be able to respond to and act to, the presence in us of this.

It is very important that we should come to think about Work as this fine substance which can be called "the blood of the soul"--and it is particularly important to understand this as it can become the foundation of group work because the same blood flows through all of us.

When that awareness is present in us, then one's whole feeling about everyone else changes. But until one feels that one feels "my work, my project, my business;" "one person's work, I work, he doesn't work;" "he works better, I work worse;" and we have all kinds of stupidities and considerings, and feel either righteous or indignant and take sides.

When we see there is one substance in all of us and that substance, the finest of all substances there are, then we see how we are connected in quite a different way.

There is a very important connection, of course, of a second kind--that is, through what we call our spiritual life; and I mean that in the sense of the life in which we are striving to perfect ourselves, to form in ourselves what ought to be formed in man--that is the body of our own individuality. What we are speaking about now is much higher than that, as this second kind is higher than the ordinary bodily existence. And yet, because it is so high, it penetrates everyone. This sounds open to doubt, in view of our varying capacities, but on reflection one must see, not just think it, that the fine substance of Work that is in you cannot possibly be different from the fine substance which is in me, or in anyone else in the universe.

It is because we do not, from time to time, stop to think about this highest significance of Work that we tend to become too much occupied with all the personal problems that our ordinary work makes for us. I am drawing your attention.

before we speak of groups and group work, to the relativity of the word "work." For instance, if during the course of working together here today we bring into it an effort to, as we say, remember ourselves, you will inevitably see that you find that something is shared between all of us that is really there, irrespective of what work we are engaged in.

Our problem is basically this: All the time our attention is taken, we are drawn; we care about various things which for that reason become god for us. We must know that we have all these gods that we worship. And we only deceive ourselves if we think that we do not have this idolatry present in us. As soon as we Work, we glimpse the force of identification, of idolatry. We see the force with which we are drawn to every kind of false god. The power to see that we worship false gods is in us all. But this does not mean their power over us ceases. Only for a short and all-important time can the power of these negative forces cease. This is the basic reason for group work. If we come together to work, we have some chance to feel more the action of what is the real divinity in us--that is, this substance of Work--and feel less the power of all these other forces.

This is why it is important to sense, to be present in what one is doing. When we do this kind of Work inevitably our values and judgments become much more corresponding to what they logically should be, that we really should be valuing what is eternal and imperishable and not continually getting lost in the temporal attractions that act on us.

Now we can see this logically, but we cannot feel it unless we are present. Groups must be designed to direct our efforts of Work to being present in whatever we are doing.

There are really two questions. The first is the title of this note: If there is a fine substance of Work which is the most precious thing in all the

world, and this substance already penetrates me, then how can I become sensitive to it? By putting the question, we are enabled to make the transition between simply thinking about it to what is our practical need now. We must pay attention to this, to let our sensitivity be held in us so as to find the presence of the Work in us and to dispose ourselves to be open to it. The second question concerns our reluctance to act on what we see. We must beware of the action of turning our backs to the Work,<sup>3</sup> but that question goes beyond the theme of this introduction to groups and group work.

---

<sup>3</sup>A and E., p. 246.