

Search for the Absolute Truth



We all have an urge for the Absolute Truth within us. You may feel it as curiosity; perhaps that's why you're reading this. Or maybe you have a deeper purpose in mind, such as trying to understand life, its problems and opportunities. According to the Esoteric Teaching that is the core of all religions, the urge to find the Absolute Truth is the motivating force of life itself, and fulfillment of this urge is the purpose of human life. Thus somehow or another we are all engaged in a search for the Absolute Truth.

The term *Absolute Truth* is capitalized for a special reason. The Absolute Truth is not found in the incessant stream of mundane information that bombards us daily; neither does it refer to the dull speculations of jaded academic intellects. The Absolute Truth is neither of these common, but unfulfilling impostors. The Absolute Truth is the real Truth for which we are all hankering; a direct inner connection with the infinite Source of all knowledge; a vibrant and vivid insight into the nature of transcendent spiritual Reality; a satisfying direct experience of one's eternal personal spiritual identity; a face-to-face encounter with the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

Yes, we all have a deep urge for this transcendent Absolute Truth. We also feel instinctively that the Absolute Truth is intimately connected with the perfection of Divine Love. Consider the hurt and disappointment we feel upon finding out that someone we love is lying. We feel so let down! It's so discouraging precisely because truthfulness is a most treasured possession. When someone we care for casually throws away the truth for cheap material gain, it's very embarrassing. This reflects the value our hearts instinctively put on truth.

Love can flourish only in an atmosphere of truth. Beyond telling the simple truth about ordinary things, love means to share the deepest contents of our hearts with our beloved, and to understand the beloved's heart in return. And eternal Divine Love, the self-realized counterpart of the Absolute Truth, is most dear to everyone. Thus each and every one of us, if we are sane, wants to know the Absolute Truth and experience unconditional Divine Love. In this book I am just making an attempt to share what little I am privileged to know of both.

Absolute Truth: the King of Knowledge

The Esoteric Teaching calls this Truth for which we are all hankering the **Absolute Truth**. Sometimes it is also called the Philosopher's Stone or Touchstone, the priceless gem of wisdom that alone can satisfy all our desires. In Sanskrit, that most ancient wisdom-language, the Absolute Truth is called by many names. The most important of these are *satyam param*, or Supreme Transcendental Wisdom, and *raja vidya*, the King of Knowledge: that knowledge, by knowing which, nothing remains unknown.

We may believe in the existence of the Supreme Absolute Truth, or we may not believe, yet directly or indirectly all our aspirations, inquiries and activities are engaged in the pursuit of perfect knowledge or ultimate Truth. Who can sincerely say that they would not like to know the Absolute Truth? Such a dull, unconscious person is more like an animal than a human being in the full sense of the term. To know the Absolute Truth is such a basic need that we have all been searching for it from time immemorial; in fact this search is the *dharma* or eternal occupation of every living being.

Recognizing the Absolute Truth

One may not have the Absolute Truth in one's possession, but by reasoning about it from experience we can understand that such a great Truth must have certain qualities or attributes. Because we

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are already familiar with certain categories of relative truth, by careful analysis we can extend what we have understood and experienced to comprehend something of the ideal nature of the Absolute Truth. Here are some basic qualities that we would expect to find in the Absolute Truth:

It almost goes without saying that the Absolute Truth must be 1) **perfect** and 2) **complete**. It cannot contain any errors or omissions. All knowledge of everything—past, present and future—must be contained within the Absolute Truth without any mistake.

The Absolute truth must be 3) **universal**, or open to understanding and realization by all. And the Absolute Truth must be useful and beneficial for all beings. If a truth cannot benefit all, it cannot be the universal Absolute Truth. Similarly, the Absolute Truth cannot be limited to any one language, place, time, people, race or religion. It must be completely universal, all-encompassing, beneficial and open to all.

The Absolute Truth must similarly be 4) **eternal**. It cannot be subject to any time limitations in the past, present or future. A truth that has to change to accommodate changing conditions cannot be absolute. Therefore Absolute Truth must be unchanging and eternal perfect Truth applicable to all beings in all times, places and conditions.

The Absolute Truth also must be 5) **concise**. It must easily be understood, learned and applied by all people, regardless of intelligence, education or socio-economic standing. The Absolute Truth is so fundamental to reality that nothing can exist without it. So in one sense the Absolute Truth is everywhere, within everything and everyone. What is the point of making the Truth so difficult to understand that it can be learned and used only by a small, highly qualified elite? The Absolute Truth must be so simple and concise that anyone—even a child—can understand, learn and use it.

Furthermore, the Absolute Truth must provide the practical 6) **solution to all suffering and problems of life**. We have difficulties in life only because we lack perfect knowledge. Thus, the elimination of suffering by finding the Absolute Truth is the prime motivator common to all action. It is the ideal toward which all humans strive, consciously or unconsciously in all their efforts. Thus finding the Absolute Truth is the primordial problem, the essence of the existential human condition. The Absolute Truth contains unlimited, perfect knowledge; therefore it also contains the solution to all our suffering.

Furthermore, the Absolute Truth must be 7) **the key to the universe**. It must completely and accurately explain the periodic cycles of creation, maintenance and destruction of the material cosmos. Material science and philosophy also address this question, but have made little progress beyond some highly speculative theories that are impossible to verify. We require the real Absolute Truth to contain a detailed and perfect explanation of the gross and subtle material cosmic manifestation, its purpose, causes, composition, structure, operation, evolution, and its past and future history.

The Absolute Truth must also be 8) **the perfect religion**. It must conclusively answer all questions as to the nature of the human mind and soul. It must also explain the existence and nature of God and any supra-mundane worlds or universes connected with Him. It should clarify His relationship with the material universe and the individual beings, and—most important—contain detailed, practical and proven methods and instructions for attaining complete perfection in spiritual development or self-realization.

We could list many more qualities and attributes that one should expect to find in the Absolute Truth, but first let's take stock of what we already have. So, the Absolute Truth must be perfect, complete, universal, understandable, concise, eternal, the solution to all suffering, the key to the universe, and the perfect religion. But wait a minute: how can the Absolute Truth contain all knowledge, and yet be concise? And how can it solve our unique

personal problems and still remain universal? How can it be the perfect religion and at the same time furnish objective knowledge of the universe?

This discussion brings to light another important attribute of the Absolute Truth: it must both 9) **contain and resolve all contradictions**. Great philosophers and wise sages down through the ages have made many statements about the Truth that are certainly irrefutable, but nevertheless appear to contradict each other. The real Absolute Truth must somehow both acknowledge and resolve all these superficial contradictions, so we may settle our doubts and reach a unanimous and conclusive final understanding.

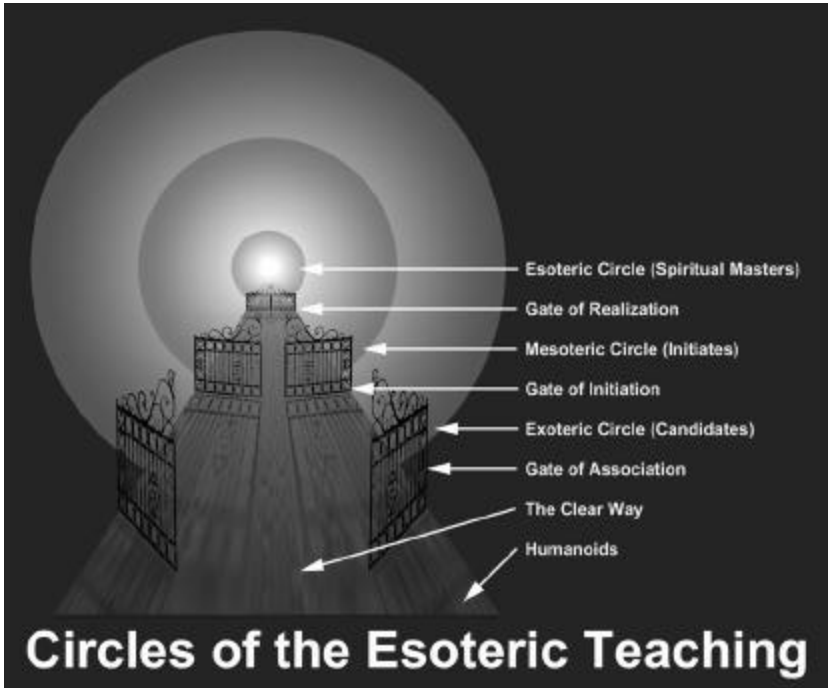
For there is one final, essential quality of the Absolute Truth: 10) **uniqueness**. There can exist only one Absolute Truth. The Absolute Truth cannot be multiple, for Absolute Truth is not a matter of opinion. There can be only one Supreme Absolute Truth, and any second opinion must either be false, or at best a relative truth in relation to the original Absolute Truth. All the great sages of ancient times were in agreement on this point; this is scientific knowledge of the matchless Absolute Truth.

If we examine the information and opinions we have been given so far as 'truth' in the light of these ten criteria, we may come to the conclusion that none of our present knowledge meets the standard of Absolute Truth. This is quite correct, and the reasons for this will be discussed in detail in this book. Every seeker on the path of the Absolute Truth has to feel this way about his state of knowledge and realization many, many times before attaining the real Absolute Truth. For even though everyone wants to know the Truth, we can understand from our experience that real Truth is very rare in this world. Most of what we encounter is far from the Absolute Truth. This bitter realization leaves one feeling empty, especially if one is intelligent and has a strong appetite for Truth. Nevertheless, it is a vital stage on the long path to complete realization of the Absolute Truth. The path to the Absolute Truth is

called the Esoteric Teaching, and human beings may be classified according to their degree of advancement on this path.

Four types of human beings

Bitten to the core by disillusionment, most people lose their pure faith, become cynical and give up the search for the Absolute Truth. In their frustration they accept other ordinary people's opinions as truth, and independently begin to generate such opinions themselves, passing them off to others as truth. In this way, somehow or other they go on with their lives. These people are most miserable in that they have abandoned all hope of perfection. They are always engaged in the material activities of ignorance and passion, centered on enjoyment of the gross senses. Therefore the Esoteric Teaching calls them *humanoids*, because although they superficially appear like human beings, they act more or less like animals. Though humanoids comprise the vast majority of human beings on this planet, they are not intelligent enough to approach even the outermost Circle of the Esoteric Teaching.



Then there are comparatively few people who keep alive the hope that even though they have not found the Absolute Truth, it may still remain hidden somewhere. Thus some day they may find it. Although these people suffer because of their feelings of hope, faith and helplessness, they still lead a better, more compassionate and moral life than the faithless. They generally become religionists, humanists or idealists, dedicated to serving and helping others. These people make gradual progress on the path of approaching the Absolute Truth, whether or not they understand what is happening or why. Then if these people get the opportunity to associate with those who are in touch with the Esoteric Teaching, they can immediately recognize the taste of Truth because of their accumulated stock of pious activities. The Esoteric Teaching calls these people *Candidates*, because if they get the opportunity, they can pass through the Gate of Association, join the association of the Exoteric Circle or the external side of the Esoteric Teaching, and become Candidates for initiation by the Spiritual Master.

Incidentally, most ordinary religious associations descended from a bona-fide Spiritual Master are composed of Candidates. However, due to lack of association with the Esoteric Teaching, over the course of time they become deviated from the Absolute Truth. Therefore strictly speaking, they cannot be considered part of the Exoteric Circle of the Teaching. Unless these Candidates are fortunate enough to come into the association of an authentic living Spiritual Master, they find it very difficult to advance in spiritual realization.

The fortunate Candidates who contact and pass the test of the Spiritual Master are allowed to pass through the Gate of Initiation and become *Initiates* or disciples. Disciples of an authentic Spiritual Master follow a strict program of spiritual progress under his personal direction. By this sincere association with a realized Master, there are soon gifted with direct knowledge of the Absolute Truth, and because of this they suffer more than anybody, but only for short time. The reason they suffer is because of the vast discrepancies between the noble ideal of the Truth they know and love, and the undeveloped state of the humanoids they must contact in their daily lives. But since they soon come to realize the Absolute Truth for themselves, this suffering is only temporary. These rare people are members of the Mesoteric Circle, or those who are training to become fit receptacles for the higher revelations of the Esoteric Teaching.

Most rare of all human beings is the *Spiritual Master*, a member of the Esoteric Circle of the Teaching, who has passed through the Gate of Realization and seen the Absolute Truth face-to-face. To meet such a person, directly or even through a book or other medium, is the turning point of spiritual life. Why? Only by patiently hearing from such a realized soul can we get the seed of the Absolute Truth in the form of his merciful instructions. When we accept that seed into our hearts and water it with our admiration, love and attention, it soon sprouts and grows into the tree of wisdom. When by further contemplation and devotion this tree bears the fruit of Love of Godhead, we in turn attain realization of the Supreme Absolute Truth.

A perfectly self-realized person feels no mundane suffering or enjoyment, only perfect and unending spiritual ecstasy. He is free from the four faults of mundane existence: relying upon the imperfect senses to gain knowledge; being in illusion about the ultimate meaning of life; always making mistakes; and indulging in cheating. A continuous process of revelation from the Lord always guides from his life within. The perfectly realized Spiritual Master is therefore the embodied representative of the Absolute Truth.

Intelligence and Enlightenment

The dedicated search for the Absolute Truth is the purpose of human life. And the proper use of human intelligence is the right method to carry out that purpose. Intelligence is the discriminating and plan-making faculty of the human mind. Intelligence occupies the highest place in the hierarchy of human faculties except for consciousness itself. The proper cultivation and use of intelligence have always been keys to success in life. Thus the proper application of intelligence is also of central importance in the successful pursuit of Truth and Enlightenment.

By Enlightenment we mean the practical realization of the Absolute Truth. The full use of intelligence certainly requires due contemplation, but no truly intelligent person is an impractical daydreamer or useless idealist. He acts compassionately upon his spiritual realizations to share his illumination with others in this world. Enlightenment thus refers to both internal and external activities of a person who has realized the Absolute Truth.

Intelligence is the proper use of the mind. The practice of the Esoteric Teaching is the art and science of using the intelligence to remain in alignment with the Absolute Truth. Thus the subject matter of this Teaching is the process of attaining realization of the Absolute Truth by proper application of the mind and intelligence.

Duplication, understanding, contemplation and realization

After accepting that the pursuit of the Absolute Truth is the purpose of human life, the sincere Candidate learns accurate knowledge of this process from an authorized source of this Teaching and begins to practice its different methods. This is called *duplication*. Then by a long process of experimentation, observation and inner debate, one can verify and unify the elements of this knowledge and figure out why it is the way it is. This is *understanding*. Next one can admire and meditate upon one's perfected understanding; this is called *contemplation*. Prolonged contemplation of the Absolute Truth leads automatically to the fourth stage of actual Enlightenment or *realization*.

Realization of the Absolute Truth is of three types or in three distinct stages: the Holy Spirit, the Son and the Father (in Sanskrit *Brahman, Paramatma* and *Bhagavan*). Each stage has its own well-defined array of techniques (covered in other editions of this series) that are performed in the context of a standard philosophy. All these techniques develop into the various spiritual perfections by applying the four basic functions of the intelligence—duplication, understanding, contemplation and realization—to the appropriate transcendental subject matter. The proper use of intelligence is thus the first and the last word in the process of searching for the Absolute Truth.

Now by using our special terminology we can state our mission of searching for the Absolute Truth with greater precision:

Let us engage our intelligence in duplicating, understanding, contemplating and realizing the Esoteric Teaching of the Supreme Absolute Truth, for taking such perfect action will free us from all material miseries eternally.

The original purpose of intelligence is only to inquire into the Absolute Truth, just as the original purpose of the genitals is only to beget children. Like the genitals, proper use of one's intelligence can bring one a great deal of enjoyment; however unlike genital

pleasure, spiritual enjoyment never ends. That is the advantage of realization of the eternal Truth; its bliss is superior to that of temporary mundane enjoyment, because once attained it never diminishes. The results of action in perfect knowledge are eternal because they are in proper relation with the eternal Supreme Absolute Truth.

To use these methods of approaching the Absolute Truth effectively, one must first mentally record or duplicate the background philosophy of the Teaching. That is, one must read or hear about this philosophy from one who understands it properly, both in theory and in practice. One should hear so nicely that one can repeat and explain the philosophy perfectly, almost like a tape recorder. As far as possible, one must make an exact mental copy of the philosophy of the Teaching.

This is the standard of duplication. Unless we duplicate the information about the Supreme Absolute Truth, how can we think about it properly? If we start thinking with an imperfect copy of the information, even if we think perfectly we may reach a spurious, deviant conclusions. If one performs ten pages of mathematical calculations perfectly, but makes a mistake on the first line, the final result will be incorrect. So to be successful in our reasoning, we must start with a perfect duplicate of the original Teaching.

Acquiring perfect knowledge

To obtain this perfect knowledge, one must first ascertain the process of obtaining knowledge. We have to begin our search for Truth from perfect knowledge of the techniques of philosophical inquiry. Then if one can apply his intelligence properly, he will actually reach conclusive results. If the process of obtaining knowledge is itself uncertain or flawed, how can the results be ultimately satisfying? Therefore first of all, one should hear from experienced persons about the process for obtaining real knowledge.

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The Esoteric Teaching is composed of true knowledge in relation to the Absolute Truth. The complete Teaching contains both material and spiritual knowledge. Spiritual knowledge is eternal Absolute Truth. Knowledge of the subtle principles of the material world is also eternal, and this knowledge is a reliable guide to practical action. The combination of material and spiritual knowledge in harmonious relation with the Absolute Truth is perfect knowledge.

Thus the Esoteric Teaching is eternal knowledge that is also very practical in life. Real knowledge is always practical, and also in perfect harmony with religious principles. In that sense, the meaning of the Esoteric Teaching or the Absolute Truth is very broad, more akin to Absolute Wisdom than to ordinary knowledge. What we usually mean by knowledge is simply sorted or formatted information, but the Absolute Truth is living Spirit.

The Esoteric Teaching is thus more than a philosophy and a process; it is a living wisdom-path, or the art of attaining a certain standard series of spiritual realizations. When properly performed, the methods of the Esoteric Teaching lead automatically to spiritual consciousness, Enlightenment and self-realization. This realization is experienced subjectively as a personal, direct relationship with the all-pervading Holy Spirit, omnipotent Son and Supreme Father. The complete detachment and bliss derived from such complete realization gives complete and permanent relief from all material suffering.

This realized knowledge is beyond both relative and even absolute knowledge. Realization is a superior class of knowledge. It is beyond the scope of dialectical philosophy because it has no referent in material variegatedness. Realization of the Absolute Truth can only be transcendental, or self-referential. It is the goal of all spiritual practice, the unique Complete Whole; therefore no philosophy, however complete, can describe it. But philosophy can point out and guide the practical means to achieve the Complete Whole, and then realization becomes possible through proper application of the intelligence and the Lord's grace.

Our search for Absolute Truth is the intelligent application of wisdom and discrimination to attaining practical realization. The external symptom of spiritual realization is that one becomes perfectly detached from the pains and pleasures of material life, and internally one experiences eternally liberated existence in continuous ecstatic bliss. This is possible only by reviving one's eternal loving relationship with the Supreme Godhead, the eternal Father of all.

Thus the process of approaching the Absolute Truth is not simply an armchair exercise for pseudo-intellectual bookworms; nor is it a kind of self-hypnosis or anything else mundane; it is nothing less than an eternal, ecstatic, direct personal relationship with the Supreme Absolute Truth, or God. This is the goal of our search for Truth: direct contact with the Supreme Personality of Godhead. So the exalted knowledge of spiritual Enlightenment must become a basis for action leading to assimilated spiritual experience. This is mature self-realization.

Until the day we reach such realization, all our knowledge is imperfect; only perfect knowledge sustained by pure experience of eternal existence, knowledge and bliss can satisfy our deep inner taste for Truth. The sincere reader of the Esoteric Teaching is well advised not only to duplicate the principles of the search for Truth, but also to put these means into practical action. A mood of sincere inquiry applied to a genuine source of knowledge automatically results in the happy blessing of spiritual realization by the grace of the Lord.

Finding the source

Someone might ask, "Very well, you may have a bona-fide Spiritual Master, but how can I find perfect knowledge that is properly related to the Absolute Truth? If I'm not yet realized or enlightened, how can I ever recognize it?"

This is a very germane question. In material consciousness we are unaware of spiritual existence; our original spiritual consciousness

is covered by ignorance. We can obtain knowledge only through our limited and imperfect material senses. As such, we are not in any condition to recognize the Absolute Truth nor to distinguish Truth from illusion. The Spiritual Master's role is crucial. Without the blessings of the Spiritual Master attained through unconditional surrender, sincere service and submissive inquiry, no one can make any spiritual advancement. But if we follow the step-by-step methods of the Esoteric Teaching, we shall be able to receive perfect knowledge by taking guidance from the most perfect Teacher, the Lord Himself.

The first step in finding knowledge about the Absolute Truth is to eliminate all possibility of mistaking falsity as truth. This will disqualify all sources of false information. The few that remain will receive our close attention. Philosophically, this is called (in Latin) *via negativa*, or elimination of the negative.

All around us there are sources of information that want us to believe that they are the Truth, and that we should accept and act in relation to this information. For example we see so many nonsense things on television, and also there is the daily newspaper containing many pages of densely formatted information awaiting our comprehension. Tuning the radio through its dial reveals still more sources of complex information, some meaningful only with sophisticated receiving equipment and digital decoding devices. And then there is the library with its millions of books and other media, and let us not forget magazines, billboards, government and other printed communications, education, and the ubiquitous marketing media that abound in our commercialized society.

There are so many ordinary sources of information, including the people in our lives, who expect that we will act upon the information they supply us in certain well-defined ways. Our parents and other relatives, mundane teachers and religious authorities, government agencies, friends and fellow citizens all have some degree of vested interest in our accepting their words as truth and acting accordingly. In other words, they want us to do what they tell us to. But can we count on their information to be

the truth? Will accepting their advice be to our real benefit? These important questions are worth investigating in depth.

The problem with accepting information from most sources is this: if we accept and act in relation to information that is not the eternal and perfect Absolute Truth, we won't be able to achieve realization of the Absolute Truth, the highest possible achievement of our valuable human life. Instead will achieve something less than our actual potential. Thus it is in our ultimate interest to be able to discriminate between invaluable Absolute Truth, valuable true information, and the various kinds of useless information such as misinformation, disinformation, speculation and fabrication. This of course is common sense, but to realize the Absolute Truth we must turn everything in life into a science.

Disinformation: motivated data

Information is descriptive symbolic data about the world. It may be truth, truth polluted with falsity, or total falsity. No matter how nicely and tastefully formatted it may be, false information is useless. Typically, the information we receive from so many channels in our daily life is polluted by a major source of falsity: is motivated. For example, the radio announcer is being paid to describe his sponsor's product as wonderful—even if it's junk. We are all too familiar with this kind of disinformation. But no amount of such polluted information is going to help us find the truth and become self-realized.

Most information media are sponsored by large corporations, whose political and aesthetic preferences determine the range of programming, and whose agenda is dominated by financial considerations. Thus mass-market opinion becomes a determining force in media programming; image and popularity are everything, from the making of a soap to the making of a President. Because this financial pressure renders professional information providers dependent on their sponsors, they cannot be objective. This destroys their credibility as sources of truth. That's why association with commercial and political interests, even though they may be

in the guise of religious people, does not produce realization of the Absolute Truth.

Even the attempt to provide an objective scientific description of the material world cannot help but deviate from the truth. Ideally, scientists are supposed to describe their observations with impersonal objectivity; but in real life their observations, descriptions and theories contain many biases, ambiguities, contradictions and inconsistencies. One scientist interprets a given experiment differently from another; thus there is constant bickering, leading to the ongoing evolution of so-called "scientific" theories.

The controversies among the scientists rage on behind the scenes in sophisticated research journals no one else can understand, until they're settled by political means among the scientists themselves. Then the current politically fashionable theories appear as gospel truth in textbooks until defeated by a new theory with more affluent or determined backers. But if a scientific theory is truth, why does it need to change? This is not absolute truth. Material so-called scientific truth is far below the standard we have set in our search for truth. Yet we see a constant flux in so-called scientific descriptions of reality.

So we can understand that the main problem with the information we encounter in an ordinary life is that it is motivated, or biased information. This is called *disinformation*. It comes packaged with a hidden agenda of related action, from buying a certain brand of product to marrying a certain girl. The question to ask oneself is: what is the desire of the person providing the information? The provider of disinformation alters the original truth in favor of the result he or she is trying to achieve. The salesperson wants to make the sale; the doctor wants the patient to accept an expensive course of treatment; the politician wants to be elected; the lover wants to marry the beloved; the parent wants the child to follow his own ideals and moral standards. Because almost everyone *wants something*, their motivation is bound to affect their information. What is the cure for this?

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It becomes obvious that unless we personally verify every bit of information we accept and somehow translate it into an objective framework, we cannot exclude the possibility of errors in action because of disinformation. We adjust ourselves to this situation on the social level by accepting information only from people we believe are motivated to tell the truth—or at least motivated not to lie. For example, we request travel information from a professional travel agent, who will profit from our buying a ticket. We seek clarification from a third party before we accept the statements of employment applicants, auto mechanics, doctors, lawyers and the like. We consult standards like reference books and commercial information services when we require accurate information about the material world upon which to base our actions.

This may make everyday life a little more bearable, but it still doesn't help us in finding the Absolute Truth, the King of Knowledge, or "that knowledge, by knowing which, nothing remains unknown."

But wait minute—we *have* accomplished something valuable: we now know that Ultimate Truth will not be found in the commercialized streams of misinformation and disinformation bombarding us every day, nor in the statements of ordinary, materially motivated people. This much is clear: If we are to obtain accurate knowledge about attaining the Absolute Truth, its source must be unmotivated by base material desires, untainted by gross commercial exploitation. Such a pure source of information cannot be concerned with the temporary, changing conditions of the material world; it must be beyond all such so-called facts and figures which are valid only for a limited time. Today's encyclopedias and reference books are tomorrow's kindling, and the river charts are constantly revised to follow the shifting sandbars. But we're seeking charts to the shoreless eternal ocean of bliss that never need revision; therefore we shall have to find a better process.

Philosophical speculation

Philosophy is an academically accepted process for finding the truth. Philosophers start from accepted truths (axioms or assumptions) and use reason to establish related truths. The strategy of philosophy is to approach the complete Absolute Truth from whatever partial or relative truth is already known. However there are many philosophers in the world, and each has a different opinion. Some schools of philosophy reach conclusions quite contradictory to those of their colleagues. How can this be? Let's look deeper into the matter and see if we can understand it.

If the process of philosophy, or manufacturing knowledge from already known facts using reason and logic, is correct, there would be only one possible philosophical conclusion: the Absolute Truth. The fact that there are as many conclusions as philosophers only points out the main deficiency of the philosophy business: it is based on mental speculation, or inferential logic.

Inferential reasoning is a kind of cheating process in which one takes his opinions—his personal likes and dislikes—and builds a philosophy around them. All the fancy reasoning philosophers do begins from arbitrary personal value judgments and proceeds to a final conclusion that must also fit within the philosophers' limits of acceptability. Unfortunately, since these personal likes and dislikes become the axioms of a philosophical system, they are very difficult to detect and dislodge, even by the most objective philosophers. These individual opinions color the philosophers' search for Truth and render it biased and invalid. Philosophical speculation is thus another kind of disinformation; for how can one arrive objective Absolute Truth by using personal opinions to make judgments?

The Absolute Truth has no obligation to be likable, even by philosophers. It is simply beyond our human limitations. Therefore it is impossible for the philosophers to arrive at a unanimous conclusion because none of them has personally realized the Absolute Truth. Consequently there are thousands of philosophies all over the world, and each one more or less disagrees with all the

rest. If one attempts to study the field of mundane academic philosophy without this simple insight, he will simply become overwhelmed by confusion. However, if one applies the process of philosophical logic to the Absolute Truth, the results are always in harmony with the Absolute Truth. How can this be?

There are six basic types of speculative philosophies:

1: **Fruitive workers** say that the universe is a machine that is bound by laws of nature to deliver the results of people's activities. They stress technique, duty and moral principles but tend to be atheistic.

2: **Analytical atheists** hold that the material nature is the cause of everything, that life is therefore ours to enjoy, and after death there is nothing.

3: **Logical atomists** rationally propound that the universe is simply a combination of atomic particles. Life and consciousness appear as a consequence of a long process of random evolution and natural selection.

4: **Impersonalist speculators** say that everything material is an illusion. They stress the impersonal Brahman, or Holy Spirit, as the cause of everything.

5: **Yogis** following Patanjali and similar writers imagine that the form of the Absolute Truth is matter. That is their process of self-realization.

6: The **Esoteric Teaching** applies deductive logic and exegetical principles to standard scriptural philosophy to realize the Absolute Truth.

Thus, most speculative philosophers are addicted to the uncertain process of *induction*. But the process of philosophical speculation has value only when we start from actual knowledge of the complete Absolute Truth and reach our conclusions by *deduction*.

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When one comes into contact with the knower of the Absolute Truth, knowledge of the process of realization is transferred to him by hearing. This is the process of duplication mentioned above. Then the process of understanding can begin. This takes the form of experimental observation along with an internal debate, where the student of the Absolute Truth verifies everything he has heard from the Teacher by experience, reason and argument. In other words, he subjects the knowledge he has duplicated to the acid test of practical critical evaluation. This is the only application of philosophical speculation that brings us closer to the Absolute Truth.

There is only one assumption that is vital if one is to duplicate this process successfully: The student must assume, at least for the purposes of verifying the Teaching, that the philosophy and techniques given by the Spiritual Master are correct; that they are, in other words, the Absolute Truth. The inner conversation of the student should go like this:

Intelligence: "The Esoteric Teaching and the Spiritual Master say that such and such is true."

Mind: "Oh really? Well, that contradicts my belief in some odd bits of popular wisdom I was told years ago by my mother."

Intelligence: "OK, but **just try to figure out how whatever the Teaching says could be true.**"

The correct form of the question is essential. The mind will dutifully process the request of the intelligence and come up with the right answer, no matter how long it takes. This process of understanding must be continued until the entire Teaching has been verified by such experimental observation, reason and argument. Indeed this process will automatically take place, for such is the doubting nature of the human mind; but one's conscious participation in the matter speeds things up enormously. One must be very firm with the mind, and not accept its many attempts at obfuscations and disinformation. By gradually giving

the mind such training and proper thinking, it will give quite good service. This mental discipline is the royal road to understanding.

Rejecting disinformation

So far in the process of winnowing the vast field of knowledge in search for the Absolute Truth, we have discussed the insufficiency of materially motivated disinformation. We have also exposed the deficiencies of ordinary inductive scientific and philosophical processes for obtaining knowledge. A similarity shared by all sources of disinformation is that they want us to accept something temporary and imperfect as a basis for action. But this we are unwilling to do, since by bitter experience we have found that actions based upon temporary substitutes for Truth do not satisfy us.

Even if a person has no knowledge of the Absolute Truth, sooner or later he becomes weary of the ordinary way of life, and sets out to find something better. This illustrates the universality of the desire for the Absolute Truth within the human heart. How many people are born into a materialistic culture and surrounded their whole lives by disinformation? Just about everyone. But people are driven from within by the strong urge for Truth, and as soon as they have an opportunity, they seek it out. You have the opportunity—you're reading this book—so please take this golden opportunity to put these suggestions into practice in your life.

The disinformation providers—philosophers, scientists, politicians, media stars, etc.—who are currently popular inevitably become forgotten in the relentless march of eternal time. Then new faces take their places, only to be vanquished alike in the inevitable rotation of temporary material values. The people, hungry for Truth and unsatisfied by substitutes, are always looking for new sources of stimulation and condemning their former heroes to the trashcan of oblivion. Similarly, the fashions, businesses, governments, religions and other social institutions created upon the temporary relative truths of material activities wither away, leaving no trace except the faded print on the dull pages of dusty

old history books. Ignorant people, frustrated in their search for real pleasure, again accept imposters and the same dance is repeated indefinitely, until somehow or other one comes to realize the following highly significant fact:

No philosophical process that begins from temporary, incomplete relative truths can ever arrive at complete realization of the infinite eternal Absolute Truth.

One cannot artificially create the Complete Whole by gluing the pieces together. Therefore it is impossible to arrive at the Absolute Truth just by amassing, classifying and formatting information relative to the material situation, *even if it is physically true*; just as it is impossible to arrive at realization of the Absolute Truth by creating new relative truths from already existing ones. Relative truth is referenced to temporary material qualities, so how can it describe or discover the Absolute Truth? One can indulge in such inferential speculation forever without realizing the Absolute Truth.

Beyond human knowledge

Our ten criteria for the qualifications of the Absolute Truth as stated above serve us well as a guide in evaluating information, for they lead to parallel conclusions. By applying them to the ocean of information in our lives, we can understand how the inability to meet these specifications eliminates the vast majority of knowledge providers from the field of potential sources of Absolute Truth. We can also see why no human being can originate Absolute Truth, and this can lead to accepting the possibility of the self-revelation of the Absolute Truth.

Let's recall some of the attributes of the Absolute Truth we talked about in the beginning of this section. The Absolute Truth is complete and perfect. If we accept any human source of information as truth, this is a recipe for chaos, because experience has shown that practically all human beings are imperfect. Human intellects are contaminated by desire, therefore they color their

communications to match their aspirations. Even if human beings are capable of generating relative truth (which experience shows they are, under favorable circumstances), relative truth is limited and conditional by definition, and therefore cannot be complete or absolute.

The Absolute Truth must also be free from illusion, or errors in meaning. Human beings cannot create knowledge that is free from illusion because they are making observations with imperfect senses. We cannot perceive everything that exists in all three dimensions of time (past, present and future) therefore neither can we create perfect, all-pervading absolute knowledge of the Complete Whole.

Another attribute of the Absolute Truth is freedom from mistakes and cheating. Every human being makes mistakes, and as we have already seen, has a natural tendency to bias information according to personal motivation. Thus we may categorically exclude ordinary human beings from the possible sources of Absolute Truth. This conclusion conveniently removes most of the contenders from the field of possible sources of the Absolute Truth.

The key to contemplation

If we actually find the Absolute Truth, one thing is certain: we shall also find the final solution to all our troubles and miseries. Being complete and perfect, the Absolute Truth is the source of all knowledge and whatever else we could desire. And because it is free from mistakes and illusion, the Absolute Truth will not mislead us, but will set us on the path to unending joy. Like the Cornucopia of the ancient Romans or the *Kalpataru* (desire tree) of the *Vedas*, it contains the fruit of all desires: the eternal satisfaction of the soul.

The mind is a quicksilver chariot. As soon as it is stimulated by the sense perceptions of the material world, it becomes agitated. A person with an agitated mind cannot have satisfaction of the soul, for to experience this spiritual pleasure requires a degree of peace

and concentration obtainable only in meditation or contemplation. Therefore even regular commercially available varieties of meditation contain a whole set of practices based upon breath control (*pranayama*) designed to calm the restless mind and fix it upon transcendental ideas. Unfortunately these ancient techniques are far too difficult for most people today, therefore even if learned they're seldom used. Contemplation is possible only if the mind can be made peaceful. The advantage of our method of philosophical inquiry into the Absolute Truth is that it automatically fixes the mind because of interest, or absorption of the mind in the attractive beauty of its ideas. This is real knowledge, which is objectively beautiful because it is perfect and eternal Absolute Truth.

So the process of obtaining real knowledge is duplication of the correct philosophy and methods along with understanding, or deliberate inner verification of the Absolute Truth. These are naturally enjoyable because of the powerful insights, liberating realizations and dramatic expansion of consciousness they provide. The mind is automatically controlled when the intelligence is attracted to contemplate the existential beauty and pleasing purity of the ideas and conclusions of the search for the Absolute Truth.

This kind of meditation—the inner contemplation of beautiful ideas—cannot be disturbed by the vagaries of the material world, simply because nothing in the material world could be more pleasurable or attractive. Once begun, this contemplation continues quietly underneath the stream of everyday impressions. Only someone who is making actual spiritual advancement can understand this quiet ecstasy; and once tasting it, one cannot give it up. This real knowledge is the first stage of realization of the Absolute Truth.

Self revelation

All processes of informational compilation and inferential analysis and the process of inductive philosophical speculation are called **ascending** or inductive processes: vainly trying to build up the

Complete Whole from the sum of its pieces. But since the Complete Whole is much more than the sum of its parts, even if all the parts were available, these approaches would be doomed to failure. No amount or transformation of relative material truth can yield the unlimited Absolute Truth. The only way the Absolute Truth can be known is by a deductive or **descending** process; since we cannot approach the Absolute Truth by our limited intelligence, the Absolute Truth must somehow reveal itself to us. This is not as far-fetched as it may sound. In fact, at the present moment you are participating in such a process by reading this book.

Human knowledge and mental powers are limited, but the Absolute Truth is not constrained by such limitations. Because the Absolute Truth is all knowledge, it is necessarily all-conscious and all-intelligent as well. Therefore to reveal all-pervading, complete knowledge to human beings—despite their limitations—is well within the unlimited possibilities of the Absolute Truth. In our discussion so far, we have arrived at some important conclusions by a process of negation (*via negativa*). Our purpose in the preceding discussion was to elaborately demonstrate that none of the commonly accepted processes of obtaining knowledge is adequate to approach the Absolute Truth. Now let us take the other tack (*via positiva*), and see if we can find any evidence of the Absolute Truth revealing itself. After all, the self-revelations of the Absolute Truth certainly ought to leave their marks on history, because this perfect knowledge is the source of all human civilized culture.

How can we recognize the Absolute Truth when we come across it? The character of Absolute Truth is that it describes that which is eternal. If the Absolute Truth describes anything material, it does so in terms of eternal values. Otherwise it would lose its absolute value because of reference to limited, transient material conditions. Relative truth changes with the shifting temporary material polarities, and this is outside our set of criteria for the Absolute Truth.

Sages realize the Absolute Truth as perfect knowledge of eternal existence, for which we all have been searching since time immemorial. How did the sages find it? Maybe we should ask them. They have encoded their wisdom in various scriptures and enshrined their practices in different religions.

Sages are human, but they're also in touch with the Absolute Truth. If someone is touching the electric mains, and another person touches him, both are electrified. Similarly, the potency of the Absolute Truth surcharges the realized sage, who is eternally in intimate communion with perfect knowledge. Thus the bona fide scriptures are not products of ordinary human beings; especially scriptures that contain descriptions of the kind of the events we're searching for, namely the self-revelations of the Absolute Truth.

Categories of self-revelation

Since we have conclusively determined that human beings cannot possibly be the source of the Absolute Truth, we must look to beings that are higher than human beings. This is commonly understood to be the domain of religion. There is no rational basis for an *a priori* disqualification of religion as a source of Truth on grounds of lack of objectivity. Although it is a fact that most organized religions in the world today would not meet our ten criteria, only a firsthand investigation will tell us if there are any that actually do.

While there are many religions in the world, most of them are admittedly invented by human beings. Therefore we can immediately exclude those from consideration, on the principle that humans cannot source the Absolute Truth. This leaves only the religions that support our parallel conclusion that Absolute Truth must come from sources higher than human.

If we can accept, at least for the sake of discussion, that the Absolute Truth can reveal itself through religion, the question of how it does so immediately arises. In the religions we have not

excluded from our study, one can find three general kinds of self-revelation of the Absolute Truth:

- 1: The Absolute Truth simply **reveals itself directly** to a human being, who may or may not make efforts to inform others so that they can realize it too.
- 2: The Absolute Truth **descends through an intermediary**, such as a Messiah or a chain of higher beings, who deliver it to humans.
- 3: The Absolute Truth **appears within the material world** and teaches knowledge about itself.

So now our question becomes, "Which of the religions still in the running best meets our requirements for the source of the Absolute Truth?" While this question may appear to be much different than the one with which we started out, at the same time we can see how close to a goal we have come in our search for the source of the Truth.

In principle, the answer is easy to understand: we need only compare the original scriptures and practices of all eligible religions with the qualities of the Absolute Truth as we have determined them so far. Thus by comparison with our standards, we will see if there is any religion that fulfills all the criteria, or enough of them to be acceptable to us as a source of Absolute Truth.

In fact, if we subject the teachings and practices of the world's religions to the ten criteria outlined in the beginning of this chapter, most of them fall far short. We find that many religions have become mere mundane moralistic shells designed only to regulate the material life of their adherents. There is no talk even of philosophy, what to speak of ecstatic realizations or Absolute Truth. Other religions are wedded to temporary social and cultural necessities that ceased to exist hundreds of years ago, making their structures invalid for today's social environment.

Thus the actual transcendental information content of most organized religions is very limited, and the majority is some kind of constantly changing disinformation. But previously we determined that the Absolute Truth must be eternally true and practical. So most of the typical socially organized but spiritually weak religions are out of the running on that count.

There is too much to know about the Absolute Truth to present it all within one book. Therefore we must also reject all religions that exclusively or primarily recognize only a single Scripture, to the dogmatic exclusion of all others.

Finally, the Absolute Truth should contain a practical, scientific method that allows any sincere person to reliably attain realization of the Absolute Truth, regardless of his or her material qualification or situation. If that is missing even the best transcendental Teaching is useless.

If we examine all available knowledge objectively and impartially according to the standards set forth in the beginning of this chapter (a process that was systematically carried out by this author over a 35-year period), there is only one potential source of the Absolute Truth that conclusively meets all the qualifications that we have established as requirements for recognizing self-revelations of the Absolute Truth: the Esoteric Teaching. All the great human religions accept one or two of these categories of revelation, but we shall find that only the Esoteric Teaching contains descriptions of all three categories of self-revelation of the Absolute Truth. Best of all, the Esoteric Teaching is a living tradition, flexible and adaptable to present-day conditions without compromising any of its august transcendental wisdom.

Although the Esoteric Teaching is little known and even less understood, this is a deliberate strategy on the part of its caretakers to protect it from adulteration. According to the internal history of the Esoteric Teaching, the Supreme Lord, God the Father Almighty, or the Supreme Personality of Godhead originally revealed the Teaching to superhuman beings at the beginning of

creation. The Scriptures of the Teaching were compiled in different historical periods for the needs of humanity in the changing conditions of the material world. Originally all these books were handed down through the chain of disciplic succession, but over time many of them have been lost. A period of great spiritual ignorance ensued, during which the original clear and simple teaching of the Absolute Truth was covered by materialistic doctrines of speculative theology based on Greek philosophy. This was not an accident: the Lord, in His infinite wisdom, kept this Teaching hidden and inaccessible until the proper time for its worldwide dissemination.

Qualifications of the teaching

Although the Esoteric Teaching is eternal and unchanging, it is also naturally extensible and adaptable to any historical situation or cultural context. The book you're reading is an attempt to extend the Esoteric Teaching philosophically to meet the needs of contemporary seekers of Truth, yet it is strictly based on the purport of the original ancient scriptures of the Esoteric Teaching. We have extracted the following information from the original text of the Esoteric Teaching:

- **This Teaching, perfect knowledge of the Absolute Truth, exists eternally in the spiritual world, and at the beginning of creation, is revealed to the first created being in the material universe.**
- The Esoteric Teaching of the Absolute Truth is subsequently passed down by disciplic succession to advanced superhuman beings until it reaches the planet Earth and is revealed to human beings.
- The Absolute Truth appears in person on the Earth at scheduled intervals in the form of the human incarnation to assure that the Esoteric Teaching is never corrupted. (Note that this makes the Esoteric Teaching unique among

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religions for containing all three kinds of self-revelation of the Absolute Truth, as discussed above.)

- The original Esoteric Teaching is never presented by people with commercial or professional interests: it is passed down through a long line of Spiritual Masters who have completely transcended material desires.
- The Esoteric Teaching categorically rejects the ascending process of mundane philosophical speculation, in favor of the descending process of self-revelation and disciplic succession.
- Highly qualified empirical observers performing independent evaluations of the original standard philosophy and practices of the Esoteric Teaching report complete consistency and equanimity of results.
- The Esoteric Teaching does not subject its philosophical contents to the conspiracies of politics, nor does it rely upon conventional political processes for its internal management; it is therefore immune to political corruption.
- The realization of the Absolute Truth supported by the Esoteric Teaching is so completely satisfying to the soul that its advanced students and Spiritual Masters are able to easily renounce all attachment to material sense gratification.
- Besides transcendental knowledge of matters far beyond the present range of human verification, the Esoteric Teaching contains much practical information that is immediately verifiable by the competent, objective student.
- The original scriptures of the Esoteric Teaching are so complete that they fill a good-sized library; they cover every facet of human existence in detail.

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- The history of the Esoteric Teaching, from its own internal accounts, goes back beyond the creation of the universe many billions of years ago.
- The knowledge of the Absolute Truth contained in the scriptures of the Esoteric Teaching is complete, perfect, and free from illusion because it is originally spoken by the incarnation of the Absolute Truth, the Supreme Personality of Godhead Himself.
- The devotees, students, Spiritual Masters and other representatives of the Esoteric Teaching are carefully trained to pass on its teachings exactly as they have been received from the original Source, and to present them expertly according to the time, situation and hearer, so that the hearers can also duplicate the original Teaching.
- Unique among all sources of religious knowledge, the original texts of the Esoteric Teaching contain a powerful and sophisticated double-blind checksum system for verification of the authenticity of the texts; thus any deviation is easily detected and corrected.

We cannot claim that our search has been exhaustive; somewhere in this vast universe there may be another source of Truth that meets the stringent criteria we define for establishing a valid source of Absolute Truth. But now, by the grace of the Lord, the Esoteric Teaching is easily accessible. Why should we needlessly continue our arduous and time-consuming search?

The Esoteric Teaching also contains a scientific, verifiable process by which any sincere student can realize the Absolute Truth and become a Spiritual Master. Though attaining this Enlightenment is a very gradual process, is so simple and reliable that anyone can use it and gain the benefits. We invite the reader to explore these techniques further, and to put them to work in his daily life, so that the real nature of the Absolute Truth may be revealed to his inquiring mind.

According to our ten criteria as set forth above, the Esoteric Teaching stands supreme, not only among religions, but also over all the potential sources of Truth. As one studies the knowledge and techniques of the Esoteric Teaching, one's appreciation for them only grows. Beyond all other religions, the Esoteric Teaching alone contains a complete teaching of the Supreme Absolute Truth, the Supreme Whole.

The transcendental Source

The Supreme Absolute Truth can be one only. However, it is transcendent and absolute, and therefore contains all possibilities, including the possibility of self-revelation. As we have seen from the previous discussion, because of the limits of human intelligence, this self-revelation is a practical necessity if we are to actually realize the infinite Absolute Truth. The Supreme Absolute Truth reveals itself by appearing in its original form in the material world from time to time, and the knowledge thus revealed is passed down through the disciplic succession of self-realized Spiritual Masters.

In the absence of knowing a self-realized person in the disciplic succession who can personally show us the way to Truth, the sacred Scriptures written by the self-realized Spiritual Masters are the best sources of Truth. Any Scripture that emanates from the Absolute Truth shares its quality of perfect knowledge; therefore authentic Scriptures possess immense value. Since the quality of being Absolute inheres in the Truth by definition, any correct description of any part of that Absolute Truth is also absolute, even though it is necessarily abbreviated.

Anyone can verify this assertion by faithfully practicing the methods of self-realization given in this Esoteric Teaching. They will invariably find that these methods, being supplied by the Absolute Truth itself, inevitably lead to complete realization of the Truth. Thus one can invoke the self-revelation of the Absolute Truth in oneself simply by following the directions given in these pages.

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The Scriptures written by the self-realized Spiritual Masters are the factual records of these self-revelations of the Absolute Truth; therefore they are not different from the Absolute Truth by virtue of extending that process of self-revelation. Such scriptural knowledge is perfect because it is wholly transparent, transcendent and self-referential. Promoting and teaching this absolute knowledge is the most beneficial welfare work for all, because it leads to complete cessation of material misery and complete personal realization of the complete Absolute Truth.

om tat sat

Bhaktisiddhartha Dasanudas
Hagatña, Guam
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