

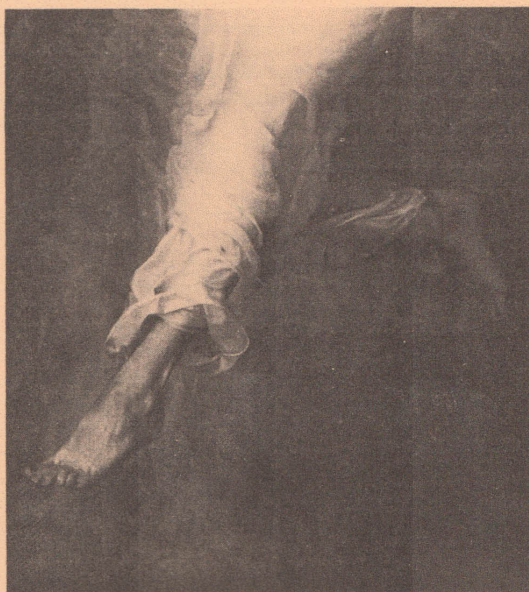
Sophia
Creating
a Soul

Wise
Woman's
JOURNAL



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Photograph by John Wimbaleley © 1994

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Creating a Soul

Many people seek "spiritual experience." It is prized as special, different, a sign of one kind or other that one is "advancing," not to mention that it usually feels good. Such seekers identify with the lofty, the intellectual, the sublime. Who has not been moved above the mundane everyday world by a magnificent piece of art, poetry, or music? Perhaps by gazing at a newborn, or into the eyes of a new love. These things are blissful in themselves, and on occasion lift us even further, into a state which can be called spiritual. If we're not careful, we will continually strive to return there, to live in that ethereal realm—to escape to it.

Seeking spiritual experience is an inaccurate seeking, a mistake. We are Spirit—experiencing the human adventure. To reject the nature of the human is to err. Earthly activity cannot be transcended to an integrated spiritually human experience until it is first recognized and accepted for all that it is—including the dense, the difficult, the physical, emotional, and the shadowy psychic dark side.

Being free to experience what we naturally reject is a step toward integration. But first we must know ourselves and our capabilities, our very human nature. When we know ourselves, when we acknowledge and freely experience this "dark side" of our nature, we can then reconcile it with the spiritual. To reconcile may mean to let go—but we cannot let go of what we do not admit is there. This process is sometimes called "creating a soul"—a soul being a container for Spirit, a strong and undefiled vehicle for Life's activity, the developed Awareness function of Life Itself.

Sophia, *Wise Woman's Journal* intends to explore and describe this process of recognition, acknowledgment, letting go, and integration. It will provide tools to know oneself, and it will both pay homage to and occasionally analyze visual and poetic and otherwise beautiful representations of the truly spiritually human experience.

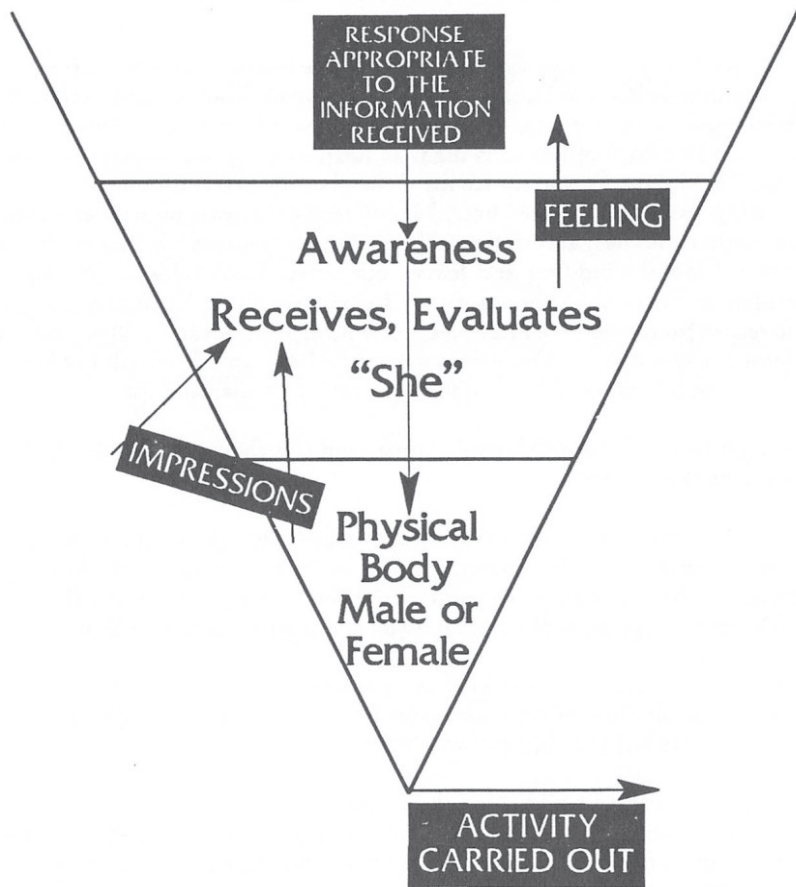
Creating a soul is not easy Work, but of course it is its own reward. Group Work, whether in a small society of two or more who talk or meet regularly, or in this broader, mail-box version, is necessary for the process to unfold. Others are mirrors for ourselves, and a focus is maintained that is not easily accessible in the world on our own. Please feel free to participate in this effort to describe the Work, with your comments and perhaps your own examples. The more communication with readers, the more living this vehicle Sophia. And in addition to the profits of group Work, it is often comforting to hear of others' experience, and though comfort is not our purpose, it is a delightful by-product of Life which we can experience and appreciate when appropriate.



Much of the material in *Sophia, Wise Woman's Journal* is based on Rhondell's *Science of Man*, and is used with permission. ⊗

X—Spirit, Intelligence, Potency

“He”



Picture of Man with Properly Functioning Awareness or “Soul”

Awareness receives impressions from both inner and outer worlds, evaluates them based on the Purpose of Living, communicates or “reports” their value to Spirit via the medium of feeling. Spirit always responds appropriately to the information received; this response is carried out through the physical body. (Rhondell’s *Science of Man* uses the term “X” to represent the Life Force; just as for instance in algebra, it designates that something exists that cannot be precisely defined—yet. Sophia uses “X” interchangeably with terms such as: Life, Spirit, Intelligence, Potency, Lover, Initiator; and sometimes refers to It as masculine because It initiates, goes forth, penetrates, impregnates).

Whither Thou Goest

And whither thou lodgest, I will lodge. These beautiful words are from the Old Testament Book of Ruth, Chapter 1, Verse 16. They are the declaration of a loving daughter-in-law to her dead husband's mother, Naomi. Naomi's husband died; then both of her sons died, as well, leaving two young widows, Ruth and Orpah. The three grieving women leave their home, utterly impoverished and with hope of finding sustenance somewhere. Naomi urges the younger women to return to their own mothers' homes, and she herself will almost "regress" to her own homeland. Orpah takes Naomi's bidding and leaves our story. Ruth refuses. She adores her mother-in-law and utters the famous words declaring her love: "Intreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee, for whither thou goest, I will go, and whither thou lodgest, I will lodge. ... Where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried: the Lord do so to me, and more also, if ought but death part thee and me."

So the two go to Bethlehem, Naomi's home, and use their wits—indeed, they connive—to secure their needs.

Any Jewish or Christian woman who has ever been truly in love (or thought she was) and has read these words has furnished her own interpretation of this linguistic masterpiece: she has spoken these words to her love, within her heart, if not to him directly. Where thou diest, will I die... if ought but death part thee and me.

If you have ever experienced this kind of relationship, these phrases do not sound dramatic to you at all, they express something that has overtaken your whole self, your body, your soul—as has the object of your love.

Spiritual Teachings always admonish the student to beware of taking the metaphorical for the literal—you find this anywhere, in any legitimate Teaching book, from any real Teacher. And when you have Worked awhile, and you experience Union—maybe not permanently, but you Know—descending from Heaven, you take back with you into the mundane world an element of bliss and a Knowing that you will never, ever, forget, that is now part of you, you know it is Truth—you do not mistake the literal for the invisible, the form is not the Essence but contains and represents Essence.

And yet.

And yet, you love him, you adore him, you know in your heart of hearts you would die for him, I adore you, I am you, Whither though goest, I will go. No matter what.

When a morsel of beauty survives antiquity and is as living today as when it was written, there must be something real there, something valuable, something alive. These are living words, words of Life. They have power. They are authentic.

What is the essential integrity of this prose? I have read it over and over, I have listened

to it sung in angelic tones*, I have pondered its potency, and, thanks to hard Work and much undeserved grace, I know. I know, and maybe you, also, know the Truth of it. That a new purpose does not always take us where we want to go, but whither Life goest. It is death that parts Us, and paradoxically, it is sometimes death, of desire, that is the catalyst to union... surrender. Not my wants, but Yours, not my will but Thy will be done. And I will do it—for You.

And the ache of potential separation impels one to offer up one's life, anything but separation, anything... And to offer up one's life is not a dramatic thing, after all... it is a cheerfulness, that's all, cheerfulness in the face of discomfort or disappointment; it is a willingness to be strong, not to crumple like a child, and whine, but to say, Yes, I will do it, if it pleaseth Thee... and then to do it.

To offer up one's life is not to be burned at the stake, or to be annihilated, or to suffer (which merely means "to allow") any way but gladly; it is merely to put self second, to see reflections of the Beloved in everyone one meets, in every interrupting voice on the telephone, in rude sales clerks and oblivious waiters. It is to see the Beloved in every nook and corner, to follow Him is to offer up one's life as a gift, I don't need it, You take it, and to make this life a worthy gift, one full of surprises, heretofore unknown talents developed, tiny unwitnessed kindnesses rendered, a smile at a stranger, a moment of attention utterly freely given. Devotion.

Whither thou goest, I will go... Life is Love. When we practice Love in every possible moment, when we strive and Work to remember to do so amidst chaos and traffic and garbage in the street, or feeling utterly alone, and the devil begging our money and the IRS and all the myriad difficulties of daily life, when we can Love, when we go where He goes, gladly, without resentment or self-pity, we and He are One. And this is Love, and we are in Love, and we are Love. And if He has provided us an image of Himself, a man whom we adore, an obsession, maybe, we can look upon this gift with wonder, and acknowledge the challenge to see the Real within the form, not to get tangled up in the earthly manifestation of Heavenly things. Knowing that He makes me whole, and His form, here in my arms and in my heart, this form is but a symbol.⊗

* (And if like me you are moved by tones and by words, you will be swept away with Emmylou Harris' fervent declaration of love with these words in "Ballad of a Runaway Horse.")

Love consists in this, that two solitudes protect and touch
and greet each other.

Rainer Maria Rilke
Letters to a Young Poet



This is the time of tension between dying and birth
The place of solitude where three dreams cross
Between blue rocks
But when the voices shaken from the yew-tree drift away
Let the other yew be shaken and reply.
Blessed sister, holy mother, spirit of the fountain, spirit of the garden.
Suffer us not to mock ourselves with falsehood
Teach us to care and not to care
Teach us to sit still
Even among these rocks.
Our peace in His will
And even among these rocks
Sister, mother
And spirit of the river, spirit of the sea.
Suffer me not to be separated
And let my cry come unto Thee.

T.S. Eliot, "Ash Wednesday"





*Doth not wisdom cry? And understanding put forth her voice?
She standeth in the top of high places, by the way in the places of the paths.
She crieth at the gates, at the entry of the city, at the coming in at the doors.
Unto you, O men, I call; and my voice is to the sons of man.
O ye simple, understand wisdom: and, ye fools, be ye of an understanding heart.*

*Hear, for I will speak of excellent things; and the opening of my lips shall be right things.
For my mouth shall speak truth; and wickedness is an abomination to my lips.
All the words of my mouth are in righteousness; there is nothing froward or perverse in them.
They are all plain to him that understandeth, and right to them that find knowledge.
Receive my instruction, and not silver; and knowledge rather than choice gold.
For wisdom is better than rubies; and all the things that may be desired are not to be compared to it.
I wisdom dwell with prudence, and find out knowledge of witty inventions.
The fear of the Lord is to hate evil; pride, and arrogance, and the evil way, and the froward mouth, do I hate.
Counsel is mine, and sound wisdom: I am understanding; I have strength. ...
I love them that love me, and those that seek me early shall find me. ...
I lead in the way of righteousness, in the midst of the paths of judgment;
That I may cause those that love me to inherit substance; and I will fill their treasures.*

The Lord possessed me in the beginning of this way, before his works of old.

*I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was.
When there were no depths, I was brought forth; when there were no fountains abounding with water.
Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth;
While as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world.
When he prepared the heavens, I was there; when he set a compass upon the face of the depth:
When he established the clouds above; when he strengthened the fountains of the deep:
When he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment: when he appointed the foundations of the earth.*

*Then I was by him, as one brought up with him;
and I was daily his delight,
rejoicing always before him;*

*Rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth; and my delights were with the sons of men. ...
Hear instruction, and be wise, and refuse it not.
Blessed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors.
For whoso findeth me findeth life, and shall obtain favour of the Lord.
But he that sinneth against me wrongeth his own soul: all they that hate me love death.*

Remembering Wisdom

The preceding declaration of Wisdom [Old Testament Book of Proverbs, Chapter 8] is a picture of the Soul, the channel through which flows Life—Love, Intelligence, Will, Brilliance, and all that is Good.

Many years ago I remember feeling great joy at first reading “Then I was by him, as one brought up with him, and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him.” Daughter? Sister? Wife? Playmate!

The words somehow “rang true,” though at the time I felt utterly alone, on the best of days, and on other days—most days—as though I didn’t “really” exist at all.

Yet—“I was daily his delight.”

Imagine.

The Source of all, the Creator—God?—looking upon “me” as his delight. What could these words mean? The ring of Truth, absolutely—I felt it in my heart. But what could they mean?



Awareness gets off to a very poor start in this earthy realm, very poor. The baby Awareness function decides at birth that this is a terrible place, and who could blame her? After hours of pressure, pushing, prodding, violent waves extracting her from her haven, her ideal warm comforting protective nest of a world comes crashing in on her, she is thrust at last into relative coldness, harsh light, alien voices, a great new demand on her little lungs—and is immediately slapped! Welcome!

More indignities ensue and “I want to go Home—NOW!” It’s as though she feels this in every cell of her tiny body.

But her memory is short, she thinks Home was her most recent dwelling, where nothing was required of her, not the place where she was “daily his delight,” but that late dark refuge—and she makes a grave error, one that, if she is not lucky, and smart, will follow her and torment all the days of her life.

But she IS lucky—as are we who have banged at the gates of Wisdom at least long enough for them to have been cracked a smidgen on our behalf. If she is lucky she will find one day that there IS a Way Home... And if she first nurtures herself, and then ventures out and tests her mettle and makes efforts to temper and increase her strength, and most especially to uncover the errors of her first interpretations of what it’s all about, she will remember—truly Know—that she was and is “daily his delight.”



But what has happened in the intervening seeming eternity since she was daily his delight? Her decision to escape this painful world, and later, with a vengeance to gain its fickle pleasures, deadened her, crazed her, and nearly swallowed her up. She forgot.

The return to Remembrance, the Way Home, is rife with difficulties and pitfalls, it is an arduous journey. But she can do it, and when she does, she will Remember, and this will encourage her and strengthen her and eventually will make her whole.

First she must realize her central error, that her decision as to her purpose here was wrong—an understandable, yes, even forgivable error, but error nonetheless.

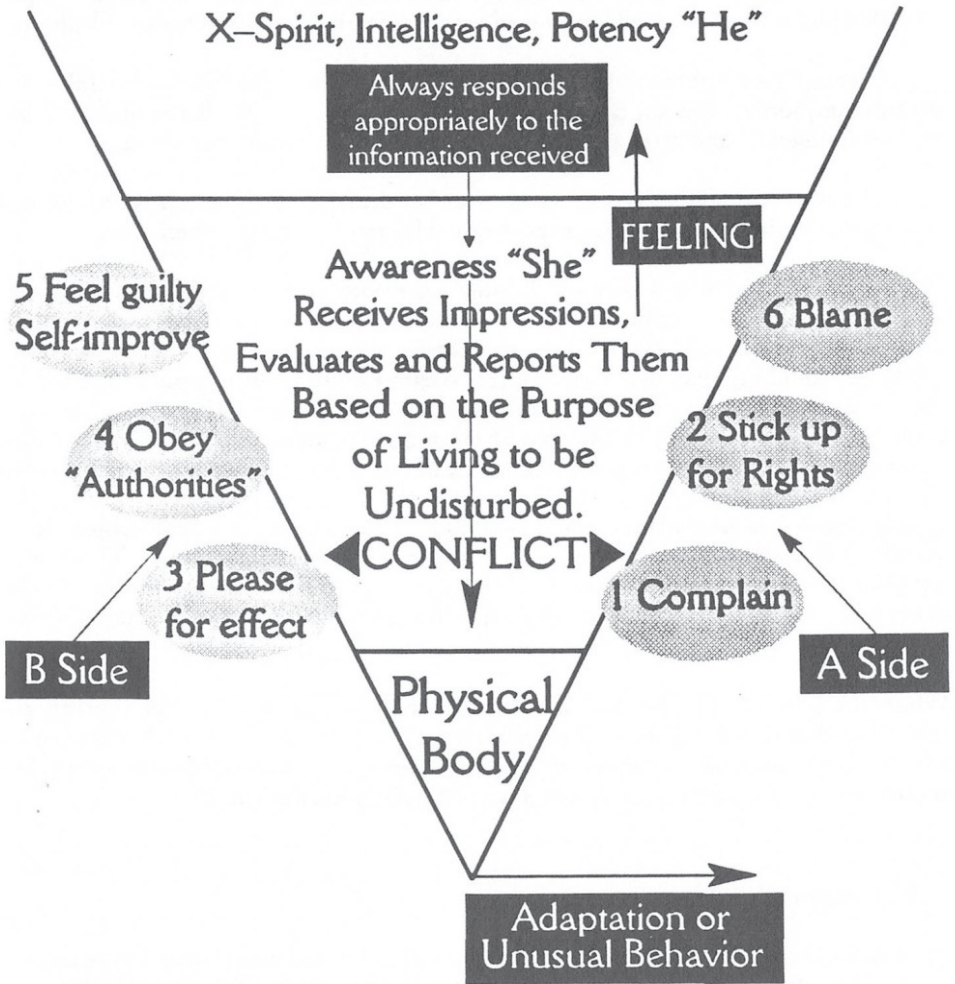
Her exposure to pain and then to pleasure were nothing in and of themselves, they were mere by-products of her Will to be here at all. The methods she thought would aid her were nothing but curses: That complaining about her plight would change it a whit—it wouldn't; that demanding gifts, seeking entitlements, would increase her lot—it didn't. That a conniving smile would gain her love—it gained her more connivance, and cast her in the role of victim; that anyone at all, no matter how intelligent, no matter how big a weapon they aimed at her, knew better than she what she was, what she could do—they didn't; that the measuring stick waved in her face at every turn had any validity at all—it didn't. She is priceless and subject to no standard, she who is daily his delight... but of course, she had forgotten. That it was her fault or their fault—nothing is anyone's fault and this is the lie that deprives her of ever remembering, regaining and repairing her majestic inheritance, rejoicing always before him. Not only are these ideas wrong, worse, they conflict.

When she first recognizes, and admits, and then lets go of error and conflict, she remembers her rightful stature, she is God's delight. Everyone who has Worked to see and to admit and then to let go of her cursed errors has tasted Remembrance. She knows what she is and was and will always be: daily his delight. ⊗

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Picture of Conditioned Man



Cover Story

The beautiful picture by John Wimberley is entitled "Descending Angel." It seems a perfect rendition of our bywords, "I am Spirit having a human experience." The unearthly being about to alight on a rock—one presumes with quite a thud! This world can feel dense and heavy to Spirit, to us. It is loud and crowded and full of almost inescapable ugliness and brutality at times. Some days it almost seems too much. How nice to close the world off, light candles, sink into a hot bubble-bath and let go. But our day-to-day existence has little of this kind of serenity, although it could have infinitely more, if we make it so.

How does one make it so? What is the impediment to serenity?

It is conflict, of course. It is the only thing in the way of serenity, of harmony.

Conflict was established very early on. The womb seemed Paradise compared to the world that followed. And the little one made an emphatic decision that the purpose of living was to regain non-disturbance, which is a wrong decision. The purpose of living is to develop, to learn, to grow, to discover and fulfill our potential. Non-disturbance is not our purpose, and freely experiencing disturbance, it turns out, is actually a method toward development. (See article "The Four Forces.")

This wrong decision was reinforced early on with more erroneous decisions—the methods to gain non-disturbance. While some of them are appropriate for babies (complaining, No.1, seems to be the only way an infant can let us know her real needs, for instance, and obedience, No.4, is necessary to ensure her safety), the erroneous methods do far more harm than good, because they conflict. Pleasing for effect, No.3 is hardly compatible with sticking up for rights, No.2. And how can everyone else be blamed (No.6) if it's all my fault, No.5?

The primal decision that the purpose of living is to be non-disturbed and the six decisions that the way to gain this is to complain, demand, please for effect, obey, feel guilty, and blame, lead to internal warfare, and eventually external as well. This, of course, is the antithesis of serenity.

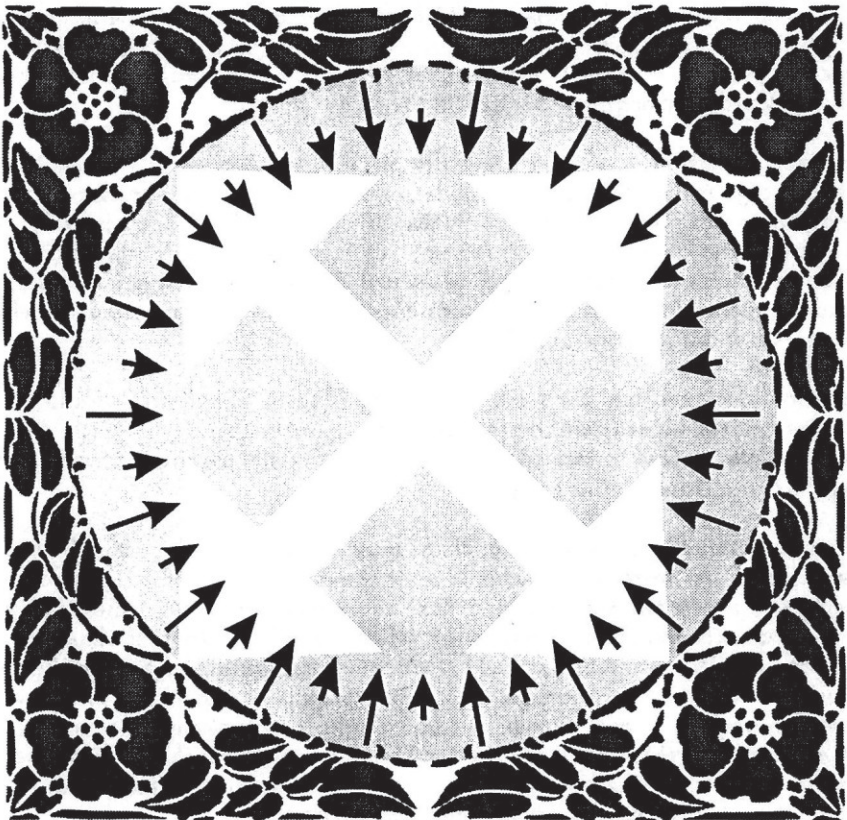
The angel descending to this land of chaos must discover her purpose of living. She must discover her methods to achieve it. If they are causing conflict, she knows something is amiss. She must examine these, continually for a time, make great efforts to see just exactly what motivates her, just what methods and tools she has chosen to get along here. When she has picked herself up off the ground, she can make a new purpose. She will discover there are untold various tools available that she can use to accomplish her new-found purpose. It takes Work. It isn't always pleasant, it isn't always pretty. But she can do it, if she sees what needs to be looked at, if she refuses to live in conflict, and develops her angelic powers to become all that she can be—a fully integrated Spirit having a very human experience. ⊗

The Four Forces

Of course I don't know if the Big Bang Theory is true or not, but when I think of it I think of Her Majesty Second Force storming out of God's house in a thunderous rage, slamming the door behind her. Bang! And voilà, Resistance was born—and so, eventually, were we.

Life, Intelligence, Will, Potency, the Word, is First Force, it is Initiative. To do. Vast power, the stuff of God. Wherever Initiative is, Second Force, Resistance, arises to meet it. There will be a Resistance to every Initiative, and that's the law, if creation is to occur. (Initiative that cannot meet Resistance eye-to-eye is no Initiative at all... it was merely a thought.)

When approximately equal First and Second Forces engage, a Form is created, Third Force. The womb Resistance has given shape to the Idea; has, paradoxically, both confined and liberated It. The Form is the manifestation of the Intelligence in the



Initiative. Sometimes it is tangible, measurable, sometimes it is slightly less concrete, i.e., an event. An event is a Form, the result of First and Second Forces.

The Fourth Force is the Result of the other three. The Response. Though most Fourth Force you will see is reaction, not response. Reaction is the result of suggestion, threats and promises. If one accepts or imagines and acts on a threat or promise in any form or event, one has not responded but has reacted in fear or greed.

There are plentiful examples of the Four Forces. Their starlight illumines all, if we have eyes to see. For instance, on any of its levels, imagine the sexual act without it. Or, think of the perpetual resistance of gravity. Without the pull of gravity, we would hardly manage here at all. You probably know that there is a major problem in the space program with muscle loss suffered by astronauts in zero-gravity. Nothing has worked to fully counteract it... gravity's resistance is actually required for strength.

The Teaching often gives as an example of the Four Forces the making of a metal pot. In the early days of my Work, I always wondered about this particular example... who of us modern city-dwellers ever sees such a thing as the making of metal pots? Then one day I realized that a metal pot is a wonderful symbol of a Soul—a conductor; a sturdy, invincible container, able to withstand intense heat, violence, anything... a worthy vessel.

If molten metal were poured into the air and a pot were wished for... we would have no pot. There must be a mold to push against it, to contain and form and shape the stuff... and that is also the definition of a soul.

Earth is Second Force to a seed. The little seed has great potential, but it will never be strong and flourish, nor fulfill its purpose, unless it pushes up against the dense, dark dirt, pushes relentlessly, seeking the sun.

It's no use whining about Resistance. Wise Women don't. It is here to stay, and it is your friend. It is absolutely essential if you are to create. To greet it with disdain, to sigh and moan and complain, is to misunderstand Universal Law. It is to wish for the impossible.

When you get up tomorrow morning, you might make up your mind (make an Initiative, First Force) to watch for and identify the Four Forces throughout the day. You will be met with Second Force, you can count on it... you will forget, you will be inundated with people talking about "Cause and Effect" (the world's completely inaccurate perception of the nature of creation), you will get bored with it, but mostly, you will forget. Forgetfulness is Second Force. See if you can maintain an Initiative as strong or stronger than the Resistance you will receive. If you do, there will be a Form waiting for you at the end of the day... Sophia would like to hear your Response. ⊗

The Four Dual Basic Urges

The nature of our physical bodies to seek pleasant sensation and to avoid painful sensation, and the nature of the body (including the brain) to become conditioned, can be described as Four Dual Basic Urges that underlie unconscious human behavior. The Four Dual Basic Urges are not bad or wrong, they are the human condition. What they also are not, though, is the very purpose of living—they are merely by-products or side-effects of living.

When seen as the purpose of living, they are dangerous, because, as well as inaccurate, the inherent conflict in them prevents full functioning rather than aids it. For instance, on the sensation level of pain and pleasure, one cannot be capable of fully experiencing pleasure and be numb to pain; pain obviously is a mechanism designed to warn of dangers to the physical body. One does not appreciate attention if one is unaware of being ignored. We do not give value to approval if disapproval does not exist. Feeling useful or needed is obviously felt only if feeling useless or unneeded is experienced. The Four Dual Basic Urges (often shortened in Sophia to “4DBUs”) are by-products of living on planet Earth, they are present to some degree for everyone at all times. The Work is to re-evaluate their importance... if they are the Purpose of Living, they are all—demanding, important, consuming, and have a built-in misery factor because there is no way to experience only the “nice” ones and always avoid the unpleasant ones. Steady and sincere Work will make a person more and more immune to the influence of the 4DBUs; she will be able to be about her business, her real Purpose of Living, and although aware of them around her, will function above and beyond them.

Every student wants to observe the Four Dual Basic Urges whenever possible. To see how they are used all the time by her and by others to control. To see how fruitless it is to occupy one’s life trying to gain and escape them. They will be there for our taking or ignoring. We can learn to be in charge of the Four Dual Basic Urges, rather than be controlled by them. This is aptly named The Work, but well worth the effort. Transcending the 4DBUs allows an unimaginable freedom, and will create a very Wise Woman, indeed. ⊗

THE FOUR DUAL BASIC URGES (The 4DBUs)

LEVEL	GAIN	ESCAPE
PHYSICAL	Comfort, Pleasure	Pain, Discomfort
MENTAL	Attention	Being ignored, rejected
EMOTIONAL	Approval	Disapproval
TRANSCENDENTAL	Feeling needed, important, appreciated	Feeling inferior, useless, unappreciated