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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

This first chapter of *Thinking and Destiny* is intended to introduce to you only a few of the subjects that the book deals with. Many of the subjects will seem strange. Some of them may be startling. You may find that they all encourage thoughtful consideration. As you become familiar with the thought, and think your way through the book, you will find that it becomes increasingly clear, and that you are in process of developing an understanding of certain fundamental but heretofore mysterious facts of life and particularly about yourself.

The book explains the purpose of life. That purpose is not merely to find happiness, either here or hereafter. Neither is it to “save” one’s soul. The real purpose of life, the purpose that will satisfy both sense and reason, is this: that each one of us will be progressively conscious in ever higher degrees in being conscious; that is, conscious of nature, and in and through and beyond nature. By nature is meant all that one can be made conscious of through the senses.

The book also introduces you to yourself. It brings you the message about yourself: your mysterious self that inhabits your body. Perhaps you have always identified yourself with and as your body; and when you try to think of yourself you therefore think of your bodily mechanism. By force of habit you have spoken of your body as “I”, as “myself”. You are accustomed to use such expressions as “when I was born,” and “when I die”; and “I saw myself in the glass,” and “I rested myself,” “I cut myself,” and so on, when in reality it is your body that you speak of. To understand what you are you must first see clearly the distinction between yourself and the body you live in. The fact that you use the term “my body” as readily as you use any of those just quoted would suggest that you are not altogether unprepared to make this important distinction.

You should know that you are not your body; you should know that your body is not you. You should know this because, when you think about it, you realize that your body is very different today from what it was when, in childhood, you first became conscious of it. During the years that you have lived in your body you have been aware that it has been changing: in its passing through its childhood and adolescence and youth, and into

its present condition, it has changed greatly. And you recognize that as your body has matured there have been gradual changes in your view of the world and your attitude toward life. But throughout these changes you have remained *you*: that is, you have been conscious of yourself as being the same self, the identical I, all the while. Your reflection on this simple truth compels you to realize that you definitely are not and cannot be your body; rather, that your body is a physical organism that you live in; a living nature mechanism that you are operating; an animal that you are trying to understand, to train and master.

You know how your body came into this world; but how *you* came into your body you do not know. You did not come into it until some time after it was born; a year, perhaps, or several years; but of this fact you know little or nothing, because your memory of your body began only after you had come into your body. You know something about the material of which your ever-changing body is composed; but what it is that *you* are you do not know; you are not yet conscious *as what* you are in your body. You know the name by which your body is distinguished from the bodies of others; and this you have learned to think of as *your* name. What is important is, that you should know, not who you are as a personality, but what you are as an individual conscious *of* yourself, but not yet conscious *as* yourself, an unbroken identity. You know that your body lives, and you quite reasonably expect that it will die; for it is a fact that every living human body dies in time. Your body had a beginning, and it will have an end; and from beginning to end it is subject to the laws of the world of phenomena, of change, of time. *You*, however, are not in the same way subject to the laws that affect your body. Although your body changes the material of which it is composed oftener than you change the costumes with which you clothe it, your identity does not change. You are ever the same *you*.

As you ponder these truths you find that, however you might try, you cannot think that you yourself will ever come to an end, any more than you can think that you yourself ever had a beginning. This is because your identity is beginningless and endless; the real I, the Self that you feel, is immortal and changeless, forever beyond the reach of the phenomena of change, of time, of death. But what this your mysterious identity is, you do not know.

When you ask yourself, "What do I know that I am?" the presence of your identity will eventually cause you to answer in some such manner as this: "Whatever it is that I am, I know that at least I am conscious; I am conscious at least of being conscious." And continuing from this fact you may say: "Therefore I am conscious that I am. I am conscious, moreover, that I am I; and that I am no other. I am conscious that this my identity that I am conscious of this distinct I-ness and selfness that I clearly feel does not change throughout my life, though everything else that I am conscious of seems to be in a state of constant change." Proceeding from this you may say: "I do not yet know what this mysterious unchanging I is; but I am conscious that in this human body, of which I am conscious during my waking hours, there is something which is conscious; something that feels and desires and thinks, but that does not change; a conscious something

that wills and impels this body to act, yet obviously is not the body. Clearly this conscious something, whatever it is, is myself.”

Thus, by thinking, you come to regard yourself no longer as a body bearing a name and certain other distinguishing features, but as the conscious self in the body. The conscious self in the body is called, in this book, *the doer-in-the-body*. The doer-in-the-body is the subject with which the book is particularly concerned. You therefore will find it helpful, as you read the book, to think of yourself as *an embodied doer*; to look upon yourself as an immortal doer in a human body. As you learn to think of yourself as a doer, as the doer in your body, you will be taking an important step toward understanding the mystery of yourself and of others.

You are aware of your body, and of all else that is of nature, by means of the senses. It is only by means of your body senses that you are able at all to function in the physical world. You function by thinking. Your thinking is prompted by your feeling and your desire. Your feeling and desiring and thinking invariably manifest in bodily activity; physical activity is merely the expression, the exteriorization, of your inner activity. Your body with its senses is the instrument, the mechanism, which is impelled by your feeling and desire; it is your individual nature machine.

Your senses are living beings; invisible units of nature-matter; these start forces that permeate the entire structure of your body; they are entities which, though unintelligent, are conscious as their functions. Your senses serve as the centers, the transmitters of impressions between the objects of nature and the human machine that you are operating. The senses are nature's ambassadors to your court. Your body and its senses have no power of voluntary functioning; no more than your glove through which you are able to feel and act. Rather, that power is you, the operator, the conscious self, the embodied doer.

Without you, the doer, the machine cannot accomplish anything. The involuntary activities of your body the work of building, maintenance, tissue repair, and so forth are carried on automatically by the individual breathing machine as it functions for and in conjunction with the great nature machine of change. This routine work of nature in your body is being constantly interfered with, however, by your unbalanced and irregular thinking: the work is marred and nullified to the degree that you cause destructive and unbalancing bodily tension by allowing your feelings and desires to act without your conscious control. Therefore, in order that nature might be allowed to recondition your machine without the interference of your thoughts and emotions, it is provided that you shall periodically let go of it; nature in your body provides that the bond which holds you and the senses together is at times relaxed, partially or completely. This relaxation or letting go of the senses is sleep.

While your body sleeps you are out of touch with it; in a certain sense you are away from it. But each time you awaken your body you are immediately conscious of being the selfsame “I” that you were before you left your body in sleep. Your body, whether awake or asleep, is not conscious of anything, ever. That which is conscious, that which thinks, is

you yourself, the doer that is in your body. This becomes apparent when you consider that you do not think while your body is asleep; at least, if you do think during the period of sleep you do not know or remember, when you awaken your body senses, what you have been thinking.

Sleep is either deep or dream. Deep sleep is the state in which you withdraw into yourself, and in which you are out of touch with the senses; it is the state in which the senses have stopped functioning as the result of having been disconnected from the power by which they function, which power is you, the doer. Dream is the state of partial detachment; the state in which your senses are turned from the outer objects of nature to function inwardly in nature, acting in relation to the subjects of the objects that are perceived during wakefulness. When, after a period of deep sleep, you re-enter your body, you at once awaken the senses and begin to function through them again as the intelligent operator of your machine, ever thinking, speaking, and acting as the feeling-and-desire which you are. And from lifelong habit you immediately identify yourself as and with your body: "*I have been asleep,*" you say; "*now I am awake.*"

But in your body and out of your body, alternately awake and asleep day after day; through life and through death, and through the states after death; and from life to life through all your lives your identity and your feeling of identity persist. Your identity is a very real thing, and always a presence with you; but it is a mystery which one's intellect cannot comprehend. Though it cannot be apprehended by the senses you are nevertheless conscious of its presence. You are conscious of it as a feeling; you have a feeling of identity; a feeling of I-ness, of selfness; you *feel*, without question or rationalizing, that you are a distinct identical self which persists through life.

This feeling of the presence of your identity is so definite that you cannot think that the *you* in your body ever could be any other than yourself; you know that you are always the same you, continuously the same self, the same doer. When you lay your body to rest and sleep you cannot think that your identity will come to an end after you relax your hold on your body and let go; you fully expect that when you again become conscious in your body and begin a new day of activity in it, you will still be the same you, the same self, the same doer.

As with sleep, so with death. Death is but a prolonged sleep, a temporary retirement from this human world. If at the moment of death you are conscious of your feeling of I-ness, of selfness, you will at the same time be conscious that the long sleep of death will not affect the continuity of your identity any more than your nightly sleep affects it. You will feel that through the unknown future you are going to continue, even as you have continued day after day through the life that is just ending. This self, this you, which is conscious throughout your present life, is the same self, the same you, that was similarly conscious of continuing day after day through each of your former lives.

Although your long past is a mystery to you now, your previous lives on earth are no greater wonder than is this present life. Every morning there is the mystery of coming back to your sleeping body from you-do-not-know-where, getting into it by way of you-do-not-know-how, and again

becoming conscious of this world of birth and death and time. But this has occurred so often, has long been so natural, that it does not seem to be a mystery; it is a commonplace occurrence. Yet it is virtually no different from the procedure that you go through when, at the beginning of each re-existence, you enter a new body that has been formed for you by nature, trained and made ready by your parents or guardians as your new residence in the world, a new mask as a personality.

A personality is the persona, mask, through which the actor, the doer, speaks. It is therefore more than the body. To be a personality the human body must be made awake by the presence of the doer in it. In the ever-changing drama of life the doer takes on and wears a personality, and through it acts and speaks as it plays its part. As a personality the doer thinks of itself as the personality; that is, the masquerader thinks of itself as the part that it plays, and is forgetful of itself as the conscious immortal self in the mask.

It is necessary to understand about re-existence and destiny, else it is impossible to account for the differences in human nature and character. To assert that the inequalities of birth and station, of wealth and poverty, health and sickness, result from accident or chance is an affront to law and justice. Moreover, to attribute intelligence, genius, inventiveness, gifts, faculties, powers, virtue; or, ignorance, ineptitude, weakness, sloth, vice, and the greatness or smallness of character in these, as coming from physical heredity, is opposed to sound sense and reason. Heredity has to do with the body; but character is made by one's thinking. Law and justice do rule this world of birth and death, else it could not continue in its courses; and law and justice prevail in human affairs. But effect does not always immediately follow cause. Sowing is not immediately followed by harvesting. Likewise, the results of an act or of a thought may not appear until after a long intervening period. We cannot see what happens between the thought and an act and their results, any more than we can see what is happening in the ground between seeding time and harvest; but each self in a human body makes its own law as destiny by what it thinks and what it does, though it may not be aware when it is prescribing the law; and it does not know just when the prescription will be filled, as destiny, in the present or in a future life on earth.

A day and a lifetime are essentially the same; they are recurring periods of a continuous existence in which the doer works out its destiny and balances its human account with life. Night and death, too, are very much alike: when you slip away to let your body rest and sleep, you go through an experience very similar to that which you go through when you leave the body at death. Your nightly dreams, moreover, are to be compared with the after-death states through which you regularly pass: both are phases of subjective activity of the doer; in both you live over your waking thoughts and actions, your senses still functioning in nature, but in the interior states of nature. And the nightly period of deep sleep, when the senses no longer function the state of forgetfulness in which there is no memory of anything corresponds to the blank period in which you wait on the threshold of the physical world until the moment you re-

connect with your senses in a new body of flesh: the infant body or child body that has been fashioned for you.

When you commence a new life you are conscious, as in a haze. You feel that you are a distinct and definite something. This feeling of I-ness or selfness is probably the only real thing of which you are conscious for a considerable time. All else is mystery. For a while you are bewildered, perhaps even distressed, by your strange new body and unfamiliar surroundings. But as you learn how to operate your body and use its senses you tend gradually to identify yourself with it. Moreover, you are trained by other human beings to feel that your body is yourself; you are made to feel that you are the body.

Accordingly, as you come more and more under the control of your body senses, you become less and less conscious that you are something distinct from the body that you occupy. And as you grow out of childhood you will lose touch with practically everything that is not perceptible to the senses, or conceivable in terms of the senses; you will be mentally imprisoned in the physical world, conscious only of phenomena, of illusion. Under these conditions you are necessarily a lifelong mystery to yourself.

A greater mystery is your real Self that greater Self which is not in your body; not in or of this world of birth and death; but which, consciously immortal in the all-pervading Realm of Permanence, is a presence with you through all your lifetimes, through all your interludes of sleep and death.

Man's lifelong search for something that will satisfy is in reality the quest for his real Self; the identity, the selfness and I-ness, which each one is dimly conscious of, and feels and desires to know. Hence the real Self is to be identified as Self-knowledge, the real though unrecognized goal of human seeking. It is the permanence, the perfection, the fulfillment, which is looked for but never found in human relations and effort. Further, the real Self is the ever-present counsellor and judge that speaks in the heart as conscience and duty, as rightness and reason, as law and justice without which man would be little more than an animal.

There is such a Self. It is of the *Triune Self*, in this book so called because it is one indivisible unit of an *individual* trinity: of a knower part, a thinker part, and a doer part. Only a portion of the doer part can enter the animal body and make that body human. That embodied part is what is here termed the doer-in-the-body. In each human being the embodied doer is an inseparable part of its own Triune Self, which is a distinct unit among other Triune Selves. The thinker and knower parts of each Triune Self are in the Eternal, the Realm of Permanence, which pervades this our human world of birth and death and time. The doer-in-the-body is controlled by the senses and by the body; therefore it is not able to be conscious of the reality of the ever-present thinker and knower parts of its Triune Self. It misses them; the objects of the senses blind it, the coils of flesh hold it. It does not see beyond the objective forms; it fears to free itself from the fleshly coils, and stand alone. When the embodied doer proves itself willing and ready to dispel the glamour of the sense illusions, its

thinker and knower are always ready to give it Light on the way to Self-knowledge. But the embodied doer in search for the thinker and knower looks abroad. Identity, or the real Self, has always been a mystery to thinking human beings in every civilization.

Plato, probably the most illustrious and representative of the philosophers of Greece, used as a precept to his followers in his school of philosophy, the Academy: "Know thyself" *gnothi seauton*. From his writings it would appear that he had an understanding of the real Self, although none of the words that he used has been rendered into English as anything more adequate than "the soul". Plato used a method of inquiry concerning the finding of the real Self. There is great art in the exploiting of his characters; in producing his dramatic effects. His method of dialectics is simple and profound. The mentally lazy reader, who would rather be entertained than learn, will most likely think Plato tedious. Obviously his dialectic method was to train the mind, to be able to follow a course of reasoning, and to be not forgetful of the questions and answers in the dialogue; else one would be unable to judge the conclusions reached in the arguments. Surely, Plato did not intend to present the learner with a mass of knowledge. It is more likely that he intended to discipline the mind in thinking, so that by one's own thinking he would be enlightened and led to knowledge of his subject. This, the Socratic method, is a dialectical system of intelligent questions and answers which if followed will definitely help one to learn how to think; and in training the mind to think clearly Plato has done more perhaps than any other teacher. But no writings have come down to us in which he tells what thinking is, or what the mind is; or what the real Self is, or the way to knowledge of it. One must look further.

The ancient teaching of India is summed up in the cryptic statement: "that art thou" (*tat tvam asi*). The teaching does not make clear, however, what the "that" is or what the "thou" is; or in what way the "that" and the "thou" are related, or how they are to be identified. Yet if these words are to have meaning they should be explained in terms that are understandable. The substance of all Indian philosophy to take a general view of the principal schools seems to be that in man there is an immortal something which is and always has been an individual part of a composite or universal something, much as a drop of sea water is a part of the ocean, or as a spark is one with the flame in which it has its origin and being; and, further, that this individual something, this the embodied doer or, as it is termed in the principal schools, the *atman*, or the *purusha*, is separated from the universal something merely by the veil of sense illusion, *maya*, which causes the doer in the human to think of itself as separate and as an individual; whereas, the teachers declare, there is no individuality apart from the great universal something, termed Brahman.

The teaching is, further, that the embodied fragments of the universal Brahman are all subject to human existence and coincident suffering, unconscious of their supposed identity with the universal Brahman; bound to the wheel of births and deaths and re-embodiments in nature, until, after long ages, all the fragments gradually will have been reunited in the universal Brahman. The cause or the necessity or the

desirability of Brahman's going through this arduous and painful procedure as fragments or drops is not, however, explained. Neither is it shown how the presumably perfect universal Brahman is or can be benefitted by it; or how any of its fragments profit; or how nature is benefitted. The whole of human existence would seem to be a useless ordeal without point or reason.

Nevertheless, a way is indicated by which a properly qualified individual, seeking "isolation," or "liberation" from the present mental bondage to nature, may by heroic effort pull away from the mass, or nature illusion, and go on ahead of the general escape from nature. Freedom is to be attained, it is said, through the practice of yoga; for through yoga, it is said, the thinking may be so disciplined that the *atman*, the *purusha* the embodied doer learns to suppress or destroy its feelings and desires, and dissipates the sense illusions in which its thinking has long been entangled; thus being freed from the necessity of further human existence, it is eventually reabsorbed into the universal Brahman.

In all of this there are vestiges of truth, and therefore of much good. The yogi learns indeed to control his body and to discipline his feelings and desires. He may learn to control his senses to the point where he can, at will, be conscious of states of matter interior to those ordinarily perceived by the untrained human senses, and may thus be enabled to explore and become acquainted with states in nature that are mysteries to most human beings. He may, further, attain to a high degree of mastery over some forces of nature. All of which unquestionably sets the individual apart from the great mass of undisciplined doers. But although the system of yoga purports to "liberate," or "isolate," the embodied self from the illusions of the senses, it seems clear that it actually never leads one beyond the confines of nature. This is plainly due to a misunderstanding concerning the mind.

The mind that is trained in yoga is the sense-mind, the intellect. It is that specialized instrument of the doer that is described in later pages as the body-mind, here distinguished from two other minds heretofore not distinguished: minds for the feeling and the desire of the doer. The body-mind is the only means by which the embodied doer can function through its senses. The functioning of the body-mind is limited strictly to the senses, and hence strictly to nature. Through it the human is conscious of the universe in its phenomenal aspect only: the world of time, of illusions. Hence, though the disciple does sharpen his intellect, it is at the same time evident that he is still dependent upon his senses, still entangled in nature, not freed from the necessity of continued re-existences in human bodies. In short, however adept a doer may be as the operator of its body machine, it cannot isolate or liberate itself from nature, cannot gain knowledge of itself or of its real Self, by thinking with its body-mind only; for such subjects are ever mysteries to the intellect, and can be understood only through the rightly coordinated functioning of the body-mind with the minds of feeling and desire.

It does not seem that the minds of feeling and of desire have been taken into account in the Eastern systems of thinking. The evidence of this is to be found in the four books of Patanjali's *Yoga Aphorisms*, and in the

various commentaries on that ancient work. Patanjali is probably the most esteemed and representative of India's philosophers. His writings are profound. But it seems probable that his true teaching has been either lost or kept secret; for the delicately subtle sutras that bear his name would seem to frustrate or make impossible the very purpose for which they are ostensibly intended. How such a paradox could persist unquestioned through the centuries is to be explained only in the light of what is put forth in this and later chapters concerning feeling and desire in the human.

The Eastern teaching, like other philosophies, is concerned with the mystery of the conscious self in the human body, and the mystery of the relation between that self and its body, and nature, and the universe as a whole. But the Indian teachers do not show that they know what this the conscious self the atman, the purusha, the embodied doer is, as distinguished from nature: no clear distinction is made between the doer-in-the-body and the body which is of nature. The failure to see or to point out this distinction is evidently due to the universal misconception or misunderstanding of feeling and desire. It is necessary that feeling and desire be explained at this point.

A consideration of feeling and desire introduces one of the most important and far reaching subjects put forth in this book. Its significance and value cannot be overestimated. The understanding and use of feeling and desire may mean the turning point in the progress of the individual and of Humanity; it can liberate doers from false thinking, false beliefs, false goals, by which they have kept themselves in darkness. It disproves a false belief that has long been blindly accepted; a belief that is now so deeply rooted in the thinking of human beings that apparently no one has thought of questioning it.

It is this: Everybody has been taught to believe that the senses of the body are five in number, and that feeling is one of the senses. The senses, as stated in this book, are units of nature, elemental beings, conscious as their functions but unintelligent. There are only four senses: sight, hearing, taste, and smell; and for each sense there is a special organ; but there is no special organ for feeling because feeling though it feels through the body is not of the body, not of nature. It is one of the two aspects of the doer. Animals also have feeling and desire, but animals are modifications from the human, as explained later on.

The same must be said of desire, the other aspect of the doer. Feeling and desire must always be considered together, for they are inseparable; neither can exist without the other; they are like the two poles of an electric current, the two sides of a coin. Therefore this book makes use of the compound term: *feeling-and-desire*.

Feeling-and-desire of the doer is the intelligent power by which nature and the senses are moved. It is within the creative energy that is everywhere present; without it all life would cease. Feeling-and-desire is the beginningless and endless creative art by which all things are perceived, conceived, formed, brought forth, and controlled, whether through the agency of doers in human bodies or of those who are of The

Government of the world, or of the great Intelligences. Feeling-and-desire is within all intelligent activity.

In the human body, feeling-and-desire is the conscious power which operates this individual nature machine. Not one of the four senses feels. Feeling, the passive aspect of the doer, is that in the body which feels, which feels the body and feels the impressions that are transmitted to the body by the four senses, as sensations. Further, it can in varying degrees perceive supersensory impressions, such as a mood, an atmosphere, a premonition; it can feel what is right and what is wrong, and it can feel the warnings of conscience. Desire, the active aspect, is the conscious power that moves the body in the accomplishment of the doer's purpose. The doer functions simultaneously in both its aspects: thus every desire arises from a feeling, and every feeling gives rise to a desire.

You will be taking an important step on the way to knowledge of the conscious self in the body when you think of yourself as the intelligent feeling present through your voluntary nervous system, as distinct from the body which you feel, and simultaneously as the conscious power of desire surging through your blood, yet which is not the blood. Feeling-and-desire should synthesize the four senses. An understanding of the place and function of feeling-and-desire is the point of departure from the beliefs which for many ages have caused the doers in human beings to think of themselves merely as mortals. With this understanding of feeling-and-desire in the human, the philosophy of India may now be continued with new appreciation.

The Eastern teaching recognizes the fact that in order to attain to knowledge of the conscious self in the body, one must be freed from the illusions of the senses, and from the false thinking and action that result from failure to control one's own feelings and desires. But it does not transcend the universal misconception that feeling is one of the senses of the body. On the contrary, the teachers state that touch or feeling is a fifth sense; that desire is also of the body; and that both feeling and desire are things of nature in the body. According to this hypothesis it is argued that the *purusha*, or *atman* the embodied doer, feeling-and-desire must completely suppress feeling, and must utterly destroy, "kill out," desire.

In the light of what has been shown here concerning feeling-and-desire, it would seem that the teaching of the East is advising the impossible. The indestructible immortal self in the body cannot destroy itself. If it were possible for the human body to go on living without feeling-and-desire, the body would be a mere insensible breathing-mechanism.

Aside from their misunderstanding of feeling-and-desire the Indian teachers give no evidence of having a knowledge or understanding of the Triune Self. In the unexplained statement: "thou art that," it must be inferred that the "thou" who is addressed is the *atman*, the *purusha* the individual embodied self; and that the "that" with which the "thou" is thus identified is the universal self, Brahman. There is no distinction made between the doer and its body; and likewise there is a corresponding failure to distinguish between the universal Brahman and universal nature. Through the doctrine of a universal Brahman as the source and

end of all embodied individual selves, untold millions of doers have been kept in ignorance of their real Selves; and moreover have come to expect, even to aspire, to lose in the universal Brahman that which is the most precious thing that anyone can have: one's real identity, one's own individual great Self, among other individual immortal Selves.

Although it is clear that the Eastern philosophy tends to keep the doer attached to nature, and in ignorance of its real Self, it seems unreasonable and unlikely that these teachings could have been conceived in ignorance; that they could have been perpetuated with the intention of keeping people from the truth, and so in subjection. Rather, it is very probable that the existing forms, however ancient they may be, are merely the vestigial remnants of a much older system that had descended from a civilization vanished and almost forgotten: a teaching that may have been truly enlightening; that conceivably recognized feeling-and-desire as the immortal doer-in-the-body; that showed the doer the way to knowledge of its own real Self. The general features of the existing forms suggest such a probability; and that in the course of the ages the original teaching imperceptibly gave way to the doctrine of a universal Brahman and the paradoxical doctrines that would do away with the immortal feeling-and-desire as something objectionable.

There is a treasure that is not entirely hidden: *The Bhagavad Gita*, the most precious of India's jewels. It is India's pearl beyond price. The truths imparted by Krishna to Arjuna are sublime, beautiful, and everlasting. But the far-off historical period in which the drama is set and involved, and the ancient Vedic doctrines in which its truths are veiled and shrouded, make it too difficult for us to understand what the characters Krishna and Arjuna are; how they are related to each other; what the office of each is to the other, in or out of the body. The teaching in these justly venerated lines is full of meaning, and could be of great value. But it is so mixed with and obscured by archaic theology and scriptural doctrines that its significance is almost entirely hidden, and its real value is accordingly depreciated.

Owing to the general lack of clearness in the Eastern philosophy, and the fact that it appears to be self-contradictory as a guide to knowledge of oneself in the body and of one's real Self, the ancient teaching of India seems to be doubtful and undependable. One returns to the West.

Concerning Christianity: The actual origins and history of Christianity are obscure. A vast literature has grown out of centuries of effort to explain what the teachings are, or what they originally were intended to be. From the earliest times there has been much teaching of doctrine; but no writings have come down that show a knowledge of what was actually intended and taught in the beginning.

The parables and sayings in *The Gospels* bear evidence of grandeur, simplicity, and truth. Yet even those to whom the new message first was given appear not to have understood it. The books are direct, not intended to mislead; but at the same time they state that there is an inner meaning which is for the elect; a secret teaching intended not for everyone but for "whosoever will believe." Certainly, the books are full of mysteries; and it

must be supposed that they cloak a teaching that was known to an initiated few. The Father, the Son, the Holy Ghost: these are mysteries. Mysteries, too, are the Immaculate Conception and the birth and life of Jesus; likewise his crucifixion, death, and resurrection. Mysteries, undoubtedly, are heaven and hell, and the devil, and the Kingdom of God; for it is scarcely likely that these subjects were meant to be understood in terms of the senses, rather than as symbols. Moreover, throughout the books there are phrases and terms that plainly are not to be taken too literally, but rather in a mystical sense; and others clearly could have significance only to selected groups. Further, it is not reasonable to suppose that the parables and miracles could have been related as literal truths. Mysteries throughout but nowhere are the mysteries revealed. What is all this mystery?

The very evident purpose of *The Gospels* is to teach the understanding and living of an inner life; an interior life which would regenerate the human body and thereby conquer death, restoring the physical body to eternal life, the state from which it is said to have fallen its "fall" being "the original sin." At one time there certainly must have been a definite system of instruction which would make clear exactly how one might live such an interior life: how one might, through so doing, come into the knowledge of one's real Self. The existence of such a secret teaching is suggested in the early Christian writings by references to secrets and mysteries. Moreover it seems obvious that the parables are allegories, similes: homely stories and figures of speech, serving as vehicles for conveying not merely moral examples and ethical teachings, but also certain inner, eternal truths as parts of a definite system of instruction. However, *The Gospels*, as they exist today, lack the connections which would be needed to formulate a system; what has come down to us is not enough. And, concerning the mysteries in which such teachings supposedly were concealed, no known key or code has been given to us with which we might unlock or explain them.

The ablest and most definite expositor of the early doctrines that we know of is Paul. The words he used were intended to make his meaning clear to those to whom they were addressed; but now his writings need to be interpreted in terms of the present day. "The First Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians," the fifteenth chapter, alludes to and reminds of certain teachings; certain definite instructions concerning the living of an interior life. But it is to be assumed that those teachings either were not committed to writing which would appear understandable or else that they were lost or have been left out of the writings that have come down. At all events, "The Way" is not shown.

Why were the truths given in the form of mysteries? The reason might have been that the laws of the period prohibited the spreading of new doctrines. The circulating of a strange teaching or doctrine could have been punishable by death. Indeed, the legend is that Jesus suffered death by crucifixion for his teaching of the truth and the way and the life.

But today, it is said, there is freedom of speech: one may state without fear of death what one believes concerning the mysteries of life. What anyone thinks or knows about the constitution and functioning of

the human body and of the conscious self that inhabits it, the truth or opinions that one may have concerning the relation between the embodied self and its real Self, and regarding the way to knowledge these need not be hidden, today, in words of mystery requiring a key or a code for their understanding. In modern times all "hints" and "blinds," all "secrets" and "initiations," in a special mystery language, should be evidence of ignorance, egotism, or sordid commercialism.

Notwithstanding mistakes and divisions and sectarianism; notwithstanding a great variety of interpretations of its mystical doctrines, Christianity has spread to all parts of the world. Perhaps more than any other faith, its teachings have helped to change the world. There must be truths in the teachings, however they may be hidden, which, for nearly two thousand years, have reached into human hearts and awakened the Humanity in them.

Everlasting truths are inherent in Humanity, in the Humanity which is the totality of all the doers in human bodies. These truths cannot be suppressed or entirely forgotten. In whatever age, in whatever philosophy or faith, the truths will appear and reappear, whatever their changing forms.

One form in which certain of these truths are cast is Freemasonry. The Masonic order is as old as the human race. It has teachings of great value; far greater, in fact, than is appreciated by the Masons who are their custodians. The order has preserved ancient bits of priceless information concerning the building of an everlasting body for one who is consciously immortal. Its central mystery drama is concerned with the rebuilding of a temple which was destroyed. This is very significant. The temple is the symbol of the human body which man must rebuild, regenerate, into a physical body that will be eternal, everlasting; a body that will be a fitting habitation for the then consciously immortal doer. "The Word" which is "lost" is the doer, lost in its human body the ruins of the once great temple; but which will find itself as the body is regenerated and the doer takes control of it.

This book brings you more Light, more Light on your thinking; Light to find your "Way" through life. The Light that it brings, however, is not a light of nature; it is a new Light; new, because, although it has been a presence with you, you have not known it. In these pages it is termed the Conscious Light within; it is the Light that can show you things as they are, the Light of the Intelligence to which you are related. It is because of the presence of this Light that you are able to think in creating thoughts; thoughts to bind you to objects of nature, or to free you from objects of nature, as you choose and will. Real thinking is the steady holding and focussing of the Conscious Light within on the subject of the thinking. By your thinking you make your destiny. Right thinking is the way to knowledge of yourself. That which can show you the way, and which can lead you on your way, is the Light of the Intelligence, the Conscious Light within. In later chapters it is told how this Light should be used in order to have more Light.

The book shows that thoughts are real things, real beings. The only real things which man creates are his thoughts. The book shows the mental processes by which thoughts are created; and that many thoughts are more lasting than the body or brain through which they are created. It shows that the thoughts man thinks are the potentials, the blue prints, the designs, the models from which he builds out the tangible material things with which he has changed the face of nature, and made what is called his way of living and his civilization. Thoughts are the ideas or forms out of which and upon which civilizations are built and maintained and destroyed. The book explains how the unseen thoughts of man exteriorize as the acts and objects and events of his individual and collective life, creating his destiny through life after life on earth. But it also shows how man can learn to think without creating thoughts, and thus control his own destiny.

The word *mind* as commonly used is the all-inclusive term which is made to apply to all kinds of thinking, indiscriminately. It is generally supposed that man has only one mind. Actually three different and distinct minds, that is, ways for thinking with the Conscious Light, are being used by the embodied doer. These, previously mentioned, are: the body-mind, the feeling-mind, and the desire-mind. Mind is the functioning of intelligent-matter. A mind therefore does not function independently of the doer. The functioning of each of the three minds is dependent upon the embodied feeling-and-desire, the doer.

The body-mind is that which is commonly spoken of as the mind, or the intellect. It is the functioning of feeling-and-desire as the mover of physical nature, as the operator of the human body machine, and hence is here called the body-mind. It is the only mind that is geared to and that acts in phase with and through the senses of the body. Thus it is the instrument by means of which the doer is conscious of and may act upon and within and through the matter of the physical world.

The feeling-mind and the desire-mind are the functioning of feeling and of desire irrespective of or in connection with the physical world. These two minds are almost completely submerged in and controlled and subordinated by the body-mind. Therefore practically all human thinking has been made to conform to the thinking of the body-mind, which ties the doer to nature and prevents its thinking of itself as something distinct from the body.

That which today is called psychology is not a science. Modern psychology has been defined as the study of human behavior. This must be taken to mean that it is the study of impressions from objects and forces of nature that are made through the senses upon the human mechanism, and the response of the human mechanism to the impressions thus received. But that is not psychology.

There cannot be any kind of psychology as a science, until there is some kind of understanding of what the psyche is, and what the mind is; and a realization of the processes of thought, of how the mind functions, and of the causes and results of its functioning. Psychologists admit that they do not know what these things are. Before psychology can become a true science there must be some understanding of the interrelated

functioning of the three minds of the doer. This is the foundation upon which can be developed a true science of the mind and of human relations. In these pages it is shown how the feeling and desire are directly related to the sexes, explaining that in a man the feeling aspect is dominated by desire and that in a woman the desire aspect is dominated by feeling; and that in every human the functioning of the now dominant body-mind is more nearly attuned to the one or the other of these, according to the sex of the body in which they are functioning; and it is shown, further, that all human relations are dependent upon the functioning of the body-minds of men and women in their relations to each other.

Modern psychologists prefer not to use the word *soul*, although it has been in general use in the English language for many centuries. The reason for this is that all that has been said concerning what the soul is or what it does, or the purpose that it serves, has been too unclear, too doubtful and confusing, to warrant the scientific study of the subject. Instead, the psychologists have therefore taken as the subject of their study the human animal machine and its behavior. It has long been understood and agreed by people generally, however, that man is made up of "body, soul, and spirit." No one doubts that the body is an animal organism; but concerning spirit and soul there has been much uncertainty and speculation. On these vital subjects this book is explicit.

The book shows that the living soul is an actual and literal fact. It shows that its purpose and its functioning are of great importance in the universal plan, and that it is indestructible. It is explained that that which has been called the soul is a nature unit — an elemental, a unit of an element; and that this conscious but unintelligent entity is the furthest advanced of all the nature units in the make-up of the body: it is the senior elemental unit in the body organization, having progressed to that function after a long apprenticeship in the myriad lesser functions comprising nature. Being thus the sum of all of nature's laws, this unit is qualified to act as the automatic general manager of nature in the human body mechanism; as such it serves the immortal doer through all its re-existences by periodically building a new fleshly body for the doer to come into, and maintaining and repairing that body for as long as the destiny of the doer may require, as determined by the doer's thinking.

This unit is termed the *breath-form*. The active aspect of the breath-form is the breath; the breath is the life, the spirit, of the body; it permeates the entire structure. The other aspect of the breath-form, the passive aspect, is the form or model, the pattern, the mold, according to which the physical structure is built out into visible, tangible existence by the action of the breath. Thus the two aspects of the breath-form represent life and form, by which structure exists.

So the statement that man consists of body, soul, and spirit can readily be understood as meaning that the physical body is composed of gross matter; that the spirit is the life of the body, the living breath, the breath of life; and that the soul is the inner form, the imperishable model, of the visible structure; and thus that the living soul is the perpetual breath-form which shapes, maintains, repairs, and rebuilds the fleshly body of man.

The breath-form, in certain phases of its functioning, includes that which psychology has termed the subconscious mind, and the unconscious. It manages the involuntary nervous system. In this work it functions according to the impressions which it receives from nature. It also carries out the voluntary movements of the body, as prescribed by the thinking of the doer-in-the-body. Thus it functions as a buffer between nature and the immortal sojourner in the body; an automaton blindly responding to the impacts of objects and forces of nature, and to the thinking of the doer.

Your body is literally the result of your thinking. Whatever it may show of health or disease, you make it so by your thinking and feeling and desiring. Your present body of flesh is actually an expression of your imperishable soul, your breath-form; it is thus an exteriorization of the thoughts of many lifetimes. It is a visible record of your thinking and doings as a doer, up to the present. In this fact lies the germ of the body's perfectibility and immortality.

There is nothing so very strange today in the idea that man will one day attain to conscious immortality; that he will eventually regain a state of perfection from which he originally fell. Such a teaching in varying forms has been generally current in the West for nearly two thousand years. During that time it has spread through the world so that hundreds of millions of doers, re-existing on earth through the centuries, have been brought into recurrent contact with the idea as an inwardly apprehended truth. Though there is still very little understanding of it, and still less thinking about it; though it has been distorted to satisfy the feelings and desires of different people; and though it may be regarded variously today with indifference, levity, or sentimental awe, the idea is a part of the general thought pattern of present day Humanity, and therefore is deserving of thoughtful consideration.

Some statements in this book, however, will quite possibly seem strange, even fantastic, until enough thought has been given to them. For instance: the idea that the human physical body may be made incorruptible, everlasting; may be regenerated and restored to a state of perfection and eternal life from which the doer long ago caused it to fall; and, further, the idea that that state of perfection and eternal life is to be gained, not after death, not in some far away nebulous hereafter, but in the physical world while one is alive. This may indeed seem very strange, but when examined intelligently it will not appear to be unreasonable.

What is unreasonable is that the physical body of man must die; still more unreasonable is the proposition that it is only by dying that one can live forever. Scientists have of late been saying that there is no reason why the life of the body should not be extended indefinitely, although they do not suggest how this could be accomplished. Certainly, human bodies have always been subject to death; but they die simply because no reasonable effort has been made to regenerate them. In this book, in the chapter *The Great Way*, it is stated how the body can be regenerated, can be restored to a state of perfection and be made a temple for the complete Triune Self.

Sex power is another mystery which man must solve. It should be a blessing. Instead, man very often makes of it his enemy, his devil, that is ever with him and from which he cannot escape. This book shows how, by thinking, to use it as the great power for good which it should be; and how by understanding and self-control to regenerate the body and accomplish one's aims and ideals in ever progressive degrees of accomplishment.

Every human being is a double mystery: the mystery of himself, and the mystery of the body he is in. He has and is the lock and key to the double mystery. The body is the lock, and he is the key in the lock. A purpose of this book is to tell you how to understand yourself as the key to the mystery of yourself; how to find yourself in the body; how to find and know your real Self as Self-knowledge; how to use yourself as the key to open the lock which is your body; and, through your body, how to understand and know the mysteries of nature. You are in, and you are the operator of, the individual body machine of nature; it acts and reacts with and in relation to nature. When you solve the mystery of yourself as the doer of your Self-knowledge and the operator of your body machine, you will know in each detail and altogether that the functions of the units of your body are laws of nature. You will then know the known as well as the unknown laws of nature, and be able to work in harmony with the great nature machine through its individual body machine in which you are.

Another mystery is time. Time is ever present as an ordinary topic of conversation; yet when one tries to think about it and tell what it really is, it becomes abstract, unfamiliar; it cannot be held, one fails to grasp it; it eludes, escapes, and is beyond one. What it is has not been explained.

Time is the change of units, or of masses of units, in their relation to each other. This simple definition applies everywhere and under every state or condition, but it must be thought of and applied before one can understand it. The doer must understand time while in the body, awake. Time seems to be different in other worlds and states. To the conscious doer time seems not to be the same while awake as while in dreams, or while in deep sleep, or when the body dies, or while passing through the after-death states, or while waiting for the building and the birth of the new body it will inherit on earth. Each one of these time periods has an "In the beginning," a succession, and an end. Time seems to crawl in childhood, run in youth, and race in ever increasing speed until death of the body.

Time is the web of change, woven from the eternal to the changing human body. The loom on which the web is woven is the breath-form. The body-mind is the maker and operator of the loom, spinner of the web, and weaver of the veils called "past" or "present" or "future". Thinking makes the loom of time, thinking spins the web of time, thinking weaves the veils of time; and the body-mind does the thinking.

CONSCIOUSNESS is another mystery, the greatest and most profound of all mysteries. The word Consciousness is unique; it is a coined English word; its equivalent does not appear in other languages. Its all-important value and meaning are not, however, appreciated. This will be seen in the uses that the word is made to serve. To give some common examples of its misuse: It is heard in such expressions as "my

consciousness," and "one's consciousness"; and in such as animal consciousness, human consciousness, physical, psychic, cosmic, and other *kinds* of consciousness. And it is described as normal consciousness, and greater and deeper, and higher and lower, inner and outer, consciousness; and full and partial consciousness. Mention is also heard of the beginnings of consciousness, and of a change of consciousness. One hears people say that they have experienced or caused a growth, or an extension, or an expansion, of consciousness. A very common misuse of the word is in such phrases as: to lose consciousness, to hold to consciousness; to regain, to use, to develop consciousness. And one hears, further, of various states, and planes, and degrees, and conditions of consciousness. Consciousness is too great to be thus qualified, limited, or prescribed. Out of regard for this fact this book makes use of the phrase: to be *conscious of*, or *as*, or *in*. To explain: whatever is conscious is either conscious *of* certain things, or *as* what it is, or is conscious *in* a certain degree of being conscious.

Consciousness is the ultimate, the final Reality. Consciousness is that by the presence of which all things are conscious. Mystery of all mysteries, it is beyond comprehension. Without it nothing can be conscious; no one could think; no being, no entity, no force, no unit, could perform any function. Yet Consciousness itself performs no function: it does not act in any way; it is a presence, everywhere. And it is because of its presence that all things are conscious in whatever degree they are conscious. Consciousness is not a cause. It cannot be moved or used or in any way affected by anything. Consciousness is not the result of anything, nor does it depend on anything. It does not increase or diminish, expand, extend, contract, or change; or vary in any way. Although there are countless degrees in being conscious, there are no degrees of Consciousness: no planes, no states; no grades, divisions, or variations of any sort; it is the same everywhere, and in all things, from a primordial nature unit to the Supreme Intelligence. Consciousness has no properties, no qualities, no attributes; it does not possess; it cannot be possessed. Consciousness never began; it cannot cease to be. Consciousness IS.

In all your lives on earth you have been indefinably seeking, expecting or looking for someone or something that is missing. You vaguely feel that if you could but find that for which you long, you would be content, satisfied. Dimmed memories of the ages surge up; they are the present feelings of your forgotten past; they compel a recurring world-weariness of the ever-grinding treadmill of experiences and of the emptiness and futility of human effort. You may have sought to satisfy that feeling with family, by marriage, by children, among friends; or, in business, wealth, adventure, discovery, glory, authority, and power or by whatever other undiscovered secret of your heart. But nothing of the senses can really satisfy that longing. The reason is that you are lost — are a lost but inseparable part of a consciously immortal Triune Self. Ages ago, you, as feeling-and-desire, the doer part, left the thinker and knower parts of your Triune Self. So you were lost to yourself because, without some understanding of your Triune Self, you cannot understand yourself, your

longing, and your being lost. Therefore you have at times felt lonely. You have forgotten the many parts you have often played in this world, as personalities; and you have also forgotten the real beauty and power of which you were conscious while with your thinker and knower in the Realm of Permanence. But you, as doer, long for balanced union of your feeling-and-desire in a perfect body, so that you will again be with your thinker and knower parts, as the Triune Self, in the Realm of Permanence. In ancient writings there have been allusions to that departure, in such phrases as “the original sin,” “the fall of man,” as from a state and realm in which one is satisfied. That state and realm from which you departed cannot cease to be; it can be regained by the living, but not after death by the dead.

You need not feel alone. Your thinker and knower are with you. On ocean or in forest, on mountain or plain, in sunlight or shadow, in crowd or in solitude; wherever you are, your really thinking and knowing Self is with you. Your real Self will protect you, in so far as you will allow yourself to be protected. Your thinker and knower are ever ready for your return, however long it may take you to find and follow the path and become at last again consciously at home with them as the Triune Self.

In the meantime you will not be, you cannot be, satisfied with anything less than Self-knowledge. You, as feeling-and-desire, are the responsible doer of your Triune Self; and from what you have made for yourself as your destiny you must learn the two great lessons which all experiences of life are to teach. These lessons are:

What to do;  
and,  
What not to do.

You may put these lessons off for as many lives as you please, or learn them as soon as you will that is for you to decide; but in the course of time you will learn them.

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*The “Introduction” you have just read is the first chapter of Thinking and Destiny by Harold W. Percival. Written over a period of thirty-four years, it speaks to our desire to know who we are and why we are here. With this understanding, a trust is awakened in our own ability to ease our perturbations and set our life on a more meaningful and fulfilling course.*

*Thinking and Destiny is available to view in its entirety on our [Website](#) where you will also find information [About the Author](#) and the unusual way in which the book was written.*

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