

Cultivation of Universal Intelligence

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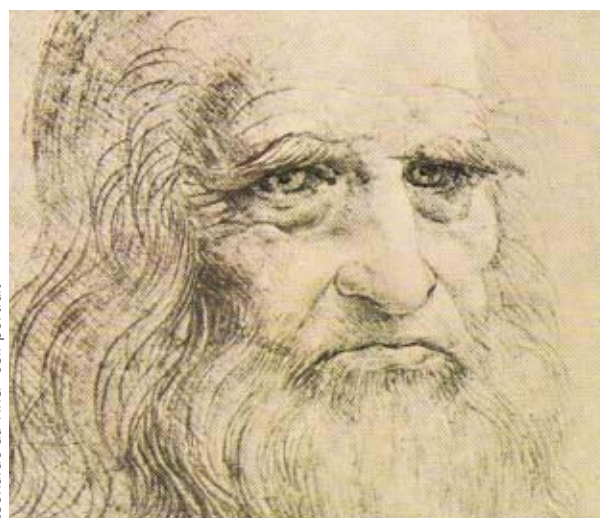
WHEN WE THINK of the phrase “cultivation of universal intelligence,” each of us may have a different opinion as to what it means. In a world of instant gratification, the thought of cultivating anything seems like an arduous and long-drawn out process and our immediate question probably is: What’s in it for me? Today almost all decision-making is self-serving, individually and collectively.

How many of us have done a little retrospective thinking and picked up a self-help book about some philosophy of living or a method to change some quirk in our attitude? Being knowledgeable about a problem is important because it is a step towards better behavioral balance and it can inspire us to a greater good. *The Urantia Book* is a book that inspires, answering many questions about our origin, history and destiny not provided anywhere else. We may even expound about some newfound knowledge to anyone who might listen, but a major question arises: How many of us truly assimilate the knowledge we have gained and allow our newfound insights to influence the choices we make?

Excellence of character and the enlarged spiritual vision of one inspired individual after another will generate a wave of love cascading into socially conscious service that will transform our world.

The teaching of the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man underlying *The Urantia Book* has been around for thousands of years. Our world, however, is not close to living a brotherhood which requires that we expand our personal meaning and appreciation of this teaching so that we may truly participate in advancing civilization. Our efforts to herald world peace will always fall short if we don’t cultivate the cosmic awareness and capacity to love that are necessary to live the brotherhood of man.

To cultivate universal intelligence is to develop the human mind, ...*the thinking, perceiving, and feeling mechanism of the human organism. The total conscious and unconscious experience associated with the emotional life reaching upward through worship and wisdom to the spirit level* [8:2]. In practical terms, to cultivate universal



“Leonardo da Vinci” self-portrait

intelligence is to develop the noble character AND the cosmic perspective necessary to live the brotherhood of man, in attunement with the Indwelling Spirit and in keeping with the Universal Father’s divine will. *Only in the higher levels of the superconscious mind as it impinges upon the spirit realm of human experience can you find those higher concepts in association with effective master patterns which will contribute to the building of a better and more enduring civilization* [1220:4]. To cultivate universal intelligence is to grow in divine attunement, in the balanced union and coordination of the traits and character of divinity.

The cultivation of universal intelligence is not to be confused with cultivating the intellect—human reasoning limited to our five senses and interpretation of our surroundings. When we exclusively cultivate the intellect, we live a life of perception only, embracing the short-sighted attitude that seeing is believing. In *The Book of Life*, Jiddu Krishnamurti says: “Training the intellect does not result in intelligence. Rather, intelligence comes into being when one acts in perfect harmony, both intellectually and emotionally. There is a vast distinction between intellect and intelligence. Intellect is merely thought functioning independently of emotion. When intellect, irrespective of emotion, is trained in any particular direction, one may have great intellect, but one does not have intelligence, because in intelligence there is the inherent capacity to feel as well as to reason; in intelligence both capacities are equally present, intensely and harmoniously.”¹

Neither should cultivation of universal intelligence be confused with conscience. Conscience directs behavior but conscience is not intelligence; it is not the innate wisdom of the soul nor is it a divine voice speaking to the soul. *It is merely the sum total of the moral and ethical content of the mores of any current stage of existence* [1005:2].

When we cultivate universal intelligence we develop our ability to express greater goodness and honor the Universal Father’s loving command to every individual: *Be you perfect, even as I am perfect* [21:3; 22:3; 86:1; 295:1; 449:2;

637:1; and the Bible, Matthew 5:48]. Perfection is a tall order. What does it mean to be perfect in an incomplete, imperfect world?

From a universal perspective, perfection is a process, its full attainment achieved only in Paradise. Relative levels of perfection can be achieved during our lifetime by our determined efforts to grow in righteousness and love—truth, beauty, and goodness—the characteristics of the nature of the Universal Father.

“Divine perfection” starts with developing balance—the free-will mobilization of all faculties towards a human personality imbued with a noble character in the pursuit of higher spiritual meanings and values, with one goal and purpose in mind: to serve others with the selflessness of a loving parent. *When man consecrates his will to the doing of the Father’s will, when man gives God all that he has, then does God make that man more than he is* [1285:3]. What this entails, however, is hard work—not a favorite pastime. *Evolutionary man does not naturally relish hard work. To keep pace in his life experience with the impelling demands and the compelling urges of a growing religious experience means incessant activity in spiritual growth, intellectual expansion, factual enlargement, and social service. There is no real religion apart from a highly active personality* [1120:4]. How comfortable we are in our efforts at spiritual attainment and even self-transformation!!! These efforts may well be personally satisfying but are not socially transforming. The “highly active personality” is the commitment required to cultivate universal intelligence. *It requires time for men and women to effect radical and extensive changes in their basic and fundamental concepts of social conduct, philosophic attitudes, and religious convictions* [1705:1].

The cultivation of universal intelligence is in alignment with the Divine Plan of Progress because it has the potential to:

- Enhance those religious/spiritual habits of thoughts and actions that contribute to spiritual growth and righteous living.
- Promote intellectual growth.
- Foster emotional maturity.
- Cultivate moral insight, a sense of duty promoting moral values and their expression.
- Cultivate true spiritual insight, the ability to recognize and embrace the reality of God as a Father/personality and the fraternal actuality of all personalities.
- Strengthen one’s familiarity with God through better attunement with the Indwelling Spirit.
- Deepen appreciation for the beauty of natural creation.
- Foster the quality of selflessness, the capacity to love and the ability to live the brotherhood of man.
- Cultivate the cosmic perspective that contributes to religious unity and cultural progress.

- Self-empower each individual to blossom with cosmic insight.

The objective results are the “icing on the cake.” This may include a positive outlook on life, improved health, better relationships, enhanced career opportunities, a harmonic rhythm to every-day events, and a stable life environment. Genuine happiness is a natural outgrowth of a universally intelligent life!

When we cultivate universal intelligence, we free faith, elevate wisdom, and live truth. Excellence of character and the enlarged spiritual vision of one inspired individual after another will generate a wave of love cascading into socially conscious service that will transform our world. For maximum effectiveness the process of cultivating universal intelligence must be powered by an unequivocal **purpose**, a supreme goal toward which all our efforts, labor, and organization is directed. A universal purpose impregnates all goals and actions and becomes the inspiration for living, the core of our personal roadmap of life.

Intelligent action becomes possible only when we are able to evaluate systematically and objectively the merit of our knowledge, skills, attitudes and actions...

Purpose must be supported by **faith**. We have the power to create what we intend, but we must believe in our purpose without knowing how it will manifest or how it feels once we get there. Personally, faith always meant belief in God. In the process of writing *Heaven Is Not The Last Stop* I learned that faith is much more than intellectual conviction. It signifies a living relationship between creator and creature that fuels our desire to develop the qualities of divinity. Faith grows in proportion to our growth in the concept of God and our understanding of God’s relation to humanity; the greater our recognition and appreciation for the Spirit that indwells us, the greater our connection and love for God and our commitment to emulate his nature. Growth in the personal experience of faith validates our belief in God as Universal Father and ourselves as the sons and daughters of God. Even more, it opens our feelings to the brotherhood of all humankind. *Belief has attained the level of faith when it motivates life and shapes the mode of living. The acceptance of a teaching as true is not faith; that is mere belief. Neither is certainty nor conviction faith. A state of mind attains to faith levels only when it actually dominates the mode of living* [1114:5].

We may have a good idea of our purpose and goals, but without the mode of living to enable us to get there we may lose sight of it. The practice of cultivating universal intelligence in the light of epochal revelation provides clarity as to function and purpose, providing greater opportunity for growth in meaning. With increased depth in understanding comes the potential to effect a positive chain reaction that will help uplift both personal values and those of society.

Cultivating universal intelligence embraces the following seven activities, all of which are crucial in developing a balanced spiritual nature:

1. Improve quality of thinking
2. Explore beliefs (in light of epochal revelation)
3. Develop emotional maturity
4. Cultivate moral awareness and consistency
5. Attune to spirit guidance
6. Cultivate sound taste
7. Develop a consecrated attitude

1. To improve the quality of thinking is to develop objective and reflective mind skills. Intelligent action becomes possible only when we are able to evaluate systematically and objectively the merit of our knowledge, skills, attitudes and actions.

2. Lack of spiritual humility and the consequent reluctance to explore and question our beliefs is perhaps one of the greatest obstacles to spiritual growth. We are complacent with what we know and find comfort in our status quo. This is not surprising. **To explore beliefs** is to engage in an intellectual journey that is sure to engage the mind and heart in battle. The mind does not want

The process is ideally started in childhood, but it is never too late to start. to let go of the familiar and we may fear losing our security if we dare to question. There is no doubt about spiritual agitation when exploring beliefs with a questioning mind, but

exploring beliefs is not about discarding them; it is about expanding them so that we may discover a higher spiritual perspective from which to live our lives. It is about being open to all knowledge and determining where your beliefs fit in.

3. Development of emotional maturity is to recognize and address our character weaknesses and to reinforce our strengths. In the book *Gāyatrī*, the author I.K Taimni expresses the importance of this process: “Before any spiritual light from the innermost recesses of our being can break through into the realms of our mind, much has to be accomplished. Impurities have to be removed, distortions have to be straightened out, and the vehicles have to be harmonized. It is only in such a prepared mind, freed from these ordinary defects, that the light of higher knowledge can manifest.”²

4. Cultivating moral awareness and consistency is perhaps the most challenging because we take for granted the moral inconsistency we witness in family, business, politics, and religion. What does it mean to be morally consistent? “Morality is about being transparent and wholly trustworthy— to family and friends, in the workplace and in all of life. It is about integrity, ‘walking the talk’ day in and day out, in matters great and small, in private and public life.”³

5. To Attune to spirit guidance is to fix our intention on finding union with the Indwelling Spirit and then abiding in receptivity to its guidance. Moral choices, righteous expressions and spiritual humility, harmonized with generous love, provide leverage for the Indwelling Spirit to adjust the mortal mind to progressively divine attitudes. The practice of worshipful meditation fosters contact of mind with divinity and relaxation renews the

mind – conflict is removed and tension relieved – expanding human capacity for spiritual response.

6. To cultivate sound taste is to develop an aesthetic sense that expresses discernment and appreciation of things which reflect perfection. Sound taste, unlike personal taste, is based upon a thorough grasp of truthful knowledge, not necessarily devoid of emotion but certainly achieved with an open and rational mind. As we develop sound taste it enables us to delight in excellence and to appreciate the good and beautiful whenever found.

7. Having a consecrated attitude embraces more than ardent feelings of love toward God. It includes dedication to knowing God and to being in his loyal service by serving our fellow humans. A consecrated attitude emerges as a result of perseverance and mental commitment to *expressing the divinity within*. We can **develop a consecrated attitude** by making a habit of confiding in God while expanding our concept of prayer and worship.

Each activity in the process of cultivating universal intelligence may be tailored to address the needs, preferences, resources, and capabilities of each individual. The process is ideally started in childhood, *but it is never too late to start*. Many will have reached a certain level of mastery in one or more of these activities but excellence is characterized not only by physical and intellectual qualities but also by moral and spiritual capacities. Progress in divine character building entails expansion of spiritual meanings and exaltation of values and is an on-going eternal process.

The activities of cultivating universal intelligence can be addressed simultaneously in varying degrees of intensity. Each action may enliven or strengthen various qualities exclusively. Long-term focus and commitment overcomes personal challenges, including doubt. Like learning a new language, there will be times when we are frustrated but also times when we *know* that we are on the right track. With inspired purpose, our motivation is strengthened as we experience a growing connection with God and our fellow humans. The challenge deepens the meaning of life for anyone embarking on the journey. ■

Sheila Keene Lund is the author of the upcoming book: *Heaven Is Not The Last Stop*. URL: <http://www.heavenisnotthelaststop.com>

- 1 *Unity of Mind and Heart – The Book of Life: Daily Meditations with Krishnamurti* by j. Krishnamurti; HarperOne; 1st ed edition (may 12, 1995); url: http://www.krishnamurti.org/quotes/2005-09-03_unity_of_mind_and_heart
- 2 *Gayatri* by I.K. Taimni, published by the Theosophical Publishing House, Adyar, Chennai 600 020, India (ISBN 81-7059-084-1), pages 29-30
- 3 *What Does it Mean to Be Moral?* By Randy Ruffin, 03 june 2005; initiatives for Change International; URL: <http://www.lofc.Org/en/resources/editorial/216.Html>