

Sounds of Love Series

Functions of the Mind and Soul

Now, let us consider: What is a mental process? How does the human mind function?

The human mind performs three functions. The lower part of the mind does what is called the interpretative function by interpreting sense perceptions to us. The sense perceptions pick up sensations and stimuli from outside. The eyes see. The ears hear. The nose smells. The mouth, the tongue tastes. The hands and the body and the skin touches. And these sensations are transferred to the brain where the human mind performs the function of interpreting these sensations to us and giving it meaning.

If I saw some flowers lying here, like these flowers, and I said, "What is this?" If the sensations alone were to be relied upon, then the flowers would be just a blotch of green color and some purple or red color or pink color, whatever the color of flowers there be and it will make no sense. What makes them flowers and leaves is the interpretative function of the mind. The mind, therefore, gives meanings to our sensations and experiences that come through the sense perceptions. This is called the third, or the lower, function of the mind.

Then there is the middle, or the second function of the mind, which is very significant and that is called thinking and reasoning. Thinking is a process in which we employ sounds and images in order to go over all these elements of experience that are coming to us through senses. We go over those experiences in the form of thoughts or in the form of images, visualizations.

What are thoughts? Thoughts are nothing but a string of words which give meaning and are employed by us in a process called logic or reasoning. This middle part of the mind is continuously thinking and continuously providing a stream of words which give us the basis for our logic and the basis for our decision making. It should be remembered, however, that thoughts are made of the same words which we are taught as a language and the limitations of language also applies to the limitation of thought.

Now, what is language? Language is nothing else but communication through phonetic symbols. These words we speak with are only phonetic symbols. They are sound symbols which represent something depending upon the association of ideas we have had with that sound. Every word is a separate sound which gives meaning to itself because of the association of ideas we have had with that sound before.

If I say 'chair', what does a chair mean? A chair means a combination of all the chairs I have seen from the time the word chair was first used. A chair does not mean something abstract for me. In the thought process, 'chair' means only the chairs I have seen. If I have seen only one chair and I use the word 'chair', it would mean only that chair. If I have seen two chairs, and the word 'chair' has been used for both those experiences, then 'chair' will mean the common experience of both those chairs. If I have seen a hundred chairs, then the meaning of the word 'chair' will deepen to include all those hundred chairs.

As the association of ideas with words increases, the dimension of meaning of that word also increases, but the limitation of the word is that the chairs I might have seen, even though it may be hundreds of chairs, will not be the same chairs another person has seen. So when I use the word 'chair,' it will mean a different thing to me than if the word 'chair' is used by another person. In communicating with other people when we use words, we

have this great limitation that we are using words according to the meaning that we know about them and the other person is taking the meaning to be that which is according to the association of ideas of that other person. Therefore, communication becomes very incomplete. It becomes limited because of this nature of phonetic symbols which are called words.

Language, therefore, has this limitation that it employs words and words are limited. The same limitation goes on into our thoughts. So when we think we have to start with thinking imperfectly, we are thinking through a medium which does not allow for perfect understanding even of the experience we are talking about. And certainly it does not relate to the experience of other human beings employing their mind to interpret the same words.

Now what is the employment of words in the thought process? How do we think? We think because we use these words in sentences and then use the sentences to follow one after the other to create a logical sense. When we use logic, we think that we have found a sensible thing out of our thoughts. We are always happy when we find a decision or a conclusion or an inference based upon these thoughts which we recognize as having flowed from the logic we have used.

Now what kind of logic do we use? All of us in our thinking process use two kinds of logic. There is first of all the deductive logic in which we set the premise by using certain statements or sentences. And those sentences or statements become the basis on which we are thinking. Then we employ more sentences in order to come to a conclusion.

For instance, we may describe a particular wall as a wall which has a pink color and we say, "This is a pink wall and the whole of the wall is pink. This portion of the wall in the center is also part of the wall. Therefore it must be pink." This is a typical case of the deductive logic which we use everyday. We will notice that this kind of deductive logic does not give us any new information, does not give any new knowledge. We remain certain about what we know, but we know what we already knew. Therefore deductive logic has never added to our knowledge and has never provided anything fresh in our thinking process. This is a big limitation in the use of deductive logic.

On the other hand, we have the second process called the inductive logic. What is inductive logic? In using inductive logic, the mind employs a method of going beyond the known premise. If I go back to the same example of the wall which is colored pink, and I say, "This whole wall is colored pink and it goes around the corner which I cannot see. But, being the same wall, I induce that it must also be pink." This kind of inductive inference that we draw from inductive logic always suffers from the great infirmity of uncertainty. I can never be sure. Therefore, when we use this part of logic in our mind, we are creating an uncertainty and a doubt automatically.

Therefore, uncertainty and doubt come automatically when we try to gain more knowledge through the reasoning process in our mind. The biggest difficulty is that thinking has never given us a sense of certainty. Thinking has given us certainty only by deductive process, which means we can be certain of an experience of which we are already certain. And if we have a new experience and we want to analyze it through logical process and we go into the inductive process, we are left with an element of doubt and uncertainty. Have you ever considered that the more we think, the more doubts we create? You can try it out. You think over a particular subject and see how much doubt you have. And keep on thinking of the same subject over and over again. Try to go beyond the subject and you will find more and more doubts and more and more uncertainties creep up.

Therefore, this kind of logic and this kind of use of the thinking machine is beset with the problem of doubt and uncertainty. This doubt and uncertainty affects all our relationships. For one thing, it takes away the experience of love and does not allow us to have that experience as if it were an experience to stay with us. We have a flash of experience called love. And then thinking comes in. And this thinking mind destroys the experience of love.

I will refer to it a little more, but let me tell you about the top part of the mind, the first part of the mind. What is that doing when the middle part is thinking? The top part of the mind is supposed to be creative. It is called the creative mind. The creative mind is nothing but an assembler of elements of perception in new patterns and new graphs so that the new diagrams, patterns and graphs which come up to the creative mind look like something new. It is not really new. It is more of a craftsmanship rather than an artists work. So when we talk of the creative mind, we are really talking of that part of the mind which is busy assembling different elements of perception and giving it a new shape and a new pattern.

So here we have three distinct divisions of the human mind: the lower part, which is doing sensing by interpreting sense perceptions, the middle part, which is thinking by using words and language and using images where words fail and thereby using the logical process and by using the inductive logical process creating an element of doubt and uncertainty. And there is the top part of the mind which creates a different kind of pattern and diagram from the elements of perception we call creative.

The point I wish to make about the mind is that whether it is doing perceiving or sensing or it is doing thinking or reasoning or it is doing creating, it is only functioning within the framework of time, space, and causation. You will notice that you cannot have any thought except with duration. You cannot have any sense perception except the duration in space. You cannot have any creative effort or craftsmanship except in space and time.

Therefore, all the functions of the mind are confined to time, space, and causation. They must follow the law of a beginning, a middle, and an end and they must follow the law of finding space for itself and they must follow the law of having a cause and an effect relationship. This is a great limitation on the mental process. These limitations, as I will show to you, do not apply to the functioning of the human soul or the human spirit, which alone is responsible for the experience of love.

Love does not confine itself to time, to space, and does not follow any laws of cause and effect. Love transcends them. It comes from nowhere. It does not take any duration to take place. We get the feeling of love. We cannot say, "It took five seconds to happen." Or, "It took one minute to happen." Or, "It took this duration or that duration to happen." It is timeless, space-less, and causeless. We have never had anyone having any experience of love which could be confined to these dimensions. These dimensions are reserved for the human mind.

I will elaborate on how love, intuition, joy and happiness, which is the nature of our own soul and our spirit transcends the limits of time, space, and causation. Then these are the three functions of the human mind: sensing, reasoning, and creating and all these three are confined to the dimensions of time, space and causation.

What are the functions of the human soul, or the human spirit which is timeless? Let us consider if the human soul also has similar functions. Yes, the human soul also has three functions to perform. And these are called: intuition, love, and joy and beauty. Let us consider these three functions of the human soul.

Intuition is a process in which we get a flash of knowledge so suddenly it is not related to the thinking process going on in our mind at that time. It has been referred to as the gut knowledge that comes to us; something that happens by hunch; a flash; a sudden feeling and one says, "I know this, I do not know how. I know it will happen like that. I do not know why. I know this is the truth. I do not know how and why."

When this kind of feeling comes, that is the intuitive hunch. These intuitive hunches come to all of us. They are a natural function of the human soul and the human spirit. And, therefore, they are not confined to any particular gifted people. You don't have to be a yogi or a sadhu or a mystic to have intuitive experiences. We all have experiences of these sudden flashes of knowledge which come from nowhere with no space and no time.

This intuitive experience is very reliable. It carries its own certainty with it. And to that extent it is different from the mental thought process that gives us a reasoned inference by saying, "This is A is B. B is part of A. Therefore, B is A." I mean those old syllogistic inferences that reasoning has provided to us do not carry that certainty which gut knowledge, that sudden hunch, carries with it.

The second function of love is also equally spontaneous. It does not depend on time, space or the nature of our thinking at that time. It happens so suddenly. It just is a feeling. It comes from inside us. It comes from nowhere. We do not know where it came from, what was responsible for it. We suddenly find we have fallen in love. And this sudden experience is as dramatic in its suddenness and spontaneity as the experience of intuition. It does not take time or space or follow any laws of cause and effect to happen. This then is the second function of the human soul or the human spirit.

The third function, which we have described as the aesthetic function, or the function of beauty, mingles with joy and this beauty and joy in any experience is also carrying with it the same spontaneity that love and intuition carries. When we feel that something we are watching is beautiful, when we get a sensation of beauty, it follows the same principals of spontaneity, of no time, no space, and no cause and effect like love and intuition. It carries with it a sensation of joy which runs through all these experiences. Therefore, when we have the soul or spirit of a human being functioning, we have these three functions going on and all of them are outside the realm of time, space, and causation.

We cannot see something beautiful and say, "It took certain time for the beautiful experience to appear." The beauty, sense of beauty, takes no time to appear. The experience may be in time and space, but the feeling and experience of beauty is not confined to time and space.

How is it that these experiences can exist without time and space? They exist without time and space because our soul, the immortal spirit, the immortal consciousness, the immortal spirit within us, the immortal part of our self does not lie within time and space. It goes beyond time and space. So when we have these experiences of intuition, love, and beauty mingled with the feeling of joy, these are experiences that do not take place in time. We have, on the other hand, these experiences of thought and sensing, perception, reasoning, creating, craftsmanship, which all take place in time.

So the main distinction between the mental process and the process of spiritual or soul experience is the difference between the framework of time, space, and causation one requires and the other does not. But we have constantly mixed up the two things. We have said "No, it is possible to have a mental experience timelessly. We can have a sudden inference taking place in a flash of a moment." That is not truly timeless.

If our mind is alert and becomes like a computer and reduces the time for coming to an inference, for coming to a logical conclusion, it still operates in time. Less time or more time still means time. In the case of love, intuition, joy and beauty, there is no time. There's not even a flash of a second. A nanosecond is a billionth part of a second. If you observe your intuitive flash, your intuitive hunch, you will notice that it doesn't take even a billionth part of a nanosecond. Therefore, it is free from time. So time distributes the mental functioning from the truly spiritual or soul function.

Now I am going to concentrate more on talking about love because love is that function which generates all other functions. Love is the core of consciousness. Love is the center part of our soul. If there were no love in the soul, we would really have no consciousness. Because, what is consciousness? Consciousness is the ability to be aware. We get awareness when we turn our soul on. Turning our soul on is like starting to use the process of love within it. When the process of love functions in human consciousness it needs something to be conscious of. It needs something to be aware of.

You cannot have consciousness in absolute terms because what are you conscious of if you have only consciousness and nothing to be conscious of? It would be a case of stating the contradictions. Therefore, when you say you have consciousness you are automatically implying you also have something to be conscious of. This creative power of the soul to be conscious of something is created because of the love that lies in the center of the soul. It is love that reaches out to an experience and makes consciousness conscious of something and whatever consciousness is conscious of becomes our experience.

This whole world, the universe around us is created from this single source of love. Love, that creates consciousness; consciousness that needs something to be conscious of and that which it is conscious of becomes the creation. We call love, the Creator. We call love, God. Why? Because love has led to consciousness that needs something to be conscious of. And whatever it needs to be conscious of becomes creation. Therefore, it is appropriate to consider love as the Creator; love as the very basis behind consciousness; love as the core of inner consciousness.

Now, when we talk of love in these terms, we are giving it a divine meaning automatically. Is there then a divine love separate from human love? I do not know any distinction between one kind of love and another. I think love is love and I do not believe that there is any love outside of the human system. I think divinity comes within the human system.

Have you ever seen any divinity outside the human system? Have you ever seen any divine experience which a human being did not have? When we talk of divine experience, who has that experience? The human being. Everything in nature, everything in creation, every speck of dust and every leaf of every tree is divine because of the human being experiencing it. If the human being does not experience that divinity in everything around, how will there be such a thing as divine love?

So, divine love is the same as love. When it is addressed to the Creator within ourselves, it becomes divine. When it is addressed to experience, it becomes human love. When we are able to see that our love is flowing outside through the mental process and the mind is commenting upon the experience of love, it becomes a human love. It becomes love with human beings.

Incidentally, there is no such thing as love for non-human beings. You can have attachments with cats and dogs and houses and automobiles and money and bank balances. You can be attached to these things. In every experience of attachment to these things, you will notice that there are two, you and the thing you are attached

to. But in the case of love, you will not have that experience. In the case of love, you will forget yourself and know only, be aware only, of the other human being with whom you are in love. Love is only possible between one human being and another. There is no love except between human beings.

If you want to love God, you love God only when God becomes human. Look at the history of divine love. How did we love God? Nobody loved God in the divine, abstract form. God was loved when He became human and walked upon this earth. Whenever God has walked in human form and we have had the same experience of love for that human being as we can have between any two human beings, we have called that divine love.

Therefore, divine love is as much a human experience as any other love. Love is love, irrespective of where it takes place and between whom it takes place. Love is not confined to a few human beings. Love is a universal phenomenon. Love is a universal experience. When we want to have experience of love, if the mind is coming in the way and if thinking interrupts our experience of love, we have to find a way of being closer to where love is. That is closer to our heart and soul.

When we are with our thoughts and mind, we miss the heart and soul. It's the heart and soul that is the seat of love. If we want to have experience of love, we must get closer to our own selves. What is our self? Our self is nothing else but our own soul; our own consciousness; our own inside. When we are within ourselves, we are close to our own soul. When we are close to our soul, we are close to the fountainhead of love. The closer we get to our own soul, the closer we are to the fountainhead of love.

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