

ENERGY

*'Energy is the inherent effort of every
multiplicity to become unity.'*
Max Planck

Energy and Physics

Energy, not matter, is the fundamental reality of the universe. Nikola Tesla: "If you want to find the secrets of the universe think in terms of energy, frequency and vibration." In scientific terms, energy is the dynamic quality of matter. Although matter appears solid, it does not have an independent existence of its own: "Matter is energy bound in quantized wave-packets and these packets are further bound together to create the vast and harmonious architecture that makes up the world."

As physicality is being progressively shown to be immaterial and information to be physical, their congruence is leading to an increased awareness that to understand the essential wholeness of reality requires restating the principles and laws of physics in informational terms. Two of the most fundamental laws are the First and the Second Law of Thermodynamics, which describe the conservation of energy and the flow of entropy, respectively. The emerging insight is that information is expressed *both* as universally conserved energy and as embodying entropy. From the first moment of spacetime, the incredibly fine-tuned information underpinning the totality of energy-matter and the interactions of the fundamental forces from which physical reality is manifest, is universally conserved. By also being encoded entropically, from its minimum level at the beginning of our universe, it is inexorably increasing through time. (1)

In his famous formula $E=mc^2$, Einstein related energy with mass and the speed of light, thereby revealing the incredible amount of energy contained in even a small amount of matter:

Einstein's work showed that concepts such as space and time, which had previously seemed to be separate and absolute, are actually interwoven and relative. Einstein went on to show that other physical properties of the world are unexpectedly interwoven as well. His most famous equation provides one of the most important examples. In it, Einstein asserted that the energy (E) of an object and its mass (m) are not independent concepts; we can determine the energy from knowledge of the mass (by multiplying the latter twice by the speed of light, c^2) or we can determine the mass from knowledge of the energy (by dividing the latter twice by the speed of light). In other words, energy and mass – like dollars and francs – are convertible currencies. Unlike money, however, the exchange rate given by two factors of the speed of light is always and forever fixed. Since the exchange-rate factor is so large (c^2 is a big number), a

little mass goes an extremely long way in producing energy. The world grasped the devastating destructive power arising from the conversion of less than one percent of two pounds of uranium into energy at Hiroshima; one day, through fusion power plants, we may productively use Einstein's formula to meet the energy demands of the whole world with our endless supply of seawater. (2)

One of the most significant findings of quantum physics is that space is not an empty vacuum or void of 'nothingness,' but, rather, a giant reservoir of energy. Subatomic particles are never completely at rest, but are in constant motion due to a ground-state field of energy (sometimes called the "Zero-point Field") constantly interacting with all subatomic matter. In the quantum domain, this 'virtual state' is invisible and intangible. It is from this nonphysical domain that subatomic particles emerge: "The virtual state lies outside the manifest creation. When a wave turns into a particle, which is the basic step that brings photons, electrons, and other subatomic particles into the world of our experience, the virtual state is left behind. The virtual state is also why physics computes that every cubic centimeter of empty space isn't actually empty. At the quantum level, it contains a huge amount of virtual energy."

The basic substructure of the universe is a sea of quantum fields. What we believe to be our stable, static universe is in fact a seething maelstrom of subatomic particles fleetingly popping in and out of existence . . . All elementary particles interact with each other by exchanging energy through other quantum particles, which are believed to appear out of nowhere, combining and annihilating each other in less than an instant, causing random fluctuations of energy without any apparent cause. The fleeting particles generated during this brief moment are known as 'virtual particles.' They differ from real particles because they only exist during this exchange. This subatomic tango, however brief, when added across the universe, gives rise to enormous energy, more than is contained in all the matter in all the world. (3)

Physicist David Bohm has proposed a model of the universe in which the phenomenal realm of existence (the 'explicate order') emerges from a deeper, underlying 'implicate order.' This hidden order is enfolded in "the warp and weft of our reality" and possesses an infinite ocean of potential energy. In *The Holographic Universe*, Michael Talbot writes: "According to our current understanding of physics, every region of space is awash with different kinds of fields composed of waves of varying lengths. Each wave always has at least some energy. When physicists calculate the minimum amount of energy a wave can possess, they find that *every cubic centimeter of empty space contains more energy than the total energy of all the matter in the known universe.*"

Space is not empty. It is *full*, a plenum as opposed to a vacuum, and is the ground for the existence of everything, including ourselves. The universe is not separate from this cosmic sea of energy, it is a ripple on its surface, a comparatively small "pattern of excitation" in the midst of a unimaginably vast ocean. This excitation pattern is relatively autonomous and gives rise to approximately recurrent, stable

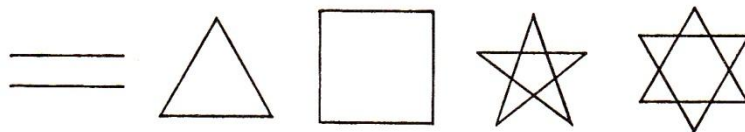
and separable projections into a three-dimensional explicate order of manifestation. In other words, despite its apparent materiality and enormous size, the universe does not exist in and of itself, but is the stepchild of something far vaster and more ineffable . . . This infinite sea of energy is not all that is enfolded in the implicate order. Because the implicate order is the foundation that has given birth to everything in our universe, it also contains every subatomic particle that has ever been or will be; every configuration of matter, energy, life, and consciousness that is possible, from quasars to the brain of Shakespeare, from the double helix, to the forces that control the sizes and shapes of galaxies. And even this is not all it may contain. Bohm concedes that there is no reason to believe the implicate order is the end of things. There may be other undreamed of orders beyond it, infinite stages of further development. (4)

Energy and Number Symbolism

Many philosophical and metaphysical teachings have employed number symbolism to describe the nature of the energies which create phenomenal reality from the primary Oneness to complex differentiation. Numbers have both a quantitative aspect and a qualitative dimension which is symbolic and archetypal. Each number possesses its own unique properties and spiritual reality, as well as correspondences and relationships with other numbers. The science of numbers is a way of comprehending 'the One and the Many,' as each number is a reflection of a principle contained within Unity. Pythagoras: "All things are numbers."

According to G.I. Gurdjieff, numbers convey the essence of the basic first-order laws of the universe: "The number of fundamental laws which govern all processes both in the world and in man is very small. Different numerical combinations of a few elementary forces create all the seeming variety of phenomena. In order to understand the mechanics of the universe it is necessary to resolve complex phenomena into these elementary forces."

The original Unity is designated by the number 1. The successive numbers 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 represent the emergence of the physical universe from the unmanifest, undifferentiated potentiality of the Absolute or One. On another level, the numbers 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 indicate the sequence of the inner development of a human being and show the different stages on the path of self-realization and growth of Being. Each number also has an associated geometric shape or symbol:



An undifferentiated unity underlies the phenomenal world perceived by our senses. In esoteric cosmology, the number 1 represents the cosmos prior to the fundamental creative moment when duality emerged from primal unity: "What we experience – sound, forms, colors, thoughts – cannot exist without a background. But this background cannot be perceived by our senses. It remains unseen. The forms and the reality are parts of a single whole, but they exist in different dimensions." Metaphysically, the number 1 is expressed as a single point without dimension. It is the source and origin of all succeeding numbers.

The number 2 represents duality, through which the natural world is organized and scaled by complementary opposites. Duality expresses the principle of differentiation and diversity – "the eternal dance of opposites."

The ancient yin/yang symbol is an archetypal image of the duality of existence, combining the principles of division and synthesis. Pictorially, duality is shown as two points which define a line of one dimension. Division by two creates the symmetries and dualities that pervade the natural world:

- Spirit - matter
- Macrocosm - microcosm
- Involution - evolution
- Day - night
- Positive - negative
- Clockwise - counter-clockwise spin
- Left - right
- Male - female
- Life - death

Human psychology and behaviour also reflect the principle of duality. In talks with his students, Gurdjieff discussed the role of dualities in the life of humanity:

Man, in his normal state natural to him, is taken as a duality. He consists entirely of dualities, or 'pairs of opposites.' All man's sensations, impressions, feelings, thoughts, are divided into positive and negative, useful and harmful, necessary and unnecessary, good and bad, pleasant and unpleasant. The work of centers proceeds under the sign of this division. Thoughts oppose feelings. Moving impulses oppose instinctive craving for quiet. This is the duality in which proceed all the perceptions, all the reactions, the whole life of man. Any man who observes himself, however little, can see this duality in himself. But this duality would seem to alternate; what is victor today if the vanquished tomorrow; what guides us today becomes secondary and subordinate tomorrow. Everything is equally mechanical, equally independent of will, and leads equally to no aim of any kind. The understanding of duality in oneself begins with the realization of mechanicalness and the realization of the difference between what is mechanical and what is conscious. (5)

In Pythagorean teachings, the number 3 represents harmony and balance – the union of unity (1) and diversity (2). Geometrically, three points form a triangle and the surface of a plane of two dimensions.

The concept of a Trinity occurs in many of the world's religions: in Hinduism: Brahma-Vishnu-Shiva and in Christianity: Father-Son-Holy Spirit. The three modes or qualities also appear in astrology (cardinal, fixed and mutable), as well as established social systems such as law (plaintiff, defendant and judge/jury).

The principle of three energies or *gunas* is a fundamental tenet of the ancient Samkhya tradition of India. The manifestation of the *gunas* creates our experiential reality, both on the physical and psychological planes. The three *gunas* are conceptualized as basic "constituents" of the natural world. In *The Integrity of the Yoga Darśana*, Ian Whicher writes: "The *gunas* encompass the entire personality structure including the affective and cognitive dimensions involving various qualities and states such as pleasure, pain, intelligence, passion, dullness, and so on. The *gunas* also function like cosmological proto-elements, as generative/creative factors involved in and responsible for the evolution of life forms."

In the *Yoga-Sutras*, Patanjali conceives of the *gunas* as functional qualities or forms of force and energy whose existence can be inferred from the manifest patterns of nature. The three *gunas* are *rajas* (activity), *tamas* (inertia) and *sattva* (harmony). The *gunas* are interdependent and combine to generate the phenomenal universe through their dynamic, energetic and transformative nature:

Sattva tends toward luminosity; *rajas* towards action; *tamas* towards fixity. Though distinct, these *gunas* mutually affect each other. They change, they have the properties of conjunction and disjunction, they assume forms created by their mutual cooperation. Distinct from each other, they are identifiable even when their powers are conjoined. They deploy their respective powers, whether of similar or dissimilar kind. When one is predominant, the presence of the others is inferred as existing within the predominant one from the very fact of its operation as a *guna*. They are effective as engaged in carrying out the purpose of the *purusha* [Spirit]. (6)

The *gunas* guide the transition from matter to spirit and vice versa. They are the three fundamental aspects of life: creation, preservation and destruction. "These modifications are everywhere and in all planes of existence. Energy (*rajas*) is the element of fermentation. If matter becomes spirit, spirit likewise must return to matter."

The 'Law of Three' contains in itself the whole of life. In the beginning there was the One, Purusha. From its inner vibration, the One projected its opposite, as light casts a shadow, which is its substratum. In this moment, spirit-matter, bound by the energy which belongs equally to the one and the other, can become percep-

tible. This can be demonstrated in the following manner:
One is the 'I'-subject manifested by light – sattva
Two is the 'I'-object manifested by shadow – tamas

Between the two aspects of 'I'-subject and 'I'-object the perpetual movement of life develops, that is, all forms of manifestation in the lower plane of life. This perpetual movement of energy is rajas. Thus life, through the energy of rajas, is a development of movements acting between the two poles of sattva-tamas. From the plane of rajas, which is ours, a certain state of consciousness can exist in which it is possible to perceive what is above (sattva) and what is below (tamas). What is above can be known by sudden intuition or glimpsed through imagination, but it is impossible to reach it without a shock provoked by the vision itself. A thorough discipline of the mind is the indispensable preparation for this. What is below is the weight of ignorance, the inertia of the primitive prakriti. It is also the field of individual work. Before discovering the stages leading toward sattva, one must become familiar with the opposition of heavy matter. (7)

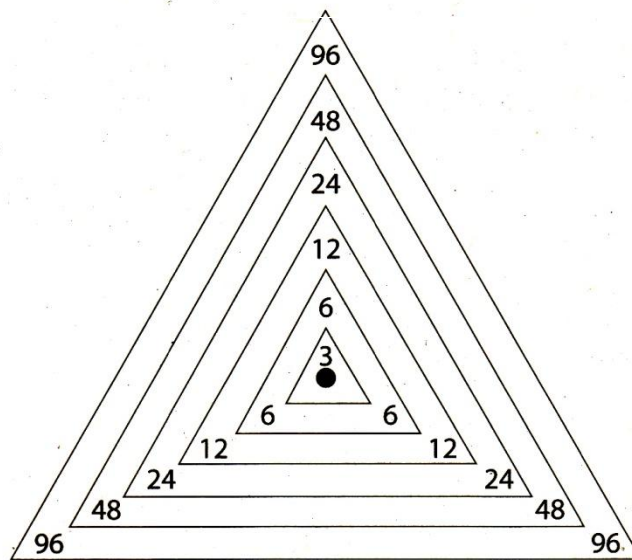
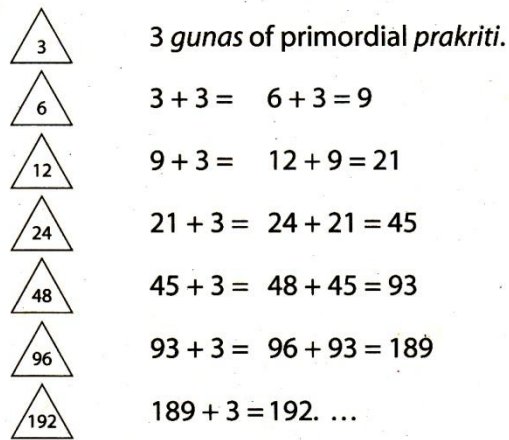
The process of inner work described in the Samkhya teachings is similar to Gurdjieff's sequence of transformative stages from duality to trinity. The three forces occur in our inner, psychological world in the form of developmental energies and forces: "The possibility of unity depends on a confrontation between the 'yes' and the 'no,' and the appearance of a third reconciling force that can relate the two. The third force is a property of the real world – 'what is' and what 'I am'."

When self-deceit is destroyed and a man begins to see the difference between the mechanical and the conscious in himself, there begins a struggle for the realization of consciousness in life and for the subordination of the mechanical to the conscious. For this purpose, a man begins with endeavours to set a definite decision, coming from conscious motives, against mechanical processes proceeding according to the laws of duality. The creation of a permanent third principle is for man the *transformation of the duality into the trinity*. (8)

In Hinduism, *shakti* is conscious cosmic energy emanating from the Absolute, which creates, maintains and dissolves the myriad forms of the phenomenal world. It manifests itself from the Void or 'living silence' through the primal vibration or Sacred Sound, echoing the Gospel of John 1:1 – "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."

Shakti predates physical existence and has an infinite capacity to create forms and balance, harmonize and unite opposites. "Shakti has neither a beginning nor an end; it constantly renews itself in its two movements – that which goes toward the exterior, creating new forms without ceasing, and that which goes toward the interior, inhaling all life and leading it back to its source."

In the Samkhya conception, the creation of the universe from the energy of shakti is governed by the three gunas. As the gunas subdivide they create more and more worlds or levels of reality. The greater the subdivision, the greater the density of the world and the further its distance from the primordial Spirit. In *To Live Within*, Samkhya master Sri Anirvân describes this process: "From one world to the next, the number of gunas is multiplied by two, whether the worlds are taken as in the cosmic order or as worlds interiorized in man. The number represents the subdivision of the Law of three which becomes heavier the further it moves from primordial prakriti [nature]. Three gunas are added in each world to the sum of gunas from the proceeding world." The figure below diagrammatically represents this cosmic process:



The above diagram is very similar to Gurdjieff's 'Ray of Creation' which represents the seven worlds or levels of reality from the Absolute to the Moon. The number of laws governing each world is dependent on the Law of Three (equivalent to the three gunas). Each level of the Ray contributes three forces or laws of its own which are added to the laws of previous levels:

World 1	Absolute	1 [Unity]
World 3	All Galaxies	3 Laws
World 6	Milky Way	6 Laws (3 + 3)
World 12	Sun	12 Laws (3 + 6 + 3)
World 24	Solar System	24 Laws (3 + 6 + 12 + 3)
World 48	Earth	48 Laws (3 + 6 + 12 + 24 + 3)
World 96	Moon	96 Laws (3 + 6 + 12 + 24 + 48 + 3)

Gurdjieff considered the Law of Three to be one of the fundamental principles governing the creation and maintenance of the phenomenal world. He taught that three forces or energies affirming, denying and reconciling – are needed for any phenomenon to exist, on whatever scale, from molecular to cosmic, in each of the seven Worlds of the Ray of Creation.

“Examples of the action of the three forces, and the moments of entry of the third force, may be clearly discovered in all manifestations of our psychic life, in all phenomena of the life of human communities and of humanity as a whole, and in all the phenomena of nature around us.”

We must examine the fundamental law that creates all phenomena in all the diversity or unity of all universes. This is the 'Law of Three' or the law of the three principles or the three forces. It consists of the fact that every phenomenon, on whatever scale and in whatever world it may take place, is the result of the combination or the meeting of three different or opposing forces. Contemporary thought realizes the existence of two forces and the necessity of these two forces for the production of a phenomenon: force and resistance, positive and negative magnetism, positive and negative electricity, male and female cells, and so on. But it does not observe even these two forces always and everywhere. No question has ever been raised as to the third, or if it has been raised it has scarcely been heard. According to real, exact knowledge, one force, or two forces, can never produce a phenomenon. The presence of a third force is necessary, for it is only with the help of a third force that the first two can produce what may be called a phenomenon, no matter in what sphere. (9)

Gurdjieff also stressed that the qualities of the three forces or energies – active, passive and neutralizing – only occur at their 'meeting points' at a given moment. At other times, the three forces may change their places, as the active force becomes passive or reconciling in certain circumstances:

The order of the three forces as expressed in triads is important and determines the outcomes of events or actions. For example, the triad 1,2,3 (in which the first/active force is followed by the second/passive force) is reconciled by the third force in an involutory way. This is the order in which the forces descend from the Absolute in the Ray of Creation. However, when the order of the triad is changed to 2,1,3 (in which the second force is followed by the first force), the reconciling action of the third force makes for an evolutionary outcome . . . John Bennett defines the six possible expressions of the three forces as the 'triad of involution' (1,2,3), the 'triad of interaction' (1,3,2), the 'triad of evolution' (2,1,3), the 'triad of identity' (2,3,1), the 'triad of universal order' (3,1,2) and the 'triad of the spirit' (3,2,1). These distinctions may go some way towards clarifying the differing expressions of the Law of Three. In one case, the third force is the result of the action of the other two forces: e.g. the sperm unites with the ovum to create the embryo. In another formulation, the third force is the agent of change that yields a result: e.g. flour and water become bread only when bonded by fire. The matter resulting from the process of the three forces can be defined as 'higher' for the preceding 'lower' (i.e. bread is 'higher' than flour and water), but 'lower' than the preceding 'higher' (i.e. bread is 'lower' than fire). (10)

The number 4 represents matter and the physical world and symbolizes order, stability and solidity. Four points create a square and define a solid of three dimensions (cube). Many of the phenomena of nature are based on the number 4:

- Four elements (fire, air, water, earth)
- Four seasons (spring, summer, autumn, winter)
- Four cardinal directions (east, north, west, south)
- Four phases of the moon (new, first quarter, full, third quarter)
- Four periods of the day (morning, afternoon, evening, night)
- Four forces of physics (gravity, electromagnetic, strong and weak nuclear)
- Four stages of life (childhood, adolescence, adulthood, old age)

In Gurdjieff's cosmological system, four qualities or states of 'matter' are identified, based on their cosmic properties in relation to the three forces or energies:

Carbon = matter in which the active force is manifesting

Oxygen = matter manifesting the passive force

Nitrogen = matter manifesting the neutralizing force

Hydrogen = matter taken without regard to force or in which no force is manifesting

In astrology, the three energetic qualities (cardinal, fixed, mutable) manifest through each of the four elements to create the 12 signs of the zodiac. The four elements signify different levels or degrees of materiality, ranging from the most rarefied (fire) to the most dense (earth):

Fire signs: Aries = cardinal, Leo = fixed, Sagittarius = mutable
Air signs: Libra = cardinal, Aquarius = fixed, Gemini = mutable
Water signs: Cancer = cardinal, Scorpio = fixed, Pisces = mutable
Earth signs: Capricorn = cardinal, Taurus = fixed, Virgo = mutable

The elements provide a template for the process of inner transformation in which a developed human being becomes a 'microcosm of the macrocosm.' In *Inner Yoga*, Sri Anirvân uses an analogy from science to represent this process by equating earth = solids, water = liquids, air = gases and fire = heat:

Physical science speaks of three states of matter: solid, liquid, and gaseous. In the solid state of substance, the molecules remain dense and compacted. With the application of heat, they begin to break apart and their rate of vibration increases; at this stage solid matter is changed into liquid form. With the application of still more heat, the rate of vibration further increases, and at the same time the volume of substance expands considerably; as a result, even a small quantity of gaseous substance is able to occupy the space of the vessel containing it. In this description we find four of the five physical qualities: the solidity of earth, the fluidity of water, the heat of fire, and the expansiveness of air. Heat is the fundamental energy of change and transformation. As long as the body-consciousness is there, these four qualities will be active; when the body becomes empty, so to speak, the fifth quality, the void appears. (11)

In traditional cosmologies, the four elements represent the elemental states of material energy as well as corresponding psychological states. In the Hindu *Upanishads* they are expressed as natural physical qualities, and supra-natural mystic manifestations:

The quality of the Earth element is solidity; its corresponding yogic quality is the feeling of calm, steadfast wellbeing. The quality of the Water element is fluidity; its yogic quality is relaxation, as if upon this stable feeling of wellbeing waves of gracefulness were flowing; the body then feels like that of a little child brimming with happiness. The quality of the Air element is pervasiveness, movement everywhere; its yogic counterpart is infinite expansion; it gives the feeling that the body is not solid; there seems to be no gulf between the inner and the outer: the whole body seems to spread out like gas on all sides. When to these three feelings, the feeling developed by pranayama [breath control] is added, the yogic quality of the element Fire begins to manifest within. Its characteristic is radiance, radiating heat and light. It brings to the human instrument, the "vessel" of mind, life and body a marvelous feeling of radiant warmth and clarity. (12)

The elements also correspond to the five primary senses of sight, sound, touch, taste and smell. In the teachings of Samkhya, each of the senses has a higher mystic quality: sight (beauty), sound (music), touch (love-touch), taste (flavour) and smell (fragrance):

To realize the Void or pure spirit, you have to enter into the domain of mystic sensations behind the elemental sensations. Smell is a primitive sensation common to all with which life starts. It is either good, bad, soft or pungent, etc. Its mystic quality is a fragrance which arouses an ecstatic condition in you, hence the incense burning in temples. The common sensory taste is sweet, bitter, etc. Its mystic counterpart is flavor. The vision of mystic light is usual for all spiritual aspirants. On the ordinary level it is beauty. The mystic quality of touch is revealed in the love-touch. And the mystic quality of sound is revealed through music, which plays such an important role in religions. We have to train our ordinary sensations to rise, to expand and also to dive into mystic sensations. Then we will see and feel that all existences are shot through and through with spirit and energy which evolve matter out of their ethereal bodies. As one rises in the ascending scale of rarefaction when passing through the different gradations of the elements, one notices how an intense light between the eyebrows expands into the Void of pure Existence, which holds the unlimited universe in its ambit and remains calm and serene, full of the peace, joy and love that are the essence of all beings. There the Creator and the created are one. One is then the very stuff of reality. (13)

The number 5 symbolizes peace and harmony, the relationship between humanity and spirit. In Pythagorean teachings, five is the marriage between Heaven and Earth. In astrology, five divides a circle into 72 segments (quintile) and denotes a creative flow of energy. It also appears in a famous drawing by Leonardo da Vinci in which he depicts a human form with four outstretched limbs and a head. Geometrically, five points define a solid moving through the fourth dimension of time.

Five is associated with the pentagram or five-pointed star. This shape often appears in classical art and architecture as well as in nature (e.g. a starfish). Like the circle, the pentagram is endless and represents perfection and wholeness. It is a symbol of renewal, regeneration and transformation. Interestingly, the lines joining the five points of the pentagram divide each other in the ratio known as the golden mean or golden proportion (ϕ).

Gurdjieff placed great importance on the symbolism of the number 5 as it applied to human transformation and self-realization:

The development of the human machine and the enrichment of being begins with a new and unaccustomed functioning of this machine. We know that a man has five centers: the thinking, the emotional, the moving, the instinctive, and the sex. The predominant development of any one center at the expense of the others produces an extremely one-sided type of man, incapable of

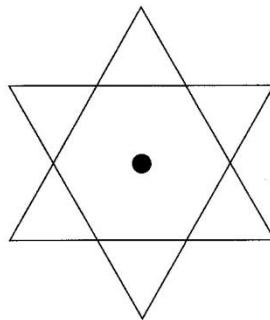
further development. But if a man brings the work of the five centers within him into harmonious accord, he then 'locks the pentagram within him' and becomes a finished type of the physically perfect man. The full and proper functioning of the five centers brings them into union with the higher centers which introduce the missing principle and put man into direct and permanent connection with objective consciousness and objective knowledge. (14)

The number 6 symbolizes movement and support. In astrology, dividing a circle by 6 produces the 60° sextile, which reflects opportunity and cooperation. The number 6 is also reflected in the six lines of the I Ching. Geometrically, 6 is associated with the hexagon or six-pointed star. The hexagon occurs in the pattern of snowflakes and is a common shape found in mineral crystals, and the honeycomb.

The 'Seal of Solomon' is a dynamic hexagon which symbolizes various complementary aspects of creation. The image is strongly associated with Jewish mysticism and appears as the Star of David on the flag of Israel. The Seal of Solomon consists of two interlocking equilateral triangles forming a six-pointed star. Together the two triangles represent the evolutionary tendencies of all forms of existence and the actions of the four elements. The upward pointing triangle meets the downward pointing triangle, and the two then merge in perfect harmony as two interlocking triangles. The upward pointing triangle is active toward heaven and passive toward earth, while the triangle pointing downward is passive toward heaven and active toward earth.

Through inner work a person can develop a permanent line of struggle with one's lower, mechanical nature on the path to self-knowledge and self-realization. In the symbolic transition from 5 to 6, an individual becomes the six-pointed star. Gurdjieff: "By becoming locked within a circle of life independent and complete in himself, man becomes isolated from external influences or accidental shocks; he embodies in himself the *Seal of Solomon*. In this way he will introduce the *line of will* first into the circle of time and afterwards into the cycle of eternity."

Speaking from the Samkhya tradition, Sri Anirvân describes the process of self-realization using the Seal of Solomon diagram as an analogy:



The seeker stands between two triangles. He who devotes his life to spiritual search, thanks to his inner discipline, absorbs the shakti of the triangle of the infinite ideal which is above him. Below him the downward pointing triangle contains all possible forms of manifestation. Perfect yoga in the heart of life is represented by the two integrated triangles with a single center. A Master is one who voluntarily enters into the manifested prakriti. His disciples and pupils are so many reflections of himself which he recognizes without being attached to them. He stands in the center of the two triangles. (15)

Higher Spiritual Energy

According to many traditional spiritual teachings, everything in the universe, including mind and matter, is reducible to energy. This primal energy is called *pneuma* in Greek philosophy, *prana* in Hindu cosmology and *qi* (or *chi*) in Chinese Taoism. It is said to be a subtle energy or life force which permeates all levels of reality. In *The Tao of Physics*, Fritjof Capra suggests that there is a parallel with the findings of quantum physics which posits that the flow and interplay of this energy connects everything in the universe and allows the exchange of information between the myriad forms of phenomenal existence – a vast cosmic dance of energy:

The exploration of the subatomic world in the twentieth century has revealed the intrinsically dynamic nature of matter. It has shown that the constituents of atoms, the subatomic particles, are dynamic patterns which do not exist as isolated entities, but as integral parts of an inseparable network of interactions. These interactions involve a ceaseless flow of energy manifesting itself as the exchange of particles: a dynamic interplay in which particles are created and destroyed without end in a continual variation of energy patterns. The particle interactions give rise to the stable structures which build up the material world, which again do not remain static, but oscillate in rhythmic movements. The whole universe is thus engaged in endless motion and activity; in a continual cosmic dance of energy. (16)

Gurdjieff indicated that there are different degrees or levels of energy in the universe, which are manifested in a fully developed human being (“As above, so below”). He taught that there is a subtle energy within each person which can connect with a higher cosmic energy. When a higher energy or force enters and unites with a physical body, there is a new quality of being. Jeanne de Salzmann, a senior student of Gurdjieff, captures the essence of this new vibration in *The Reality of Being*: “A feeling appears, a new energy is produced which penetrates my whole body. I am touched by the quality of this energy. It has an intensity and intelligence, a vision which I do not know in my usual state.”

Only when a person is whole, balanced and consciously aware can he or she touch a higher source of energy. The higher force is always present and available, but most individuals are not able to receive it since a sustained effort is needed to create the required intensity in the body, mind and emotions. "This brings a special energy, which allows the action of a finer, more subtle nature. The energy has the power to call and to irresistibly attract."

The universe consists of energies that pass through us. Each movement inside and outside us is a passage of energy. The energy goes where it is called. We cannot prevent it. We are subject to the forces that surround us. Either we are related to an energy that is a little higher, or we are taken by an energy that is lower. We are not a unity, we are not one. Our energy needs to be contained in a closed circuit, in which it could be transformed. This would allow it to enter into contact with energies of the same quality to form a new circuit, a new current. So long as a current of higher energy is not established in me, I have no freedom. There is an energy that comes from a higher part of the mind. But we are not open to it. It is a conscious force. The attention is part of this force that must be developed. (17)

Human beings have the capacity to contact spiritual energy from a higher level of reality through certain traditional practices such as prayer, contemplation and meditation. When the mind is quiet and the body relaxed, a more refined current of energy can appear as living Presence. Jeanne de Salzmann: "For a moment I am no longer the same. My freed attention, my consciousness, then knows what I am essentially. This is the death of my ordinary 'I'. Returning to the source, I become conscious of that which arises not to fall back, that which is not born and does not die – the eternal Self."

Each person has an ideal, an aspiration for something higher. It takes one form or another, but what matters is the call to this ideal, the call of one's being. Listening to the call is the state of prayer. While in this state, a person produces an energy, a special emanation, which religious feeling alone can bring. These emanations concentrate in the atmosphere just above the place where they are produced. The air everywhere contains them. The question is how to enter into contact with these emanations. By our call we can create a connection, like a telegraph wire, which links us, and take in this material in order to let it accumulate and crystallize in us. We then have the possibility to manifest its quality and help others understand – that is, to give it back. True prayer is establishing this contact and being nourished by it, nourished by this special energy, which is called Grace. As an exercise for this, we breathe in air, thinking of Christ or Buddha or Mohammed, and keep the active elements which have been accumulated. (18)

In *Inner Octaves*, Michel Conge, a student of Gurdjieff, speaks of a 'divine spark' which animates our inner being: "That is what destiny really is – rediscovering what I am and, in fact, what I have never ceased to be: a spark that is never extinguished, a spark which creates."

If you agree that a particle of divine energy animates you, you can understand that a contact, a direct perception of this circulating energy, must be possible. You can also understand that the key to the mystery of consciousness resides in this capacity of perception, which is not a mental act but the awakening of a dormant property. Everything is here. If this living and divine energy-substance were not in us, there would be no sense in trying anything at all. We are separated from ourselves, and also, of course, from God, only through our forgetting or our ignorance. Remembering oneself means recognizing oneself in a rediscovered and eternally present energy, free from all form. This rediscovery must not be the result of thought or desire alone: the proof must be brought by our whole being, in order that the contact becomes in fact a fusion with no gap through which doubt may still slip in. It is only the Absolute whose reality we are presently incapable of knowing or touching, but this is not a permanent separation . . . I need to recognize that I AM. And from this rediscovered fact, Faith, Love, and Hope are born, very naturally without any subjective distortion.

(19)

The meaning and purpose of existence and the destiny of humanity can only be understood when a certain cosmic relationship is established between a receptive human being and influences emanating from higher levels of reality. Inner transformation occurs when we become sensitive to this finer energy. "The whole being is changed. A pure feeling is born, an uncontaminated energy that is absolutely necessary for me to go further. Without it I will never know what is true, never enter a world entirely new."

We need to understand the idea of a cosmic scale, that there is a link connecting humanity with a higher influence. Our lives, the purpose of being alive, can only be understood in relation to forces whose scale and grandeur go beyond ourselves. I am here to obey, to obey an authority that I recognize as greater because I am a particle of it. It calls to be recognized, to be served and to shine through me. There is a need to put myself under this higher influence and a need to relate to it in submitting to its service. I do not realize at the outset that my wish to *be* is a cosmic wish and that my being needs to situate itself and find its place in a world of forces. I consider it my subjective property, something I can make use of for personal profit. My search is organized on the scale of this subjectivity in which everything is measured from a subjective point of view – me and God. Yet at a certain point I must realize that the origin of the need I feel is not in me alone. There is a cosmic need for the new being that I could become. Humanity – a certain portion of humanity – needs it. And I also have a need, with their help, to capture the influence that is just above me. We feel that without this relation with a higher energy, life has not much meaning.

(20)

The great Indian sage Ramana Maharshi often taught through silence in which he transmitted spiritual energy without any words or actions. Stabilized in the Self, he emanated a

profound spiritual current which passed directly to the hearts of his followers. "Silence is eternal eloquence and the highest form of Grace. Silence is the ocean in which all the rivers of all the religions discharge themselves."

The Samkhya tradition teaches that the ordinary person lives in dualities, while the liberated one lives beyond dualities. The energy of shakti is only perceptible to someone who has developed a refined consciousness which can receive this subtle energy in his or her innermost being. Sri Anirvân: "The silence of shakti is a Void, full and whole, a perfect harmony. It is toward this silence that we must work, gradually emptying ourselves until the power of shakti has the space to move within ourselves and become manifest . . . When we discover within ourselves the vibration of shakti, we rediscover the kingdom of Heaven, the beatitude of all eternity." This state of consciousness is reflected by a harmonization of the three gunas to create an impenetrable inner peace and stability.

When the three gunas are in perfect balance, they can be represented by an equilateral triangle with a central point (*bindu*) which "contains everything in itself." Shakti can also gather itself together at the central point: "This signifies – in a perfect action or in a perfect meditative state – the union of shakti and purusha (Spirit), a state of perfect awakened consciousness." In *Shakti: A Spiritual Experience*, Lizelle Reymond writes:

All the great spiritual beings have entered the Void, the inner circle of Shakti. That which in them remains a mystery for us is the ultimate unknown which they reflect. It is their secret. Their desire to reveal their experience to us stops at the very moment when we can no longer absorb what they have to transmit. It is for us to become worthy of the light that comes to meet us. What we wish to ignore as long as possible is that their sacrifice stands between them and us. This sacrifice is to remain on our level, to be with us. We do not have the courage to face it even though we wish to derive all possible benefits from it. This sacrifice is expiation in many forms and under many different names. It is the vanishing of dualities on all levels, the oneness of Purusha-Prakriti. It is the One beyond spirit and matter . . . It is beyond what is dual, it is the Absolute. The stillness of this Absolute is creative silence. Therein a "new movement" is being born, the essence of life. (21)

When the universe is viewed as sacred, then *every* aspect of the phenomenal world is perceived as sacred and magical: "Gold can be formed into different shapes – both beautiful and grotesque – but it still remains gold." When we are connected to the spiritual energy of the universe our lives are transformed and renewed. "The sacred world is *great* because of its primordial quality. Experiencing the greatness of the sacred world is recognizing the existence of that vast and primordial wisdom, which is reflected throughout phenomena."

In *Shambhala: The Sacred Path of the Warrior*, Tibetan Buddhist master Chögyam Trungpa invokes the archetypal figure of the sacred warrior to describe the potential for enlightened

and wise behaviour that exists within every human being. By mastering the challenges of life, we can live a meaningful life based on respect for the natural world and service to others:

The challenge of warriorship is to live fully in the world as it is and to find within this world, with all its paradoxes, the essence of nowness. If we open our eyes, if we open our minds, if we open our hearts, we will find that this world is a magical place . . . The world is filled with power and wisdom, which we can have, so to speak. In some sense we have them already. We have possibilities of experiencing the sacred world, a world which has self-existing richness and brilliance – and beyond that, possibilities of natural hierarchy, natural order. That order includes all the aspects of life – including those that are ugly and bitter and sad. But even those qualities are part of the rich fabric of existence that can be woven into our being. In fact, we are woven already into that fabric – whether we like it or not. Recognizing that link is both powerful and auspicious. It allows us to stop complaining about and fighting with our world. Instead, we can begin to celebrate and promote the sacredness of the world. By following the way of the warrior, it is possible to expand our vision and give fearlessly to others. In that way, we have possibilities of effecting fundamental change. We cannot change the way the world *is*, but by opening ourselves to the world *as it is*, we may find that gentleness, decency, and bravery are available – not only to us, but to all human beings. (22)

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