

Depressions and their causes

TODAY I want to introduce a new subject: depressions and their causes.

As we know, people can become depressed as a result of an incorrect attitude to life's problems. It is not always an unconscious reaction. Quite often the patient tries to avoid responsibilities or difficulties by seeking refuge in pathological behaviour. But in many cases this reaction is caused by circumstances which burden his nervous system in some way and give him the feeling that he is incapable of dealing with them. Emotional and physical weaknesses do not allow him to take an objective view of problems; inferiority complexes make them appear insoluble. Moreover, a lack of self-confidence leads to the conclusion that whatever fate decrees has to be accepted, that karma cannot be avoided.

It must, however, be taken into account that depressions do not only stem from a person's unstable psyche and his incorrect philosophy of life. They can also be caused by the people around him with all their shortcomings and mistaken ideas. They can also be generated by spiritual energies.

We have already discussed suicide, surely the most intense form of depression. We have said that nobody commits this voluntarily.

On the other hand, an individual must display a certain willingness to expose himself to energies which exploit a psychic weakness or a flaw in his character and cause him to cut short his life. The rate of suicides is increasing in an appalling manner. This is mainly because the care and welfare of the soul of a young person growing to adulthood is totally neglected and there is no suitable instruction on the subject.

I must keep repeating how important it is that a child's self-confidence is constantly bolstered; that it is taught to resist feelings of failure and inferiority; that its parents teach it self-responsibility through their own way of life, and that the home atmosphere is cheerful and happy.

Somebody whose personality is developed under these conditions and is made aware of his spiritual and emotional powers cannot possibly fall prey to depressions and their consequences.

If one considers the often very astonishing results that psychic treatment has on physically disabled people who are not capable of leading a normal life, it must be borne in mind that not only do their visible defects oppress their soul and affect their daily routine, but to a far greater extent there are hidden disorders in their psyche.

People who are physically disabled come to terms with their restricted living conditions and look for ways to prove that their life's purpose and objectives can be fulfilled.

They are often happier than "normal" people who have no limitations but still don't know how to conduct their lives properly because they are unable to find a signpost telling them what to do.

All knowledge and wisdom is pointless if the means to exploit it is not found because the whys and wherefores are disregarded.

To establish these needs empathy, common sense and good intentions, like service or help to humanity even if this is just to the people in one's vicinity.

Knowledge ranks higher than human emotions, and the driving force to material success and position leaves no time for contemplation.

The care offered by parents, teachers, psychologists and doctors should be far greater than it is today. Then there would certainly be a considerable decrease in the number of depressions and suicides.

I will be told that it is impossible to create suitable establishments or institutions which provide such individual attention. But on second thoughts it may become obvious that if sufficient preventative measures are taken in the first place, the intensive treatment and care required for such patients can gradually be reduced.

It is not only the duty of individuals to do this work. Everybody would gladly care for his fellow men if he were sure of his ground and his correct understanding of life enabled him to have the proper perceptive attitude towards the community.

It only requires somebody to make a start and expend a little effort to develop his own character in order to be an example to others in every situation in life.

The first step is the psyche. Children must not be allowed to cry without being comforted and the cause of their trouble being established and eliminated. Often the causes are so minimal that adults think they can be ignored but they continue to bother a child because it does not know how to overcome the problem.

Whatever preys on a mind and causes distress must be replaced by good thoughts and happiness. Happiness is a positive energy which is so necessary to master life on earth.

But in order to spread happiness, the one who does so must himself possess this quality in good measure. People who are happy and well-balanced unconsciously project it on their surroundings.

Not that they divest themselves. No, they gain renewed strength because they bathe their soul in it. A person—and I now refer to youngsters growing to adulthood—is best educated by being set an example. It is far easier and far wiser to guide him as he matures than try to repair damage and suffering which was allowed to come about unchecked.

Do not give uncertainty and depression the opportunity to arise.

Your clinics can then be filled with people who are really ill.

Let us examine one cause of depression. Grete will tell the story: A man wrote to me in the summer of 1973 after he had read "Messages from a Doctor in the Fourth Dimension" as follows: "In 1969 I was suddenly subjected to attacks of anxiety and giddiness. I was hospitalised with a suspected heart attack. Despite intensive investigations no organic illness could be established. I had the impression that my doctors had absolutely no idea what they were looking for and consequently didn't know what to do. Perhaps it was something new brought on by nerves...

"At this point I must add that I also visited a neurologist some months before who prescribed autogenic training to patients with this complaint—and there are a lot of them today. But this had no effect as the feelings of anxiety and giddiness increased.

"As there is no doctor who seems to know what to do, I would be grateful if you could ask Dr. Nowotny what the matter is and how it can be cured." Nowotny replied as follows: "The letter in front of me shows me that this man has the wrong attitude. But it is not apparent. His environment causes him to withdraw behind a screen of anxiety and attacks of giddiness to escape responsibilities which seem insurmountable.

"He is not aware of this fact but keeps doubting his own capacity for mastering the tasks that face him. His self-confidence is very shaky even though his intentions to find a way out of his dilemma are good.

"Tell him I say this is not an organic illness; the diagnosis of the doctors was correct but they are not sufficiently well-trained to be able to administer psychic treatment.

"Psychic treatment and medications are not called for. The patient has the ability to observe himself in remarkable measure. His own powers can deflect these attacks when they occur.

"His giddiness can be traced to the fact that anxiety disturbs his circulation and consequently his balance.

"Therefore, my friend, begin to combat the negative impressions and thoughts. Counter them with strong willpower. Don't wait anxiously for the next attack.

"You can also count on my help if you continue to have confidence in me. Finally, for your peace of mind, I want to repeat my diagnosis that you are not ill. You only have a slightly negative attitude to life which brings on the complaints which in another person could well be symptoms of an illness. So please be courageous. We will get it right." Nowotny comments on the case: I had hit the nail on the head, but must admit it was not difficult. Any doctor who has acquired some knowledge of psychology could have done the same.

There is another point to consider: the patient was probably fascinated by being diagnosed in this manner, but what really mattered was that he now knew what was the matter with him and what he had to do. In a few days he was cured, or rather, he had found the way to free himself from his incorrect attitude towards life.

Grete describes another case: I first met him and his friend in October 1973 and learned that he had a very responsible position which called for serious decisions. He said, and I quote, "I cannot bear the responsibility that I have taken on." Nowotny sent the following message to both men: "I thank you for contacting me. We have much to talk about but nothing is difficult or tragic. I would recommend minor adjustments in your attitude to daily life and a little cheerfulness and light-heartedness.

"To this end you must accept my messages with an open mind, confident that there is a cure for every situation in life when the necessity arises. I cannot yet express this as concretely as you may be expecting to hear it. Perhaps I should phrase it differently. I could do so but will not because everybody must first feel the need to tackle his psychic problems himself.

"I see that a good start has been made and ask for your friendship.

We will have a close relationship. This statement may have a different connotation on earth to over here, but do not doubt what I say. Our spiritual relationship is so good that you have no need to make any adjustments. You both have direct access to me. Your powers of discrimination have led you to make contact with me. You are quite capable of separating the wheat from the chaff.

"Come again and have confidence in my teaching. You will soon notice a change and no longer require medical attention.

"Put your questions to me mentally. You will find the answers yourselves. There is no need to decide whether these come from your inner self or from other sources. Have total confidence in your own strength and use it.

"Your self-confidence is often a little shaky. This does not only apply to you two gentlemen, but to all people who are critical of their own actions. If you think you have not done something perfectly, you will always have the possibility of doing it better another time. Let this knowledge be a comfort to you today."

At this point I did not understand the insinuations Nowotny was making. But I soon learned that these men were working on the translation of an important mediumistic publication in English. In March 1974 I received a letter saying, "Unfortunately I have to tell you that my feelings of anxiety and giddiness, which in the past months were as good as gone, have set in again very strongly..." He asked for Nowotny's help again.

Nowotny replied: "In a nutshell your mistaken attitude is as follows: The problems around you are as good as solved but your attitude is still not sufficiently positive. Your thoughts are fragmented.

This makes you uneasy and upsets your balance.

"You must realise that it is dangerous for human beings to move into transcendental planes and seek insight in spheres that should remain closed to them "Endeavours to attain superior wisdom and universal knowledge need particular powers and resistance against unwelcome influences.

"I have already told you to trust me if your own abilities are insufficient to overcome your problems. Do not be evasive. I only ask you to trust me.

"In your mediumistic work, which I certainly do not wish to belittle, you open yourself to other spiritual influences and do not always use your powers of discretion as you usually do. Reject all negative thoughts and you will soon be all right. Have confidence in me and you will realise that I offer you real friendship which will set your mind at rest and renew your creative ability." After a short while his problems were over, which proves that mental disturbances can occur simultaneously with depression.

Nowotny outlines another case: A young woman cried constantly and suffered from insomnia.

When asked the reason she replied that when her child was teething it had terrible convulsions. This gave her such a shock that she still cried constantly although nothing had happened to her child and it was now in the best of health.

In this case I wrote as follows: "You have no reason to have an inferiority complex. It is nice to have people around who anticipate your every wish and do things for you. This does not mean that you have to think that you cannot do the work yourself..." This shows that patients often do not know the cause of their problems. In this particular instance it was the loving care of the young woman's mother who did all her daughter's housework so that the latter came to believe she was incapable of doing it herself and would never be as perfect as her mother. One drastic experience was sufficient to tip the scales in favour of flight, which she justified by becoming ill. She soon found the opportunity to prove her abilities and all her problems were solved.

Suicide and its consequences. The Church and science must change their way of thinking.

I WOULD like to devote a special chapter to suicide which, in this time of great technical advances and in spite of the many benefits they have brought mankind, is still on the increase.

The word, or rather what it characterises, does not really pertain to fact. Every deed carried out by an individual is a reflection of his own decision and the activation of his will.

Why does a person kill himself? Because he no longer has the willpower to master his earthly tasks. This at least is his justification.

But when a person's willpower breaks down, the result is resignation, indifference and total passiveness, not full steam ahead in the opposite direction. He who believes he has lost the will to live has even less will to throw away his life because according to natural laws it is everybody's desire to maintain life on earth as long as possible. It cannot be denied that this instinct is inherent in every human being.

Taking one's own life is by no means an act of free will. Admittedly the person concerned carries out the act, but his passiveness has so reduced his will that other energies are able to possess and manipulate him.

Very often people who have to a large extent lost their self-confidence strive with all their might to fight against thoughts of suicide. They are afraid that they will be forced to give in, protest that they do not want to do so, but are driven on and on, as if pressurised to continue.

There are any number of influences and kinds of compulsion according to the causes and the type of dominating spirit energy.

The root problem is always that the person has failed in some way. It could be through some fault of his own; it could be that he has the wrong outlook on life; it could be extreme physical suffering or physical defects which cause his emotional renunciation and lead to his willingness to receive negative energies.

Hatred and envy of others who are sound and healthy attract such energies so if people with these inferior feelings are to be helped, fundamental attention must be paid to the reciprocal action and effect between this world and the spirit world.

All work in this direction—even if it is not specifically channelled towards one of the above-mentioned causes—is extremely laudable. The self-confidence and strength given to a physically handicapped person leads to positive thought and enables him to deflect harmful energies.

Helping a person to resist suicide is a priority task for a psychiatrist, at present not a very successful one because he is not familiar with the traffic between the two worlds and the real causes of suicide.

To this must be added the error of believing the reason which the patient gives as the cause. Only in very rare cases is the driving force correctly identified and named.

Of course, the causes can only be a discussion point when the attempt has not been successful and the person has been brought back to normal life. It is considered an attempt that failed, though the reasons given for having undertaken it are widely divergent. They depend on how his environment judges him, what it considers him capable of doing and so on and so forth. That help was administered in good time and he was saved is ascribed to chance or unexpected circumstances.

That the unexpected circumstances are always brought about by benevolent spirit entities has yet to find a place in the subsequent discussion about the attempted suicide.

If a doctor is aware of the links between the two worlds, he can explain to the patient which energies helped him and are at his side to assist him in future to master his life tasks and resist and overcome negative energies successfully.

Very often the patient is not to blame for such a happening. Rather it is those nearest to him who have misunderstood or abandoned him when he most needed them. For this reason it is important to consider these people and make them aware of their incorrect attitude.

One more fundamental consideration must be taken into account. We know that the end of every person's life is predetermined. Why should it be so important for him to reach the scheduled day of departure from earth? Is it not left to his free will to end life when he wishes to do so?

We have free will to come to earth, but our incarnation is subject to spiritual norms which prevail in the other world. There would be total chaos if it were a matter of free will. I do not have the right words to explain to you what these spiritual standards are. But to maintain eternal order every human being is obliged to adhere to them and keep to the timing allotted to him, using it for his development and maturation. If he departs the world earlier, his spirit entity remains fully committed to matter. It suffers immensely through his inability to make use of it. Equally, it is not able to make contact with the spiritual world and its invigorating energy until the pre-arranged time for leaving the earth comes round.

Such beings are bound to time and space. This alone causes them endless suffering.

This is why the most pressing duty of a psychiatrist treating somebody threatening suicide is to make this clear to his patient. It is of the utmost importance that he instructs those closest to him to understand and forgive him.

Suicide is not a crime; there is no doubt about this. Understandably it is not easy to change the established way of thinking on this matter if some thought is given to the fact that life is a gift from divine Omnipotence but according to animistic reasoning man alone is responsible for making the best of it.

One of the most important tasks of the Church is to rectify its misinterpretations of these matters. Indeed, in view of the experiences it has had these past two thousand years this cannot be difficult.

It will easily be appreciated how valuable help from this quarter would be for the accomplishment of our tasks. Regrettably, attempts are even being made to give a new interpretation to the works and achievements of Jesus, to make them appear only as parables and teach them as such.

It has never harmed anybody to admit a mistake and adopt a more progressive way of thought. In my opinion, the Church could only benefit from a change of attitude. It must find the courage to face the truth without regard for person or establishment. The error does not date from today; it came about very, very long ago but the experiences gained in science no longer justify the maintenance of these old viewpoints.

It should not be overlooked that theology, the science of the divine, does not base its tenets on exact proof as is the case with the natural sciences, but purely on experience. In this respect it could be an example to other sciences, but gives the impression of being totally unaware of its advanced outlook. All other branches of science and research will only be able to expand their present boundaries when instead of basing themselves on exact proof they found their work on belief.

This is not belief in the sense of being willing to adopt religious tenets, but rather the absolute conviction of the existence of a divine Omnipotence. Only in this way will the keys to the laws of the Universe be found. For the most part they are still unknown.

Then it will become clear to you that everything that seems to be a miracle because you cannot explain it, is simply based on natural law which applies equally in the incarnate and discarnate worlds.

Its effects are only different in both worlds because time and space are concepts of the material sphere. There are different dimensions in the spiritual world.

There have often been surprises when changes manifested in the physical domain were simply dismissed as Utopian because so far there has been no scientific explanation for them.

Changes of this nature have mostly been predicted. Those who know about such things have always been ridiculed or declared insane. Why is there a refusal to profit from such knowledge and experience? Truth does not inspire fear if it is faced openly and with goodwill.

People of this generation are accumulating great guilt if, because of conceit and arrogance and guided by purely materialistic aspirations, they oppose their inner conviction to accept as truth that which on account of reasons already given is not allowed to be true.

Truth cannot be abolished. It can be bypassed with blinkers. It can be denied. It can be distorted. But in spite of every negative effort it will prevail and eclipse whatever tried to suppress it.

The sooner this occurs and people learn to live in the proper way with the good spirit energies the sooner there will be better understanding of fellow men and full realisation of the purpose of life on earth.