

## SELF-REMEMBERING

The term “self-remembering” is commonly used to describe the open secret of practice for pupils in all true esoteric traditions. It is an open secret because almost all of humanity is so identified and enamored of the personality, that even if self-remembering is known about, it is generally dismissed. In effect, we have been mis-educated about who we really are. The thesis behind self-remembering is that who each of us really is, is neither the body, the thoughts, nor the emotions of this lifetime. These are temporary features that develop through education in this lifetime and which are destroyed at death or thereafter. But our identification with these features, although temporary, is incredibly strong. Who we really are, is sometimes expressed as “I Am” (Atma, Self, God, Soul, Endlessness, etc.) which cannot be further described but which can be experienced through practice. That practice is self-remembering, called by different names in different traditions. Sri Madhava Ashis expressed this practice through two traditions: esoteric Hinduism (Advaita) and esoteric Christianity (Gurdjieffian).

Examples for the practice:

**Esoteric Hinduism (Advaita): Sri Madhava Ashish** in Ginsburg, *The Masters Speak*

“Observe an object, for instance, a candle. See the candle. See what is seeing the candle. Drop away the candle. What is left is that you are seeing or observing what is seeing the candle. In other words, you are aware of being aware. This is true self-remembering or self-awareness avoiding the trap of illusory self-remembering.”(p. 222)

**Esoteric Hinduism (Advaita): Sri Nisargadatta**, *I Am That*

"There is such a way, open to all, on every level, in every walk of life. Everybody is aware of himself. The deepening and broadening of self-awareness is the royal way. Call it mindfulness, or witnessing, or just attention - it is for all. None is unripe for it and none can fail. But of course, you must not be merely alert. Your mindfulness must include the mind also. Witnessing is primarily awareness of consciousness and its movements." (p 324) "This union of the seer and the seen happens when the seer becomes conscious of himself as the seer; he is not merely interested in the seen, which he is anyhow, but also interested in being interested, giving attention to attention, aware of being aware." (p. 292)

**Esoteric Christianity: G.I. Gurdjieff**, *Views from the Real World*

“Remember yourself always and everywhere.” (p. 273)

**Esoteric Christianity: P.D. Ouspensky**, *In Search of the Miraculous*

“I am speaking of the division of attention which is the characteristic feature of self-remembering. I represented it to myself in the following way:

When I observe something, my attention is directed towards what I observe -- a line with one arrowhead:

I -----→ the observed phenomenon.

When at the same time I try to remember myself, my attention is directed both towards the object observed and towards myself. A second arrowhead appears on the line:

I ←-----→ the observed phenomenon.

Having defined this I saw that the problem consisted in directing attention on oneself without weakening or obliterating the attention directed on something else. Moreover this ‘something else’ could as well be within me as outside me. (p. 119)

The above suggestions for practice are commonly known as the Work, and its tool is the directing of attention. The Work always requires intentional effort. That effort, to the extent that we can remember it, needs to be practiced always and everywhere in the long process of undoing the mis-education about who we really are.