



THE NOTION OF GROWTH

Discover Unknown
Dimensions
of Your Consciousness

Hermann Kuhn

HERMANN KUHN

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of Your Consciousness

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This book is dedicated to
SRI ARYANANDI MUNI MAHARAJ
in deep gratitude.

परस्परोपग्रहो जीवानाम्

'The purpose of souls is to assist each other.'

TATTVARTHASUTRA - Chapter 5, Sutra 21

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THE BEGINNING

Almost all people start life with enthusiasm. Every step we venture into the new world confronts us with things unknown which cause amazement and happiness within us and which we explore with fascination.

This fascination accompanies our early years. It reaches an absolute high point when we fall in love for the first time and thereby discover that *within ourselves* there lies a dormant, undiscovered world, whose existence we previously couldn't even guess at and which holds the promise of totally unexpected ecstatic joy for us. This discovery inspires us to try out entirely new action-patterns and makes us venture into unknown areas of our life.

After this high point our fascination usually diminishes somehow. Inevitable profound disappointments cause us to be more cautious especially in the area of our emotions, so that deep pain may not overwhelm us too easily. Yet instead of searching how to renew the original enthusiasm that

guided us so playfully through our early years, we restrict exactly the one feature that filled our life with liveliness.

More or less willingly we accept the advice whispered by our environment (school, relatives, friends etc.) that now the seriousness of life would start and that the rest of our days will conform to this - more solemn - pattern of reduced happiness. We learn to put less value on our enthusiasm than on our material and emotional stability - though in the long run any such stability always proves either highly fleeting and built on quicksand, or it solidifies our life into a death-like state in which nothing is able to move within and outside us.

In all this we follow the overwhelming example of those around us, whom we are hardly able to resist. Lacking any alternative concept, we accept a life that is only occasionally inspired by fascination and enthusiasm, but for the most part grinds us down in an increasingly monotonous and dull routine.

Yet no matter how soothing this supposed stability may appeal to us most of the time, as violently does it tear us apart at other times when we suddenly become aware of how deeply we locked ourselves into these desperate confining boundaries. We sense that this could not possibly have been everything, that life should offer more than increasingly stagnant resignation with less and less real happiness. An almost irrational yearning for breaking loose, for carefree excitement, for daring adventure rises within us - the yearning for exactly that type of enthusiasm that made us experience our youth so intensely.

If we abhor to continue our life with this inner disappointment, with this deep-rooted unfulfilled longing, then we have to fundamentally change something in our present situation, then we have to find other worlds we can explore

with the same enthusiasm that put so much liveliness in our early life. If our present world becomes too narrow, then we have to find new ideals, concepts and objectives to resuscitate that feeling of fascination.

This book describes a path to discover a world within us that becomes the more fascinating the deeper we venture into it. It is a path to the center of our consciousness which has never been described in this clarity and practicability in our time. The path is open without restriction to everyone, and it is independent of any philosophical orientation or faith.

It is a path to experience the majesty, the grandeur, the infinite breadth of our existence, which everyone does sense within himself - if he is only courageous enough to permit this feeling.

The knowledge of this path originates in times beyond history. It not only describes how we can free ourselves from any entanglement in undesired events, but also gives insight into the immense - untapped - potential available within all of us and how to unfold these inherent abilities much more effectively than we do at the present.

The objective of this path is *not* the annihilation of our individual existence in a faceless enlightenment, nirvana, satori or brahman. It isn't even the insight into the fundamental mechanisms of this world. The real objective of this path is not found on the level of the mind, but in an ever growing comprehensive, *loving* understanding, - a love-filled expansion of our being that unfolds more with every single step, yet never violates or annihilates our individuality. With loving understanding our insights are not trapped on the cold level of the mind, but take on an unprecedented vivaciousness and depth.

Once we discover that deep within us - beyond our usual emotions - there exists a hidden, fantastic world which - when opened - introduces us to dimensions of ecstatic love, happiness and an unprecedented clarity of perception and understanding, our original vibrant fascination with life re-surges again. This state can only be compared to the wonderful discovery which our first falling in love opened up to us. Yet the kaleidoscopic diversity and vivaciousness of the new world far transcends the experience of that first love.

Once we know the entrance to this world, our enthusiasm never leaves us again. We only need to become aware of our immense dormant abilities if we want to experience them. The ease with which this happens, demonstrates vividly that all further unfoldment of our consciousness will be simple; - as simple and natural as we experienced in the growth of our body from the newborn baby to our present form.

The Ancient Knowledge of the Jains

This book is part of an ancient Indian manuscript - the Tattvarthasutra. The Tattvarthasutra describes in concentrated form the essence of the Jaina philosophy, one of the oldest, if not the oldest philosophy of the world. It presents us not only with an inspiring, comprehensive and extremely logical view of our world, but introduces a practical method unknown to the West, with which we can systematically develop dynamically expanding cognition and loving understanding in our own life.

In refreshing contrast to many other religions, philosophies and ideologies the Jains have no intention whatsoever to teach mankind respect towards any kind of supernatural power or any real or imaginary (one or many) gods, nor to

pray in any form for their (the gods) blessing. The Jains further have no desire to convert mankind into blind-believing devotees to let their lives revolve around some luminous spiritual magnet.

Jaina philosophy provides everyone who is interested with an instrument, a method, that enables him to realize the highest status of his own potential, - a potential that possesses such breathtaking depth and broadness (in love, knowledge, power, abilities and the experience of happiness) our Western culture has no concept to match.

The Tattvarthasutra contains a practical key that systematically leads to more comprehensive understanding and superior states of consciousness. This key is not shrouded in obscure language nor demands the application of mystic techniques, it simply interprets life from a new angle. Yet this new angle enables us to arrange the components of our daily life in a way that will automatically produce the expansive experiences mentioned above.

Those who put this method into practice, set out onto a path to total self-determination and the attainment of capabilities generally attributed only to supernatural beings. Yet this high aim is not reached by the blessings of any god, the attendance to mystic powers or by subordination to any guru. The method of the Tattvarthasutra causes - in step with our own efforts - the gradual dissolution of obstructions that limit our consciousness. In this process of growing self-determination our individual path to further comprehensive understanding becomes more and more clear to us. The Tattvarthasutra describes exactly how this can be achieved.

The Tattvarthasutra

The Tattvarthasutra is about 1800 years old. Its title translates '*The Aphorisms describing the Purpose of Reality*'. It was written in the second or third century AD by the Indian sage Umaswami, who condensed all Jaina knowledge of his time in this one work.

Though the beginning of Jainism is often associated with the life of its last prophet Mahavir (599 to 527 BC), the knowledge is known to be far older. Early Jaina artifacts have been found in the Indus Valley Culture, the oldest Asian civilization (approx. 3000 BC) and the Jains' own historic records reach even further back. The Jains regard the Tattvarthasutra as their central scripture.

Sutras (short statements) and their interpretation through commentaries originated in times when paper and other means of material recording did not exist. Knowledge was learnt by heart and handed down orally from generation to generation. Sutras therefore were kept as brief as possible. They were governed by precise rules which for example defined the weight of a word by its position alone. To keep knowledge pure, even the commentators followed exact rules. This method worked with such precision that highly complex information conceived thousands of years ago reached our present times with hardly any distortion.

To someone raised in a Western cultural environment, the transfer of knowledge by brief sutras may appear strange and unfamiliar at first. Complex rules and the formal style can easily block access to these works, - especially when translated literally and close to the original text.

But even though the knowledge of the Tattvarthasutra originated millennia ago, it proves extremely relevant to our present times. The current search for purpose beyond mate-

rial saturation finds in it the keys to dimensions of human experience entirely unknown to the West.

To make this knowledge accessible to a wide audience, a modern commentary accompanies the ancient text. For easier reading all accents in the transliteration of the Sanskrit words have been eliminated. The Sanskrit terms mentioned in brackets are for reference only. They help to identify their specific content.

The Tattvarthasutra consists of three parts with clearly distinct contents:

Chapter 1 presents the comprehensive picture of a universe that generally supports the realization of all the ideals, desires, ideas and aspirations we carry deep within us. It describes methods how to unfold hidden abilities of our consciousness. It describes the channels through which to access knowledge, including the range and handling of extrasensory perception and how to intuitively discriminate between truth and error.

Chapter 2 to 5 portray the levels of existence on which life manifests. They further deal with the purpose and functions of time, space, matter and other basic elements of this universe.

Chapter 6 to 10 analyze what causes the blockages that limit our present state of life and explain the mechanisms to remove these causes. The last chapter describes our shift into a state of consciousness where karma ceases to block the inherent potential of man.

THE NOTION OF GROWTH presents the first chapter of the Tattvarthasutra. The accompanying modern commentary links the magnitude of the human potential and its explora-

tion directly to our daily life and presents this in an applicable and practical way.

KARMA - THE MECHANISM - also by Hermann Kuhn and published by Crosswind Publishing - explains how to understand and consciously control the hidden mechanisms that govern our actions and how to unfold our potential abilities. It contains those parts of the Tattvarthasutra that explain the *karmic mechanisms* relevant to our present times (chapter 6, 8, and part of chapter 9).

The new commentaries are partly based on the interpretation (Sarvarthasiddhi) written by the Indian Pujapada in the seventh or eighth century AD.

For easy access to this book it is recommended to postpone any questions that might arise during the first reading. The text often introduces themes only briefly to return to them extensively later. A second reading then produces far more comprehensive insight.

For a concise overview of the entire content of the book, please turn to the section 'TEXT OF THE SUTRAS' that lists all sutras without accompanying commentary.

The second part of the book called 'THE APPLICATION' offers additional information on the practical use of this knowledge. This information is derived from other parts of the Tattvarthasutra, ancient Jaina scriptures like Nemichandra's *Dravya Sangraha*, *Gommatasara* etc. and practical experience.

**THE
NOTION
OF
GROWTH**

Chapter 1 of the
- Tattvarthasutra -

S U T R A 1

सम्यग्दर्शनज्ञानचारित्राणि मोक्षमार्गः ॥ १ ॥

Samyag darshana jnana charitrani moksa margah (1)

- The notion which path leads to the optimal unfolding of our consciousness (*samyag darshana*)
- knowledge that makes us recognize and understand this unfolding of consciousness (*samyag jnana*) and
- the manifestation of these insights in action (*samyag charitra*)

are the path to liberation. (1)

Three factors need to act in concert to enable the dynamic unfoldment of our consciousness and the experience of new, more comprehensive levels of life:

- 1 - **The notion which path leads to the optimal unfolding of our consciousness** (*samyag darshana*) is the ability to intuitively choose from the innumerable alternatives of daily life the *one optimal* action that opens up new, expansive and more interesting levels of experience and understanding within us.

This intuitive ability to find our path to inner growth is no mystic faculty we need to train tediously through esoteric techniques, but nothing other than a special feature of our perception that is called *darshana* in Sanskrit.

darshana is intuitive comprehension; - it is the emotional weight we assign to sense-impressions and insights. By intuitive comprehension we select from all the possible actions of daily life the one we feel most attracted to.

Our intellect plays hardly any role in this process. It is far too slow for the fast pace of daily life to compute in advance all the consequences our actions may have.

Yet we also know that our intuition might lead us astray and cause undesired results.

This book therefore describes a *special feature* of intuitive comprehension that excludes error and flawed understanding. The Sanskrit name for this special feature is *samyag darshana*; in this book it is called 'The Notion of Growth'.

The notion of growth is a natural, inherent ability of our consciousness that can be unfolded by everyone. The author of the Tattvarthasutra demonstratively positions this ability at the very beginning of the book and thereby emphasizes its central importance for our development.

The notion of growth enables us to spontaneously and with unerring certainty select only those actions which advance us towards ever widening perception and towards the realization of the immense potential abilities dormant within us. It enables us to intuitively identify flawed information and exclude them from our path.

Our notion of growth is the essential key for a type of development that inevitably leads to liberation. Its development and application is the guiding theme for all topics of this book.

Yet the features of *samyag darshana* (the notion of growth) described above are only the practical expression of this far more comprehensive term. The entire scope and depth of *samyag darshana* will become clear in the second sutra.

How to develop and expand our notion of growth is described in Sutra 3.

How to apply our notion of growth to access hidden parts of reality is explained in Sutra 15.

2 - Knowledge that makes us recognize and understand this unfolding of consciousness (*samyag jnana*) opens our awareness to those mechanisms that cause our potential abilities to become reality.

We generally assume that if we want to explore previously unknown areas of experience, we first need to acquire knowledge and then to apply it. Yet reality works exactly the opposite way. We *first* experience something new and *then only* begin to search - more or less intuitively and often subconsciously - for concepts that may explain our new experiences and connect them to our current understanding. This applies especially to any unfoldment of consciousness that radically transcends our familiar sphere of life.

Contrary to common belief most experiences of expansion of consciousness are hardly ever so vivid and clear that we immediately become aware of them. The majority of insights into different (new) levels of consciousness are so brief that they appear like highly fleeting, almost unreal apparitions. Since we mostly have no explanation for what we experienced, we usually store these events in the same place as all the

other unresolved experiences that accompany our life and which we choose to ignore and forget as well.

Hidden deep inside our memory we therefore carry a number of experiences we are hardly aware of, but which nevertheless contain vital information how other, more comprehensive states of existence feel like.

The type of knowledge mentioned in the sutra (*sam-yag jnana*) has the purpose to alert us to these hidden experiences and to make them accessible.

It is special knowledge that can reach us through a variety of channels. Some of these channels are unknown to the West or their mechanisms are misunderstood. Sutras 9 - 31 explain the bandwidth and range of each of these channels and describe the different types of knowledge they transmit.

How this knowledge is communicated to us - by verbal instruction, by reading the corresponding scriptures or by sudden intuitive comprehension - is not of primary importance.

The knowledge awakens us to that part of the path we already experienced.

If we already have access to more comprehensive levels of experience without knowing it, the knowledge will make us conscious of this opening. It is therefore essential that we familiarize us with the concepts that describe the expansion of consciousness, - and then link these concepts to our experiences.

Apart from this it always pays to take interest in this special knowledge because it enlivens areas of our consciousness we are unacquainted with.

It is impossible to achieve an expansion of consciousness by study alone or by mere intellectual understanding.

Simultaneously with every expansion of consciousness we also automatically receive the ability to fully comprehend our experience. This happens whether we are aware of it at the moment of expansion or not. Experience and understanding are just two different aspects of the same event.

Error, misunderstanding and doubt in the assimilation and application of this knowledge are automatically filtered out if we allow our notion of growth (*samyag darshana*) to guide this process. This makes us intuitively sense how every information we receive is influencing our progress. It gives us the choice to accept only those impulses that definitely lead to higher stages of development.

3 - Manifestating these insights in action (*samyag charitra*) means to really do what will free our consciousness and action from all restrictions. This transfer of our insights into action is essential if we truly want to experience more fascinating dimensions of consciousness.

Many who strive for an expansion of consciousness believe that this will only happen on a purely mental (spiritual) level and therefore should be accompanied by some withdrawal from worldly activities. They usually maintain the idea that the more comprehensive the withdrawal, the faster their spiritual progress will be.

Convictions of this type often cause disdain for physical activities and the instrument of this activity -

our body - while at the same time all mental (spiritual) efforts assume a disproportionately high significance. In this frame of mind all kind of actions (and even the body itself) may be rejected as annoying, troublesome, obstructive and interfering with spiritual development.

The sutra makes clear that activity is an inalienable factor in our development. Only when we transfer our insights into action will the unfolding of our consciousness become possible. Any exclusively mental (spiritual) occupation with esoteric contents - irrespective of how intensely and seriously we go about it - neglects one of the three essential factors of growth and therefore is unable to produce the optimal and stable unfolding of our consciousness.

Activity is an essential part of our life in the state of embodiment. Through activity we strive for fulfillment (realization) of the values and ideals we feel deep within ourselves. The emotional engagement with which we pursue these values acts like a magnet that attracts all components necessary for their fulfillment.

This emotional engagement allows us to experience the themes of our life until we gained optimal insight from them and our emotional attachment to the finished themes falls off.

Yet our emotional bond to *unfinished* themes of life continues to remain active *even if we reject* their transfer into activity. Without manifesting them in activity our life will continue to revolve around these unfinished themes - whether we like it or not.

When we seriously begin to direct our activities towards inner growth, we rapidly become able to arrange our actions so intelligently that unwanted themes of life either fall away or are completed in their shortest pos-

sible time.¹ Insights into more comprehensive levels of consciousness will then rise automatically.

Liberation (*moksa*) is the full unfoldment of all our hidden abilities. These abilities, which all of us always carry within us, open such breathtaking breadth and depth of comprehension, love, power and the experience and capacity of happiness, our Western culture has no concept to match. We reach liberation when all elements that blocked the unrestricted operation of our consciousness have fallen away. Only when these blocks are fundamentally removed, do we gain access to this highest status of our life.

The Tattvarthasutra offers us a method with which to realize this highest status of our potential. It contains a practical key that systematically opens the hidden dimensions of our consciousness. This key is not shrouded in obscure language or requires the exercise of mystic techniques, *it simply interprets life from a new angle*. Yet this new angle enables us to arrange the components of our daily life in such a way that more expansive insights will rise automatically.

When we put this method into practice, we enter a path to total self-determination and to the attainment of abilities we usually assign only to supernatural beings. Yet we do not reach this high objective through the blessings of any god, through esoteric powers or by following any guru. The method described in the Tattvarthasutra gradually dissolves - in step with our own efforts - all obstructions that limit our consciousness.

¹ The chapter 'FIVE FREEDOMS' introduces the main mechanisms that assist this process. KARMA - THE MECHANISM (also by Hermann Kuhn) explains the practical application of this knowledge in daily life.

The sutra mentions three elements. Yet this does not mean that each element would constitute a path all by itself. The text clarifies that only the combined application of all three factors:

- the intuitive notion how to find the one path that will optimally unfold higher insight and experience within us,
- our conscious understanding of the mechanisms that cause this unfolding of consciousness and
- our consequent application of all the abilities and knowledge we gained by this process in action

will open the dormant levels of consciousness that far exceed all Western imagination.

S U T R A 2

तत्त्वार्थश्रद्धानं सम्यग्दर्शनम् ॥ २ ॥

Tattvarthashraddhana samyagdarshanam (2)

Confidence in the purpose of reality is the origin of our notion of growth (*samyag darshana*). (2)

The striving for fulfillment (manifestation, realization) of all the values and ideas we feel deep inside us, is one of the fundamental characteristics of our existence.

It is the purpose of reality to enable the realization of all these ideas, ideals, values and concepts. The purpose of reality is a growth-process in which our inner striving for these values becomes physical experience.

One of the essential characteristics of this process is to always break up static situations that restrict our growth². This mechanism provokes us to open up to ever new experiences and to unfold an ever growing, more comprehensive understanding of reality.

It is *not* the main purpose of our reality to give permanence to material components that may accompany our actions, but to stimulate us to always seek out *new* fields of experience. Whatever - positive or negative - circumstances we find ourselves in will lose their importance as soon as we gained optimal insight from them. When this happens, they cease to capture our interest and fall off automatically.³

Once we clearly understand this basic function of our reality, we may easily direct our attention and energy towards the growth-process instead of striving for an illusionary and fleeting stability in our material environment. This understanding enables us to interpret the purpose of any change within us or outside as an alignment towards something

² and also to stall actions that are detrimental to our development

³ This is the reason why the accumulation of material objects - as it is propagated by the modern media - hardly ever produces the promised permanent satisfaction. After the initial joy of buying something wears off, we often are disappointed how little the purchase of a new thing does effect our happiness. All too soon a feeling of unfulfilled desire prompts us to again crave new experiences and objects.

People able to fulfill all their material desires, but lacking any orientation beyond matter, often lose themselves in activities that have no effect on their development (i.e. the unshackled accumulation of material objects or money, charitable activities without real inner engagement, participation in social circles that are directed towards superficialities etc.). The feeling of boredom and meaninglessness of material existence that often surrounds this type of people is an excellent proof that reality is directed towards inner growth and not towards the stability of our outer environment.

new, even if these changes may initially cause disorientation and confusion.

Confidence in the purpose of reality is the fundamental conviction that *all* events we confront in our present state of corporeal existence have only the purpose to make us conscious of our immense potential abilities, so we may explore them, understand them and use them for our further growth.

Confidence in the purpose of reality is the fundamental conviction that the immense potential abilities we feel within us will become real. It means to direct our attention towards the experience of higher states of consciousness - irrespective how fleeting they may appear initially - and then to actively work on their unfoldment and stabilization.

This confidence is not brought about by blind faith or purely intellectual understanding, but only by us *experiencing* it on a personal level.

A skeptical attitude during our first experimenting with this concept does not obstruct the process. Positive results usually manifest after only a short time, even if not every single effort in this direction does yield results. The growing freedom from events we thought inevitable before, independence from restrictive persons or circumstances and the additional energy and inspiration available for our development are the best motivation for a continued engagement in this direction of increasing self-determination.

Any obstacles we confront on this path are caused by our very own emotions, prejudice and bias. The mechanisms that give rise to these obstacles and their dissolution cannot be described with adequate thoroughness in this context. The book KARMA - THE MECHANISM deals more extensively with this subject.

Confidence in the purpose of reality (*samyag darshana*) and our notion of growth - the practical expression of this trust - unfolds in two stages.

- The first stage is still deeply marked by the physical reality that almost hypnotically confines our consciousness to the lower states of development⁴ (*gunasthana*). Here we experience the notion of growth mainly as the path that leads out of our hypnotic fascination with matter.

The notion is the *counterweight* to all the objects and environments we experience while in these states. It appears to us like a tunnel that on our way to higher levels leads through an increasingly absurd world⁵. Since this absurd world sometimes causes fear, we hold fast onto our path like to a lifeline.

Yet there is growing understanding of the confused happenings we observe around us. Almost automatically a feeling of loving compassion for all those who still experience this confused world without real orientation begins to arise within us. The impulse to lead these others out of their daze is another characteristic of this first stage of our notion of growth.

- Once we reach the second stage of *samyag darshana* we step out of the narrow tunnel the physical reality had spun around our consciousness. Our orientation shifts from leaving confining emotional and material circumstances to attaining and experiencing the fantastic reality we now feel unfolding within us.

⁴ see '14 STAGES OF DEVELOPMENT' in THE APPLICATION

⁵ It is our own world that appears so unfamiliar to us, because we now perceive it from a new, distanced perspective.

Before us stretches the real expanse of our consciousness. We begin to perceive its infinite possibilities and explore this potential with an assuredness never before experienced. At this very moment we realize that all events we ever confronted led us to exactly this exulted point. From here onwards we pursue our path in unshakable certainty that everything ever happening to us will only support the further unfoldment of our abilities.

This second type of *samyag darshana* arises from the tenth state of development (*gunasthana*) onward. Its unfoldment now is inspired by the ever increasing clarity of our consciousness only.

S U T R A 3

तन्निसर्गादधिगमाद्वा ॥ ३ ॥

Tannisargadadhigamadva (3)

Confidence in the purpose of reality and the notion of growth (*samyag darshana*) arise

- through intuition (*nisarga*) or
- by the acquisition of a special type of knowledge (*adhigama*). (3)

Intuition that causes our notion of growth to rise within us (*nisarga*) has an entirely different character than normal intuition.

Normal intuition is often accompanied by conflicting emotions: Many of our premonitions disagree with our ideas how situations or events should happen. Though we might

have a bad gut feeling, we are usually unwilling to fundamentally reconsider all our planning or opinions only because of some vague foreboding. Taking recourse in our intellect, we try to pacify our heart by rejecting this kind of ominous intuition as unfounded and illogical.

This conflict between intellect and emotion characterizes our normal intuition: we never know if we should follow it or not, - too often we have been led astray. But irrespective of how often our intuition has been right, - feelings of doubt and insecurity accompany this process and will continue to accompany it in the future.

Intuition that causes our notion of growth (*samyag darshana*) to rise differs fundamentally from the uncertain premonitions mentioned above.

At the rising of our notion of growth we feel neither doubt nor hesitancy. We experience a sudden understanding, a crystal-like recognition of the blockages that only a second ago obscured our consciousness. It feels as if we finally step into the light, are finally able to see clearly. An immense freedom caused by the dissolution of the blockages is flooding us, - an elation always accompanied by insights into a level of understanding that eluded us before.

Any problem that previously overwhelmed our emotions and our consciousness has disappeared. It became irrelevant as soon as we reached the new level of understanding. Our new understanding separates us from the one-sided perspective that made the problem appear insurmountable. Though none of the physical circumstances might have changed, our disposition is fundamentally altered. We are able to make out a path to a solution; an emotional load falls off our heart and we start feeling the elation mentioned

above. Depending on the intensity of the problem this elation may last shorter or longer.

Yet it is not always a blockage or a problem that may cause this kind of intuition. Our notion of growth also becomes active when we completed a certain level of experience and our vision becomes free to discover new fields. This is experienced as an inner certainty that the new level that is just about to unfold will lead to further growth.

The acquisition of knowledge that causes our notion of growth to arise (*adhigama*) produces a similarly inspiring effect. It differs fundamentally from the learning of formal contents we generally associate with the term 'acquisition of knowledge'.

When we read or hear descriptions how to expand our consciousness, we often reach a state of dynamic understanding where our mind and feelings suddenly experience an intuitive re-arrangement of thoughts and emotions.

This effect may also happen when we are tutored by someone more advanced on this path. Sometimes their mere presence may be sufficient to produce this effect.

The decisive factor in this process is the energy with which *we* are searching for this special knowledge and how much effort we direct towards understanding it. The more intensely and consciously we strive for this objective, the faster insights into new levels of consciousness will open up to us.

Our notion of growth may arise through intuition *as well as* through the acquisition of knowledge. *Both paths have the same rank*; both equally open up access to this subtle

ability and perception; both produce the same dynamic stimulation of our development⁶.

This means that at all times people were able to find their path to liberation intuitively, without ever getting access to scriptures dealing with this type of knowledge. The Tattvarthasutra states explicitly that the development of consciousness is independent of any formal knowledge - and this consequently also includes the information contained in the Tattvarthasutra. This emphasizes that the real key to higher stages of consciousness is our own intuitive comprehension, - and that everyone heading in this direction is capable of unfolding this comprehension from within himself in a self-sufficient way at any time he decides to do so.

* * *

Confidence in the purpose of reality is the key to liberation. But what is reality?

Many of today's people would probably spontaneously reply: 'Reality? That's - working, eating, drinking, sleeping, recreation, family, friends, television and vacations. Why this question?'

⁶ The one and only cause for the unfoldment of *samyag darshana* is the removal of inner blocks that prevent us from perceiving this special ability. As soon as these obstacles are removed, we spontaneously gain access to this intuitive key for inner growth. It is entirely irrelevant whether the removal of the obstacles is generated from within ourselves (by intuition) or has been triggered by outside factors (instruction by others, the study of corresponding knowledge etc.).

Both factors are independent of each other, - both may appear simultaneously. Since both produce the same result, it is irrelevant which of them appears first.

And they are perfectly right: What they describe is their reality. It is one of the many possible answers.

Yet what about the following situation?

Every second billions and billions of stimuli meet our senses - the color and structure of the walls, the hardness of the chair we are sitting on, the different scents we smell, the sounds we hear around us, the dry taste in our mouth, some vague uncomfortable sensation inside our body, worries and thoughts that zip through our mind, some unrest, emotion so fleeting that we are unable to assign it to any concrete experience - all this and much more reaches our inner and outer sense-organs. And how do we react to this? We close out this whole universe and direct our entire attention towards the rows of black letters on the white paper in front of us - and actually not even towards the printed words, but to the meaning that kind of surfs on top of the black letters and just happens to stimulate our mind.

So now where is our reality of working, eating, drinking, sleeping, etc.?

Out of the billions of impulses presented to us second after second, we select a minute amount of material that we allow to get through to us, to our awareness. We couldn't possibly attend to all the rest because it would overwhelm our consciousness and block us completely. We have to select. And this selection-process is so subtle, so automatic that we hardly ever notice it. Only sometimes, when we abruptly come out of deep concentration, we become aware of how much of our surroundings we had closed out.

Now, we might think that this type of selection is something we handle quite well, for example when we decide to read a book, to drive a car or to attend a lecture, - these are all activities that require a certain attention, a certain presence of mind.

But let's see what our consciousness is doing with us and how little we control this process.

How often while reading a book did we have to go over one particular paragraph again and again because our attention was drifting to some other subject? We *wanted* to read, but our selection process directed our attention towards something entirely different. Certainly, - the words reached our eyes, but they didn't get through to our awareness. Something was closing the book to our attention, even though we didn't want to.

How often are we driving a car with our thoughts here, there, anywhere, but definitely not on the road? Did we ever ask ourselves who actually is steering the car?

How often did we attend lectures - just remember school, - and our awareness wandered far from what the speaker was presenting? - Who or what made us leave the speaker's words and let us drift into a different world? It certainly wasn't something we controlled.

And these are only rather trivial examples. How often did we reject our intuition though it was yelling at us and later proved, it was dead right? How often did we follow our intuition? But who or what made that pro or con decision in each single instance?

What makes us draw back from risks, - or go for it? What motivates us to do things we do not want to do? What makes us say a glass is half full as do the optimists, or half empty, as do the pessimists? Who or what made all these myriad decisions that brought us to our present state? - Was it really the 'I' we seem so familiar with?

But what about those two, three important decisions in our life where we **knowingly** chose one particular path over so many others, - did we really have as much control as we

thought we did? Let's just look at the motive that was inside us at the time of decision, the real motive we wouldn't dare tell others, the real motive that was the true emotional cause for our determination to go for a career, an adventure, a partner, for security, responsibility, for challenge or boredom.

Let's just once - briefly - forget all those nice official reasons that so perfectly rationalize our decisions and let's look a little deeper than might be comfortable.

Was it the desire to impress the father - to gain his attention, his love, his respect, his admiration? Or was it the mother, the elder brother, the friend, or the old enemy? Was it the fear of poverty, destruction, of loneliness, of losing something? Was it the hope to meet girls, boys, others, because we had only little opportunity for that before? Was it the enthusiasm to achieve a certain goal - and who or what had caused that enthusiasm? Or did we only want to show others how brave we could be? -

Were we really aware of all this when we made these important decisions? Were we really clear about everything that went on beneath the polished surface?

No, let's not fool ourselves, - it's not us who are in command of selecting, it's the selection process that controls us. We are ruled by some unknown mechanism that puts thoughts, meanings, emotions and impulses for actions into our consciousness. And we can only follow. We have no alternative, no concept how life could be without this automatic mechanism, can not observe this process from any outside point of view. - We have no idea what at some certain times presents us with ever the same painful events that tear up our insides again and again.

None of the modern material concepts of this world offer information about this mechanism. But reality is far *more*

than erratic swirling matter as Western science assumes. Our reality - i.e. that what we individually experience within ourselves and outside of us - is subject to far more influences than all the laws of matter might ever describe.

So - if we want to free ourselves from uncomfortable circumstances, if we want to steer our life on our own, then it is worth the effort to find out what reality is, - to find out what really determines our life. Then we need to find out what controls our selection process and how to take charge of our life again.

And if we feel uncomfortable within the limits of our life and want to break out, then it is worthwhile to ask where we find new, undiscovered levels of consciousness, - and let their exploration become the most fascinating adventure of our life.

Because of all these practical reasons, and not for any theoretical pondering, the next sutra describes reality.

S U T R A 4

जीवाऽजीवास्रवबन्धसंवरनिर्जरामोक्षास्तत्त्वम् ॥ ४ ॥

Jivajivasrava bandha sanvara nirjara moksastattvam (4)

- The individual impulse of life - 'that what lives in a living being' (*jiva*)
- the elements that do not possess consciousness (*ajiva*)
- the mechanism by which a living being attracts karmic matter (*asrava*)

- the **binding** of karmic matter to a living being (*bandha*)
 - the **termination** of the process that binds karmic matter to a living being (*samvara*)
 - the **separation** of karmic matter from a living being (*nirjara*) and
 - the **liberation** of a living being from all influences that limit his innate qualities and abilities (*moksa*)
- are reality. (4)

At first sight some of the components listed may look quite unfamiliar. Yet this description covers not only our familiar Western concept of reality where matter presently plays a central role, but also includes all mechanisms that make us really experience life.

How little our Western, matter-oriented concept can guide us, always becomes apparent when we crave concrete, practical orientation. Once life confronts us with grave immediate and individual problems, all scientific descriptions of a material, external universe are of no help because they do not cover any of our emotions, our motivations and all that really moves us inside.

The components listed in the sutra include far more than only the physical building blocks of our reality. They also describe the mechanisms that govern our actions, the amount of energy at our disposal, our feeling and direction of life, our thinking and our emotions, - irrespective if they effect us in a direct or indirect way. The power and practicability of this description enable us to steer our life far more efficiently then ever before and open our awareness to previously unknown activities of our consciousness.

The first two components of reality look familiar: Our universe contains bodies and things that can be perceived by our senses. These bodies and things are either endowed with consciousness or not. The Jains call the essence of consciousness *jiva* and define it as 'That what is alive in a living being'. All other elements⁷ that do not possess consciousness are called *ajiva* (literally non-living).

- **The individual impulse of life** (*jiva*) is consciousness.

It is easy to describe consciousness, even if there seems to exist a bewildering number of concepts for it. Consciousness is the foundation that must be present before the experience of things, relationships and emotions. All thoughts, all states like joy, pain etc. need a center, a subject, a carrier to whom they belong and who experiences them. In short: A feeling necessarily needs a being that feels. Insights and emotions cannot exist in nothingness, nor can intention or thinking arise from nothing.⁸

⁷ The term 'element' shall emphasize that these constitute original forms of reality that cannot be divided into even more basic parts.

⁸ The current idea that life was generated by the mixing of material substances in the surf of the oceans is barely one-hundred years old. Though entirely unproven, this grotesque hypothesis is surprisingly widely believed in.

It basically supposes that chaotically whirling matter would generate a living organism that in an inexplicable manner 'emanates' consciousness like the liver secretes bile. Consciousness is then thought to be an ether-like, subtle matter that radiates out from the brain and illuminates a certain scene. What the hypothesis does not take into consideration is that there is still the need of a spectator, of someone who really observes the scene 'illuminated' by the hypothetical ether-like substance.

Yet this pseudo-material idea fails to explain even simple phenomena like memory, intuition and emotions. It totally ignores intuitive insights into abilities and knowledge that could not possibly have been acquired or trained during the present life (examples are

The individual impulse of life - *jiva* - our very consciousness - possesses a number of extraordinary abilities of which we presently know and use only a small part.

Knowledge is one of the most significant of these qualities. It gives us the initial key to the unknown part of our consciousness. Therefore the first chapter of the Tattvarthasutra focuses primarily on this theme.

In the Western hemisphere of the world we usually regard knowledge as the constantly growing mass of external information. The sheer volume of this data alone seems to make any comprehensive cognition impossible.

But this type of external information is not what the Jains conceive as knowledge.

The Jains regard knowledge as the basic nature of our consciousness. They consider knowledge such a fundamental and inseparable feature of individual consciousness that it encompasses the source and the totality of all knowledge within itself.

All external knowledge recorded in books or other storage media has no impact on us as long as we do not actively integrate it into our consciousness. All formal

prodigies like Mozart, Blaise Pascal, Yehudi Menuhin etc., whose extraordinary abilities could not have been gained by training and cannot be explained by mere talent). For all this there must exist a basis of individuality that continues during time and is independent of material factors.

It is certainly everybody's own choice to believe in a model of the world that assumes that matter is the central governing factor of the universe. Yet this model basically concludes that the continuation of the species may be the only possible value of life - and in the long run even this would prove insignificant. Those who believe in this speculative idea block all search for and access to a purpose of life beyond this materialistic model.

learning remains without effect as long as we do not transform it into individual experience.

Only when we apply knowledge to expand our range of experience, - i.e. when we use it to understand more of the events around us and to reflect and change our own activities and attitudes, - then only knowledge becomes an integrated part of our life. We then stop considering it as something new or special, but apply it without being particularly aware of it most of the time. Without this integration into individual consciousness and experience, knowledge does not become lively, but remains segregated from our life.

The Jains regard knowledge that is relevant for life as an individual, subjective and active experience of consciousness. The mass of external information that the West interprets as knowledge is at best raw material that needs to be transformed into lively, active knowledge by individual experience before it can become relevant to us.

But the Jains go far beyond regarding knowledge as an integral feature of our consciousness. To them every individual manifestation of consciousness (i.e. every living being) carries ALL knowledge that can possibly be known always within.

Wherever we are, the entirety of all knowledge is always with us. The fact that we do not perceive this at present, is caused by our own prejudices, errors, misconceptions and erroneous beliefs what knowledge is all about and how it is gained - i.e. by karmic mechanisms that block our very access to knowledge. Once we remove these blocks, our awareness begins to reach into regions previously inaccessible. Any event at any location may then make us aware of the new areas now available to us.

We do not need to visit special locations to 'receive' knowledge or to wait till we are in possession of 'better' insight. The path to liberation is wide open to everyone at any place and at all times. If we want to gain more comprehensive understanding and ultimately liberation, we only need to secure access to the complete treasure-trove of knowledge readily available within us.

How revolutionary this concept is becomes apparent when we consider the absolute independence we gain by it. Since all knowledge already exists within us, we do not need anyone - no church, no guru, no organization of any kind - to give or withhold knowledge. We only need to find the path to activate and actively perceive what already exists within us.

We all have *intuitive* access to this path. It is open for everyone without the study of any kind of formal knowledge.

Yet there exist external sources which offer special information that helps us to become aware of the mechanics that lead to the experience of higher levels of consciousness: These are the descriptions of those who successfully completed the path to liberation.⁹

These reports discriminate 14 stages (*gunasthanas*) human beings experience on their path to liberation. Each of these stages is characterized by the type of karma manifesting therein (i.e. the action-patterns and psychic dispositions we encounter), the time spent in a particular stage, the direction in which we pass through and how

⁹ It is of little use to expect guidance from people or institutions who proclaim higher levels of consciousness impossible, while principally rejecting to even research this field.

To the degree we accept this prejudice, we block our very own access to new levels of consciousness.

much our personal development is stimulated. Because of these differing features each stage has a unique feeling and significance.

By knowing which stage we presently experience and its features and mechanisms, we can deal far more efficiently with the respective themes of life. This prevents us from wasting time and energy on efforts that may succeed only on higher stages.¹⁰

It is not necessary to believe that higher levels of consciousness can be experienced. A neutral, inquisitive attitude and a certain eagerness for experimenting is entirely sufficient for our first steps in this direction. When we experience first results - greater clarity of perception, faster identification of limiting concepts and prejudices, etc. - we receive enough confirmation to trust further directions of this kind.

Yet knowledge is not the only feature of *jiva* - our consciousness. According to the Jains each one of us - i.e. each living being - carries a potential within that encompasses a breathtaking width and depth of abilities, love, knowledge, power and the experience of happiness. Each one of us is able to consciously develop all this potential at any time we like. Once we start out on this path, it is only a question of time until this potential begins to become our real experience.

- **The elements that do not possess consciousness** (*ajiva*) constitute the (material) environment of our consciousness (*jiva*). This is matter, space, time and the media that support movement and rest.

¹⁰ The chapter '14 STAGES OF DEVELOPMENT' - *gunasthana*' introduces these stages in more detail.

- Matter (*pudgala*) - is well known to us. It is the material substance of all kinds of bodies, constantly moving because of its inherent qualities of attraction and repulsion and composed of energetic particles of extremely small dimensions.

Yet over and above that the Jains describe more subtle forms of matter that are unknown to present-day science.

- Space (*akasha*) - The Jains use the unit *pradesha* (generally translated as 'spacepoint') to describe the dimensions of space. *pradesha* denotes the 'smallest possible expansion of the element space'¹¹. Yet other elements (e.g. matter) have forms that can be far subtler than the element space and therefore much smaller than a spacepoint.

According to the Jains space can neither expand nor contract. Its primary purpose is to enable the existence and the expansion and contraction of the other elements.

- Time (*kala*). The Jains see time from two different perspectives:

From the perspective of the practical, day to day usage (*vyavahara-naya*) time is partitioned into present, past and future. Time is the medium that allows the other elements to exist in continuity and to undergo changes during the manifestation of their characteristics. Time supports the movement of the ele-

¹¹ *pradesha* is defined as the space that is taken up by an indivisible elementary particle (*paramanu*). According to its definition this elementary particle is far smaller than an atom.

ments and in this context enables the experience of consecutive events.

From the perspective of the all-comprehensive underlying reality (*nischaya-naya*) time exists as an eternal present. It does not extend into future or past, which are basically only limiting concepts we project onto time. From this perspective time exists in every spacepoint (*pradesha*), yet has no spatial dimension on its own and does not react or combine with other units of time or any of the other elements.

- The medium that supports movement (*dharmā*), may appear strange at first, but is easily illustrated by the following analogy: Water is the medium that supports the movement of fishes, but in itself is not their movement.
- The medium that supports rest (*adharma*) is equally illustrated by an analogy: It is pictured as the shadow of a tree that invites for a rest beneath it, but in itself is not this rest.

Chapter 5 of the Tattvarthasutra contains an extensive description of the non-living (*ajiva*) elements. Therefore their characteristics are not elaborated here.

Matter, space and time are the only three elements Western science is concerned about at present.¹² Science

¹² Though there are branches of science that are interested in the mechanisms of learning, sense-perception and motivation, modern psychology is mainly content to collect statistical data about behavior and perception to predict future behavior (often for the purpose of commercial advertisement and the promotion of products). Yet this empirical endeavor does not represent an independent concept that would go beyond the matter-oriented theory of evolution.

limits itself mainly to researching and describing our material environment. It directs the major part of its efforts to structure this environment in the best possible way according to its concepts. Yet the Western scientific model has no idea in which direction we may develop *after* we achieve optimal material comfort.

The elements *jiva* (consciousness) and *ajiva* (the non-living elements) constitute the universe. If they existed separate from each other, no further description would be necessary.

Yet within us and in our environment we constantly observe interactions between consciousness and the non-living elements. These interactions and the results they produce are therefore also an essential part of our reality. They cannot adequately be described by the elements *jiva* (consciousness) and *ajiva* (matter, space, etc.) *alone*. A complete description of reality therefore also needs to state:

- how consciousness (*jiva*) attracts matter etc. (*ajiva*) to itself,
- how this attraction develops into the firm bond (attachment) between consciousness and matter etc. that we constantly observe in the world,
- what ends the growing of this bond, so that it does not increase infinitely,
- what separates consciousness from matter etc. and
- what we experience when we free our consciousness from all attachment to matter, space, time, etc..

The basic component that connects all these five mechanisms is action - our very own day-to-day activities.

Yet by action the Tattvarthasutra does not only mean the movement of living beings or matter, but also some kind of *'interactive field'* that all action creates inside and around living beings. This 'interactive field' is shaped by our intentions, motives, desires and the emotional content and 'drive' with which we conduct our individual actions.

The Tattvarthasutra unites all mechanisms that influence this interactive field under the heading *'karma'*.

Now, in the last twenty years the word 'Karma' acquired a somewhat dubious meaning in the Western hemisphere. It is usually attributed with a nebulous feeling of revenge of past actions, or guilt stored for future incarnations and often serves as a convenient justification of bad luck or inadequate planning.

Nevertheless - the fact that this word has been misunderstood and misused in the West has nothing to do with the validity, clarity and impact of the original concept of karma as the ancient Indian scripture of the Tattvarthasutra describes it.

This ancient Indian concept has *no intention whatsoever* to chain us to events of former incarnations as the vague Western understanding falsely assumes. And - in refreshing contrast to many esoteric assumptions - the karmic mechanisms neither contain any mystery or secrets, nor need they be a negative load on our life.

The striving for fulfillment (manifestation, realization) of values and ideas originating deep within us, is one of the fundamental characteristics of our existence. We *want* our actions to bear fruits, we want to *experience* these fruits and we usually have quite real ideas, what these fruits should look like. When we e.g. strive to acquire a special, uncommon ability, we generally have a clear picture of the rewards we intend to reap - more social recognition, more con-

trol over our life, more money etc. The emotional power with which we pursue our ideas and desires acts like a magnet that attracts all components necessary for the fulfillment of these ideas.

Karma is the mechanism that enables this process to happen. Karma¹³ is nothing other than the mechanism that makes us thoroughly experience the themes of our life until we gained optimal knowledge from them and until our emotional attachment to these themes falls off.

What we experience is basically a neutral growth-process that we need not interpret in a negative way. The better we understand how this process works, the less we feel victimized by it. The more we can control it and the faster we achieve the results we desire, the less we will regard this mechanism as obstructive.

After describing consciousness (*jiva*) and the environment it is embedded in - the non-living elements (*ajiva*) - the sutra therefore lists the mechanisms that control our actions, - i.e. how our interactive karmic field works and how we can influence and dissolve it.

¹³ The best key to understanding the original concept of karma provides the word itself. 'Karma' means 'action' - and nothing other than 'action happening in the present'.

The Tattvarthasutra clarifies that our present individual karmic field always holds the entire actualized status of all our karma. It also states that the character and inclination of all our karma can be changed at any given moment and entirely at our own discretion. There just doesn't exist a shadowy 'mountain of karma' in which supposedly all our past actions are stored.

True, the contents of our interactive karmic field have been shaped by (previous) activities - as all our life is, - but this does not mean that it contains memories of all the details of (previous) actions. The field only holds the directions in which we actively move (our desires and motives) and the intensity and the emotional thrust with which we endow our actions to reach objectives.

The primary purpose of this description is to make us aware of the mechanisms that govern our actions. Once we know them, we will be able to employ them far more consciously and effectively.

Yet over and above that, the *sequence* of the described mechanisms makes us recognize a more fundamental dynamism that ultimately directs all our action towards the liberation from karmic obstructions.

- **The mechanism by which a living being attracts karmic matter** (*asrava*). These are the activities of body, speech and mind. Our own actions, words and thinking are the very origin of the attraction between our consciousness (*jiva*) and non-living - karmic - matter (*ajiva*).

This attraction to karma is what enables us to experience the state of embodiment in the first place. As long as we do not react to this attraction in a certain emotional way, it does not lead to a stronger *bond* to karma.

The tendency of our consciousness to experience embodiment is one of the foundations of our life. As long as this tendency exists, we do have the right to influence this state in such a way that we can manifest the values, ideals, and concepts we feel deeply within us.

At the very heart of each of our ideals there always is a positive impulse. At our very core we never strive for destruction, but always for expansion, for ways to manifest the greatness we feel deep within us.

We experience fulfillment when we accept the challenge to manifest our ideals of expansion within the framework of possibilities that the state of embodiment offers us.

Yet all our ideals, values and intentions, - as high as they might be, - never justify all the means used for their achievement. Each single step towards an ideal needs to do full justice to its core. Each action that does not correspond to our original aspirations makes us deviate from the fundamental direction in which we move.

All obstacles, opposition and problems we encounter during the realization of our ideas, serve only to correct our flawed concepts of reality and to break up situations in which we got trapped. It is our own will and our own consciousness that causes both these - positive as well as negative - experiences.

There is no reason to regard our body and its experiences as something base, bad or less evolved, as many religions do. And it is of no use to regard as valid only those activities that are directed towards spiritual goals.

The desire to turn towards new, more comprehensive, 'higher' levels of existence arises automatically when we completed the themes of the stage of development we presently reside in.¹⁴ As long as this has not happened yet, we should experience our bodily life without reserve. Any concept that we might accumulate guilt and sin by this is entirely without basis.

Real growth is caused - irrespective of any concepts we might believe in - always and exclusively by the removal of karmic blocks, never by reaching a certain 'final' material status.

¹⁴ Persistent feelings of boredom and general discontent are usually indications that our consciousness is searching for new levels of experience.

Yet real growth - i.e. the fundamental and steady expansion of our range of experience - can only take place, if we do not restrict our consciousness by binding new karma. Freedom from karmic attachment is ensured if we orient the actions we undertake to realize our ideals and values along the 'Five Freedoms' described in THE APPLI-CATION.

Life without action is no valid alternative for us, because we then could not release our existing karmic matter - i.e. our emotional attachment to certain themes of life - through action. Life without action would cement our present karmic state and also our current stage of development (*gunasthana*) into eternal permanence.

- The binding of karmic matter to a living being (bandha).

Karma is not an inaccessible, mystic force whose inexplicable mercy we are subjected to. Karma is a kind of (subtle) matter that is present everywhere in the cosmos and differs fundamentally from the inherent nature of our consciousness (*jiva*).

Through ignorance, error, skepticism and strong negative emotions we attach this type of subtle matter to our consciousness. Though karmic matter does not possess consciousness, it has the characteristic to bind karmic mechanisms to our life. It works in a similar way as the particles of our body that bind us to the material world which surrounds us in the waking state.

The emotional force with which we pursue our ideas and desires determines the strength and duration of the bond. The type of activity we perform at the time of

bonding determines in which area of life karma will manifest upon its activation.

It is important to understand that we ourselves determine which themes of life we feel so strongly attracted to. It is nothing other than our own positive or negative emotional engagement that programs us to experience these themes again and again. Karmic matter is only the carrier-substance that allows this process to manifest in physical reality.

- **The termination of the process that binds karmic matter to a living being** (*samvara*) stops the attachment of new karmic matter to our consciousness.

The intake of new karma into our interactive karmic field is the main cause for our confrontation with ever the same - uncomfortable - situations. As long as we are unaware of this mechanism, we may accumulate new karma even if it is against all our intentions and our will.

The most important - and the simplest - method to stop this cycle is to prevent the bonding of new karma (*samvara*). The process takes two steps:

- Step one is our decision to stop all activities that cause the binding of new karma (i.e. the resolve to end ignorance, error, skepticism, intense negative emotions, laziness, etc).
- Step two is the actual dissolution of our attachment to karmic matter. This happens automatically when we put the decision taken in step one into action.

If we want to prevent new bonds, we need to direct our attention to our very initial attraction to karma (*asrava*). This is a highly sensitive point: All initial attraction to karma stimulates us with (new) activity. At this particu-

lar point in time we often can freely decide how to respond to this stimulation. As long as we feel no emotional reaction to an event, no new karma is bound. If at this very moment we recall our decision to stop the (beginning of a new) karmic process, and act accordingly, e.g. with equanimity and patience or by consciously deciding to follow a different (positive) line of thought, emotion or action, we attract no new karmic matter. At exactly this time when everything is still open, we have the power to end unwanted karmic processes.¹⁵

Since we continually manifest part of our existing karma (and thereby dissolve its attachment to our consciousness) the mass of karmic molecules in our interactive karmic field will inevitably diminish once we stop binding new karmic matter.

- **The separation of karmic matter from a living being** (*nirjara*) happens automatically when karma becomes active (when it manifests).

The activation of karma converts its latent energy into physical form. The activation dissolves the bond between

¹⁵ A good example for this mechanism is the irritation we always feel when a particular person is present. Yet however strong our reaction may be, whenever we meet this person, there often is a brief initial period during which we are not yet irritated. If we take this (brief) opportunity *not* to re-enforce our sensitivity, but decide instead to maintain distance, equanimity and peace of mind, the chances are great that our irritation will either not rise during this meeting or at least be significantly less intense.

For future encounters we then have established a pattern of behavior that will eventually free us from our previous involuntary reaction. Certainly, it takes energy to take this path, - more energy than just letting us fall into the familiar irritation, - but this is a small price to pay for freeing our consciousness from an automatic reaction that in the long run will cost us far more energy.

our consciousness and the respective karmic molecules. After its activation karma ceases to influence our life.

This process happens all the time without us being much aware of it. Our attachment to the features of our physical environment for example runs on such a fundamental level that we generally regard it as a self-understood property of our life.¹⁶ Only when we begin to dissolve this deep-rooted bond (from the sixth stage of development onwards) do we notice that our present environment is *not* a primary feature of the universe but a result of our emotional (karmic) attachment to a certain limited range of interactions between matter, time, space, movement and rest.

In the lower stages of development we tend to notice the separation of karmic matter from our consciousness only when they trigger strong desire or strong rejection within us. Though this is only a small part of all ongoing karmic processes, it nevertheless is the one part we can influence most easily. The more we progress in our devel-

¹⁶ This means our emotional attachment to the perception of this world e.g. as three-dimensional, as subject to gravity (as our feet resting on the ground), as matter being relatively stable, as thoughts not manifesting without us putting effort into them, as nature being green in its phase of growth, etc.

Though these perceptions appear so normal that we hardly ever think about them, they nevertheless are quite different to what we experience in our dreams. In our dreams we take it as nothing special when we fly through the air, when our thoughts manifest or change material objects instantly, when we perceive us as the center of multidimensional perceptions, when nature appears as a side-show that runs in the background only, etc.

Though there is a present trend to regard dreams as rather irrelevant mirages, we nevertheless experience them as vividly as our current world once our consciousness immerses in them. This demonstrates that our consciousness activates quite different modes for perceiving the world it focuses on.

opment, the more we become capable of accessing also the subtler levels of karma that impede the full unfoldment of our consciousness.

Our attachment to karma is dissolved,

- 1 - in the natural sequence of events, either as soon as the conditions for an activation occur, or - if this does not happen - at the end of the maximum period for which a particular type of karma can be bound to a living being. In this natural sequence of events a long time may pass between the original binding of karma and its final dissolution.
- 2 - when we force its activation, i.e., when we intentionally create the conditions that stimulate a karmic activation. This mechanism can reduce our amount of karma (i.e. the amount of our unresolved themes of life) significantly faster.

- **The liberation of a living being from all influences that limits his innate qualities and abilities** (*moksa*) opens access to the highest status of our potential. Once we achieve this, we experience a state of realization that possesses such breathtaking depth and broadness (in love, knowledge, power, abilities and the experience of happiness) the Western culture has no concept to match.

This high goal is not reached by mystical powers or the blessings of supernatural beings, but only by a self-determined individual path on which we dissolve our attachment to all elements that block the unrestricted use of our consciousness. Once these blocks are fully removed, we automatically gain access to this highest state of our consciousness.

S U T R A 5

नामस्थापनाद्रव्यभावतस्तन्नायासः ॥ ५ ॥

Nama sthapana dravya bhavatas tanniyasah (5)

We experience reality (consciousness, matter, time, etc.) on four different planes:

- on the plane of articulation - where we use names and terms for the purpose of communication and social mechanisms (*nama*)
- on the plane of mental structure - where we form our individual reality (*sthapana*)
- on the plane of all potentially possible features of the elements - this constitutes the basis for the identical perception of reality by different people (*dravya*) and
- on the plane of present manifestation - where individual features of the elements (or a combination of them) manifest in the actual present (*bhava*). (5)

We tend to regard reality as one holistic experience. Though we usually assign our themes of life to certain brackets - work, home, leisure, study, vacation etc. - we nevertheless regard these as different parts of one fundamental whole that always functions in the same way, no matter what particular activity we are engaged in.

Yet there exist four different planes on which we experience reality. These four planes function in distinctly different ways. As long as we are unaware of their characteristics, we tend to confuse them. So if we want to terminate unwanted themes of life, access more fascinating dimen-

sions of our consciousness or change the general direction into which we are moving, we need to become aware of the very mechanisms that influence us. By knowing their respective characteristics we then can easily identify and employ the types of actions or modifications that will produce the changes we desire.

Once we stop confusing the different planes, we cease to apply mechanisms to planes on which they do not work. Confusing the planes is one of the main causes of our misunderstanding of the world's mechanisms. It effectively retains us on the lower stages of development (*gunasthana*).

We e.g. often confuse the plane of articulation (*nama*) with the plane of reality (*bhava*). We accept words and terms at face value and consequently experience disappointment when the words do not correspond with the expected action. Or we use words to try to win over others that can only be convinced by our actions.

The plane of mental structure (*sthapana*) is often mistaken for the plane of real manifestation (*bhava*). We experience this as the desire to see events as we want to see them, and not as they really are. This prevents us from understanding that what we want to perceive is only one part of reality, not its entirety.

Constant awareness of the four planes of reality does not impede our normal life. Life remains a holistic experience even when we are constantly aware of the four planes' mechanics. As we effortlessly are able to cook, listen to the radio and converse with other persons all at the same time, we can also easily distinguish between the four planes while conducting the rest of our activities.

- **The plane of articulation** (*nama*) is focussed on the external part of our life. On this plane we assign names and

meanings to the objects, situations and events we confront. We do not experience these objects, situations etc. on this plane. This happens on another plane - *bhava* - where individual features of the elements (or a combination of them) are manifesting in the present.

All communication with our fellow people takes place on the plane of articulation. Here we deal only with names and terms. And only names and terms are exchanged during any communication with others.

But names and terms are far more than mere naming, are far more than the mere words we assign to objects, situations etc. Names and terms also comprise everything we associate with them when we hear a certain word. Names and terms include all the concepts and meanings that come to our mind and even all the emotions that rise within us when we hear them.

Only in the most basic interactions does the mere naming of an object express all we mean. 'Please pass the salt' is an example of plain naming. As soon as we attempt to express more complex contents¹⁷ and need to

¹⁷ The question 'Who are you?' - as simple as it may sound, - is an example for the communication of complex contents. Is this just a request for your name or a thorough inquiry into your personal, professional, bodily and emotional situation? Does it express the hope for social contact? Is it an attempt to remind you of your innermost magnificent nature or only a casual greeting that can be answered by 'just passing through'?

Similarly complex might be the answer. Since all of us play many different roles in our life - the employee or boss, the lover, the husband or wife, the father or mother we are to our children, the expert we are in our special field, - we first have to identify the level on which to answer.

'Who are you?' said the Caterpillar.

Alice replied, rather shyly, 'I - I hardly know, Sir, just at present - at least I know who I *was* when I got up this

combine meanings, then the mere naming, the mere mentioning or listing of all the components we want to convey hardly ever produces the intended comprehension.

Communication is basically the attempt to coordinate and align the ideas and concepts which different people associate with more complex contents. But contrary to common opinion only a small part of this mechanism involves the use of spoken words.

Most people are not aware that during communication they not only exchange physically expressed words, descriptions and explanations, but that they also transmit content on an emotional level. Whatever meaning we express in speech we also convey on the level of feeling. It is an associated field that automatically reverberates in every word we use.

Our communication can be compared to an iceberg. The visible peak above the water corresponds to the words we exchange on the physical level. Yet the contents we really transmit equals the far greater part beneath the surface that is invisible to the eye.

The questions and answers we use in our communication inform us to what degree the emotional (invisible) meaning that we transmitted *beyond* words and sentences reached its destination intact. Here we employ our spoken words mainly to correct the differences that exist on the level of that deeper, emotional understanding. Yet

morning, but I think I must have been changed several times since then.'

'What do you mean by that?' said the Caterpillar, sternly. 'Explain yourself!'

'I can't explain *myself*, I'm afraid, Sir,' said Alice, 'because I'm not myself, you see.'

From ALICE'S ADVENTURES IN WONDERLAND

we all encountered situations - often with intense frustration - where words are entirely inadequate to convey more complex meaning.

The names and expressions used on the plane of articulation can be quite unrelated to their real meaning. Modern advertisement for example likes to use the expression 'You save ... dollars' in an attempt to motivate us to buy a certain object. Yet when we accept this offer, we primarily experience a loss of money and not an increase in our savings account as the word 'save' really denotes.

- **The plane of mental structure** (*sthapana*). On this plane we build and maintain the ideas and concepts that form our personal reality. Here our selection-process takes place. Here we chose from the constant barrage of billions of inner and outer stimuli those few impulses we permit to get through to our awareness.

The mental structure within us determines how much of reality we perceive and how clear or distorted it appears to us. Our mental structure contains the preconceptions and patterns we position like a filter between our consciousness and the objects and events we selected for perception.

On this plane we e.g. perceive someone who would be judged ugly in a particular social environment as the most beautiful person in the world - if we are in love with him or her. Here we determine whether we see a glass as half full or half empty, i.e. whether we generally interpret events as conducive to our growth - optimistically, - or as a - pessimistic - confirmation of a general decline.

Our preconceptions and patterns may even be so far removed from the existing reality that we perceive the en-

tire world in a distorted way. Drastic examples for this type of misconception are absolute dictators who feel secure in the loyalty of their people - until their fall makes them perceive a 'more genuine' reality.

On this plane (*sthapana*) we direct our consciousness towards those contents and values we feel - positively or negatively - attracted to. This alignment happens mostly without us being aware of it. Yet we do possess the ability to fully influence and control this automatic process. The Tattvarthasutra describes the mechanisms available for this purpose.

- **The plane of all potentially possible features of the elements** (*dravya*) contains in inactive, latent form all the potentially possible qualities and variants of all the basic elements of our reality (consciousness, matter, space, karma etc.).

This plane comprises *all* variations that the elements may possibly assume during their manifestations. We do not perceive this plane directly since it exists as a solely potential, unmanifested state.

Though at first sight this may sound academic, we often handle inactive, potential qualities in our daily life. One example for potential, unmanifested qualities is an architect who is presently sailing a boat. While he is on the water his ability to build houses certainly does not cease. It continues to exist, but on a latent level that does not manifest at this particular time. One further example is a book decoratively positioned on a bookshelf, whose latent potential to convey ideas is inactive at that moment.

The existence of this plane forms the basis for the identical perception of reality by a wide variety of people. The function of this fundamental plane (*dravya*) is not influ-

enced by the activities of the elements on any of the other planes.

All embodied beings are directly and intuitively connected to this plane. We automatically and subconsciously compare all our experiences with their potentially possible variations. We affirm intuitively whether an experience belongs to our particular reality. Everything that does *not* agree with the possible variations, is rejected and consequently does not reach our attention.

- **The plane of present manifestation** (*bhava*) is *that* part of reality in which single qualities or features of the elements¹⁸ manifest *in our present*.

On this plane we experience directly how specific features of the elements behave, how they feel like, what reaction they trigger in our consciousness, what meaning they convey to us and how to handle them.

Here is the anchor against which we check our concepts of reality. Here we test if a meaning (*nama*) concurs with the real qualities (*bhava*) of an object etc. Here it becomes clear whether the concepts and ideas along which we form our personal reality (*sthapana*) do or do not match up with that what really exists.

And here finally the planes of articulation (*nama*), concepts (*sthapana*) and real manifestation (*bhava*) can converge to form a unified perception of reality that unlocks new dimensions of our growth.

¹⁸ and their combinations

S U T R A 6

प्रमाणनयैरधिगमः ॥ ६ ॥

Pramananayair adhigamah (6)

We obtain insight into¹⁹ reality either

- by ***total perception*** (*pramana*), where we comprehend the totality of the appearance of the elements (i.e. their forms, qualities and features) as they manifest at a particular time, or
- through ***partial sights***, where we perceive manifestations of the elements from a limited perspective (*naya*). (6)

In the Western hemisphere of the world we generally have the idea that knowledge is something separate from us, something that needs to be laboriously discovered by either experience, research, reflection or ingenious intuition.

In stark contrast to this the Jains regard knowledge as a fundamental and inseparable feature of individual consciousness. According to their understanding we always carry the totality of all knowledge within us, and it is only our limited capacity to perceive this that prevents us from becoming fully conscious of it.

Since in the West we adhere strongly to the familiar concept of external (separate) knowledge, and since we almost never come across alternative models, the thought that we carry all possible knowledge always within us, might appear utterly absurd. Yet the pride the West takes in the data accumulated during the last three centuries, overlooks en-

¹⁹ and knowledge of

tirely that we have really no idea how all these fragments could possibly fit into one coherent whole, nor where this constantly growing pile of data might lead us in the first place.

In contrast the concept of the Jains introduces not only a candid outline of the structure, import, range and validity of knowledge, but also provides clear orientation where insight and cognition will lead us.

The difference between the two concepts originates in the fact that the West concentrates almost exclusively on only one of the two types of perception available to us. Unfortunately this is the one type that can only produce a limited insight into reality (*naya* - see below). Over and above this the West further limits itself by focussing almost exclusively on only one single aspect (the mechanisms of matter²⁰) of the broad spectrum of reality and attempts to explain the functioning of our entire reality with the mechanics of this single element.

The Jains however use both methods of perception to uncover an ever broader and more integrated comprehensive picture of reality instead of dividing it into disconnected fragments. The Jains also never forgot - that cognition and insight is an individual experience, - that external knowledge as it is recorded in books and other storage media has no significance as long as we do not actively integrate it into our consciousness, - and that any formal learning is irrelevant to our growth if we do not transform it into individual experience.

The sutra introduces both methods of perception:

²⁰ more precisely: the belief that the functioning of reality is governed exclusively by the mechanisms of matter

- **Total perception** (*pramana*) - We experience total perception as the immediate and complete comprehension of complex situations as they occur in the present. As supernatural as this ability may appear to us, as naturally and effortlessly do we handle it in our daily life. Without constantly applying total perception - *pramana*²¹ - we would hardly have chances to survive.

pramana is complete perception and understanding that with lightening speed evaluates multi-layered, interconnected and highly complicated situations for which an intellectual analysis of the many factors would be far too slow. We handle this ability with dreamlike certainty, though we are almost never aware how complex this process really is.

One example: We want to cross a street. We see a car approaching whose course might collide with our intended path. In this brief moment - before we decide to either step onto the road or not - we comprehend the totality of the situation in all its complex diversity.

We register the speed of the car, the width of the street and with this also the ability of the driver to swerve to avoid us. We take in visibility (day, night, cloudy, foggy or clear vision), nature and condition of the road (dry, wet, icy, asphalt, pebbles, sand) and the velocity of the car in relation to all these components. We check if other pedestrians intend to cross the street before us and thereby possibly might cause the car to slow down. The form of the car makes us reflect that this type is preferred by young aggressive drivers. Some - however vague - notion arises that the driver might be pressed for time.

²¹ Western languages contain no term that might come near this type of comprehensive insight (perception). Therefore this book uses the Sanskrit-word *pramana* mentioned in the sutra.

We calculate our strength and constitution to safely reach the other side - and also our readiness and capability to speed up should we have miscalculated. We calculate if we have to cross the street before the car, i.e. how far we are under time-pressure, - a contemplation that connects to even more complex psychological dimensions.

All this and much more we completely take in in the fraction of a second, weigh it against each other and make our decision with lightning speed and dreamlike assuredness. Sure - the accident-statistics show that some do miscalculate, but we succeeded to arrive here and now and this shows us how effectively we employ this ability - *pramana*.

If for once we recapitulate the huge number of multi-layered situations we experience during the day: - the multitude of highly complex bodily decisions we subconsciously make almost every second; - the swift evaluations with which we judge power, disposition and strategy of communication partners and then instantly fine-tune our tactics; - the immediate recognition whether the outer and inner circumstances we confront conform with our deeper motives, ideas and values, and how we should react to this.

In all these decisions our intellect plays almost no role. Certainly, we consciously adopt well reflected and laboriously trained concepts and action-sequences, but we also experience quite often that *pramana* - our direct access to comprehensive knowledge - is far stronger than any mental calculation however logical. When speed of evaluation and decision is vital to our survival, we almost always revert to *pramana* - to the one ability that brings us so efficiently through life.

pramana is the direct connection to our consciousness. Its ability to understand the most complex circumstances instantly and comprehensively, gives us a taste of the immense potential of insights that still rests undiscovered deep within us.

The casualness with which we handle *pramana* in our daily life shows how natural and spontaneous our unfoldment of more comprehensive levels of insight will be; - we only need to direct this familiar ability towards new and more expansive goals.

The ease with which *pramana* unfolded in our life - from toddler to grown up - further demonstrates how playful any further unfoldment of this ability can be.

pramana is the irrefutable proof that even now we do have the ability to reach and develop new dimensions of consciousness. We only need to extend the range in which we use this ability.

The range of *pramana* - i.e. how much of reality we perceive by it and how clear our insight is - depends on the degree this ability has opened within us. Yet this opening cannot be reached by special training, but only by removing certain blocks that obstruct its functioning.²²

These blocks are caused by our very own preconceptions, errors and misunderstandings²³. The blocks are the stronger, the more intensely we project prejudices, errors, etc. onto the real world and the more we reject (e.g. by neglect or laziness) to correct them. If we intend to ex-

²² KARMA - THE MECHANISM describes extensively how to remove these blocks.

²³ i.e. by karmic mechanisms originally caused by our own actions, thinking and speech

pand the scope of what we perceive through *pramana*, it is therefore entirely at our own discretion, how fast and to what degree we remove these obstructions.

Also the clarity of *pramana* , - i.e. how clear or faulty our insight is - is determined by the karmic blocks that obstruct this ability.

The range of *pramana* further depends on the channels we use for perception. The bandwidth and qualities of these channels are described from Sutra 9 onwards.

pramana is our very key to 'higher' more comprehensive levels of consciousness. Only *pramana* enables us to evaluate the multitude of new impressions we receive during an expansion of consciousness. Only *pramana* gives us the dreamlike certainty to select and amplify only those impulses that drive us to further unfoldment.

It is primarily the development of *pramana* that opens our access to new areas of our consciousness and not the use of intellectual knowledge.

Intellectually analyzing new experiences is certainly of value. It can make us conscious of what we encountered, connect it to previous experiences and generally give us the confirmation and security that makes us continue on our chosen path.

Yet intellectual analysis can only yield results after we experienced the new (expansion of consciousness). It is utterly impossible to initiate an expansion of consciousness by intellectual analysis alone, or by thinking logically about it. And further - any attempt to intellectually analyze an expansion of consciousness while it is happening, significantly disturbs this process.

There are two types of *pramana*:

1 - direct insight (*pratyaksha*) - is the highest form of *pramana*. We experience it directly in our consciousness without the help of external and physical carriers (i.e. without the help of sense-impressions, books or teachers).

This type of insight causes such clear and self-evident understanding of facts and circumstances, situations and interconnectedness that no proof by further factors is needed.

2 - indirect insight (*paroksha*) we obtain with the help of external means and carriers like sense-impressions, books or teachers.

Indirect insight can be faulty. Its validity needs to be examined.

Sutras 6 to 31 explain

- what we perceive through *pramana*,
- what mechanisms control this process and
- how we can develop and expand this ability.

- **Partial sight** (*naya*) - is an analytic method to explore manifestations of the elements from a limited perspective. It is a precise instrument that amplifies one particular form or one particular quality of an element.

Partial sights (*nayas*) are individual aspects (parts) of *pramana*. Their origin is always *pramana*, i.e. they always arise from total perception.

The purpose of partial sights (*nayas*) is to make us conscious of special areas of what we perceived through *pramana*. They investigate *pramana* from a limited perspec-

tive and direct our attention to one single aspect, like a magnifying glass.

Partial sights play a vital role in the communication of insights. They define exactly the range in which an insight is valid and thereby prevent confusion, uncertainty and misunderstanding.

Partial sights (*nayas*) are structured. They are valid for only one of the four planes of reality²⁴, i.e. either

- on the plane of articulation, - where we use names and terms for the purpose of communication and social mechanisms (*nama*) - or
- on the plane of mental structure, - where we form our individual reality (*sthapana*) - or
- on the plane of all potentially possible features of the elements, - the basis for the identical perception of reality by different people (*dravya*) - or
- on the plane of present manifestation, - where individual features of the elements (or a combination of them) manifest in the actual present (*bhava*).

Partial sights further relate either to

- the non-changing, general qualities of the elements (*dravyartika*), or to
- their constantly changing variations, aspects, forms etc. (*paryayarthika*).

Sutra 33 describes seven easy steps to obtain clear insight into reality through partial sights (*nayas*).

* * *

²⁴ see sutra 5

In the Western hemisphere of the world we concentrate mainly on partial sights (*naya*). Our entire idea of knowledge, - i.e. our tendency to interpret observations and experiences as 'data' and also the enormous attempt to grasp quality in terms of quantity²⁵, - are essentially attempts to split up reality into ever smaller parts. According to the leaders of this direction of thought this is supposed to make the world easier to understand and to handle.

But unfortunately this shattering of reality produces the exact opposite effect. In the overabundance of details that flood us at present, we lack all orientation.

Now, - *pramana* would certainly be fully capable to provide the required sovereign orientation. By consciously employing our ability to grasp the most complex of situations, we would easily recognize the major part of the present pile of data as irrelevant and proceed onto more significant themes of life. After all the majority of the people is well versed in using *pramana* since it is the major factor that guides them through life.

Yet formal education and the modern media purposely divert our focus and our attention from this exquisitely effective ability. Our capacity to instantly comprehend highly complex situation is regarded as so natural, so self-understood that we would never even consider to systematically explore, train and *expand* this feature of our consciousness.

We however recognize intuitively that the emphasis on partial sights (i.e. what schools and media impart to us) does not give us the immediate and comprehensive experience and satisfaction we are familiar with through *pra-*

²⁵ this means e.g. the effort to *digitize* as many events and circumstances of the world as possible as our computer-oriented society strives to do

mana. Partial sights and details are certainly taught, but in real life we use *pramana* - and this is the very origin of the great discrepancy between individual life and science²⁶.

Once we begin to consciously employ *pramana*, it unfolds new levels of experience within us that are far more interesting, intense and fulfilling than a life mainly directed towards the accumulation of objects and bodily comfort.

S U T R A 7

निर्देशस्वामित्वसाधनाधिकरणस्थितिविधानतः ॥ ७ ॥

Nirdesha svamitva sadhan adhikarana sthiti vidhanatah (7)

²⁶ The cause of the almost exclusive concentration of the West on partial sights is science. Science splits the reality it perceives into small parts and examines these parts in the light of limiting conditions. Many of the scientists engaged in this type of research are idealistically motivated that this approach will produce verifiable and valuable information about features and behavior of the examined objects.

There is basically nothing wrong with this approach. No doubt, science helped to make the physical conditions of life more comfortable and this also explains the popularity of this particular trend of thought. Yet unfortunately this success caused science to demand that all of reality should be explained by mechanisms that are valid only in the partial field of matter.

The propagation of this dogma is so successful that by now the majority of people accepts statements about the world only as true, when they are explained by the mechanics of matter. Though in daily life we constantly experience and use entirely different - non-material - mechanisms, this claim of science blocks the serious and systematic development of our far more comprehensive, intuitive and innate capabilities already at the very start.

This overvaluation of the partial, analytical sight (*naya*) diverts our attention from our ability to effortlessly comprehend and handle the most complex situations. It ignores the value and potential of *pramana* and thereby impedes our growth.

We develop total perception²⁷ - *pramana* - by

- directing our attention towards this particular ability of our consciousness (*nirdesha*)
- by recognizing and accepting the insights we gain as our own (*svamitva*)
- by becoming aware of its mechanisms and qualities (*sadhana*)
- by discovering what causes it to arise (*adhi-karana*)
- by consciously prolonging its duration (*sthiti*) and
- by allowing *pramana* to influence our life (*vidhana*). (7)

The sutra describes how to expand an ability we already are familiar with into a method of gaining access to higher states of consciousness. The six steps listed in the sutra are easily put into practice. The steps make us aware of those regions of our consciousness that already opened up to us, but which we never consciously explored. They further offer an excellent guideline how to systematically investigate all types of knowledge.

The following demonstrates how the six steps can be applied to unfold our notion of growth:

- **Directing our attention** (*nirdesha*) - is the main key to all new knowledge. As trivial as this may seem, as important it is for the exploration of all new levels of experience. Without directing our attention towards new and

²⁷ e.g. of the purpose of reality, of the notion of growth and of other objects or events

previously unknown experiences, we are incapable of expanding the circle of our familiar life.

Our life is only where our attention is.

Our attention works like a spotlight that we train on events and objects. The objects in the center of the light we perceive the clearest. The more we leave the center, the weaker the light becomes and the more indistinct everything we see appears. The periphery of the circle of light finally harbors all the objects and events that we - consciously or subconsciously - refuse permission to intrude into the center of our attention.

So if we want to discover new levels of consciousness, then the periphery of our consciousness - i.e. the perimeter of the cone of light - offers an almost inexhaustible reservoir of experiences. We definitely had these experiences, but we never consciously examined them. By placing them into the center of our attention (by consciously training the spotlight on them), we expand them. They then become vivid and clear and we can discriminate details and start to consciously relate to them.

Everything we will ever cognize in the context of this universe already exists at the periphery of our consciousness. This also includes all higher stages of development. We can access this treasure-trove of experience at any time we chose.

Directing our attention towards the events at the periphery is a conscious step. It is the deliberate decision to introduce new elements to our life.²⁸

²⁸ Focussing on peripheral events may confront us with religious, philosophical or personal ideas, preconceptions or programs that may interfere with our openness for new experiences on a deep

EXAMPLE: Many people experience the notion of growth (*samyag darshana*) as fleeting moments of intense wakefulness or as the sudden awakening from a day-dreamlike state. Since they mostly cannot explain what they experienced, and because the event has been so fleeting, they usually ignore it.

Yet when we direct our attention towards these fleeting moments, they become more intense. We now know what to expect and at their next occurrence perceive these events with far greater clarity. Simply directing our attention causes these moments to become longer so we can observe them more clearly.

- **Accepting the insights *pramana* provides as our own** (*svamitva*) - means to become conscious of the fact that we really have mastery of a method of comprehending highly complex, multi-layered situations with lightning speed.

As long as we separate us from the events we perceive, we have no access to this instant and complete insight. We can only gain the ability to deeply penetrate the events and to explore all their dimensions when we remove the distance between us and the events we confront.

Once we fully accept that our consciousness is definitely capable of expanding - even if only for brief moments, - *conscious* expansion becomes part of our growth-process.

Only this gives us the ability to detect all the dimensions and qualities our experiences stimulate within us and to explore them to their fullest. Only then do we really know what these brief insights mean to us and how

emotional level. This does not need to occur; it is mentioned here to prevent potential conflicts.

they further our growth. The study of books (external knowledge - see sutra 20) that describe and explain these insights accelerates this process.

Though our present society displays a demonstrative openness towards all phenomena of consciousness, deep down below, it tends to regard any real expansion of consciousness as impossible. Despite the many books that describe experiences of higher states of consciousness, we hold it quite out of question that we ourselves might experience something similarly fantastic. This needless attitude is caused by a temporary social trend that unspokenly demands that no one is to rise from the mass of those who might not have these kind of experiences.

But this subconscious programming and the resulting attitude that we are not supposed to really reach higher states of consciousness, does not take away our innate ability to expand. It is an erroneous bias that prevents us from fully exploring our very own experiences and should be discarded once and for all. Without this programming the entire range of our peripheral experiences is at our disposal without restriction.

EXAMPLE: We read the respective descriptions. We discover that the brief moments of clear awakening we experienced are insights into the fourth stage of development (*gunasthana*), where our consciousness ceases to be mesmerized by the daydream-like cocoon that usually surrounds it. We come to know that this stage of development is characterized by the clear perception of our notion of growth (*samyag darshana*).

We accept that for these (brief) moments we really experience the fourth stage of development. We become interested in how to consciously trigger this state so that

our notion of growth will be available in less fleeting form.

- **Awareness of *pramana's* mechanisms and qualities** (*sadhana*) - rises within us in the same degree we become familiar with this type of perception.

To develop *pramana*, we need to eliminate all ideas, concepts and expectations that have nothing to do with the experience itself. This means to discard e.g. the expectation that the rising of higher states of consciousness should always be accompanied by visions of supernatural light, massive expansions of space, ecstasy etc.²⁹

Clarity about the functioning and features of our experiences arises when we gain a *feeling*, a *sense* of their more subtle aspects. Even if we are not used to direct our

²⁹ Experiences of this kind are certainly possible but usually occur only from the sixth stage of development onwards, - i.e. after we reached the necessary stability. All feelings of ecstasy occurring in stages 1 to 5 are usually quite fleeting. They do not last longer because in these stages the corresponding blocking karmas can only be inactive briefly and also because this (volatile) state is easily disturbed by the activity of other karmas. Once the respective blocking and disturbing karmas are fundamentally dissolved (in the higher stages of development), the stability for this type of experience automatically rises.

As long as we are still bound by karmic limitations, the attractiveness of any state of ecstasy is mainly based on the contrast between the temporary experience of a 'higher' state of consciousness and our normal state. Once this 'higher' state of consciousness becomes more permanent, it matures into the *normal* state and the feeling of ecstasy fades.

The state of bliss we experience *after* reaching liberation is far more satisfying than any state of ecstasy that is still subjected to karmic constraints. There is nothing temporary in the state of supreme bliss. Its attraction is not caused by a contrast to lesser states, but by the perception of our innermost nature. - Why go for ecstasy, if we can have the real thing?

awareness towards our feelings and even if this does not produce immediate results, the orientation alone makes us aware of deeper dimensions of what we experience.

We achieve clarity when we try to master an event, i.e. when we approach an event with the intention to explore all its dimensions for the expansion of our consciousness.

To succeed in this we need to carry out every action we deem necessary to explore these dimensions to their fullest. This focussing of energy moves the event(s) into the center of our consciousness and gives us access to their deeper dimensions.

EXAMPLE: The rising of our notion of growth is characterized by a feeling of mental clarity that differs significantly from the almost hypnotic involvement of our consciousness in daily life. It is always accompanied by a feeling of waking up from a long and intense daydream. This experience is very agreeable and while it lasts, we often remember clearly when it occurred before, or how long since we experienced it.

When we probe deeper into this notion, we become aware how few of the people around us look beyond the short-lived activities, achievements or security they strive for. Our experience creates a stark contrast to their way of life. This contrast makes us more aware of the hidden dimensions that extend much farther than any of the usual objectives of daily life will ever reach. We now become curious of how to produce these moments of clear awakening intentionally.

- Finding the cause of its occurrence (*adhikarana*) - means to find out how a particular state of consciousness (or event) can be reproduced.

The rising of higher states of consciousness is caused by either of two factors:

- 1 - Inner causes (*abhyantara*) - We open up to higher states of consciousness as soon as the karmas that block our ability to perceive them become inactive. This is the primary cause. For this to happen the karmas need not to be totally dissolved. We are also capable of experiencing more comprehensive levels of consciousness when the respective karmas become partially or fully inactive for a while. During this time the obstruction of our inner expansion is temporarily suspended.

A lasting unfoldment of new states of consciousness becomes possible only if we fundamentally decide to manifest all our dormant abilities of expansion. Sutra one describes the three factors essential for this to happen. If we do not manifest our potential abilities, then we will not experience stable levels of higher consciousness.

- 2 - External causes (*bahya*) - can also trigger the experience of higher states of consciousness. These are outside events that confront us, - e.g. shocks, accidents, deep disappointments, intense love, great pain, etc. External causes shake us up to stimulate a general reflection of our current goals. They generally give rise to a new evaluation of our purpose in life.

This may also be triggered by meeting people who are more advanced on their path to liberation, by the sudden recall of former lives, or by exploring knowledge that describes the path to higher states of consciousness.

EXAMPLE: We observe that the notion of growth arises almost exclusively in times of relative quietness, i.e. when our attention is not immersed in the events of daily life and when we have time and opportunity to reflect on us and on life in general (e.g. during periods of waiting and quietness, in open nature, etc.).

We discover that these moments of awakening occur more often when we intentionally prevent the intake of new karmas (i.e. when we stop refueling negative emotions, give up carelessness, laziness, indifference, put energy behind our intention to grow, actively maintain equanimity even though this takes effort, etc.).

We now transfer this insight into action and e.g. read books describing higher states of consciousness, search out the presence of those more advanced on the path etc.

- **Consciously prolonging the duration** (*sthiti*) - Initially this is a basic readiness to intentionally explore ever deeper dimensions of new insights as they arise. Once our insights begin to last longer, it is mainly our intention to prevent the intake of new karmas as in the previous step that makes them more stable.

The duration of an event also gives us concrete information about the stage or phase of development we experience.

EXAMPLE: We observe that initially our feelings of awakening (our notion of growth) appear only for a very short time. The respective descriptions inform us that the notion of growth arises in the fourth stage of development (*gunasthana*) and that it has three phases:

- The first phase is characterized by fleetingness. - At the first rising of the notion of growth all karma that

prevents us to experience level four becomes inactive (latent) for a short time. Though this awakening brings extraordinary clarity to our consciousness, our desire for experiences on level one is so intense that after a brief time (initially after only fractions of seconds, at most after 48 minutes) we fall down to level three, two or one.

By experiencing these insights repeatedly and by directing our attention towards them, this process loses its fleeting character. Though the initial strong contrast to the familiar hypnotic envelope of level one diminishes as we get more used to this type of alertness, we begin to lose ourselves less and less in the actions we are involved in. The clarity in our life increases and we become able to steer it far more consciously. Eventually we exceed the maximum time we can stay in this phase and thereby automatically advance to phase two.

- In the second phase some part of the karma that had only become inactive (latent) in the first phase, dissolves completely. This lengthens the periods during which we are free from the hypnotic envelope that overshadows our consciousness on level one.

Yet since not all blocking karma has been dissolved, we still lose this state of clarity from time to time. When - at the end of this phase - all obstructing karma (i.e. all preoccupations that attached our consciousness to the emotional cocoon of level one) dissolves, we enter phase three.

- In the third phase there exist no more karmic bonds that may impede our clarity of understanding. Once this third and highest phase is reached, we cannot fall down to any of the lower *gunasthanas* any more. To

what extent we now put our new insights *into action* is theme of the next stages of development.

- **To allow *pramana* to influence our life** (*vidhana*). - To integrate an experience into our life means far more than merely accepting it as we did in step two (*svamitva*).

As we reach this last step, we have gained a far more intimate insight into our new experience than in step two. We now know how the experience enriches us and integrate it into our life. This is a natural process that follows automatically from the broadness of insight the new experience opened within us.

EXAMPLE: We purposely apply our notion of growth to explore unknown regions of our consciousness. We employ this ability in the same natural way as we e.g. walk or read. This integration in our life now opens up the entire dimension of the notion of growth.

S U T R A 8

सत्संख्याक्षेत्ररुपर्शनकालान्तरभावाल्पबहुत्वैश ॥ ८ ॥

Sat sankhya ksetra sparsana kalantara bhavalpabahutvaisca (8)

***pramana* perceives**

- the existence (*sat*)
- the qualities, features and functions (*sankhya*)
- the place of manifestation (*kshetra*)
- the immediate sense-experience (*sparshana*)
- the time and duration of manifestation (*kala*)

- **the inner purpose and meaning** (*antara*)
 - **the presently active qualities** (*bhava*)
 - **the quantities and proportions** (*alpa-bahutva*)
- of all six elements and their manifestations. (8)**

pramana gives us access to the following information about objects and events:

- **Existence** (*sat*) - *pramana* perceives whether living beings, objects, events, emotions etc. do exist or not.
- **Qualities, features and functions** (*sankhya*) - *pramana* perceives the components of the elements and the organization of their manifestations.
- **Place of manifestation** (*kshetra*) - *pramana* perceives the locale, where objects and events manifest. This also includes the perception of their size and range.
- **Immediate sense-experience** (*sparshana*) - *pramana* perceives how our senses experience the elements and their manifestations.
- **Time and duration of manifestation** (*kala*) - *pramana* perceives the time of manifestation of objects and events and also the duration of their manifestation.
- **Inner purpose and meaning** (*antara*) - *pramana* perceives what significance objects and events have in our life and also what insights they are supposed to trigger within us.
- **Presently active qualities** (*bhava*) - *pramana* perceives how events and objects behave in the present and what reactions they trigger in our consciousness.

- **Quantities and proportions** (*alpa-bahutva*) - *pramana* perceives up to what extent the elements manifest their qualities. It also perceives their proportions and relationship of their particular manifestations towards each other.

* * *

That what we perceive by *pramana* is called *knowledge*.

We take in knowledge through five different channels. The qualities of the channels have major influence on how clearly and to what extent we perceive knowledge. Therefore the next sutras describe the nature of these channels and their respective range.

S U T R A 9

मतिश्रुतावधिमनःपर्ययकेवलानि ज्ञानम् ॥ ९ ॥

Mati srutavadhi manahparyaya kevalani jnanam (9)

There are five types of knowledge (*jnana*):

- knowledge we perceive through the senses (*mati*)
- knowledge we gain from external sources (scriptures, teachers, etc.) (*sruti*)
- knowledge we receive through clairvoyance and telepathy (*avadhi*)
- knowledge we receive by the direct perception of contents present in the mind of others (*manahparyaya*) and
- omniscience (*kevala jnana*). (9)

Five channels give us access to knowledge. Every channel offers us a different kind of knowledge. The channels we employ also determine the range and scope of knowledge that will open to us.

The five types of knowledge - the channels - are listed in ascending sequence, i.e. each successive channel perceives more subtle and more comprehensive knowledge than the one preceding it.

Some of the channels mentioned in the sutra far exceed the range of the officially recognized channels (senses and mind). Though we use these 'unofficial' channels in a natural way in our daily life, they carry the stigma of public suspicion.

Yet although our western society presently regards everything functioning without the help of the senses as suspiciously strange, this does not change the fact that these channels are definitely available to us.

The scope and precision of the 'subtler' channels far exceeds everything our senses will ever convey to us. Therefore it doesn't make sense to refrain from using this immense potential only because some leaders of the presently fashionable ideology³⁰ assume that a systematic application of these abilities is impossible - without having seriously studied this.

We can use the more subtle channels in the same natural way we employ our five senses.

- **Sense-perception** (*mati*) - arises, when we perceive objects and events through our five senses and the mind.

³⁰ the belief that the functioning of reality is governed exclusively by the mechanisms of matter - science

Sense-perception also includes the *processing* of the information gained by our mind, e.g. recollection, deduction, etc.

The clarity with which our senses and our mind perceive objects, depends on the karmic blocks that obstruct the functioning of this channel.

Sutra 13 to 19 explain the features of sense-perception in more detail.

- **Knowledge from external sources** (*sruti*) - we gain by obtaining and reflecting information contained in the scriptures and other storage media, as well as through verbal instruction.

Knowledge from external sources encompasses far greater parts of reality than pure sense-perception. External knowledge makes us aware of experiences that otherwise would have escaped our conscious understanding. It offers us concepts how to choose from the multitude of alternative experiences those paths that bring us nearer to the realization of the values and ideals we feel deep within us.³¹

Knowledge gained from external sources always originates in sense-perception. Sutra 20 deals more exten-

³¹ The difference between sense-perception and knowledge from external sources becomes clear when we consider the fleeting moments of intense awareness during which we leave the dense hypnotic envelope of level one and feel like waking up from the deep dream that life weaves around our consciousness. As long as we remain solely on the level of sense-perception, these moments remain brief and fleeting because we do not know what to do with them. Once external knowledge gives us a concept how to understand and to work with these experiences, we can extend their duration and transform this vibrant wakefulness into a stable foundation of our life.

sively with external knowledge and how it connects to sense-perception.

- **Clairvoyance and telepathy** (*avadhi*) - provide insights into regions of our life that are not accessible through the senses or by studying external knowledge.

Our present society regards clairvoyance and telepathy as such bizarre abilities that even the esoterically inclined have the opinion that this requires a rare and extravagant talent.

Yet as exotic and strange this channel might appear to us, as natural and spontaneous do we apply it in our daily life.

Telepathy for example is nothing other than wordless communication. It is the ability to sense the intentions and emotions of others without first perceiving the respective words, looks or gestures.

We employ telepathy when we e.g. enter a room in which a group of people is meeting. Without a word being spoken, we perceive if the atmosphere is positive or negative, whether the group is open to newcomers or regards our entering as intrusion, and often we even feel what the subject of the meeting might be and the direction the debate is taking.

We experience telepathy when we steer a car and our passenger says 'go right', but means 'left', and we correctly turn left.

Telepathy is the wordless understanding between two persons who e.g. observe the self-portrayal of an acquaintance at a party and - without needing to exchange words or even looks - know exactly what the other one is feeling in this situation.

Telepathy is the sure knowledge who is on the other side of the line when our phone rings. Though this may not happen frequently, it occurs often enough to be noticeable.

Telepathy is the sure knowledge of a mother, who knows unfailingly how her children feel when they are not in her presence.

We usually never call these experiences telepathy. And yet we transmit and receive most complex contents in a highly precise way without using material means of communication like speech, gestures, posture, facial expression, the arrangement of objects, etc.

Certainly, - these examples are simple, our ability is not always exact and functions more at the periphery of our consciousness. But this is because we never really took care to seriously train this channel.

Our present, rather naïve idea how telepathy functions, is the biggest obstacle for developing this ability.

Telepathy is not the transfer of single words or symbols, but an extremely fast communication of complex contents that happens on the level of feeling and intuition. The main carrier of this communication are our emotions, not our thoughts.³²

³² Our thoughts are far too slow for this task. We notice this when we try to use words and sentences in the attempt to precisely phrase ideas that shoot through our head.

In a similar way telepathy is not especially well suited for the transfer of single pictures, words or symbols that are not directly connected to the dynamic events of life. And this is also the very reason why most attempts to research telepathy with the usual scientific methods do fail. As long as the general concept of telepathy remains this far out of range of its real functioning, no experiment will ever yield conclusive and productive results.

It is easy to train telepathy. Since we use this ability quite often in our daily life, we only need to become conscious of the extent and the precision with which we already send and receive contents through this channel. Once we remove our erroneous concepts and prejudices towards this ability and begin to playfully experiment with it, we will rapidly expand the actual bandwidth this channel offers us.

Clairvoyance also gives us insight into regions we cannot access through our senses or through external knowledge. By clairvoyance we perceive events and objects outside our physical range at this particular time. Clairvoyance also perceives events that will happen in the future or happened in the past

We experience clairvoyance when we e.g. meet someone for the first time, but get a strong positive feeling of familiarity - usually accompanied by the impression that we already have known him or her for all our life. In this case we either have intuitive insight into the positive energy that any future association with this person will bring us, or we perceive strong positive emotions generated in other realities that are not bound to the time and space of our actual manifestation.

This type of insight certainly also informs us about negative associations, when we e.g. meet our colleagues at the start a new job and know instantly and intuitively which of them will be the cause for future trouble.

We experience clairvoyance, when we e.g. sense for sure that a certain path of action will or will not bring the results we desire.

Further examples of this ability are premonitions, experiences of 'Déjà vu', the certain, unquestionable knowl-

edge that a certain event has happened though we did not receive news about it, or the sudden clear feeling that someone else will or will not meet success with a certain project, etc.

Without training clairvoyance is far less precise than its potential would permit. It is trained the same way as telepathy.

Extra sensual perception (ESP), premonition, the sixth sense, 'Déjà vu' are synonyms for our ability to perceive knowledge beyond the reach of our senses (*avadhi*).

Everything we perceive through clairvoyance and telepathy may also contain error.³³

Clairvoyance and telepathy (*avadhi*) register only a limited part of reality. Sutra 21 and 22 deal more extensively with the six types of clairvoyance and telepathy and the range available to them.

- Knowledge we receive by direct perception of contents present in the mind of others (*manah-paryaya*) - is a state of consciousness where we perceive the mental activity of another person immediately and instantly in our own mind. This ability is far more precise and reaches into regions that clairvoyance and telepathy (*avadhi*) have no access to.

Direct mental perception (*manah-paryaya*) works in a dimension of realization where the instruments of sense-perception (*mati*) and also the mind play no direct role.

Though the mind (*manas*) is part of this process, it serves only as field of reference, as background that re-

³³ this certainly also holds true for all knowledge we gain through our senses and from external sources - see sutra 31

flects the degree of realization of the other person.³⁴ The real perception happens directly. During this process all limits that exist normally between the consciousness of two persons fall away. Any communication through external means (words etc.) becomes superfluous in this situation.

The scope and depth of what we perceive is influenced by the degree with which we ourselves have access to higher states of consciousness (even if we are not fully aware of this access yet.).

Direct mental perception (*manah-paryaya*) is an excellent tool for the precise transmission of complex and multilayered contents. It is the immediate predecessor of omniscience and is not subjected to error and misunderstanding.

Direct mental perception rises when all karmas that blocked this type of insight are dissolved or inactive (latent). It arises from the tenth stage of development onwards. Prior to that it can be experienced during the state of dream.

- **Omniscience** (*kevala jnana*) is an objective for which many people take on great inner and outer hardship. Yet seen from a higher perspective, omniscience is reached without the help of any means only by dissolving our karmic obstructions.

Omniscience is mentioned last, because this type of knowledge is reached after all other types have been experienced.

³⁴ An analogy illustrates this: When we say 'Look at the moon in the sky!', the sky is only background.

Omniscience (*kevala jnana*) - and also direct mental perception (*manah-paryaya*) - is reached through knowledge of the higher self. Knowledge of the higher self means to have a notion of the eternal, majestic being we really are beyond the limits of this universe (see 14 STAGES OF DEVELOPMENT - *gunasthana* 11).

Though the attainment of omniscience appears to be a far cry from our present reality, we often receive a taste of this ability. These are the moments between dream and waking, when we have not left one world completely yet while already beginning to become conscious of the other one. Here we often experience seconds or minutes where we are in command of immensely complex knowledge that would solve all riddles of the world if we could only take it with us.

Even if after waking up completely we shake our head with incredulity and store the experience in the same place as all the other strange events we cannot explain, the feeling of omniscience nevertheless has been reality. The feeling definitely occurred - however fleeting it may have been.

The fact that we are unable to carry this feeling of omniscience with us into the waking state, does not reduce its validity. We certainly can experience it in the waking state of consciousness, but first would have to significantly expand our presently rather limited capacity for insights before we could in any way use it.

It is worth while to take this taste of omniscience as an indication how natural, comfortably and without awe we handled this ability - even if only for a short time and not completely in the waking state. It tells us that omniscience is much less alien to us and much more accessible that we might ever have believed.

These five types of knowledge are perceived by *pramana* - i.e. by instant total perception

The next sutras examine how knowledge is shaped by the channels through which we perceive it.

S U T R A 1 0

तत्प्रमाणे ॥ १० ॥

Tatpramane (10)

These five types of knowledge are generated by the two types of *pramana*. (10)

All knowledge we perceive through the senses, from external sources, through clairvoyance, direct mental perception and omniscience, *is pramana*.

This statement sounds simple, but has far reaching consequences. It basically says that *knowledge is only what we PERCEIVE of it in the PRESENT*. It says that knowledge is only what we are able to access at a particular moment in time. No matter how diligently we try to memorize a particular information or train certain reactions, if this information or reaction is not present at the very moment we need it, it is not knowledge. No matter how well we learned or practiced it, if it is blocked from our consciousness when we want to access it, it might as well not exist at all.³⁵

³⁵ We all experienced this e.g. at the time of exams, when to our horror knowledge we have studied for weeks, months or years suddenly is blanked from our consciousness. This indicates that our concept of knowledge and learning is flawed. It vividly demonstrates that by cramming data into our memory we do not produce knowledge.

This means that knowledge is a *process*, and *not* the mass of information collected in books and other storage media we usually regard as knowledge. This mass of data is at best raw material that only becomes knowledge when we actively integrate it into our consciousness.

Knowledge is an individual *experience* we define for ourselves through the degree we open our own consciousness.³⁶

We obtain knowledge by expanding our *ability to understand*, not by accumulating formal data³⁷. We expand our ability to understand by removing the obstacles that limit our consciousness.

It shows that whatever we want to learn we need to integrate into our consciousness by really comprehending it. It means that we first need to establish an overall framework of understanding so that all the single pieces of data we learn at a later time will be linked into one meaningful concept. Only by focussing on *understanding* and not on learning alone can we make sure that a particular knowledge will be available at all times.

³⁶ Knowledge does not only consist of all the details that a particular situation moves into the center of our awareness. It also encompasses the vast sum of insights and experiences we previously integrated into our consciousness that supports this situation invisibly from the background.

When we steer our life, we constantly access this 'invisible' (previously integrated) knowledge. And even if we are not aware of many of the details, this does not diminish our skill to use them.

Riding a bicycle is one example for this process. This state of unstable balance becomes only possible because we constantly refer to all the bodily experiences of previous rides. This permanent visualization of prior training subconsciously runs always in the background without taking energy from our foreground activities. It does not e.g. prevent us from steering the bike through unknown areas where we need to put considerable attention on our orientation.

³⁷ The learning of formal knowledge may certainly have its purposes. But for the experience of higher states of consciousness (the theme of this book) it is of hardly any value.

The rising of knowledge - i.e. the moment of understanding - causes deep satisfaction within us. Knowledge dissolves insecurity, misunderstanding and hesitation and produces an inner quietness, clarity, certainty and security that is in stark contrast to our previous state of mind and heart. The rising of higher states of consciousness is nothing other than the experience how knowledge unfolds within us.

The widespread opinion that knowledge can only be perceived through the senses, is wrong. Too often do we receive - by way of sudden intuitive insight - knowledge of objects and events that are hidden or far away, but certainly not in contact with our senses. Almost all reports of experiences of higher states of consciousness emphasize that these states arose without the help of the senses or material means.

S U T R A 11

आद्ये परोक्षम् ॥ ११ ॥

Adye paroksam (11)

The first two types of knowledge are perceived indirectly. (11)

- Sense-perception (*mati*) and
- knowledge from external sources (books, teachers etc.) (*sruti*)

are called 'indirect', because their rising depends on factors that are outside our consciousness.

We hardly ever become aware of indirect knowledge at the time the karmic bond that blocked its perception dis-

solves. Indirect knowledge always needs an external factor to make us aware of the new range of insight that opened up.

The prime cause for the rising of indirect knowledge is *always and only the dissolution of karma* that blocked this type of insight, never the perception of particular objects or events.

The dissolution of karma opens our consciousness for a new range of experience. Yet we may not become immediately conscious of this opening. Only sense-impressions we receive *after* the karmic blocks are removed can make us aware of the newly opened access.

Since our mind³⁸ is also able to make us aware of new insights, indirect knowledge also includes all intellectual methods for the systematic exploration of knowledge (deduction, comparison, induction etc.).

Knowledge gained through the senses is obtained by the senses *and* the mind; knowledge received from external sources is gained *only* through the mind³⁹.

³⁸ by familiarization with the mechanics of the expansion of consciousness

³⁹ The Jains regard the mind (*manas*) as a sense-organ. It is an instrument of perception that exists *outside* of our consciousness, but is *not* consciousness itself.

Since the West is not aware of the mechanisms of direct knowledge, we regard our mind as the true carrier or expression of consciousness. Yet this concept leads to a dead end. It unnecessarily restricts the possibilities of our consciousness to the rather limited range accessible to the mind. This limitation hinders us to search for insights beyond what the mind is able to perceive.

S U T R A 1 2

प्रत्यक्षमन्यत् ॥ १२ ॥

Pratyaksa manyat (12)

The remaining three types of knowledge are perceived directly (without external help). (12)

- Knowledge we gain through clairvoyance and telepathy (*avadhi*),
- knowledge we receive through direct mental perception (*manah-paryaya*) and
- omniscience (*kevala jnana*)

are direct knowledge.

These three types of knowledge manifest automatically and immediately in our consciousness as soon as the karma that blocked its access is partially or fully dissolved. We instantly become aware of the newly accessible range of knowledge. We need no external factor to alert us to this expansion of our ability to gain insight.

S U T R A 1 3

मतिः स्मृतिः संज्ञा चिन्ताभिनिबोध इत्यनर्थान्तरम् ॥ १३ ॥

Matih smrtih sajna cinta abhinibodha ityanarthantaram (13)

- **Recollection (of something known before, but presently not in contact with our senses) (*smrtih*)**
- **recognition (of an object known before, when the object itself or something similar or markedly dissimilar is presented to our senses) (*sanjna*)**

- **induction (reasoning on the basis of observation) (*chinta*)**
 - **deduction (reasoning by inference) (*abhinibodha*)**
- are considered sensory knowledge (*mati*) as well. (13)**

Recollection, recognition, induction and deduction are sense-perception (*mati*) because they are generated by the mind which the Jains also consider a sense-organ.

Recollection, recognition etc. can make us aware of areas of knowledge that became open to us⁴⁰, but which we never consciously explored.

S U T R A 1 4

तदिन्द्रियानिन्द्रियनिमित्तम् ॥ १४ ॥

Tadindriyanindriya nimittam (14)

Sense-perception (*mati*) is caused by the senses and the mind. (14)

Knowledge is the very nature of our consciousness.

Therefore we should be able to 'gain' any kind of knowledge just by becoming aware of that particular part of our consciousness that contains what we want to know.

Yet because karmas are partially blocking our ability to perceive and understand, we cannot access this knowledge directly. While in this restricted state, we therefore need instruments to gain access to the desired insights.

⁴⁰ after the dissolution of karma

- The instruments for perceiving material knowledge are our sense-organs (*indriyas*).
- The instrument for the perception of non-material knowledge is an organ⁴¹ (*anindriya*) that gives us access to regions beyond the range of the sense-organs.

Our senses perceive their objects up to a limited degree of subtlety. Their perception keeps constant for longer periods.

Our mind functions in a different way. It is neither restricted in subtlety, nor does it stay long on one single object (i.e. our attention jumps constantly from one object to another).

The mind is also called the 'inner sense-organ', since its evaluations of events, situations, recollection etc. is independent of the outer senses.

S U T R A 15

अवग्रहेहावायधारणाः ॥ १५ ॥

Avagrahehavaya dharanah (15)

Sensory knowledge develops in four stages:

- 1 - apprehension (*avagraha*)
- 2 - forming a first idea of what has been perceived (*iha*)

⁴¹ According to the Jains the mind (*manas*) is an organ made of subtle matter (*manovargana*) in form of a lotus-flower with eight petals that is positioned to the right and above the heart. *anindriya*, *manas* and *antahkarana* are synonyms for 'mind'.

3 - evaluation of the perception (*avaya*)

4 - consolidating and retaining the perception and its evaluation in our memory (*dharana*). (15)

1 - Apprehension (*avagraha*) is the first conscious recognition of an object after its contact with the sense-organs.

This process is preceded by *darshana*. *darshana* is a highly delicate experience that arises before the actual perception-process (*avagraha*) even starts.

darshana is the experience that arises at that particular moment when our senses are in contact with an object for the first time, but do not react to this sensation yet.

At that point in time *darshana* decides whether a 'tendency towards an object' will arise in the first place. Here the real selection-process happens that permits only a few of the billions of stimuli presented to our senses and mind to get through to our consciousness. Here on this fundamental level it is determined whether a stimulus will develop into perception and possibly become an insight later.

darshana is influenced by all the concepts and patterns that we installed between reality and our consciousness. This filter permits contact with only those events and objects that resonate in our consciousness. Everything else might well exist and might even meet our senses, but because of this filter will never reach our perception and is thereby closed out to our consciousness.

Here is the plane of mental structure (*sthapana* - see sutra 5) where we direct our consciousness towards

those contents and values we feel - positively or negatively - attracted to.

Yet we are not at the mercy of this selection-process. We can easily change the effect this filter has on us by modifying our concepts and ideas (i.e. by altering the content of our interactive karmic field). This rearrangement happens in two steps:

- Step one is the earnest decision to give up concepts and activities that cause prejudice, ignorance, error, skepticism, strong negative feelings, etc.
- Step two is the transfer of this decision into action.

The alteration or rather the reduction of our interactive karmic field takes place automatically when the decision taken in step one is put into action.

Transferring our decision into action is necessary because only this activates and dissolves (manifests) the respective karmas that block the perception of this part of reality in our consciousness.

As soon as *darshana* accepts an object or event as visible, it is immediately followed by the more or less clear perception (*avagraha*) which brings it to the attention of our consciousness.

EXAMPLE: Seeing a white object in the distance we know that it is white, but cannot determine yet what it is.

- 2 - **Forming a first idea** (*iha*) - The desire to know details about an apprehended object causes us to form a first idea of what we perceive.

During this stage we process the content of our perception, select single elements of what we perceive and group them in a first attempt to form a coherent whole.

The result is an unconfirmed, yet definite idea that an object must be this or that.

A perception can only reach this point if we have the *desire* to ascertain what the object really is, i.e. if we send some more or less conscious attention into this direction.

EXAMPLE: Is this white object a swan or a flag?

Many experiences of a widening of consciousness either never reach this stage or need a long time to be processed. We can shorten this time considerable if we familiarize us with concepts of consciousness and its expansion.

Many other events also never reach this stage, because we usually accept as perception only those events and objects that proceed to the *conscious processing* which happens only in stage 3 (evaluation) and 4 (consolidation and retention).

Unfortunately this also discards ideas, inspirations and impulsive thoughts which we might well perceive, but regard as too weak to knight them with our attention. Yet we should not snub these subtle impulses. It often pays to muster the energy to raise these vague ideas to a more conscious stage of perception. Though the impulses might be weak, they nevertheless could give us access to more interesting and more colorful experiences far beyond our present reality. - All great inventions and ideas started out as this kind of subtle impulse

- 3 - **Evaluating the perception** (*avaya*) - In this stage we ascertain details of the object and confirm to our consciousness what exactly we perceived.

EXAMPLE: By observing the flapping of the wings we ascertain that this is a swan and not a flag.

- 4 - **Consolidating and retaining** (*dharana*) - Consolidating our perception means connecting it to previous experiences. Once this is done, we need not retain the entire object or event in our memory, but only those features that distinguish it from similar patterns already imprinted in our consciousness. Storing the new pattern in our memory ensures that we will not forget it.

Stored information supports a dimension of understanding that goes far beyond the range of a single perception.

By recalling previous perceptions from our memory we can establish connections to other events or objects.

EXAMPLE: This is the same swan I saw this morning.

The multitude of stored experiences eventually creates a multi-layered and complex picture of the world as we perceive it.

S U T R A 1 6

बहुबहुविधक्षिप्रानिःसृतानुक्तध्रुवाणां सेतराणाम् ॥ १६ ॥

Bahu bahavidha ksipra nihsrta nukta dhruvanam setaranam (16)

Sense-perception recognizes twelve fundamental qualities in the perceived objects and events:

- 1 - many (*bahu*)
- 2 - few (one unit) (*eka*)
- 3 - many kinds (*bahavidha*)
- 4 - few kinds (one kind) (*ekavidha*)
- 5 - fast (*ksipra*)
- 6 - slow (*aksipra*)
- 7 - partial (*anihsrita*)
- 8 - complete (*nihsrita*)
- 9 - perceived indirectly (*anukta*)
- 10 - perceived directly (*ukta*)
- 11 - steady, permanent (*dhruva*)
- 12 - transient (*adhruva*). (16)

The sutra mentions six qualities but also includes their opposites. Therefore there are twelve fundamental qualities.

- 1 - 'Many' or 'more' (*bahu*) - many in number of the same kind, or much of the same kind in quantity.
- 2 - 'Few' or 'one piece' or 'one unit' (*eka*) - (the opposite of 'many'). This also means 'countable'.
- 3 - 'Many kinds' (*bahavidha*) - a large number of different kinds; e.g. the many types of goods offered in a super-market.
- 4 - 'Few kinds' or 'one kind' (*ekavidha*) - e.g. a flock of sheep. This also means 'countable'.

- 5 - 'Fast' (*ksipra*) - the perception of a fast sequence of events.
- 6 - 'Slow' (*aksipra*) - the perception of a slow sequence of events.
- 7 - 'Partially' (*anihsrita*) - we perceive only one part of an object or event, the rest remains hidden; e.g. the fate of a person who briefly enters our life and then leaves it again.
- 8 - 'Completely' (*nihsrta*) - we perceive an object in its entirety; e.g. a glass sitting on the table.
- 9 - 'Perceived indirectly' (*anukta*) - we recognize a (new) object or event that has never been described to us before and is not marked in such a way that we could identify it directly. The qualities of the object can be perceived only indirectly by inference.

EXAMPLE: A man stands at a bus-stop. Though he does not signal, the bus-driver assumes that he intends to board the bus.

- 10 - 'Perceived directly' (*ukta*) - We perceive a (new) object or event. Since the object has been described to us before or is clearly marked, we identify it immediately.

EXAMPLE: We see a building that has been described in a guidebook we have read before.

- 11 - 'Steady' or 'permanent' (*dhruva*) - the steady and complete recognition of an object as it really is.

EXAMPLE: All perception arising in a consciousness that is not subjected to error any more is complete and steady from the very beginning. It does not change at any later time.

This type of perception is called 'steady perception' (*dhruva avagraha*).

12 - 'Transient' (*adhruva*) - the cognition of an object is not complete and therefore subject to change, i.e. it does not last in its present form.

EXAMPLE: All perception arising in a consciousness that is still characterized by mixing error and true knowledge. It sometimes perceives more, sometimes less of reality. This type of perception is called 'unsteady perception' (*adhruva avagraha*).

S U T R A 17

अर्थस्य ॥ १७ ॥

Arthasya (17)

Sense-perception (*mati*) perceives not only the outer (visible) qualities of an element, but its entire content, purpose and meaning. (17)

Elements (*dravya*) and their qualities (*bhava*) are inseparably connected to each other. With every quality we perceive (color, form, smell, function etc.) we always and automatically also connect to the entire basic element itself.

When our senses come in contact with an object, we therefore do not only perceive its visible qualities, but experience an instant, intimate connection to the entire basic element (*dravya*) of which the perceived object is just an aspect.

This is how we test whether our perception conforms with the possible variations an element can manifest. Our con-

sciousness then rejects everything that does not agree with the possible variations. Rejected events do not reach our attention.⁴²

EXAMPLE: When we see a parked automobile, we automatically also recognize its ability to enable transportation, - though it is not moving presently. This is the proof that the perception of one single quality (its form) makes us aware of all the other functions of the car, - i.e. its potential to reach other locations with it, to transport friends, to cause accidents, to pollute the environment, to give shelter from rain, and much more.

Yet the total number of functions a car can fulfill, is limited. An automobile that would transform into an elephant does not fit the range of all acceptable variations. Even if we would witness such a transmutation, our consciousness would filter out this event and would refuse to accept it as a building block of our reality.⁴³

That we presently do not consciously perceive all the qualities of the elements involved in an event or object, is due to karmas that block this part of our perception (*darshana*), - i.e. it is our own preconceptions, prejudices, ideas and emotions that close off parts of reality for us.

Apart from the real and potential functions of an object or event we also perceive why these are brought to our attention. We consciously or subconsciously perceive what pur-

⁴² This describes how sense-perception (*mati*) connects to the plane of all potentially possible features of the elements (*dravya*) - see sutra 5.

⁴³ We might possibly regard it as a singular event, as a distortion of our sense-perception or as a magic trick. But we would certainly not assume that all cars might change into elephants at any time.

pose a situation or object has in our life and to what degree they are capable of fulfilling this mission.

We perceive this, - irrespective if we accept this perception or not, - irrespective if we like our perception, - and also independent of our intention to show a reaction or not. Our consciousness impartially takes in the entire content, meaning and purpose of the manifested elements(s). It is solely our own decision how much of this splendid abundance of information we want to use for our life.

S U T R A 18

व्यञ्जनस्यावग्रहः ॥ १८ ॥

Vyanjanasyavagrahah (18)

Apprehension (*avagraha*) perceives objects and events in an indistinct way. (18)

Apprehension (*avagraha*) is the first step of sense-perception (*mati*). On this first step of perception we apprehend objects and events in such a vague, uncertain way that we neither can form an idea of what we perceived (*iha*), nor evaluate or further process it.

Our apprehension functions independently of whether we process (interpret, store, etc.) what we perceive at a later time or not. This means that much of what we perceive never passes the threshold to our attention.

This process is an additional filter between reality and our consciousness. But it functions on a completely different level than *darshana* (see sutra 15). *darshana* basically determines whether a tendency towards an object will arise in

the first place.⁴⁴ In contrast to this *avagraha* (apprehension) certainly perceives its objects, but passes it on to conscious processing only when the perception is *lasting* or is *repeated several times*.

An example illustrates this process: A pot of clay does not become wet by two or three drops of water. Only when we moisten it again and again, its wetness becomes apparent. In a similar way apprehension reacts to matter in its qualities of sound, smell, etc. During the first few moments we are unable to clearly determine what we have heard, felt or smelled. Yet when we perceive the event or object repeatedly, we can identify it.

Conscious apprehension (*avagraha*) therefore happens in two stages:

- 1 - We first perceive something indistinct. Our attention is alerted peripherally, but does not focus fully onto the experience.
- 2 - The perception happens again. Our attention engages, the experience gets clearer and becomes ready for further (conscious) processing.

As academic as this process might sound, as tangible and harsh do we experience it during daily life. The current marketing and advertisement techniques for example prefer to transmit certain impulses only subconsciously, - i.e. they like to keep these impulses on the level of indistinct perception (stage one).

But even the indistinct and vague perception we receive in stage one transmits the entire spectrum an object or event carries within (see sutra 17). So, if a vague feeling is

⁴⁴ *darshana* is an experience that happens *before* our perception-process even starts. It mirrors all the concepts and patterns we maintain on our plane of mental structure (*sthapana* - see sutra 5).

transmitted to us in stage one that a certain (useless) object appears attractive, then from now on we carry a subconscious tendency for an impulse-buy within us.

The advertising company is very interested to never allow this vague impulse to progress to stage two. Once we perceive the content of the advertisement on a conscious level, chances are great that we clearly recognize the uselessness of the promoted object. The spontaneity of buying that the advertiser intended is then rendered ineffective, because we made a conscious decision against it.

Advertisement that uses this subtle mechanism is specially effective if it engages taste and touch, since indistinct apprehension (*avagraha*) is not available to all the senses.

S U T R A 19

न चक्षुरनिन्द्रियाभ्याम् ॥ १९ ॥

Na caksur anindriyabhyam (19)

Indistinct apprehension does not arise through the eyes or the mind. (19)

Our eyes and the mind do not experience indistinct apprehension because these two sense-organs do not come in direct contact with the objects they perceive.

The eyes e.g. can only perceive color that does *not* come in immediate contact with them. Similarly there certainly is no direct contact between the mind and the objects it perceives. The eyes and the mind therefore have no indistinct apprehension. The impulses they perceive are distinct and thereby can proceed to further processing without delay.

Here ends the description how we gain knowledge through sense-perception (*mati*). The next part deals with knowledge we gain from external sources (*sruti*).

S U T R A 20

श्रुतं मतिपूर्वं द्वयनेकद्वादशभेदम् ॥ २० ॥

Srutam matipurvam dvyaneka dvadasa bhedam (20)

Knowledge gained from external sources (*sruti*) always originates in sense-perception.

There are two types of scriptures⁴⁵. The first type has twelve, the second one many divisions. (20)

Knowledge from external sources (*sruti*) offers far broader and deeper insights than sense-perception (*mati*). It alerts us to experiences we otherwise would not recognize. It establishes a connection between new experiences and our existing concepts of life. It offers us ways to select from the multitude of potential avenues the one path that brings us nearer to the realization of the values and ideals we carry deep within us.

We obtain knowledge from external sources by studying books (or information stored in other media) and by oral instruction.⁴⁶ Since we receive this information through mate-

⁴⁵ This refers to the ancient scriptures of the Jains that describe the unfoldment of consciousness. The Jains regard these works as the main source of external knowledge.

⁴⁶ In ancient times the scriptures were handed down orally. Therefore this type of knowledge originally was gained by 'hearing' and not

rial means - books or teachers, - it is always preceded by sense-perception (reading, hearing).

Yet insight from external sources (*sruti*) does not automatically arise when our senses perceive written or spoken words. We obtain access to this type of insight only when we make a conscious effort to understand what we have read or heard. It is essentially our desire, our longing, our 'drive' to open up unknown regions of our consciousness that makes us step beyond the limits of our present level of comprehension.

The energy with which we transform this desire into action and the strength of our longing for knowledge determines how fast and to what extent our 'inner scope' will expand.

We can accelerate this process significantly by opening ourselves to new ideas and concepts. But though this sounds easy, it is much harder than we think.

Opening ourselves for new concepts does not mean to kindly listen to new ideas, consider them sympathetically and then - like a benevolent judge - decide whether we accept them or not. This is merely the (intellectual) evaluation of sense-perception (*avaya* - see sutra 15). Any insight we might gain this way remains on the level of sensory knowledge but does NOT advance onto the entirely different strata of our consciousness that this second channel of knowledge has the power to open.

To open ourselves to new ideas and concepts means

- to overcome our very own psychic barriers with which we oppose new and uncomfortable ideas,

by 'reading' the scriptures. The word '*sruta*' that denotes this channel of knowledge is derived from the Sanskrit root '*shri*' (to hear).

- to become aware of the emotions that make us cling to old concepts,

- to make the effort to review and throw out worn-out beliefs,

even if all this makes us feel uncomfortable, takes energy and might require a complete re-thinking of the world.⁴⁷

The starting points are easy to find. Whenever the presentation of a (new) concept provokes strong feelings within us (e.g. repulsion, stubbornness and even anger, but also exhilaration or enthusiasm), then it is worth the effort to examine these (new) concepts more closely. After all it is exactly these powerful emotions that chain us - positively as well as negatively - to old concepts and thereby prevent any openness towards something new.

⁴⁷ Though we consider ourselves flexible and receptive for anything new, we nevertheless hold resolutely fast to many worn-out, but cherished ideas about the world. Even if we - consciously or subconsciously - recognize that our worn-out concepts do not agree with much of our real experience any more, we intuitively sense how much of an effort it would take to fundamentally reexamine all our existing ideas. Afraid to jeopardize our present hard-won stability, we dread the (temporary) inner insecurity that might accompany this process.

Holding fast onto old concepts solidifies our life into unmoving static that is easily mistaken for stability. But this static will always break up - at the latest when our consciousness leaves our present body. In the state we enter thereafter we clearly recognize to what extent our concepts correspond with reality. We then judge for ourselves if we need further bodily experiences to access more comprehensive levels of insight.

In future embodiments we then might place ourselves in a similar environment as our present one to again stimulate the dissolution of rigid and flawed concepts. If we want to avoid these recurring confrontations, it is recommended to react flexibly and positively at the presentation of new ideas already in this very life.

Even if confronting these emotionally loaded concepts might initially feel uncomfortable or even embarrassing, it unfailingly leads us to discover new and more comprehensive levels. Exploring these new levels then causes the same fascination bubble up within us that in our early days infused our discovery of the world with such enthusiasm.

When new ideas confront us, it pays not to remain on the level of sense-perception, but to make the effort to consciously advance these impulses to the far more intense comprehension that the channel of external knowledge (*sruti*) offers.

This conscious effort dissolves karmic blocks that we experience as prejudices and limiting concepts. A neutral or positive attitude towards anything new is therefore an essential prerequisite if we want to move on to more intense insights. Any formal learning or purely intellectual understanding of external knowledge does not produce this access - even if it is taken from scriptures describing the expansion of consciousness.

Through which one of our senses we perceive external knowledge is irrelevant for the insights we gain. As the means of transportation does not transfer its characteristics to the transported goods, so also external knowledge does not become influenced by the particular sense through which it reaches our consciousness.

Knowledge that makes us recognize and comprehend the unfoldment of our consciousness (*samyag jnana*), is a special variation of this type of knowledge. It arises if we allow our insights to be guided by our notion of growth.

We experience this as a sudden upsurge of intense joy, - accompanied by dynamic insights that cause an intuitive rearrangement of thoughts and emotions on levels previously

unknown. We realize how these expansive insights intensify our growth and this infuses us with inspiration and invigorating energy.

As long as we are guided by our notion of growth, we exclude error, misunderstanding and doubt from our insights. While in this state, our comprehension is not obstructed by karmic blocks. With unfailing certainty we now pursue only those impulses that lead us to ever more comprehensive levels.

Though the removal of karma is the primary cause for the rising of our notion of growth, it can also be triggered by the intense study of scriptures describing the expansion of our consciousness.

Our notion of growth might also be activated by the guidance of those who are further advanced on this path. At times their mere presence will produce this effect.

* * *

The scriptures mentioned in the sutra are the books of the Jains that deal with the expansion of consciousness in the widest sense.

The scriptures originally were taught by the *tirthankaras*. *tirthankaras* (path-builders) are human beings who reached the state of omniscience and pass on their knowledge to others. *tirthankaras* are not yet liberated, but their liberation is assured.

According to the Jains only few people achieve the status of a *tirthankara* because an extraordinary stability of body and mind is necessary to retain the bodily form after reaching omniscience.⁴⁸

⁴⁸ The twenty-fourth and last *tirthankara* of the present world-cycle - Mahavira - was born 599 BC in Vaishali (India). He entered the

The chief disciples of the *tirthankaras* recorded their teachings in extensive works. Successive teachers wrote shorter works that communicated the knowledge in simpler form.

The sutra does not list any particular scripture, but only mentions the number of categories into which these works are divided. The categories are listed in more detail in the chapter 'THE HOLY SCRIPTURES OF THE JAINS'.

Here ends the part dealing with indirect knowledge.

The next part describes direct knowledge.

* * *

Direct knowledge is perceived straight, without the help of external factors or the circuitous route of our senses. We receive direct knowledge through

- 1 - clairvoyance and telepathy (*avadhi*),
- 2 - the direct perception of the mental activity of others (*manah-paryaya*) and
- 3 - omniscience (*kevali jnana*).

The first two channels give us access to limited knowledge, while omniscience is unlimited and encompasses the entire reality.

path to liberation at the age of 30 and reached omniscience after twelve-and-a-half years. He communicated his knowledge and experience for 30 years before he left his body at the age of 72.

Mahavira's teaching vitalized the path to liberation and had profound influence on Jainism up to the very present. During his presence as *tirthankara* he taught approximately half a million people and it is said that many of them reached liberation even during his lifetime.

Clairvoyance and telepathy (*avadhi*) arise in two different ways: we either gain them by birth or by removing the karmic blocks that obstruct their functioning.

S U T R A 21

भवप्रत्ययोऽवधिर्देवनारकाणाम् ॥ २१ ॥

Bhava pratyayo avadhir deva narakanam (21)

In the inhabitants of higher and nether worlds⁴⁹ clairvoyance (*avadhi*) is inborn. (21)

The inhabitants of higher 'celestial' worlds (*devas*) are beings, who by their own activities and inner attitudes attracted a certain type of positive karma that caused their embodiment in these regions. The bodies and life-circumstances of *devas* support their deep desire for happiness, unrestricted movement, health, supernatural abilities,

⁴⁹ The Jains distinguish four classes of beings:

- 1 - *devas* - beings residing in celestial areas;
- 2 - *narakas* - beings residing in infernal areas;
- 3 - human beings,
- 4 - animals and plants.

For someone born and raised in the Western cultural environment this division - and specially the first two classes - may promptly be relegated into the area of religious fable or attributed to a rather simpleminded higher instance of merit and punishment.

This type of mystical context is not meant by the Jains. The statement refers to the comprehensive classification of life-forms that is described in great detail in the second, third and fourth chapter of the Tattvarthasutra.

Western science - which presently influences most of our concepts of life - is not interested in these areas, does not examine them and therefore cannot seriously state anything about them.

stress-free communication, freedom from sorrow and fear, etc. Since the 'celestial' regions are inhabited by beings of similar disposition, these desires can be satisfied without being disturbed by beings with different objectives in life.⁵⁰

Incarnations in the nether 'hellish' regions are caused by excessive attachment to objects, persons, status etc., unrestrained longing for the property of others, feelings like 'All this is mine' and revengeful, cruel thoughts at the time of death. This manifests the deep desire of the being for further attachment to matter and for the experience of cruel, revengeful behavior. Since the nether, 'infernal' regions are inhabited by beings with similar attitudes (*narakas*), this desire can be satisfied without disturbing other beings who have different objectives in life. Once this attitude weakens, i.e. once the corresponding time-karma is dissolved, someone bound to this level will get the opportunity to leave the respective region.

It is important to understand that these two types of existence denote no (religious) concept of heaven and hell in the sense of 'punishment' and 'eternal damnation', or 'reward' and 'eternal bliss', but a mechanism that positions a living being in exactly those conditions of life that are ideally suited for his desires and present abilities. It is an optional path which everyone defines by his behavior in the present.

⁵⁰ In spite of all their - from the human point of view - extraordinary abilities, *devas* are not free from karma. Negative karma that might oppose the life-circumstances of *devas* has only receded into its latent state and will become active after the karmas that caused the celestial birth(s) are dissolved.

Celestial beings may become so immersed in the enjoyment of their 'heavenly' conditions that they forget to develop higher stages of awareness. But here also the karmic mechanisms ensure that their (temporary) stability is broken up for further progress.

The inhabitants of celestial and infernal regions are clairvoyant and telepathic by birth.

These abilities are a fundamental feature of their actual level of existence. They do not arise from the dissolution of karma. Any karma that blocks clairvoyance on other levels of existence becomes latent, inactive for the time spent in celestial or infernal regions.

Though the ability is inborn, *devas* and *narakas* do not all possess the same degree of clairvoyance. The differences mirror their individual degree of development. As human beings perceive right or flawed knowledge through their senses⁵¹, the *devas* and *narakas* also may take in right or wrong knowledge through clairvoyance.

S U T R A 2 2

क्षयोपशमनिमित्तः षड्विकल्पः शेषाणाम् ॥ २२ ॥

Ksayopasama nimittah sadvikalpah sesanam (22)

Upon the dissolution of the respective karmas human beings and animals manifest six types of clairvoyance (*avadhi*). (22)

Clairvoyance and telepathy are blocked by several types of karma. The strongest block prevents the rising of clairvoyance in the first place. The weaker blocks interfere with the clarity in which we experience clairvoyance and telepathy.

Clairvoyance and telepathy arise either by the complete dissolution of the respective karmic bonds, or when these

⁵¹ and from external sources

bonds become temporarily inactive. In the second case we experience clairvoyance for some time, but lose it again.

Clairvoyance arises when we dispel the prejudices and misconceptions that prevent us to perceive it (i.e. when we dissolve our respective obstructing karmas), - and by recognizing and amplifying this special perception each time it occurs. Once we activate our notion of growth (*samyag darshana*) it automatically identifies the activities that will further the rising of clairvoyance and telepathy.

Since *devas* and *narakas* also experience clairvoyance (by their respective karmas receding into an inactive state), the sutra specially emphasizes that human beings and animals obtain this ability by their own efforts only and not by birth.

There are six kinds of clairvoyance):

- 1 - Accompanying clairvoyance (*anugami*) is not lost, even if we move from one place to another or from one incarnation to the next.
- 2 - Fleeting clairvoyance (*ananugami*) is lost when place or circumstances change.
- 3 - Increasing clairvoyance (*vardhamana*) recognizes ever more comprehensive areas of life. It develops in the same degree in which our notion of growth grows. The growth of this type of clairvoyance is not limited.
- 4 - Decreasing clairvoyance (*hiyamana*) declines in the same degree as our notion of growth decreases. The areas we cognize are more and more reduced until almost no clairvoyant abilities are left.
- 5 - Steady clairvoyance (*avasthita*) neither increases nor decreases. It maintains the same degree in which it originated. Its scope and steadiness correspond to the stability and intensity of our notion of growth.

6 - Changeable clairvoyance (*anavasthita*) is unsteady like the waves caused by the wind. It develops or deteriorates in the same degree as our notion of growth increases or declines.

Through clairvoyance we receive true as well as erroneous information.

During our last incarnation before liberation (*moksa*) the fleeting, decreasing and changeable varieties of clairvoyance do not arise any more.

S U T R A 23

ऋजुविपुलमती मनःपर्ययः ॥ २३ ॥

Rjuvipulamati manahpariyayah (23)

Direct perception of contents present in the mind of others (*manah-pariyaya*) occurs in two intensities, as:

- **simple direct knowledge (*rijumati*) and as**
- **complex direct knowledge (*vipulamati*). (23)**

Direct mental perception (*manah-pariyaya*) is a state of our consciousness where we perceive the mental activity of someone else immediately in our own consciousness. Once this channel is activated, the boundaries that normally exist between the consciousness of two people fall away. Any communication through external means (words, gestures etc.) becomes irrelevant during this period, and distance in space also ceases to be an obstruction.

Direct mental perception is an excellent method of transferring multilayered insights in a highly precise way. Direct

mental perception is not subject to error and misunderstanding.

The scope and depth of the perceived insights corresponds to the degree by which our consciousness has opened to higher levels of perception (even if we are not fully aware of this opening).

Direct mental perception appears as the karmas that blocked its rising either dissolve or inactively recede into the background.

In this process our mind serves only as a level of reference that reflects the degree of realization of the other consciousness.

- **Simple direct knowledge** (*rijumati*) cognizes insights that extend from two to eight incarnations into future and past - of ourselves and other persons. It gives us insight into future and past incarnations.

Simple direct knowledge reaches up to a distance of about 12 km, but not beyond it.

- **Complex direct knowledge** (*vipulamati*) is not limited by time.

In space it functions in the entire range where human beings reside, but not beyond this boundary.

S U T R A 24

विशुद्धय प्रतिपाताभ्यां तद्विशेषः ॥ २४ ॥

Visuddhya pratipatabhyam tadvishesah (24)

These two intensities of direct mental perception (*manah-paryaya*) differ in their degree of clarity and in the possibility of losing this ability again. (24)

Two factors determine the degree in which direct mental perception manifests:

- **The clarity of insight we receive through this ability** depends on the amount of corresponding karma that has already been dissolved (or become inactive).

Complex direct perception (*vipulamati*) is far clearer than simple direct perception (*rjumati*). It recognizes far subtler forms of matter and dimensions of reality than is accessible to simple direct perception.

- **The possibility to loose this ability again** depends on our decision which path we chose to reach higher stages of development (see 14 STAGES OF DEVELOPMENT - *gunas-thana* 7).

We experience direct mental perception from the seventh to the twelfth stage of development. Stage seven (*apramatta virata*) offers us two paths for further progress:

- 1 - **The suspension of karma** - Here most of our remaining karma recedes into a latent, inactive state and thereby enables us to experience the character of the higher stages. The path leads only to level 11, from where we go back to the seventh level. The ascent beyond level 11 is blocked as long as our inactive emotional attachments (i.e. our existing latent karma) obstruct further advancement.

As long as we choose this path and avoid dissolving our remaining karma, we only experience the

first intensity of *manah-paryaya* - simple direct perception (*rjumati*).

- 2 - The dissolution of karma - Here we dissolve our remaining karma once and for all. This path bypasses level 11 and leads via level 8, 9, 10, 12, 13 to level 14 and then to liberation. This path is the only way to liberation (*moksa*).

Complex direct perception (*vipulamati*) - the second, far more comprehensive intensity of *manah-paryaya* - becomes only accessible when we decide to fundamentally dissolve our remaining karma, - i.e. when we dispel our remaining attachments to the world we presently experience.

The ascent from stage 7 to stage 11 cannot be compared to any of the mechanisms we encounter in stage 1 to 4. Most people remain very long in stage 1 to 4 and experience the advance into a higher stage as something extraordinary, highly arduous and problematic at times.

However, as soon as we reach the fifth stage of development, our unfoldment of consciousness accelerates. Some of the higher stages permit only a short duration of stay, but we now experience this constant shift from one stage to another as something natural and comfortable.

Our frequent ascent from stage 7 to stage 11 can be compared to practicing an approach run. Like in training high jump, it is a preparation for taking the last hurdle before the full unfoldment of our consciousness.

Yet the decision to dissolve all our remaining karma instead of just choosing its mere suspension is not easy. Though we clearly decided for liberation on stage 7, subtle emotional bonds still attach us to this world. As long

as we shy away from again assuming our majestic, unlimited self, we will not depart the limiting experiences we completed long ago, but still continue to cherish.

It is essential to understand that it is *entirely our own decision* at what time we dissolve our final bonds, - and walk the second path that inevitably leads to liberation.

S U T R A 25

विशुद्धिक्षेत्रस्वामिविषयेभ्योऽवधिमनःपर्यययोः ॥ २५ ॥

Visuddhi ksetra svami visayebhyo avadhi manahpariyayayoh (25)

Direct mental perception (*manah-paryaya*) differs from clairvoyance (*avadhi*) by

- its clarity
- the spatial boundaries in which it functions
- the degree of realization of the perceiver and
- the type of the perceived objects. (25)

Both, clairvoyance and direct mental perception reach into regions beyond the range of the five senses. Yet in spite of this common feature significant differences exist between these two channels of knowledge.

- 1 - **Clarity** - Direct mental perception cognizes its objects far clearer than clairvoyance and telepathy. It can penetrate into subtle and subtlest aspects, while clairvoyance and telepathy perceive only comparatively gross levels.

- 2 - **The spatial boundaries in which it functions** - Clairvoyance and telepathy extends to the entire universe, while direct mental perception covers only the range where human beings reside.

Though the extent in space in which direct mental perception functions is limited, it cognizes qualitatively far subtler dimensions than clairvoyance and telepathy.

- 3 - **The degree of realization of the perceiver** - Clairvoyance and telepathy can be obtained by all beings in possession of a mind⁵². Direct mental perception only arises in human beings who reside in the seventh to twelfth stage of development (*gunasthana*).

- 4 - **The type of the perceived objects** - Clairvoyance and telepathy can perceive all elements (living beings, matter, karma etc.), but not all of their modes.

Direct mental perception only cognizes what is present in the mind of a person. Yet the mind itself does not take in these contents. It only serves as background before which the perceived contents appear. It can be compared to the projection-screen of a movie theatre that enables the perception of a movie. But as the projection-screen does not influence the message of the movie, so also does the mind not influence the insights our consciousness receives through direct mental perception.

⁵² human beings, *devas* and *narakas*

S U T R A 26

मतिश्रुतयोर्निबन्धो द्रव्येष्वसर्वपर्यायेषु ॥ २६ ॥

Matisrutayor nibandho dravyesva sarva paryayesu (26)

Sense-perception and external knowledge perceive all six elements (living beings, matter, time etc.), but not all their manifested aspects. (26)

Sense-perception (*mati*) and scriptural knowledge (*sruti*) have access to only a limited number of the infinite multitude of aspects, forms and modes the six elements can manifest. These two channels e.g. do not perceive our interactive karmic field that consists of karmic matter (subtle molecules) and surrounds us permanently.⁵³

⁵³ The space that our body occupies contains an infinite number of karmic molecules. Karmic molecules are far subtler than space-points. One spacepoint may contain an infinite number of karmic molecules. (One spacepoint is exactly the amount of space that is filled by one elementary particle - *paramanu*. Elementary particles cannot be divided into smaller parts. They are far smaller than atoms.)

Activity attaches a number of these karmic molecules to our interactive karmic field, where they remain for a shorter or longer time.

If we stimulate a (limited) number of these karmic molecules (by our inclinations and intentions), they either cause immediate activity, or attach to our interactive karmic field to manifest activity at a later point in time (latent karma). Without this stimulation by activity - that connects consciousness (*jiva*) to karmic matter (*ajiva*) - karmic molecules do not have any effect, even if they take up the same space as our body.

Karmic molecules that are attached to us exist only within the limits of the body we inhabit during incarnation. Individual karma is not stored outside the bodily form. Karmic molecules are stationary, i.e. they do not move beyond the limits of the respective

S U T R A 27

रूपिष्ववधेः ॥ २७ ॥

Rupisva vadheh (27)

Clairvoyance (*avadhi*) perceives all that has form, but not all its variations. (27)

Clairvoyance is limited to the range of matter (*pudgala*) and does not perceive the non-material elements. Clairvoyance further does not extend to all possible aspects (of matter), but only to a limited range.

S U T R A 28

तदनन्तभागे मनःपर्ययस्य ॥ २८ ॥

Tadananta bhage manahpariyasya (28)

Direct mental perception (*manah-paryaya*) perceives infinitely subtler forms than clairvoyance (*avadhi*). (28)

Even the highest form of clairvoyance does not extend to the subtle areas that are accessible through direct mental perception.

body. Apart from manifesting activity they have no further function.

The activation of karmic molecules brings the latent energy they contain into a form that can be experienced. Activation totally dissolves the bond between our consciousness and the manifested karmic molecules. After their manifestation the corresponding karmic molecules have no more influence on our life.

Yet even the purest form of direct mental perception cannot perceive the entire multitude of all possible manifestations. The stages of development (*gunasthana*) where direct mental perception occurs, do not yet provide the kind of stability of consciousness that is a prerequisite for the experience of omniscience.

S U T R A 29

सर्वद्रव्यपर्यायेषु केवलस्य ॥ २९ ॥

Sarva dravya paryayesu kevalasya (29)

Omniscience (*kevala jnana*) perceives all elements and all their manifestations simultaneously. (29)

Omniscience perceives all elements and all their modes and manifestations in the present, past and future simultaneously.

Omniscience arises automatically when our consciousness is not restricted by deluding karma any more. Though we may still have other karmic bonds, they cease to effect the vastness of our consciousness. Once we reached omniscience, we never lose it again.

We experience *full* omniscience as soon as it arises for the first time. There are no different degrees of omniscience.

We do *not* experience omniscience *through our mind*, because the mind cannot direct its attention to a multitude of *simultaneous* events and objects.

Omniscience is not caused by any external means; - it is the complete unfoldment of our consciousness by itself.

As soon as we reach omniscience, we cease to experience the other four types of knowledge. We remain subject to them only as long as our consciousness is limited by karma.

As long as we are influenced by *time* (*kala*), we experience the world as a chain of events that lead us to ever deeper and more comprehensive insights. While in the first twelve stages of development, new insights therefore appear to us like the end-result of a sequence of events.

Yet a *time of emergence* of an insight only exists in those stages of development that are *below* omniscience. In the state of omniscience our consciousness is *not subject to the element time*. Concepts like 'consecutive', 'simultaneous' or 'sequence' cease to apply and there is no 'evolution' of insights as we know it presently.

Here ends the description of the ranges the different channels (types) of knowledge perceive.

S U T R A 30

एकदिनि भाज्यानि युगपदेकस्मिन्नाचतुर्भ्यः ॥ ३० ॥

Ekadini bhajyani yugapade kasminna caturbhyah (30)

One up to four channels of knowledge can be active simultaneously. (30)

We can experience up to four channels of knowledge simultaneously, but never more than four.

- **One** channel of knowledge. - When we are in the state of omniscience (*kevala jnana*), we experience only this *one* - all-comprehensive - channel.

The other four channels only operate as long as our consciousness is still limited by active or latent karma. Omniscience is characterized by the absence of karmic bonds. Therefore it cannot appear simultaneously with any of the other four channels of knowledge.

And furthermore - once we obtained omniscience, we have no need to experience knowledge by less perfect channels.

- **Two** simultaneously active channels of knowledge are sense-perception (*mati*) and external knowledge (*sruti*). All human beings (except the omniscient) have access to at least these two types of knowledge.

- **Three** simultaneously active channels of knowledge are either

- sense-perception (*mati*), external knowledge (*sruti*) and clairvoyance (*avadhi*), or
- sense-perception (*mati*), external knowledge (*sruti*) and direct mental perception (*manah-paryaya*).

Since external knowledge depends on sense-perception, sense-perception (*mati*) and external knowledge (*sruti*) always operate simultaneously - irrespective of the third channel that is active

- **Four** simultaneously active channels of knowledge are

- sense-perception (*mati*)
- external knowledge (*sruti*)
- clairvoyance (*avadhi*) and
- direct mental perception (*manah-paryaya*).

These are the only four channels available to living beings whose consciousness is restricted by karma.

S U T R A 3 1

मतिश्रुतावधयो विपर्ययश्च ॥ ३१ ॥

Mati sruta vadhayo viparyayasca (31)

- Sense-perception (*mati*)
 - knowledge from external sources (*sruti*) and
 - clairvoyance (*avadhi*)
- can also produce error. (31)

What causes error?

We experience error when we project concepts onto our perception that do not correspond with reality.

We experience error when our notion of growth - i.e. our flawless insight into reality - is not active.

The cause for error is not the process of perception itself. When we are guided by the notion of growth we perceive exactly the same forms, colors etc. as someone who is subjected to erroneous concepts. Error is caused when the processing of our perception is not oriented towards the purpose of reality.⁵⁴

Error manifests in the form of

- Doubt (*sansaya*) - Doubt rejects insights how to re-orient our ideas and actions before they can effect us. Even though a certain degree of (temporary) insight into the real mechanisms of this world exists, we reject

⁵⁴ An analogy illustrates this mechanism: When we pour milk into a vessel with a bitter taste on its own, then the milk adopts this taste. The cause for the change in taste is not the milk itself or the process of pouring, but the flaw of the vessel - its bitterness.

this offer of a new orientation of our understanding because of an acquired or socially opportunistic skepticism.

- Confusion of truth (*viparyaya*) - This is the firm conviction that our own concepts are right, even if they do not conform with reality.

Concepts based on flawed assumptions often appear surprisingly logical. As long as our thinking is trapped in such models, it is impossible to discover the flaws in their construction. Without questioning the model from an outside point of view, our awareness will stay within the limits of the erroneous concept.

Adhering to a flawed concept often has the psychological effect that we (consciously or subconsciously) check all experiences and events whether they fit into the corresponding model. Facts that do not agree with the presumed concept are ignored, interpreted as unimportant, forgotten or not even perceived - without us being able to control this process in any way.

- Carelessness, indifference, confusion (*anadhayavasaya*)

Carelessness is first of all a lack of attention towards activities that could further our inner growth. Yet in a wider sense any kind of negligence towards any person or object always also indicates a lack of respect towards ourselves.

Indifference is the tendency not to end a state of error and flawed concepts although we receive some (temporary) insight into the true mechanisms of this world. Though we feel the impulse to reevaluate our habitual behavior or to try out new types of action, we decline to follow this impulse because of laziness.

Carelessness and indifference - irrespective towards whom or what - block inner growth. The conscious and stable insight into more comprehensive levels of consciousness becomes only possible when we commit *the best* of our energies and abilities to this goal.

Confusion often mistakes cause and effect or assumes wrong causes. Many believe e.g. that passion is caused by matter (e.g. that it arises when we perceive a coveted object or person). In reality passion is caused within ourselves (by our own thoughts and emotions) and then projected onto an object of desire.

Error is either caused

- from within ourselves or
- by the influence of others - i.e. by accepting (believing in) concepts based on error.

Both variations block the ability to find our way to more satisfying and comprehensive levels of inner growth.

Objection: Our notion of growth cannot possibly *always* be active so that we always recognize true knowledge. To achieve this our consciousness and senses would have to be flawless and working perfectly. For someone, who has not reached liberation (*moksa*), this is not possible.

Furthermore - why should someone whose notion of growth is *not* active not also receive true knowledge at some time or another, even if this state does not last?

And finally - what about all those who discover unknown things e.g. in the realm of science and who achieve identical authentic results as other researchers. Should this not be called 'gaining true knowledge'?

Answer: There are two kinds of beings: those, who direct their life towards the achievement of liberation (*bhavya*) and those who mainly care about worldly life (*abhavya*).

Those who seriously aspire liberation, possess a special sense of discrimination: they know intuitively what knowledge and what lines of action will bring them closer to their goal. This does not mean to give up any part of worldly life, but only to arrange it in such a way that it enhances the growth of their consciousness.

All those who do *not* aspire liberation concentrate mainly on the material range of reality (sometimes on its more subtle aspects like art etc.). But as intelligent, clear and comprehensive the knowledge and perception of a worldly person may appear, they are and will remain temporary and do not contribute to their inner growth. Each so-called progress is accidental and unstable⁵⁵.

The next sutra continues to answer the objection:

S U T R A 3 2

सदसतोरविशेषाद्यदृच्छोपलब्धेरुन्मत्तवत् ॥ ३२ ॥

Sadasato ravisesyadya drichchhopa labdhe runmattavat (32)

Someone trapped in error does not discriminate between the real and the unreal. Like a lunatic he as-

⁵⁵ We ourselves decide to which class of beings we want to belong. We either develop our potential abilities which are available to *all* beings, or we don't. We are *bhavya* when we follow our notion of growth and actively strive for the unfoldment of our consciousness. If we do *not* follow this notion (*abhavya*) we consequently will not reach liberation.

signs meaning to objects and events that is subjected to his constantly changing moods. (32)

A lunatic who sometimes sees things clearly and calls them by their right name, is far from capable to discriminate between right and wrong on a *permanent* basis. All his knowledge - even if it is right at times - is *fundamentally* flawed.

All those who focus their energy onto material life are in a similar situation. No matter how comprehensive and refined their knowledge appears, from the perspective of the path to liberation, they have no insight into the nature of their consciousness. All their (materially oriented) knowledge does not support the unfoldment of their inherent potential.

The amount of worldly knowledge or material possessions has no effect on our spiritual development. The orientation towards inner growth is the decisive factor that arranges all our knowledge - how little it may be - in such a way that it leads us to new, more comprehensive levels of understanding and inspires an ever increasing and satisfying spiritual liveliness.

* * *

Here ends the description of *pramana* (total perception) - the type of insight that arises from the comprehensive perception of the features, qualities and variations of the elements as they manifest.

The next Sutra explains partial sights (*naya*), a systematic method to explore limited areas of reality.

S U T R A 3 3

नैगमसंग्रहव्यवहारर्जुसूत्रशब्दसमभिरूढैवंभूता नयाः ॥ ३३ ॥

*Naigama sangraha vayvahara rjusutra sabda samabhirudhai-
vambhuta nayah (33)*

Knowledge from partial sights (*naya*) is gained in seven steps:

- 1 - outlining an indistinct experience (*naigama*)
- 2 - recognizing the interconnected whole behind the experience (*sangraha*)
- 3 - identifying its functional elements (*vyavahara*)
- 4 - asserting what really manifests in the present (*rju sutra*)
- 5 - deepening the insight by verbally describing it (*sabda*)
- 6 - condensing this conscious insight into one clear image (*samabhirudha*)
- 7 - integrating this one clear image into our consciousness (*evambhuta*). (33)

Partial sights (*naya*) produce knowledge by examining a limited part of reality from a particular perspective. Partial sights illuminate special conditions or special qualities of objects or events. Partial sights focus our attention on one particular aspect of reality like looking through a magnifying glass.

The deeper and the more precise we penetrate a partial aspect, the deeper and clearer will be our comprehension of the entire level of reality of which this aspect is a part. Pro-

found insight into one single experience may positively reveal the mechanism of an entire level of reality, - as a part often reveals the whole behind it.⁵⁶

The sutra introduces a systematic method for exploring partial areas of reality. It describes seven consecutive and interdependent steps that lead us ever closer to the examined object. The last step is the full integration of the (new) insight into our consciousness. Like *pramana* the insight then becomes part of the unified basis we rely on for steering our life.

The method of partial sights is excellently suited for becoming aware of vague experiences. It produces even faster results if we use it in dialogue with similarly interested people. It becomes much easier to verbalize our insights (step 5), if we have a partner to talk to.

Since reality is a huge, complex object, there of course exists an infinite number of partial views (*nayas*) from which this object (reality) can be perceived. The Jains accept that every perspective - as global as it might appear - can always only represent a partial truth. They accept fundamentally that there are other perspectives and partial truths - apart from their own - that may be equally valid.

This understanding is the basis of a sovereign tolerance towards other views, opinions, religions and philosophies that looks for its equal. The fundamental recognition that

⁵⁶ Although the expansion of understanding from part to the whole happens on more intuitive levels and beyond intellectual patterns like logic or deduction, it is not less precise and systematic. We experience insights of this kind as sudden dynamic understanding, where mind and feeling encounter an intuitive re-arrangement of thoughts. All new ideas, concepts, inventions etc. this world ever produced originate in this kind of dynamic insight.

we cannot possibly comprehend reality in its entirety⁵⁷, makes us understand that others can also only see and interpret the world from their particular angle. They voice their views with exactly the same legitimacy we assume for ourselves.

This sovereignty and tolerance of the Jains make us realize how many other philosophies interpret the world from only one particular point of view while demanding an absolute and universal validity for their partial perspective.⁵⁸

Tolerance towards the partial views of others allows us to accept that even contradictory perspectives might well be in harmony with each other if we only regard them as different aspects of one and the same reality.

Yet partial sight (*naya*) is far more than a precise analytical instrument. The seven steps do not only help us to examine and broaden new insights, or to arrange reality in such a systematic way that its infinite variety can be more easily understood. The seven steps stimulate us to search for ever more subtle and more fundamental levels of understanding and this inevitably opens our consciousness to broader and broader regions of reality.

Partial sights (*naya*) generate knowledge in seven steps:

1 - **Outlining an experience** (*naigama*)

By outlining an experience we describe a part of reality without clearly defining it. We do not bother about de-

⁵⁷ except in the state of omniscience

⁵⁸ This ambition easily leads to the exclusion of extensive parts of reality. The missing parts are usually either plainly ignored or substituted by dogmatic beliefs that do not permit questioning. Philosophies or belief-systems with this kind of ambition therefore hardly ever agree with the unrestricted development of our full potential.

tails that we might not perceive distinctly (yet). Yet the mere outlining of an experience makes it so tangible that we become able to analyze it.

EXAMPLE: We perceive a new object. Something inside the object is ringing. If we speak to the object in a certain way, it answers.

'There is something.'

2 - Recognizing the interconnected whole behind the experience (*sangraha*)

Here we move our attention to the fundamental whole that lies beyond the individual details we perceived in step one.

We consciously withdraw our energy from perceiving details and direct it to the attempt to find what is behind it. It is the attempt to discover a coherent whole in all the many parts. This attempt, this energy we consciously focus is the crucial factor that ultimately enables us to identify the underlying whole.

EXAMPLE: We ask friends what the object might be. We understand eventually that this is a method to talk to people who are not in hearing distance.

'What is it exactly?'

It is essential to understand that we do not have to experience all details first before we receive an impression of the whole.

3 - Identifying its functional elements (*vyavahara*).

After we determined how the fundamental whole looks like, we now try to recognize its structure and its parts, - we identify its functional elements.

EXAMPLE: We find out that a cable connects a receiver to the object. We understand that there are keys through which we can input numbers that cause similar objects in other places to become active.

'How does it work?'

Vyavahara is the primary mechanism that shapes our present perception of reality. In its current state of karmic limitation our consciousness splits the totality of this universe into small parts and single action-sequences. Our present state of embodiment makes us perceive these consecutive single events in great detail and like in slow motion so we can physically experience how certain features of this universe work.

4 - Asserting what really manifests in the present (*rju sutra*).

The PRESENT is the only time that gives us access to reality. Everything we do, everything we experience, everything that confronts us, only happens in the present. Even if we think of the past (when we remember something), or plan the future, we do this only in the present. Therefore only what we experience here and now can give us information about an object, an event, or ourselves.

But in the present we experience not only mere temporary, fleeting manifestations. *Fleetingness* is only *one* aspect of the present. Every object or event - irrespective how fleeting it may be - always also mirrors the *totality of the reality* that originally caused it to manifest.

The statement 'I am happy' e.g. describes a positive experience in the present. The basis of this statement - the being that is cheerful, the cause and the type of its

joy etc. are implied without needing to be specifically mentioned.

All events that happen in the present also express everything that brought about their appearance. Origin, content, emotions, associations, projections, concepts, - all this resonates within us as well when we observe an event. That we are mostly unaware of this is simply because we never put our attention on this comprehensive aspect of the present and the immense potential it offers.

In the Western hemisphere we focus mainly on the fleeting aspect of the present. We see time as a line that comes from an infinite past and runs into an equally infinite future. In these seemingly gigantic masses of past and future the present takes up such a minute point, it seems almost a miracle that we perceive it at all.

Yet this again is only a concept. It is only our very idea of time that produces this devaluation of the present. We arbitrarily take that part of the present we feel familiar with and define it as 'the past'. We take our expectations and hopes and define it as 'the future'. The little that remains we either assign to the present or discard it because we don't know where to put it. It is only this concept that makes us regard past and future as so important and domineering that we allow them to overshadow major sections of our present.⁵⁹

⁵⁹ We usually even define ourselves on the basis of our past. We take bygone experiences and project them into our future. We regard events as inevitable only because we are familiar with the way they happened in the past and because we want to believe that they would do the same in the future.

The statement e.g. 'I am unhappy (now)' describes a negative experience in the present. The experience might be over in a sec-

We forget that *only the present* can give us access to *everything*. We neglect that behind its characteristic fleetingness we also perceive all the 'invisible' influences that led to the manifestation of a specific event or form in the first place.

In this fourth step we therefore examine how an object or event manifests in our present and how this actual manifestation mirrors its underlying 'durable' and comprehensive reality.

EXAMPLE: We purchase a telephone and talk to friends, relatives and other people who live far away.

We notice that this makes it easy to coordinate future events with others, that we receive information very fast, etc. We eventually observe that the possibility of fast and easy communication (by telephone) changes our life significantly. We recognize that the machine has an influence on us that extends far beyond the content of any individual telephone call - as important as it may be to us.

'What do we really experience now?'

We are not interested in theoretical knowledge that may influence us in some future time, but only in the real effect we experience in the present - but this in all its depth.⁶⁰

ond. Yet how often do we feel 'I will continue to be unhappy in all future' though we do not know the future and though all our circumstances could change at any moment.

⁶⁰ Only the very present is able to connect us to the foundation of an event. Only the immediate present gives us access to the entire reality an experience is made up of.

5 - Deepening the insight by verbally describing it
(*sabda*)

After we found out what really effects us, we intensify this experience by verbalizing it.

EXAMPLE: We tell others how the telephone works and what kind of opportunities it offers. This makes us more aware of our relationship with the machine and the effect it has on our life.

'How can it be described?'

One of the best methods to make us more aware of an insight is to express it in words. This process moves the insight right into the center of our awareness.

6 - Condensing this conscious insight into one clear image (*samabhirudha*)

The previous step made us aware of the insight we had. We now condense this insight into one clear picture.

EXAMPLE: We combine all individual aspects of the telephone into one single experience. We do not separate the individual components any more, but condense the entire complex mechanism of telephone-communication and all the possibilities it offers into one characteristic experience.

We also experience this when we are reading. We condense letters, words and sentences in such a way that on a higher level we perceive a comprehensive meaning that goes far beyond the range of single words or sentences.

'Yes, that's it!'

7 - Integrating this one clear image into our consciousness (*evambhuta*)

In step six we are still separated from our insight. Certainly - we acquired an ability, an expertise, assured knowledge, - but its application still requires special attention.

In this seventh step we fully integrate the condensed experience into our life so that it ceases to be separate from us. From then onwards we apply it without needing to raise special attention or energy for this purpose.

EXAMPLE: We regard fast communication to all points of the globe as a foundation of our life, - as normal as reading, speaking etc. We use this ability so automatically and comfortably that we put our attention only on the *content* we intend to communicate, but hardly ever think about the processes that make it possible.

Another example is driving. After we trained the ability and practiced it for a while, we never waste a second thought on the mechanics. We sit behind the steering-wheel and think about where we want to go, what to do when we arrive etc., but never how all the levers and switches operate or how the engine works.

'Let's apply it.'

This integration of (new) insights into our consciousness happens automatically when we discard all mental concepts, contents and emotions that we projected onto the experience *while developing or training* it, but that have nothing to do with the actual insight itself.

Driving a car becomes a natural ability when we stop thinking how much we liked or disliked our driving teacher, how expensive it was to get the license or what

we felt during the theoretical test. Once all superfluous content is discarded we only manifest the pure ability. And this means that the new insight or ability has become an integrated and effortless part of our consciousness.

The seven steps are far more complex than can be described in this book. They also constitute one part of a comprehensive system of logic the Jains developed over the last millennium and on which a number of voluminous books have been written. Whoever likes to ponder elaborate theoretical arguments should consider reading these works.

Yet our very own, direct experience is and remains the best key to new insights. Therefore this book mainly concentrated on opening practical access to this knowledge so that everyone may understand and apply it without outside assistance.

We only experience the path to liberation by progressing on the path itself, - never by the mere reading of books or by any kind of preliminary training that only moves our start further and further into the future and carries the danger of losing ourselves in an endless and superfluous preparation.

The path exists - but only to the extent WE begin with it.

TEXT OF THE SUTRAS

THE NOTION OF GROWTH

(Chapter 1 of the Tattvarthasutra)

- (1) - The notion which path leads to the optimal unfolding of our consciousness (*samyag darshana*)
 - knowledge that makes us recognize and understand this unfolding of consciousness (*samyag jnana*) and
 - the manifestation of these insights in action (*samyag charitra*)are the path to liberation.
- (2) Confidence in the purpose of reality is the origin of our notion of growth - *samyag darshana*.

- (3) Confidence in the purpose of reality and the notion of growth (*samyag darshana*) arise
- through intuition (*nisarga*) or
 - by the acquisition of a special type of knowledge (*adhigama*).
- (4) - The individual impulse of life - 'that what lives in a living being' - (*jiva*)
- the elements that do not possess consciousness (*ajiva*)
 - the mechanism by which a living being attracts karmic matter (*asrava*)
 - the binding of karmic matter to a living being (*bandha*)
 - the termination of the process that binds karmic matter to a living being (*samvara*)
 - the separation of karmic matter from a living being (*nirjara*) and
 - the liberation of a living being from all influences that limit his innate qualities and abilities (*moksa*)
- are reality.
- (5) We experience reality (consciousness, matter, time etc.) on four different planes:
- on the plane of articulation - where we use names and terms for the purpose of communication and social mechanisms (*nama*)
 - on the plane of mental structure - where we form our individual reality (*sthapana*)

- on the plane of all potentially possible features of the elements - this constitutes the basis for the identical perception of reality by different people (*dravya*) and
- on the plane of present manifestation - where individual features of the elements (or a combination of them) manifest in the actual present (*bhava*).

(6) We obtain insight into reality either

- by total perception (*pramana*), where we comprehend the totality of the appearance of the elements (i.e. their forms, qualities and features) as they manifest at a particular time, or
- through partial sights, where we perceive manifestations of the elements from a limited perspective (*naya*).

(7) We develop total perception - *pramana* - by

- directing our attention towards this particular ability of our consciousness (*nirdesha*)
- by recognizing and accepting the insights we gain as our own (*svamitva*)
- by becoming aware of its mechanisms and qualities (*sadhana*)
- by discovering what causes it to arise (*adhikarana*)
- by consciously prolonging its duration (*sthiti*) and
- by allowing *pramana* to influence our life (*vidhana*).

(8) *pramana* perceives

- the existence (*sat*)
- the qualities, features and functions (*sankhya*)
- the place of manifestation (*kshetra*)
- the immediate sense-experience (*sparshana*)
- the time and duration of manifestation (*kala*)
- the inner purpose and meaning (*antara*)
- the presently active qualities (*bhava*)
- the quantities and proportions (*alpa-bahutva*)

of all six elements and their manifestations.

(9) There are five types of knowledge (*jnana*):

- knowledge we perceive through the senses (*mati*),
- knowledge we gain from external sources (scriptures, teachers, etc.) (*sruti*)
- knowledge we receive through clairvoyance and telepathy (*avadhi*)
- knowledge we receive by the direct perception of contents present in the mind of others (*manah-paryaya*) and
- omniscience (*kevala jnana*).

(10) These five types of knowledge are generated by the two types of *pramana*.

(11) The first two types of knowledge are perceived indirectly.

- (12) The remaining three types of knowledge are perceived directly (without external help).
- (13) - Recollection (of something known before, but presently not in contact with our senses) (*smrtih*)
- recognition (of an object known before, when the object itself or something similar or markedly dissimilar is presented to our senses) (*sanjna*)
- induction (reasoning on the basis of observation) (*chinta*)
- deduction (reasoning by inference) (*abhinibodha*)
are considered sensory knowledge (*mati*) as well.
- (14) Sense-perception (*mati*) is caused by the senses and the mind.
- (15) Sensory knowledge develops in four stages:
- 1 - apprehension (*avagraha*)
 - 2 - forming a first idea of what has been perceived (*iha*)
 - 3 - evaluation of the perception (*avaya*)
 - 4 - consolidating and retaining the perception and its evaluation in our memory (*dharana*).
- (16) Sense-perception recognizes twelve fundamental qualities in the perceived objects and events:
- 1 - many (*bahu*)
 - 2 - few (one unit) (*eka*)
 - 3 - many kinds (*bahuvidha*)

4 - few kinds (one kind) (*ekavidha*)

5 - fast (*ksipra*)

6 - slow (*aksipra*)

7 - partial (*anihsrita*)

8 - complete (*nihsrita*)

9 - perceived indirectly (*anukta*)

10 - perceived directly (*ukta*)

11 - steady, permanent (*dhruva*)

12 - transient (*adhruva*).

(17) Sense-perception (*mati*) perceives not only the outer (visible) qualities of an element, but its entire content, purpose and meaning.

(18) Apprehension (*avagraha*) perceives objects and events in an indistinct way.

(19) Indistinct apprehension does not arise through the eyes or the mind.

(20) Knowledge gained from external sources (*sruti*) always originates in sense-perception.

There are two types of scriptures. The first type has twelve, the second one many divisions.

(21) In the inhabitants of higher and nether worlds clairvoyance (*avadhi*) is inborn.

- (22) Upon the dissolution of the respective karmas human beings and animals manifest six types of clairvoyance (*avadhi*).
- (23) Direct perception of contents present in the mind of others (*manah-paryaya*) occurs in two intensities, as:
- simple direct knowledge (*rijumati*) and as
 - complex direct knowledge (*vipulamati*).
- (24) These two intensities of direct mental perception (*manah-paryaya*) differ in their degree of clarity and in the possibility of losing this state again.
- (25) Direct mental perception (*manah-paryaya*) differs from clairvoyance (*avadhi*) by
- its clarity
 - the spatial boundaries in which it functions
 - the degree of realization of the perceiver and
 - the type of the perceived objects.
- (26) Sense-perception and external knowledge perceive all six elements (living beings, matter, time etc.), but not all their manifested aspects.
- (27) Clairvoyance (*avadhi*) perceives all that has form, but not all its variations.
- (28) Direct mental perception (*manah-paryaya*) perceives infinitely subtler forms than clairvoyance (*avadhi*).

- (29) Omniscience (*kevala jnana*) perceives all elements and all their manifestations simultaneously.
- (30) One up to four channels of knowledge can be active simultaneously.
- (31) - Sense-perception (*mati*)
 - knowledge from external sources (*sruti*) and
 - clairvoyance (*avadhi*)
 can also produce error.
- (32) Someone trapped in error does not discriminate between the real and the unreal. Like a lunatic he assigns meaning to objects and events that is subjected to his constantly changing moods.
- (33) Knowledge from partial sights (*naya*) is gained in seven steps:
- 1 - outlining an indistinct experience (*naigama*)
 - 2 - recognizing the interconnected whole behind the experience (*sangraha*)
 - 3 - identifying its functional elements (*vyavahara*);
 - 4 - asserting what really manifests in the present (*rju sutra*)
 - 5 - deepening the insight by verbally describing it (*sabda*)
 - 6 - condensing this conscious insight into one clear image (*samabhirudha*)
 - 7 - integrating this one clear image into our consciousness (*evambhuta*).

14 STAGES OF DEVELOPMENT

- *gunasthana* -

The Tattvarthasutra describes 14 stages (*gunasthanas*) human beings experience on their path to liberation. Each of these stages is characterized by the type of karma manifesting therein (i.e. our emotional disposition and the action-patterns we experience as the result), the time spent in a particular stage, the direction in which we pass through and how much our personal development is stimulated. Because of these differing factors each stage has a unique feeling and significance.

The initial purpose of this classification is to determine our own present stage of development. By knowing its features and mechanisms, we can deal far more effectively with those types of karma (themes of life) that are accessible on our actual level. This prevents us from wasting time and energy on efforts that may succeed only on higher levels.

Far more interesting is the fact that we often experience brief insights into 'higher' stages - irrespective of the level we presently reside in. Though initially the duration of

these insights may be very short, they offer us a taste how higher levels feel like. The insights - however brief they might be - prove vividly that we are capable of experiencing these higher stages. They tell us that it is well within our ability to reach these stages and that we - with corresponding understanding - are capable to develop them into a permanent foundation of our life.

Once we become familiar with the characteristics and mechanisms of the different *gunasthanas*, it becomes far easier to identify which of the levels open up to us when we experience insights into higher stages.

In contrast to other systems of development the 14 *gunasthanas* are not 'climbed' sequentially one after the other. We do not have to 'complete' one level first before we may progress to a higher one. The Tattvarthasutra describes an interconnected, complex structure that makes dynamic moves between distant stages an essential part of our development. The insights obtained this way provide an immense incentive to wind up the themes of the lower levels so we may turn our attention towards exploring higher and more fascinating stages.

We nevertheless should not judge higher stages as fundamentally 'better' than lower ones. In the end it is the experience of all stages that makes up the fabric of our character we are building during our bodily manifestations. While on a higher stage we might well decide that the - temporary - experience of a lower stage would be essential for our development and then consciously immerse ourselves into the greater emotional density and lesser comprehension of the lower stage for that very purpose.

Once we fundamentally understand the processes that unfold our consciousness, we never discount someone who

presently experiences a denser stage. We only feel profound compassion and appreciation for his or her particular path.

Only two *gunasthanas* (no. 1 and 4) permit an unlimited duration of stay. In all other stages we may remain for only limited time. This structure gives the *gunasthanas* an intrinsic dynamism which explicitly directs our life towards the liberation from all influences that obstruct the full unfoldment of our consciousness.

1 - The first stage of development (*mithyaktva*) is experienced as a state in which we are deeply absorbed by our convictions, emotions, our activities and by the events the world confronts us with.

Though subjectively we might feel that we are fully in control of our life, any closer and deeper look reveals a completely different picture:

- How often do we feel victimized by events we are hardly able to bear, less alone control?
- How often do we experience that any stability we achieve either breaks down sooner or later, - or solidifies our life so thoroughly that inside and around us nothing is capable of moving us any more?
- How often do we really feel satisfied by a situation we are in, or by the things we do and feel - and for how long does this satisfaction really last?
- How often did our emotions tumble us from highest happiness to deepest misery (and vice versa) in one single second without us having much influence on this process?
- How often is our attention either arbitrarily drifting from object to object like a butterfly in the wind, or so deeply absorbed in one particular concept, emotion or

event that the world outside this dense envelope is barely noticed.

We might feel perfectly normal and clear in this environment, but this is mainly due to the fact that we know no alternate state that may show us a different and more satisfying pattern of life. We live in a dense emotional cocoon we are hardly ever aware of. Though sometimes friends alert us to this condition, we know of no method to find our way out of this almost hypnotic state. None of the goals we pursue on this level leads systematically to the experience of higher stages.

It is a state of delusion and erroneous concepts of the world-mechanisms. All convictions, ideas, belief systems, viewpoints and opinions we found our life on retain us on this level - irrespective if we acquired them by our own efforts or accepted them from others. Even when presented with truth, we either are incapable of recognizing it or take it for false.

If we want to find our way out of this stage, we need to introduce new components to our life that open opportunities¹ for growth. Otherwise it lasts eternally.

When we leave this stage (even if only for brief moments of insights), we proceed directly to the fourth stage (*avirata-samyaktva*) without experiencing *gunasthana* two and three.

2 - The second *gunasthana* (*sasadana*) is an interim level we transit while falling from the third to the first stage. In this second stage delusion and error is beginning to take hold on us. The clear understanding we still could have regained in the third stage is already lost with only

¹ see 'ATTRACTION TO KARMA', Sutra 12, commentary

a vague memory remaining. The time spent on this level lasts only seconds.

3 - In the third stage (*misra*) understanding and delusion exist simultaneously in mixed form. We experience this as an ambivalent state where we have neither the intention to separate ourselves from delusion and error to regain the clear understanding of the fourth stage, nor the inclination to let go of clear understanding to move back to the familiar hypnotic environment of level one. As soon as this equilibrium is disturbed and a tendency towards clear understanding or delusion is started, we leave this stage either in the direction of the fourth *gunasthana* (*avirata-samyaktva*) or towards the second (*sasadana*).

The third level can only be reached from the fourth level. The maximum duration of stay is limited to 48 minutes.

The third stage has enormous significance for obtaining the clear understanding of the fourth stage. Here an important process takes place that stabilizes our access to the fourth stage.

Many of those dwelling mainly in the first stage experience flashes of insight into the fourth stage. This is usually a fleeting sensation that feels like a brief, but intense awakening from some long and almost hypnotic 'waking dream'. The experience is generally regarded as highly agreeable and is almost always accompanied by flash-backs to similarly fleeting states we experienced before. Many perceive these brief insights in regular in-

tervals (every 3 to 6 weeks). Most often they occur in times of comparative quietness.²

Once we understand the nature of these insights, accept them as real and direct our attention towards them, they become livelier and more intense. We remember them more clearly and the ambivalence of the third stage - the simultaneous perception of clear understanding and delusion - occurs.

If at the time this happens we make a conscious effort to regain the clear understanding of the fourth stage, a momentum is created that eventually, but unfailingly will cause the transfer of our consciousness from the first stage to the fourth - irrespective whether each single effort is successful or not.

The fact that the duration of stay in this stage is very short, should not cause disregard for its importance. The third *gunasthana* (*misra*) is a vital instrument for gaining access to more comprehensive stages of existence.

- 4 - In the fourth stage (*avirata-samyaktva*) we reach a clear, intuitive and true understanding of the mechanisms of this world. We are no longer subjected to the strongest form of passions that overshadows us completely, but our feeling of life may still be impeded considerably by the remaining three (milder) degrees. We undertake some efforts to steer our life towards liberation, but our attempts are not sufficiently successful to reach the fifth *gunasthana* (*desavirata*).

² Since the West offers no explanation for these perceptions, and since they seem so fleeting, we - after some brief irritation - usually store them in the same place as all the other unexplained experiences which accompany our life and which we generally ignore as well.

In this stage we still are subject to doubt and the attachment or rejection of material objects. In the first two phases of this stage we can lose our clear understanding (our notion of growth) again. In this case we fall to the third stage (*misra* - mixed truth and delusion), from where we may rise again to the fourth level or - passing through the second level - fall down to the first stage of total delusion.

The fourth *gunasthana* is reached directly from the first stage - without any intermediary steps. This level is experienced in three phases which differ significantly in their clarity of understanding. The differing character of these phases is caused by the length of time we stay in them.

- The first phase is characterized by fleetingness.

At the first occurrence of this phase all karma that prevents our ascent to level four becomes inactive (latent) for a short time. We experience this as brief periods during which all our desires, wishes, preoccupations, preconceptions and attachments that bonded us to the dense hypnotic envelope of level one cease to engage our attention. It feels as if we wake up from a deep dream that the hustle-bustle of daily life wove around our consciousness.

As long as we do not direct our attention towards these moments of awakening, they will continue to be so evanescent that only fleeting impressions remain in our consciousness. Though we experience this awakening with extraordinary clarity, our desire for experiences on level one is so intense that after a brief time (initially after only fractions of seconds, at most after 48 minutes) we fall down to level three, two or one.

By experiencing these insights repeatedly and by directing our attention towards them, this process loses its fleeting character. In consequence the initial strong contrast to the familiar hypnotic envelope of level one diminishes. Yet we now begin to notice that we loose ourselves less and less in the actions we are involved in. The clarity in our life increases and we become able to steer it far more consciously. Eventually we exceed the maximum time we can stay in this phase and thereby automatically advance to phase two.

- In the second phase some part of the karma that had only become inactive (latent) in the first phase, dissolves completely. This means we understand the limiting influence of some of our attachments, desires and preconceptions that held us on level one. We stop refueling these bonds with new energy and in consequence their influence on us ceases after a while. This lengthens the periods during which we are free from the hypnotic envelope that overshadowed our consciousness on level one.

Yet since not all blocking karma has been dissolved, we still lose this state of clarity from time to time. When - at the end of this phase - all obstructing karma (i.e. all preoccupations that attached our consciousness to the hypnotic envelope of level one) dissolves, we enter phase three.

- In the third phase there exist no more karmic bonds that may impede our clarity of understanding. To what extent we now put our new insights *into action* is the theme of the higher stages of development.

The transition from phase two to three is usually so gradual that we become hardly aware of it. Since in phase two we already experienced long stretches of inner clarity, we barely notice that we do not fall back to the level one any more. There is no special experience connected with this particular transition other than that the silver lining of this awareness of ourselves never disappears any more. We might e.g. still feel intense anger, but in contrast to level one there now is always a detached observer in our head who judges our actions and emotions with an impartiality and clarity we sometimes are almost unable to bear. We now *know* without fail when we do something detrimental to our growth (and still keep on doing it), but we also see clearly what activities and attitudes will enhance our development. The more we listen to this impartial part of us that became aware of itself on this level, the faster our progress to higher stages will be.

Though at this point we might feel unsure which activities will further our growth, this information will come to us the faster the more we desire to progress further.

Once this third and highest phase is reached, we cannot fall down to any of the lower *gunasthanas* any more. The more comprehensive understanding of the fourth level automatically dissolves our emotional attachment to all karmas (themes of life) of level one to three, which then dissipate *without manifesting much of an effect*.

Yet this third phase of the fourth *gunasthana* has a highly static character. We can easily get trapped in a complacency that prevents the ascent to higher levels

as intensely as when we were trapped in the dense emotional cocoon of the first level.³ If we do not put significant effort into progressing further, our stay in the fourth stage may last eternally.

The rise to the fifth stage (*desavirata*) only becomes possible when a strong and dynamic desire for further development exists *that is also transformed into action*. Only by consciously directing a significant part of our life-energy towards inner growth, the karmic stagnation of the fourth level can be broken and tilted towards the higher stages.

The attempt to orient our life along the Five Freedoms⁴ helps to set further development in motion. Yet in contrast to a wide-spread interpretation taking a *purely formal* vow to practice the Five Freedoms is *not* sufficient to cause the transfer of our consciousness to level five.

5 - The rise to the fifth stage (*desavirata*) accelerates our progress towards liberation significantly in comparison to any of the preceding stages. While on the fourth level we reached clear *mental* insight into the world-

³ This often manifests as the conviction that we are progressing well on our path to liberation, as a smug, self-satisfied contentment with the stability with which we seem to develop, as a tendency to observe rather than to actively shape our life, as a preference for ritual and symbolic action over the efforts needed for gaining real understanding or meeting challenges and as a reluctance to define higher goals.

Yet in reality this is stagnancy. What is lacking are the sweeping breakthroughs, the dynamic unfoldment of higher stages, the pronounced transition into far more comprehensive levels of our being. Though we might well gain insights in this static phase, we basically are unwilling to raise sufficient energy for further growth.

⁴ see 'FIVE FREEDOMS'

mechanisms, on this fifth level we use this clarity to consciously direct our action towards liberation. We are carried by an energy previously unknown which amplifies all our efforts. We feel a profound inner urge to venture to more comprehensive levels of understanding and recognize with increasing clarity which of the many potential lines of action in our daily life will lead towards liberation.

On this level the Five Freedoms are recognized as the main lines of action that lead in this direction. Although we succeed only partially and imperfectly to put them into practice, we fully comprehend the potential and scope the Freedoms opens up for us: We experience more intense levels of compassion and an increasing grasp on truth. We become aware how our entire environment supports our path. We sense the unfoldment of inner growth. The more we detach our emotions from material objects and their associated worries, the more we experience a freedom never tasted before.

The fifth *gunasthana* is mainly characterized by the following theme: Though we fully recognize the potential the Five Freedoms offer us, we consciously reject to transfer all this insight into action. This is caused by the manifestation of a particular type of karma (*pratyakhyanavarana kashaya*), which is the main issue of the fifth level. The more we understand that our progress depends exclusively on how much energy we invest into the realization of the Five Freedoms, the more our thrust in this direction is amplified by our surroundings. The more we realize that only we shape our development and the better we transfer this insight into action, the more we speed up our progress.

Temporarily our consciousness can still be overpowered by intense manifestations of karma which for a

time may dominate all our actions and moods. Unable to fully control our behavior during these outbreaks, the constant and perfect pursuit of the Five Freedoms is not yet possible. Therefore on this level the Five Freedoms are called the Five 'minor' Freedoms.

- 6 - The sixth level (*pramatta virata*) is the breakthrough into a vivid intensity of the present never before experienced. This breakthrough gives us the long desired and solid confirmation that our path really leads to levels of consciousness entirely unimaginable on lower stages.

With immense relief all concepts, preconceptions and emotions that previously locked our consciousness into narrow limits fall off like superfluous crusts. Our attention shifts from the fleeting aspect of the present to its comprehensive character. We now become vividly aware of all the contents, associations, origins, projections and concepts that always also resonate within us, when we observe an event in the present.

An euphoric feeling of all-encompassing universal love rises within us that is not constrained by personal expectations and demands any more. We feel like intoxicated by the potential that now opens up for our life.

We gain the power to send part of our consciousness to other places and inside objects to ascertain their true nature and to dissolve doubt.

We gain insight into significances and meanings that exist beyond the senses and that we were not conscious of before.

In each event we confront we recognize how much we can learn from it if we engage in it though our action, -

and how much energy we need to spend for gaining these insights.

We recognize to what extent our own feelings, desires and expectations influence our perception of reality. We now understand fundamentally how sorrow, fear and our emotional attachment to matter block the immense inherent capabilities of our consciousness. We comprehend that *only we* create our own path to liberation.

We see how unnecessary gossip directs our attention towards irrelevant themes and wastes valuable energy. We observe how this detains other people (and us) on the lower levels. We perceive how the contents of such chatter surround us like a cocoon that obstructs further unfoldment of our consciousness.⁵

Though we are still subjected to karmic manifestations which prevent the perfect realization of the Five Freedoms, these manifestations now surface only as mere temporary distractions. From this level on therefore the Five Freedoms are called the Five 'Great' Freedoms.

7 - From the seventh level (*apramatta virata*) onwards karmic manifestations cease to overshadow our consciousness. Though we still experience them, we are so

⁵ This means small talk about money, women, men, food, politics, crimes, accidents, enmities, art, the stupidity of others, sex, scandal, rumors, half-truths etc.

Small talk definitely has its purpose. As long as we are unable to directly fine-tune our relationship with others (which is necessary for the coexistence of human beings), small talk often represents the outer occasion, while the real emotional communication happens on deeper psychic levels (we use this mechanism on level 1 to 5).

Yet during a major unfolding of our consciousness any talk about themes of this kind significantly disturbs our process of expansion.

thoroughly established in the knowledge of our greater potential that they are unable to unbalance us.

More and more clearly we now perceive the mechanisms by which our consciousness forms our environment. We see how our emotions, desires and our attachments to ideas, concepts etc. act like magnets that attract the conditions in which these longings can manifest. We begin to use this insight creatively to structure perfect circumstances for our growth. In a most natural and automatic way this environment is in complete harmony with the Five Great Freedoms. All our being now orients towards unfolding the fantastic potential of our consciousness we sense within us.

We reach the seventh level as soon as the intensity of the 'intoxicated' state of the sixth level that swept through our consciousness like a conflagration, diminishes. We then oscillate for some time between the sixth and seventh level, until we get used to the far more intense energies and possibilities of the higher stage.

We experience the seventh level of development in two phases:

- The first phase is characterized by rapid oscillations between level six and seven. For a maximum of 48 minutes we remain in level seven and then fall back to level six. But here we also only stay for a short time before we ascend again.

While in this phase, we are unable to experience any of the higher *gunasthanas*.

- Once we enter the second phase of level seven, we are caught by a sweeping current that pulls our consciousness up into ever more comprehensive stages of development. Where before we needed effort to

reach the higher levels, we are now carried by a surge of boundless energy.

Our thoughts accelerate rapidly. Thousands and thousands of thinking hours become compressed to mere seconds, to mere flashes of mental images. Thinking and intuition merge into one. Towering consequences build on each other in our mind, but with a precise grasp on reality as clear as never before.

As we rapidly comprehend more and more of reality, we recognize limiting circumstances and instantly remove our bonds to them. We dissolve all attachments that impede our upward path, leaving parts of reality that kept us confined before.

Within minutes we reach dimensions of consciousness never experienced before and entirely unimaginable on the lower levels. Yet surprisingly enough, - the higher we go, the more natural and comfortable we handle the features of our consciousness that now unfold.

We reach this second phase as soon as we relinquish our attachment to familiar, but obstructing mechanisms of action.

The second phase of level seven offers us two paths for further progress:

- 1) *The suspension of karma*. On this path most our remaining karma recedes into a latent, inactive state. Since up to *gunasthana* eleven inactive karma does not obstruct progress, this enables us to experience the character of the higher stages. The path leads via level 8, 9 and 10 to level 11, from where we go back to the seventh level. The ascent beyond level 11 is

blocked as long as the existing latent karma (i.e. our inactive emotional attachments to experiences on lower levels) obstructs further advancement.

It is not required to experience level 7 to 11 sequentially. We may e.g. bypass all these levels to get a feeling for *gunasthana* 11 and then later go back at will to explore any of the levels we sidestepped.

2) The dissolution of karma. On this path our remaining karma is dissolved once and for all. It bypasses level 11 and leads via level 8, 9, 10, 12 and 13 to level 14 and then to liberation. This path is the only way to liberation.

In the seventh and higher stages pleasure and pain - as we knew them on the lower levels - still manifest as the respective karmas mature. Yet these feelings now hardly attract our attention. We presently are far more in touch with our own eternal character that was merely suppressed by our attachment to karma. With intense joy we feel radiant bliss nearby that attracts us far more than any pleasure or pain the lower *gunasthanas* might offer.

The seventh to the tenth *gunasthanas* appear less well defined than the stages one to six. This happens because we now change stages far more frequently than ever before and also because we pause only for short periods on each level. Initially it may even be difficult to identify the specific characteristics of each stage.

But as we follow the path of 'suspension of karma', that takes us rapidly from level 7 to level 11 and down again, we may at will stop at any of the *gunasthanas* we want to experience more closely. An analogy would

equal this to a circular subway-system that gives us the option to get in or out at any particular station.

From the seventh level onwards we are far more in control of our fate than ever before. We may at any time choose to dissolve our final emotional attachments to karmic limitations and to proceed to level 12 and finally to liberation.

But we also have the choice of temporarily going back to level four or five⁶, if we feel that the experience of particular events or emotions in these stages may enrich our scope of life and our further progress. During our return to these (emotionally far denser) levels we may lose much of our previous higher insights until only a vague memory remains. Yet our time on the lower levels is limited. After completing the desired experience, we automatically raise again to the higher level we came from.

We may further choose to accompany souls close to us on these temporary visits. In this case it is at our discretion how much we permit our consciousness to become limited by the restricting density of these levels.

8 - On the eighth level (*apurva karana*) entirely new and unknown abilities open up. Our consciousness explores levels of existence never before encountered. Though mild forms of passions still arise, we experience an immense delight in either dissolving them or checking their consequences. From this *gunasthana* onwards the practice of the highest form of meditation (*shukla dhyana*) becomes possible. *shukla dhyana* is the ultimate instrument by which liberation is achieved.

⁶ though never to stage one, two or three

- 9 - In the ninth *gunasthana* (*anivrita karana*) we experience an expansion of the abilities of the eighth level.
- 10 - In the tenth stage (*sukma samparaya*) we become capable of subduing or dissolving all subtle forms of greed.
- 11 - On the eleventh level (*upa shanta moha*) we begin to perceive the real splendor and majesty of our consciousness. We get a notion of the eternal, majestic being we really are beyond the limits of this universe.

We now experience our existence within the material frame of the body as only a small part of our being, - like a puppet-master who directs his figurines through an animated performance, but commands for himself an immeasurably greater, cosmic understanding that extends far beyond all meaning of the enacted play.

Our eyes look upon the activities of the corporeal part of our self with boundless loving understanding and in infinite peace and certainty that all paths our embodied self may choose will bring it to the desired goal, - irrespective of how much our 'small' self in bodily form understands this process, or how troubled it is by the events it confronts.

This subtle insight into the real nature of our existence becomes possible, because all our deluding karma is inactive (latent) in this stage. As we temporarily extricate our consciousness from all limiting influence, we get a first glimpse of what final liberation will be like. This temporary insight into our real, magnificent character enables us to consciously decide when to dissolve our last emotional attachment to limiting karmas. We now do not blindly enter an unknown, mysterious state,

but know exactly where we go, when we choose our path to final liberation.

At the end of our stay on level eleven the latent deluding karmas become active again and we go back to level seven, eight, nine or ten. From there we may ascend again.

Once we choose the path of complete dissolution of our karmas (see *gunasthana* 7), we proceed directly from level ten to level twelve.

- 12 - The twelfth *gunasthana* (*kshina moha*) can only be reached from level ten. On level twelve all karmas that produce delusion are dissolved. In consequence this causes the shedding of the last karmas which still blocked knowledge and intuition and caused obstructions. Shortly before reaching level thirteen, sleep and deep sleep end. Our consciousness reaches clarity unknown. We now are no more at the mercy of karmic forces, but the perfect master of our life. Our liberation is ensured.
- 13 - In the thirteenth *gunasthana* (*sayoga kevali*) we reach the state of omniscience (*kevali*). Our consciousness now encompasses the totality of knowledge. If we have bound special *tirthankara*-karma, we teach on this level. *yoga* - activity - is the only influence we still are subjected to. And this last bond we dissolve at our ascent to level fourteen.
- 14 - The fourteenth *gunasthana* (*ayoga kevali*) immediately precedes liberation. Here the last remaining karmas are eliminated. We liberate ourselves from status, emotions, body and limiting time and thereby dissolve all bonds to the non-living elements (*ajiva dravyas*). We leave the

fetters of the entire strata of bodily existence to regain full command of our greater, majestic self, - immensely enriched by our experiences in the restricted, separated circumstances we voluntarily and consciously subjected ourselves to.

At the moment of liberation we again assume what was never really lost to us, - pure unrestricted consciousness. We now fully experience its inherent nature - unlimited cognition, unlimited love, unlimited knowledge, unlimited power and unending bliss.

Each higher stage brings about a substantial acceleration of development and our ability to comprehend. This acceleration can be compared to the mechanism of an e-curve, which after a long, drawn-out starting-phase with only few small changes, increases rapidly in dynamic to reach the final state only a short time later.

Though we may spend long time in *gunasthana* one and four, we should not infer that the higher stages require an equal amount of time for their unfoldment. From the fifth *gunasthana* onwards we will experience an unprecedented acceleration of our development that cannot even be imagined in the preceding stages.

This acceleration is further supported by the fact that certain karmas fall away once a higher level is reached. The broader and more comprehensive understanding on the new level automatically dissolves the emotional attachment to these karmas (themes of life), which then dissipate without manifesting much of an effect.

This description is a brief overview. The attributes, mechanisms and inner logic of the *gunasthanas* are far more extensive and complex than can be covered in this

book. For deeper understanding it is recommended to read *Gommatasara - Jiva and Karma Kanda*.

One word regarding the classification of our own presently active stage of development:

It is safe to assume that almost everyone who reads these lines for the first time spends most of his time in the first *gunasthana* (*mithyaktva*). Yet your interest in the theme of this book indicates that your mind already opened up for opportunities that may lead out of the stage of perpetual delusion.

A realistic evaluation of our own position - without self-deception - is one of the few essential prerequisites for a successful journey to more fascinating levels of existence.

FIVE FREEDOMS

'The Five Freedoms' are five specific lines of action. Once we reach the fifth stage of development (*gunasthana*), we recognize them as the five major types of activities that lead to liberation. The Five Freedoms are:

- 1 - Profound understanding of all living beings and the feeling of natural compassion towards them. - We recognize our own aspirations and path in other beings. - This automatically produces a growing awareness how our actions affect others. It leads to a way of life that takes care that our actions do not restrict the vitality and expression of other beings and naturally avoids injuring or killing them.
- 2 - An intense craving for truth. - From the fifth stage of development onwards truth is perceived as all the mechanisms that lead from misconception and confusion towards liberation. This automatically produces the insight that communicating misleading information, false or unconfirmed rumors and vague statements is essentially damaging, since it promotes and maintains a state of deception in others. We realize that only by living and communicating truth do we create that refined aura of clarity around ourselves which enables us to intuitively

select the one path leading to liberation from the many possible alternatives of daily life. This attitude makes us naturally express truth in speech and action.

- 3 - The insight that *all* components necessary for reaching liberation already exist in our own immediate environment. - It is the awareness that we only need to identify and understand these components to receive optimal support. - Once this is recognized, we experience that everything needed for our own development is always provided in abundance. - This insight automatically makes us realize that the desire for the possessions of others is irrelevant and unnecessary.
- 4 - The intention to grow. - This is experienced as an intense desire for ever more comprehensive levels of understanding. It constitutes the main drive for our path to liberation. From the fifth stage of development onwards the intention to grow provides an additional energy that becomes stronger the more intensively we pursue this direction.
- 5 - The recognition that worldly (material) possessions play no significant role on our path to liberation. - We experience matter more and more as only a *partial* aspect of life, whose influence on our growth-process is continuously diminishing. This does not mean to give up all possessions. We only recognize the decreasing importance of material components for our path and consciously support this development.

From the fifth stage of development onwards we perceive clearly that these five broad lines of action unfold higher levels of comprehension and will eventually produce liberation. This recognition causes the inflow of a previously un-

known, additional energy that makes it easy to steer our life consciously along these five main lines.

The Conventional Interpretation

The above interpretation differs significantly from the way the Jains usually interpret the Five Freedoms. According to their understanding the Five Freedoms are:

- 1 - To be free from killing or hurting living beings - directly or indirectly.
- 2 - To be free from falsehood, deception, lies and dishonesty.
- 3 - To be free from taking what is not given voluntarily.
- 4 - To be free from the inner compulsion that allows sexual needs to govern our life.
- 5 - To be free from the attachment to material possessions.

The Jains generally interpret the Five Freedoms as 'vows'. Many of them believe that everyone who formally accepts these vows proceeds directly and automatically from the first to the fifth stage of development (*gunasthana*). However, this general understanding does not correspond with the mechanism of the 14 *gunasthanas* as it is described in the ancient scriptures. It rather indicates that much of the basic comprehension of this dynamic method of development has been lost - irrespective of how widely the erroneous understanding may be believed in.

A purely formal acceptance of these vows can never induce the transfer to a higher stage of comprehension and development. Certainly - taking the five vows will mark an initial point from where the development in this direction

may start, yet higher stages of development will only unfold when the karma that blocks their access is removed.

Unfortunately this flawed conventional interpretation often leads to much pointless world-renunciation, self-punishment and intense ascetic behavior.

The Five Freedoms are basically a method of dynamic growth that has nothing to do with sacrifice, self-denial or renunciation of the world. On the contrary - feelings of remorse, self-punishment, mortification etc., (which are often associated with sacrifice and renunciation) not only hinder our path to liberation, but may block it altogether. Self-denial, remorse etc. only indicate a negative bond to the objects denied and not a fundamental freedom from them. As hate is just proof of a highly emotional attachment to the hated person - only in a negative way - so also remorse, self-denial etc. only indicates a negative attachment to worldly objects. This negative attachment by itself will not bring any freedom or detachment from the objects resented. As long as any object of which we want to be free still plays a role in our life, we are not yet free from it.

Furthermore - any kind of self-denial or remorse always orients towards past experiences. It forever looks back to atone for deeds, emotions or thoughts gone by. It never inspires dynamic impulses towards future progress. But as long as we only strive for a freedom from something rather than aspiring a freedom to do something, true freedom is not yet found.

The Five Freedoms are never directed towards the sacrifice of elements of life, but always towards attaining new, more fascinating and broader levels of life. We are reaching this new state because it attracts us more than the old one. That the old state becomes obsolete in this process and falls away, is a side-effect, not the main aim. One example: When

we switch from a radio station with 'boring' music to one with a more interesting program, we would never regard this switch as 'sacrificing the boring music', but rather as a nice change for the better.

Following the lines of actions the Five Freedoms describe, does not waste energy on any attempt to abolish old conditions, but concentrates on the experience of new and more attractive levels of life. The shedding of old conditions and behavior patterns consequently happens automatically, without any forcing.

In the original Sanskrit the Five Freedoms are also called *sanyama*⁷ which translates as 'control' or 'steering'. The conscious steering of our life along the five lines of action described in the beginning is the real mechanism that leads towards the experience of higher levels of consciousness.

The Intention to Grow

The fourth freedom is generally interpreted as 'the confining of sexual activity'. Yet this restrictive understanding does not agree with the dynamism with which the other four freedoms propel the expansion of human experience and development.

The Sanskrit-word '*brahma*'⁸ that defines this freedom means 'growth', 'evolution', 'expansion'. It is not in any way connected to sexual sense-experiences.⁹

⁷ apart from the Sanskrit-word *vrata* (vow)

⁸ the text of the Tattvarthasutra contains the word '*a-brahma*', which means the negation of '*brahma*'.

⁹ Often the word '*brahmacharya*' is used instead of '*brahma*'. *brahmacharya* translates as 'the way of life directed towards growth' and is not connected with sexuality either. Only general usage associates *brahmacharya* with a restriction of sexual experiences.

None of the Jaina scriptures offer an explanation why the restriction of one particular sense-experience would produce mental growth. The few dogmatic statements about this subject do not conform to the precision of Jaina knowledge which usually offers highly detailed explanations.

For all these reasons it is probable that between the time and teaching of Mahavir (557 to 527 BC) and the writing of the Tattvarthasutra 700 or 800 years later, the word *brahma* has changed its meaning - as it happened several times in the history of Sanskrit.

Starting from its original meaning ('expansion', 'growth') *a-brahma* can be understood as '*an aversion to growth*'. Freedom from this is '*the intention to grow*'. This interpretation is far more in step with the dynamic expansion that is the main trait of all Jaina knowledge, than its reduction to sexuality alone.

It certainly is everybody's own decision to interpret *abrahma* in the conventional way. In our modern world this would mean 'to be free from the compulsion to constantly search for (new) sexual partners'. However, it is recommended to observe if practicing this interpretation brings about the desired expansion of consciousness.

Yet - irrespective how this is assessed - the 'intention to grow' definitely constitutes a major element of every path to liberation (*moksa*).

Shocks or deep disappointments often trigger the search for a new orientation in life. Yet a permanent change in our life's direction will only happen when this initial impulse is actively pursued, - the desire for change alone will not cause life to take a different direction.

REGARDING REINCARNATION

Karma is easily associated with reincarnation. Not without reason; - though karmic mechanisms definitely operate in the actual present, they are also placed in the context of successive embodiments. The West often looks upon this model with disdain and without much further consideration relegates it to the domain of oriental fairy tales - usually with a mild ironic smile.

But we easily forget that our precious Western idea of existence is also just a concept. The presumption that life is created from nothing to assume a brief corporal existence, then - at its end - is transferred to another type of body to remain rather eternally in heaven or hell, - this presumption originates in religious beliefs hardly accessible to logic.

Ever since science successfully propagated the idea that only what is physically perceived is permitted to exist, heaven and hell are dismissed. Our life (and our consciousness) was reduced to an accidental play of chemicals that neither exists before the body's birth, nor after its death and therefore could not possibly have any deeper meaning.

Now - *every* concept (whether originating in the divine, scientifically proven or practically tested) is always only a

mental model, a pattern projected onto a set of personal experiences. And these patterns always amplify some parts of the experience while ignoring or reducing the relevance of others.

Unfortunately many of these models exclude entire sections of reality which govern highly important mechanisms of life. It is impossible to discover these missing mechanisms from the *inside* of a concept with only the help of the concept's tools and logic. And it often is very difficult to even get a notion that something else exists *outside* the cherished model. As long as we rigidly adhere to one single model, there always is the danger that entire sections of reality are inaccessible to us.

Yet we cannot live without concepts. We need a conscious idea how to successfully handle life. But since no concept is capable to embrace the entire latitude, depth and dynamism of our existence, it doesn't make sense to take the *belief* in *one* system as the ground to principally reject the serious examination of others.

Karma and reincarnation are also nothing other than concepts projected onto this world. They are not holy and there certainly are areas in which they are not valid. Yet karma and reincarnation encompass a far broader section of reality than many other (Western) models. They open up experiences and mechanisms other concepts do not believe accessible.

Reincarnation manifests our craving to physically experience all the values, ideas and ideals we carry deep within us. Our present life is a very expression of this craving. What we encounter now IS reincarnation! We ourselves consciously attracted all the circumstances we experience at present. We ourselves created all the challenges, the ten-

sion, the impossible situations we confront now so as to bring out the values hidden within us. We did and do create this because we were unable to experience the fulfillment of these aspirations in previous lives.

Not everything we want to experience needs necessarily be regarded as positive in the social context in which we incarnate. It may well set us against norms, break rigid rules, upset ourselves and others, and much more, but nevertheless it is all driven by the same intense desire to manifest those values within us. Some of these values might find success, some might face opposition and become failures and some might die off in the process without even leaving a trace. But this is only *one* part of the learning process we subject ourselves to. The most important thing in all the actions, attitudes and emotions we create is *that we manifest them in the first place*, - is that we do not keep them bottled inside us, - is that we express what we feel within us in the physical world.

When we leave our present body, we take with us all the abundance of the experiences gained by these attempts, all the sagacity, the maturity, the sovereignty we accumulated within us. We might even choose to carry detailed memories into our next lives, but this is rare. Most of us favor to enter a new life unencumbered by the recollection of past events.

Death is a highly overrated experience. It is nothing other than leaving our physical body to experience different levels of existence. It is nothing other than what we experience while we are dreaming. When entering the dream-state, we certainly do not take our physical body with us. It remains behind in bed while we take on a 'dream'-body that feels as real as our physical body. And this 'dream'-body often enables us to experience action far more flexible, intense and exciting than our present conditions would ever permit. We

also never lose our identity while entering dreams, we always take the 'I' with us, - and we always feel completely normal and natural in our dream-identity while doing the most extraordinary things.

Though we all experience leaving our physical body several times during sleep each night, we usually would not connect our dream-experiences to the mechanism of death. Yet death is also nothing more than our consciousness leaving our physical body. Sure, it seems different because we do not return to this particular physical body and its familiar environment. But then - have we ever cared much about the many 'dream-bodies' we left behind when waking up? And as we were able to retain our identity, character and memories while entering the dream-world, we also take all our identity, character, wisdom and everything we are and learnt with us at our time of death.

The apprehension with which the West looks upon death stems from the idea that our present life is the only one we will ever have and that - if we botch it - we never will get another chance.

This is a good illustration how rigid concepts can limit our scope of life. As long as we believe that this is our only life, we tend to get as much physical excitement out of it as possible. Especially in our youth we focus almost exclusively on the joy our body can give us. We presume that older bodies would be less capable of doing so and that any non-material enjoyment would be much harder to reach. We hardly ever recognize or even hold possible that alternative dimensions of life may bring far more intense thrills and ecstasy.

Unfortunately this exclusive focus on material enjoyment often carries over into our more mature part of life. Instead of recognizing the limited range of material enjoyment and

progressing to more satisfying dimensions, we frequently attempt to re-enact particular positive experiences of our youth - often with less and less success. At the end of our life we then may look back in frustration and with the unspoken question what this was all about. Yet though we certainly will have another opportunity (another life) to figure this out, this is missing the point.

The far more interesting question is - where do we go from there? What is our intention after we leave our physical body?

All the values and ideas we were unable to express in our current life will leave an unfulfilled longing at our time of death. This longing has the tendency to make us again choose circumstances that offer the potential of fulfill this craving.

Yet there is no guarantee that our next life will bring the desired satisfaction if we do not actively take the concrete steps necessary for fulfilling our aspirations NOW. Only sitting and waiting for something to happen will never produce the desired results - and NEVER in this case means an endless repetition of our present circumstances.

So why not face the challenges we carry within us now? If our next lifetime will confront us with similar circumstances as we currently experience, what makes us hope that we will take up the opportunity then, if we fail to take charge of manifesting our ideas now, - in the very present?

The idea that this is our very first incarnation and that any successive life in a bodily context is re-incarnation, is illusory and illogical. There has been a long chain of lives before this one and there might be an equally long chain ahead of us if we continue to avoid manifesting our inner ideals and values.

Now is our point of power. Now is the only point in time when we are able to do something. If we transfer this power to another - future - re-incarnation, we basically surrender the control of our life(s) to an indeterminable future that may never arrive.

The fact that the theme of this book triggered your interest is the best indication that materially oriented themes do not engage your full interest any more and that you now are - consciously or subconsciously - searching for other and more rewarding realms.

THE HOLY SCRIPTURES OF THE JAINS

The Jains divide their scriptures into two main types, - those within the Jaina Canon and those outside it.

The Jaina Canon is divided into twelve parts: *Acara, Sutrakrita, Sthana, Samavaya, Vyakhyaprajnapti, Jnatridharmakatha, Upasakadhyayana, Antakriddasa, Anuttaraupadikadasa, Prasnavyakarana, Vipakasutra* and *Dristivada*. *Dristivada* has five subparts: *Parikarma, Sutra, Prathamanyoga, Purvagata* and *Culika*. *Purvagata* is divided into 14 parts: *Utpadapurva, Agrayaniya, Viryanupravada, Astinastipravada, Jnanapravada, Satyapravada, Atmapravada, Karmapravada, Pratyakhyananamadheya, Vidyanupravada, Kalyanana-madheya, Pranavaya, Kriyavisala* and *Lokabindusara*.

There are many works outside this canon, e.g. *Dasavalkalika, Uttarakadhyayana* etc.

The basis for these subdivisions is the stage of development of the authors of these scriptures:

- 1 - the *tirthankaras*, who teach from the state of omniscience,

- 2 - their immediate disciples (*sruta kevalis*) and
- 3 - the subsequent teachers and preceptors of the order of the Jains.

Of the many ancient scriptures of the Jains listed in the earlier manuscripts a major part has been lost during the last two millennia. Yet still a considerable number of works reached our present times intact. Unfortunately only a few of these works have been translated into Western languages and even these few are often out of print.

The following list contains a short selection of Jaina scriptures that deal mainly with the mechanisms of the expansion of consciousness and have been translated into English language:

- *Tattvarthadhigama Sutra* by Sri Umaswami Acharya, Original Sanskrit Text with Introduction, Translation, Notes and Commentary in English by J.L.Jaini, Volume II of The Sacred Books of the Jainas, Arrah, India, 1920.
- *Sarvarthasiddhi* by Sri Pujapada, The oldest commentary of the Tattvarthasutra, published under the title *Reality* by S.A.Jain, Vira Sasana Sangha, Calcutta, India, 1960
- *Dravya Sangraha* of Nemichandra, Original Text with Introduction, Translation, Notes, etc. by S.C.Goshal, The Sacred Books of the Jainas, Arrah, India, 1917.
- *Gommatasara - Jiva and Karma Kanda* and by Sri Nemichandra Original Text with Introduction, Translation and Commentary by J.L.Jaini, Volume V and IV of The Sacred Books of the Jainas, Lucknow, India, 1927

WHAT TO DO

Now that you have read the book, a question might arise: - How may I realize all this? - What can I do to unfold all these intriguing dormant states of consciousness?'

Well, - first of all, - regard your path to liberation not as a grave obligation or as a heavy load on you, but rather as an adventure, - a venture of discovery, - a quest for something fascinating and new, - an exciting journey of exploration. There is no compulsion whatsoever *not* to enjoy your venture. You are not obliged to behave grave, solemn and glum while reaching for the highest. It is nowhere stated that you are forbidden to laugh and dance and to have fun while achieving liberation.

Apart from the directions given in HOW TO DISSOLVE KARMA, there are six suggestions that will help you reach higher stages:

1 - Become aware of the many insights you already have

Put your attention on your moments of wakefulness, no matter how short and fleeting they are, - on these moments of clear understanding that give you

insight into broader and deeper meanings of this world. Become aware that these sudden breakthroughs give you vital information about the many dimensions of consciousness hidden within you.

Remember the emotions that accompany these insights, these breakthroughs and try to re-experience your feelings when they happened.

As a result you will experience more comprehensive understanding. It will stabilize and become a natural feature of your life.

2 - Go for the higher choice

If you can choose between a comfortable and an uncomfortable path, - choose the uncomfortable one, that's the right one for you.

See, you already know the comfortable path, because otherwise how could you possibly recognize that it is more comfortable. What we already know always feels more comfortable. It is *the unknown* that makes us feel awkward and uneasy. It is always the unknown that requires considerable more energy to face than the familiar.

Chose the uncomfortable path because it will lead you out of the known circle of your life, - it is the one that will break your boundaries, - it is the one that will expand the envelope in which you move.

3 - Really carry out what you intend to do

Initiate the actions you want to experience. Intentionally put yourself into the positions where you will really meet the challenges you decided to face.

Try out the path you see in front of you. Do change the components of your current life that you feel need changing.

But don't procrastinate, don't lose yourself in endless preparation. Go ahead through learning by doing.

And don't seek too much advise. Advise from well-meaning friends and relatives is one of the major reasons why well-intentioned projects fail. Especially the people close to you more often than not have not the slightest clue what you are reaching for.

You are shaping your very own, individual path according to your very own needs, - if you are serious about it, you definitely know what to do, - you don't need much advise.

And if you don't know what to do? - If nothing comes to your mind how to create your path to higher stages, then

4 - Make a list

Make a list of all the things you'd like to do or become in this life. Write down all your aspirations, ideals, dreams, fantasies, everything that comes to your mind, even if it looks utterly absurd to you and even if it seems not to lead into a spiritual direction:

Do write down the things you want to learn, to master, to apply.

Write down the situations you want to experience, the places to visit, the people you want to meet, to interact and to have fun with.

Write down the honors you want to receive, the amount of money you would like to have and what you will do with it once you attained it.

Write down the challenges you want to meet and how much excitement they should bring to your life.

Write down the adventures you want to experience, and how much risk you are prepared to face on these ventures without fixed outcome.

Never censure your thoughts while you are writing, - never evaluate whether your desires are feasible or not, whether they appear comfortable or not, whether you are afraid of them or not. Do not even put them in any sequence, - like what to do first, what takes priority, what is most or least feasible. This all comes later. In this first step just define that colorful part of yourself you have not manifested yet.

And never regard this list as closed. This is just your very first list, add more items at any time you like.

Arrange this list according to your preferences.

Then do whatever is necessary to playfully realize all your ideas, desires, fantasies and aspirations. -

Become all what you really want to be.

It will give you self-assuredness, charisma and power.

It will make you aware of new areas of life.

It will alert you to the ways you manifest your dreams.

It will unfold more comprehensive perception within you.

It will intensify your life.

This process frees you from your dormant desires. And at one certain point in time you will notice that you are what you ever wanted to be and to experience. Then your mind is be free to explore higher levels. Then you will perceive the higher avenues that were clouded by the dormant desires you now released through action.

There is no need to haste this process, but keep at it steadily.

5 - Become a vegetarian

Many experience more subtle insights once they switch to an exclusively vegetarian diet.

So - give it a try. Don't eat any kind of meat or fish for two solid months. You should feel the effect 4 to 6 weeks after the switch.

Then decide whether you prefer the clarity of mind, the lightness of your body and the easiness of comprehension you now experience to the fleeting taste of meat or fish - and make your decision permanent.

But - if you go for this test - become 100% vegetarian for this time. Don't break your intent even once or for any (social) reason. Otherwise you might not feel any effect.

Water only boils at 100° Celsius, - below this temperature nothing will start. Do it wholeheartedly.

6 - **Be courageous - don't fear**

And finally - be courageous in your quest for higher stages of development. Fear is always only acquired. And most of the time it is entirely groundless.

Sure, - any conscious confrontation with situations whose outcome is uncertain and unforeseeable may cause initial fear or apprehension. Don't be afraid of this 'initial fear' itself. Don't permit your fears to run your life.

You cannot escape fear by avoiding situations you believe will produce fear. This merely directs this negative emotion towards *other* situations, persons or objects.

Courageously confront your fears, realize how unnecessary they are, and then be free of them.

Pericles - Athenian admiral and statesman (495-429 BC) effectively defended Athens against overwhelming outside aggression and brought about its highest bloom. He lived true to his words -

***'Knoweth,
the secret of happiness is freedom,
but the secret of freedom is courage.'***

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July 1, 1999

Dear Mr. Kuhn,

It is a matter of great joy that your two books; "The Notion of Growth" and "Karma - The Mechanism", are being published to coincide with the 10th Biennial JAINA Convention. These new and modern translations of our ancient holy scripture - "TATTVARTHASUTRA" are most welcome at this time when America is turning spiritual and looking for answers to questions facing modern Life.

An ancient scripture has been translated from Sanskrit into simple, lucid language with years of scholarly hard work. Your books are making ancient intuition accessible to all that are seeking inner growth.

We hope that your readers will enjoy this ancient wisdom and radiate its message through their life in the new millennium.

Yours sincerely,

Devendra T. Peer
President of Samarpan Jain Sangh and
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Hermann Kuhn, born 1950 in Germany studied Indian philosophies and mysticism for extended periods directly at their sources in Asia. After his translation of the *Taitvarthasutra* - the central scripture of the Jains - he became recognized as one of the few experts of this ancient wisdom.

Parallel to his research he built up a computer company and a Europe-wide distribution network for modern water-purification equipment. For major corporations he developed and conducted advanced management courses. Since 1994 he works full-time as an author.

Hermann Kuhn lives in Greece, India and the USA. He likes mountain-trekking, jazz, organ music and holds pilot-licenses for airplanes and helicopter.

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