

THE POWER OF THOUGHT AND THE ESSENCE OF LIFE

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Although many Rosicrucian students are familiar with the expression “thoughts are things,” they may not be familiar with some of the science and mysticism behind this statement. We do know that our thoughts can affect our emotional health and thus even our physical well-being, and thus learning to master our thoughts for the benefit of ourselves and others might be one of the most important reasons that we continue to pursue our studies in the Rosicrucian Order.

Initiating Conscious Change

Our Order gives us knowledge of Cosmic laws and principles as well as the techniques whereby we can initiate changes in our own consciousness.

A.A. Taliaferro, a member of the Rosicrucian Order for over fifty years and a popular Rose+Croix University International (RCUI) Instructor, once stated: “The consciousness is initiated by changes in consciousness, consciously.” An avid, lifelong learner and music teacher, Taliaferro went by the motto of Alcuin of

York (ca. 735-804 CE): “*Disce ut Doceas!*” Or “learn in order to teach!” Alcuin was a trusted advisor to Charlemagne (ca. 742 – 814 CE), who traveled widely, and was revered for his extensive knowledge and wise counsel.

We understand that initiations can occur formally through the power of ritual performance, but certainly also through our own experiences and conscious thought. In this article, we will explore the power of thought and its relationship to the initiatory process, which has transformation as one of its key purposes.

The Microcosm and Macrocosm of Thought

The human brain-mind and the cosmos in actuality are indeed one unity, since Cosmic Intelligence informs both. The Cosmic, in Rosicrucian vocabulary, refers to the intelligence that pervades all, meaning all natural laws and principles that govern both the microcosm and macrocosm including the visible and invisible domains—all of nature down



to the subatomic level. As part of that infinite web of life, we humans are deeply connected to all of nature in a reciprocal relationship.

What we learn about consciousness and thought in the earliest Rosicrucian monographs is no surprise: our senses give us detailed and vast information about the world around us from our outward or objective self. Our subjective self synthesizes sensory information, memories, and emotions, and from these, creates thought forms. New research shows how neurons in the brain accomplish this task without “overloading.”

Donald Hebb, in 1949, famously stated, “Neurons that fire together, wire together.” We have learned a great deal since then about what scientists call “synaptic plasticity”—a phrase that refers to the changes in the amount of neurotransmitters that are released, the number of postsynaptic receptors available, and the resulting changes in synaptic strength—all of which is affected by our thoughts. Lack of activity weakens the signal, while repetition of a thought strengthens the signal. The lesson here is that the more we dwell on a particular thought or memory, whether positive or negative, the more the signal becomes entrenched or potentiated, what scientists call “long-term potentiation.” Our thoughts thus affect signal strength, and our thinking thus acts as a cause, rather than an effect. However, the more we repeat a certain thought, the stronger the signal strength becomes thereby smoothing the pathway; it becomes easier and easier to repeat the same thought.

This self-augmenting process might offer an explanation about why it is so difficult to change deeply held opinions and entrenched beliefs. Often, it takes an experience to jolt us out of some complacent or long-held idea. Moreover, by observing our own reactions and by



examining long-held beliefs, we can literally initiate changes in consciousness. Thus understanding “long-term potentiation” helps us to actually see the effects of our thoughts and subsequently to change the direction of our thought forms and habitual ways of thinking.

Once we discover that we are ruminating on non-productive or negative thoughts, it doesn’t mean that we are doomed if we don’t “switch these off.” Rather, we can focus on becoming aware of our thinking: to notice or witness our thoughts and what tends to trigger emotional responses. Likewise, we can take note of what makes us happy.

A “gentle gaze” allows us to reflect on our own thinking and discover how thoughts are as effervescent as soap bubbles—they come and go and can change direction through the power of our own will—not by force, but by our simply becoming aware.

Initiating change in our own consciousness affects individual behaviors. Even one person who begins to act more





responsibly due to self-reflection can set an example that has broader social implications, creating repercussions that can affect the macrocosm and how others also think and respond.

The Brain is not the Mind

Wilder Penfield (1891-1976), the American-Canadian neurosurgeon, felt that the physical brain is not the mind. In hundreds of human surgical experiments with electrical brain stimulation, he could not find the intellect or the will, that is, he could not find the master controller (the one who is moving the arm). He could only find motor function, sensation, and memory (not the one who is having the memories).

Another way of looking at this relationship of the human mind and the brain is that all we know and are aware of takes place in consciousness. Philosophers and scientists agree that all experience is qualia—that is, instances of subjective thought, based on our perceptions and subsequent interpretations. Several of our early Rosicrucian lessons bring home the fact that we can easily make mistakes based

on false perceptions and the resulting assumptions.

One could also say that the mind is greater than the brain. In Volume 14 (2020) of the *Rose+Croix Journal*, G. Bryan Young writes about various levels of consciousness and the brain-mind as a networked entity using a case study of a man who experienced coma after cardiac arrest and over time regained functional awareness and self-consciousness. The author suggests that waking (objective and subjective consciousness) is the result of the brain networking various parts that act in concert harmoniously. Young concludes that the brain is necessary for the mind to function, but he also suggests that higher aspects of mind are also dependent on universal or Cosmic Mind.

“Thoughts are Things!”

The Rosicrucian phrase “thoughts are things” applies not only to the electro-chemical activity that takes place in our brains, but also applies to the art of manifestation. One of the Cosmic principles that we study is the law of attraction. Applying this important law in a step-by-step method as taught by our

Order allows us to attract what we envision. Fortunately, there is also a gap between our thoughts and what we manifest with them, which allows us to alter the outcome.

Words are uttered both in the mind and through the breath, and the sounds themselves have great power as they resonate according to the octaves of the Cosmic Keyboard of vibrations. Florence Scovel Shinn (1871-1940) was an American artist and New Thought mystical writer. In her essay, “The Power of the Word,” she states, “Owing to the vibratory power of words, whatever man [a person] voices, he [they] begin to attract.”

Fearlessness may seem difficult, especially if we are accustomed to assuming and even voicing the worst. Rather, know that love and Inner Wisdom are our shield and guide to mastering our thoughts and thus our circumstances. Emperor Emeritus Christian Bernard has written, “Let us learn to let go, to not allow ourselves to be overwhelmed by the circumstances and conditions of this world. Let us constantly remember that at the heart of ourselves, as at the heart of all human beings, there forever stands a silent and watchful guardian: the Master Within.”

The Power of Meditation

Consistent meditators, even novices who begin a daily practice of meditation of ten to twenty minutes, show remarkable changes in brain function. The results can be even more pronounced if meditation is practiced twice a day, morning and evening, as suggested at the beginning of our Rosicrucian studies.

Benefits include improved neuroplasticity, memory function, emotional resilience, and reduced anxiety, plus an overall improvement in mood by lessening depression and worry.

During meditation, our focus shifts from the ego or small “me” to the Meta-Self, our Inner Self. A personal Sanctum or place set aside that allows us to take a break from everyday demands allows us to attune with the essence of life, the Divine Within. Such a consistent practice has a powerful effect on our well-being, our sense of happiness, and contentment with life, while offering a new confidence regarding the mastery of daily challenges. We begin to realize that the “real me” is that perfect inner essence, and thus we can better carry that knowledge with us always.





Becoming a mystic and mastering our thoughts is likely our life's greatest challenge. To manifest our lives in a constructive direction, we must attune with those higher frequencies of vibration, the highest of which is love. This may be difficult for some of us since we tend to see the flaws in others and in ourselves, and through repetition we magnify these thoughts. Contemplation of how we can improve is important, but so is suspending judgment by turning within to that Eternal Presence, the essence of all life.

The Purpose of the Rosicrucian Teachings, Exercises, and Techniques

The initiatory process allows us to evolve our consciousness consciously.

Through self-reflection, we are able to see what was in the past, how the past is related to the present, and how we can create the future. We can also keep in our minds the possible result we wish to manifest in the future: we can make it a living reality in the present, in consciousness. Thus, the

manifestation in the future can also be the cause in the present. All we have is now; this realization gives us greater power over our own thoughts and their consequences.

Our thoughts are immaterial, as is the “thinker,” the one who is having the thoughts. We can activate our thought forms by giving them emotional power. To create manifestations in the world, to better ourselves and to assist others, we can make use of breathing techniques, vowel intonations, and emotion as powerful drivers.

What is the Life Essence?

In the Rosicrucian teachings, there is an all-pervasive force that emanates from the source of life. This force has both positive and negative polarities relative to each other. These differ in rates of vibration in ascending octaves according to natural law and manifest the world of forms. In the study of vowel intonations, Rosicrucians associate the Vital Life Force with the positive polarity and the vowel sound RA. Spirit Energy, relative to the Vital Life Force, is negative in polarity and is associated with matter, electron fields, and the vowel sound MA. The intonation of OM or AUM is associated with Universal Soul, Cosmic Consciousness, and the source of Light, Life, and Love. Thus, we also speak of the triune nature of being.

In nature, in the body of any living organism, each cell is infused with the Vital Life Force even though the material elements change over time: for example, the caterpillar transforms into the butterfly; the acorn into the oak tree; the infant into the adult. The soul essence or consciousness of each, its immaterial aspect, is constant over time. At the time of transition, these aspects seem to separate, each returning to its primordial aspect.

There is but one Universal Soul pervading all. The human body, with its brain, is the vehicle for the expression of Soul Consciousness and the Life Essence. As developing mystics, we strive to bring our outer personality into better alignment with the Inner Self or One Soul.

This Essence of Life also powers our thoughts. Deep breathing creates excess energy that may be shared. That is, when we visualize and then “drop” a thought-form into the subconscious, we send it out into the Cosmic Source to attract the means to manifest our thoughts. We can create a sense of vitality and health in our bodies, but using vowel intonations at the same time also focuses the mind and allows us to resonate with other octaves on the Cosmic Keyboard both physically and psychically. Our Order teaches us the techniques whereby we can activate our thought forms and bring them into material manifestation.

The Cosmic Quintessence

What we call the Divine Essence has also been symbolized as the quinta essentia, the Fifth Element in spiritual alchemy, also named the Philosopher’s Stone. The Cosmic Quintessence is that “primordial emanation” of the Divine. The Great Mystery of our existence is the divine nature of this Cosmic Quintessence that animates us on all levels, while also suffusing the entire cosmos. It is the perfection of Soul Consciousness that resides at the very center of our being, often symbolized by the heart center, the dot in the circle, the rose in the cross.

The goal of spiritual alchemy is to harmonize with the Quintessence consciously. The

power of thought, combined with love at its highest level, draws all that we require to us. To emit this highest frequency, and to work on transmuting ourselves, we must also love ourselves.

When we surrender to this notion by focusing on the Divine Presence, the Quintessence Within, we can accomplish our every heart’s desire.

A Meditation Exercise

Please sit comfortably. Relax and take three deep neutral breaths. Follow these by breathing normally with longer exhalations to relax by activating the parasympathetic nervous system.

Now, concentrate on the heart center with the following invocation:



Nicomedes Gomez, The Cosmic Keyboard (1961).



“May the sublime Essence of the Cosmic that penetrates the entire universe and infuses my being, reveal Itself to my consciousness so that I and all others may benefit from Its purifying and regenerating power.”

So Mote It Be!

Video

<https://youtu.be/HnHWNdABioc>

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