

COURAGE AND CONFIDENCE ANYONE?

By Michael Robbins, Ph.D.

Now tell me truly, are you feeling the pressure? I don't mean the little pressures, encountered through the ordinary trials of daily living. I mean the great BIG PRESSURE, the pressure of the Divine Will transmitted through the spirit. Indeed, "Pressure is the Law of Existence" and the pressure is on.

The Law of the Pump is at work, and the downward bearing pressure from a host of coordinated celestial influences directed through Shamballa and Hierarchy into the New Group of World Servers and Humanity are more intense than ever.

Therefore, what is the logical conclusion: if the pressure is on, then, our spiritual opportunity to RISE is unparalleled.

Most golden opportunities pass unfulfilled because people are blind to the presence of the opportunity.

And let us remember that Saturn, the Lord of Pressure is equally the Lord of Opportunity.

And, these days, Saturn is found in the sign Aquarius -- the sign of group creativity and group progress, the sign of the New Era. So all progressive groups in the world, and, among them, the global esoteric group, are being called to accountability. The demand has gone forth that we actually, factually accomplish.

I know I am correct in saying that those in this room recognize both the pressure and the opportunity.

And surely there is within each of us a willingness to do our best, to play our part in the Divine Plan to the best of our ability.

So realizing that I am talking to a group of individuals of strong intention and good heart, I would like to get very practical (and very radical), focusing on why we accomplish and why we fail, with the view to making failure a thing of the past.

We have so much. We are richly endowed with intelligence and love, and we have an

important, even vital, message for the world. We are ready in so many ways, yet, still we fail. Why?

Cutting straight through the many reasons that may be based upon individual idiosyncrasies, I would say that our failures, when they occur, are based upon the lack of true Confidence and Courage -- both qualities of the Will.

Let us briefly examine these two concepts, and how they are rooted in the life of the spirit.

First, Confidence, for although when the two terms are spoken together, Courage usually precedes, Confidence must be established before Courage takes root.

What *is* confidence, and upon what is it based?

The derivation of the word Confidence arises from *Confidere* = con + *fidere*, to trust. (Confidence that the Hierarchy Stands)

Confidence, then, is a form of trust, reliance and faith. Confidence, when real, is based upon the experience of that which is reliable and better still, upon that which is infallible, i.e., upon LAW.

Is it not a great deficiency in the life of so many of us? I have found it so.

In the esoteric field, for instance, I have found that although people carry forth good works, and speak with a brave voice, they are often plagued by an inner gnawing doubt concerning their knowledge, their power, their effectiveness, and even their *right to teach* the esoteric arts and sciences.

Confidence, to be sure, is selective and it is possible for many of us to have confidence in relation to certain matters in our life and very little in others. But I have found a deep-seated lack of confidence in one's esotericism an area of vulnerability.

Perhaps this deep-seated lack of confidence is based upon a growing appreciation of the

incredible scope and extent of the occult/esoteric field. Such a daunting vision may make so many of us hang back, and fail to share what we *know* and what we *are* as fully as we might.

Perhaps we can be excused for falling victim to what the Tibetan has called a *spiritual inferiority complex*, for the further we go, the more vast the perspective, and the more humbling the realization of exactly where we stand in all this Cosmic immensity. How, then, to overcome this insecurity in our approach to a spiritual task which must be accomplished. For although the insecurity may not be readily visible to many, it curtails our spiritual radiance and magnetism and therefore undermines our effective-ness.

This is not to say that one should not "act as if," and that lack of confidence cannot be somewhat neutralized by "acting as if" confident. Indeed, today, a host of spiritual forces support those who DARE to spread the light, for the tide is on and the Hierarchical push is such that those who seek to give forth the wisdom are supported as never before.

Nevertheless, this moving bravely through fear and acting as if confident (admirable though that may be) is a poor second to that True Confidence which allows us to move forward with the courage of the fiery heart, and with the certain *knowledge* that one cannot possibly fall to one's ruin.

So we want the *real thing*, right? That which is genuine through and through, and does not merely seem so?

Upon *what* or *whom*, then, can one truly confide?

Again cutting through many possibilities, all of them legitimate to a greater or lesser extent, one can confide completely only in that which is infallible.

Here a consideration of the concepts of modification and variability (so common to Yogic and Vedantic philosophy) must enter, for one cannot truly confide in that which is variable or contains any kind of modification.

In short, one can ultimately rely only upon that which is absolutely changeless and real.

All this is to say that the only true and worthy source of absolute confidence is the one immortal SELF, the one changeless, infinite Absoluteness.

This may seem a radical statement, and indeed it is RADICAL, because it goes to the root. It leaps far beyond all the many valuable people, places and things upon which we have come to rely -- nor, from a strictly practical point of view, should we cease to rely upon

them. But I go to the heart of the matter because my time is limited and it is important that we get the point, or even more important, to the "pointless," the Zero, the Self.

All other sources of confidence are relative and variable. Everything else fails. Everything else is Maya. Everything else is change, variability and unpredictability.

The degree of confidence one may accord to anyone or anything, depends upon the degree to which that one or thing is representative of the One Immortal SELF.

How else than by confiding in the SELF, are we to navigate the great Ocean of Relativity, for surely we must deal with relativity for all eternity; during the infinity of Universal Manvantaras, we always have and we always will.

But even though it has been said, by the philosopher Heraclitis that "there is nothing permanent except change", in all this change there is a core of *changelessness*. And in THAT, SAT, the changeless absoluteness, Be-ness, Self-ness, which is the SELF of all selves, one can truly and rightly confide. And, ultimately again, only in THAT.

What I indicate here is the ultimate in reliability.

Naturally, confidence builds incrementally. There is what might be called a "Chain of Reliabilities", and surely we learn the meaning of SELF and begin to confide in it, we first learn to confide in accumulated FACULTY -- the powers and attributes of Self that have proven themselves reliable.

For instance, the one who was afraid to

speak, discovers he can speak, often because he is forced to; the one afraid to swim discovers he can swim, often because he is forced to; he who feared expression, discovers he can express, and that the source from which expression comes does not dry up...and so forth.

Throughout evolution, faculty increases, and becomes ever more subject to our will -- to our beck and call. We grow accustomed to its presence and feel it will not fail us.

But faculty can fail -- we can lose our health. We can lose our coordination. We can lose our ability to feel. We can be at a loss for words. We can even lose our mind (I know a few, not naming any names) -- however temporarily when seen from the reincarnational perspective.

No, true confidence must rest upon that which is NON-MAYAVIC, and the only thing in the UNIVERSE and NON-UNIVERSE which is NON-MAYAVIC is the SELF. Thus absolute Confidence rests upon the essential completeness of the eternal internal SELF.

Where is that imperishable SELF now?

Do you recognize It?

Do you realize It cannot fail you?

Now, with courage, on to COURAGE.

Courage = corage, curage, fr. cuer (F. Coeur) fr L. cor heart.

Therefore, courage is somehow based upon the heart, upon the desire of the heart, the love of the heart, and perhaps the maturity and experience of the heart.

It is based upon an understanding of the *essence*, the very heart of the matter.

Courage is a virtuous strength needed in war -- as it is in peace.

Well, discipleship is war aiming at a peace which only alignment with Shamballa can confer.

There is no discipleship without courage

The Tibetan, ever a practical Teacher, said of His disciples that He could wish they were a little more courageous....which may have been His way of saying that He could wish they were a *lot* more courageous.

For it is possible to be endowed with many gifts, but if courage is lacking, the waves of

world ignorance and rejection will beat back the expression of those gifts.

The Master Morya in the book *Hierarchy* identifies two kinds of courage -- the courage of desperation and the courage of the flaming heart.

Listen to this quotation from *Hierarchy*, 314:

Amidst the concepts of courage, the most invincible is the courage of the flaming heart when with full decisiveness, with full realization of achievement, the warrior knows only the path of advance. To this achievement of courage only the extreme degree of the courage of desperation is comparable. With the same speed with which the courage of the flaming heart overcomes the

future, desperation flees from the past. Thus, where the courage of the flaming heart is lacking, let there be the courage of desperation. Only thus can the warrior gain victory when the offensive is great. All other aspects of courage are of no significance, because in them will be halfwayness. This quality, next to cowardice and treason must be avoided.

The purpose of courage -- invincibility on the Path of Advance. This means undeterred accomplishment on behalf of the Plans of the Great Ones.

So then, understanding somewhat that upon which Confidence is based, what guarantees courage, and what will not?

Are we courageous disciples? If not, how may we become so?

Many worthwhile activities and pursuits prepare the way to courage, but are not the effective cause of courage itself.

Looking at the heart of the matter we discover that the exercise of courage is related to the achievement of a requisite intensity of desire and to the holding of certain values as supreme.

Courage is instilled when one desires something so intensely or values that

something so highly that he will settle for nothing else, and is willing to sacrifice many things (even things which most consider indispensable) so that one most desired or most highly valued objective may be achieved.

The achievement of a state of courage is actually a form of *selflessness* for the normal prudential considerations relating to the preservation of the little self and its so-called necessities are, temporarily at least, ignored.

But what is it, in essence, that gives individuals the power to confront probable or even certain loss, with a courageous disregard for that loss -- for this is a fact: *it is against the will of the spirit to tolerate loss of any kind*, except loss of limitation. So what is it that allows the truly courageous individual to tolerate the loss of that which the great majority of human beings desire and value most highly?

To answer this question let us again try the radical approach and go for the ROOT.

Perhaps, in the one animated by spiritual courage, there is a deep if not always conscious conviction that **WHEN ACTING BRAVELY FROM THE HEART, REAL LOSS IS IMPOSSIBLE**, and that apparent loss is, in fact, spiritual gain.

Ultimately, real courage is an **ACT OF THE ESSENTIAL IMMORTAL SELF**.

He who acts from SELF as SELF is brave and courageous.

All other forms of courage, while admirable in their own way as stepping-stones to the ultimate courage, are not the real thing. They do not carry the quality of invincibility.

For, in a nutshell, what is the one thing that can never be lost. Only the SELF can never be lost, for the SELF is **ALL THERE IS**.

So that truly courageous person is not only able, but eagerly willing to give up all things short of the SELF, for the sake of the greater realization and assertion of the SELF.

And as for giving up the SELF -- it is the one great impossibility. Therefore, ultimately, courage is based upon identification as the immortal, invincible universal SELF.

Courage, in short, is based upon the

realization of one's true *Identity*.

Cowardice arises from the overwhelming sense that something of supreme value will be lost. But the SELF is supreme, Who can lose the immortal SELF?

Now let us pause for a moment.

Think back upon your life to a moment of your greatest confidence and highest courage.

What stimulated it?

Where was your little self then? Were your eyes upon it? Or was self-forgetfulness involved?

Or in a strange sort of way, was SELF-remembrance also involved?

Now preserve the feeling or the sense of what it was like to be in that high state.

Now, let us carry this a little further.

Suppose now that you are immortal, which, in fact and in spirit you are.

Suppose, therefore, that you are indestructible, invincible, which in fact and in spirit you are.

Suppose that inevitably, your will must prevail, which it must and will, because you are the immortal SELF.

Suppose in fact that you are deeply confident in the SELF, and deeply courageous because your heart beats in unison with the one immortal HEART of all.

What would you do? What would you do?

Is there something important you are hesitating to do?

How would you change your life?

What daring act, inwardly or outwardly daring, would you perform, based upon the absolute courage and confidence of the SELF?

What non-essentials would you part with?

What new ground would you break?

What would you do on behalf of Hierarchy, Humanity, and the Plan?

Now is there anything seeming to stop you?

What do you fear should you advance? What would you lose! What would you have to give up?

Now again identify as the indestructible spirit and intensify your realization as spirit as you listen to the following words:

*More radiant than the Sun
Purer than the snow,
Subtler than the ether
Is the SELF, the Spirit within my heart.
I am that SELF, that SELF am I.*

Now still identified as the formless spirit, weigh the loss you fear, and realize deeply that if you act with authentic confidence and courage nothing can be lost except the limitation upon your freedom of spirit.

Visualize the liberating effects that will occur in your life when you act with courage and confidence, and now you intend to do.

Make a contract with yourself, and set a time during this month of initiative, an appointment with destiny, when you will take courageous and confident action based upon your realization of who you really are.

Now let's open our eyes.

Just imagine the freedom, the wider, freer life that courageous, confident action will generate.

The act has been conceived and the will is there -- however, the intended action has not yet been taken, but it needs to be taken. Right there, *in the taking*, lays the difference between futile good intentions and admirable spiritual accomplishment.

You know all of us must forge ahead. Not just as individuals but as groups.

Hopefully the University, as a group, can be as confident and courageous as the most spiritually inspired individual. The UNIVERSITY of the SEVEN RAYS and THE SEVEN RAY INSTITUTE has made a policy of attempting to be courageous -- to do what has not been done before, to do what many said it was not possible to do.

To take bold and constructive action whether or not the financial resources existed to back that: action.

We try to live by the Book of Daring and are frequently found Out on a Limb.

The newer schools of occultism are to recognize and implement the spirit aspect, the aspect of SYNTHESIS.

Here at the SRI/USR, we stress SYNTHESIS, the broad outlook. It's a new and necessary orientation in esoteric groups *synthesis and the spirit*.

It allows us to move ASSERTIVELY forward, with courage and confidence. Asserting the Fact of the spirit and of the synthesis, and of the Isolated Unity that embraces and contains all our efforts. All of us in all our many esoteric groups are part of a MOVEMENT that is an aspect of the major event occurring upon this planet -- Externalization of the Hierarchy.

What we are doing together goes against the established grain, but increasingly, the world will come along.

In order to perform this task with inspiration our courage and confidence must grow.

Surely our abilities will increase and we shall become ever more confident and courageous in the expression of those abilities, those faculties.

But, especially, there must be cultivated CONFIDENCE IN THE ONE ESSENTIAL SELF, and a COURAGE rooted in the realization of one's indestructibility and based upon a realization of the SYNTHESIS, an Isolation of the Unity of the Whole.

Now let each of us think soberly of our lives of discipleship. There are many demands upon us now, true. The demands, onerous though they may seem, are actually relatively small, but they will certainly increase, in this life or the next or the next, and the burden, albeit carried in joy, will be terrific by comparison with what we carry now.

If we are ever to become full members of the Spiritual Hierarchy of the Planet, we must become "Great Spiritual Toilers" on behalf of humanity.

For such work, and it looms ahead certainly, if eventually, for all of us, only confidence and courage based upon the realization of the One SELF will render us effective.

It is happiness based upon the true bliss of invincibility which, for those who are

spiritually *awake* is the right and natural state of mind, and which would turn us from the path of halfwayness.

So if we, as individuals and as groups are to cultivate courage and confidence, we must learn to think in a large way.

And the highest measure of these two desirable virtues comes to those who can think in the LARGEST WAY -- UNIVERSALLY. The greatest of all forms of confidence is SELF-confidence, confidence in the ONE UNIVERSAL SELF, in the I AM THAT I AM. And this SELF is the great HEART of the UNIVERSE, for the seat of the SELF, of the LIFE, is in the HEART. And it is by identifying with that UNIVERSAL HEART that there arises the truest of all forms of COURAGE, the COURAGE OF THE FLAMING HEART.

Michael D. Robbins, Ph.D., Co-Founder and an Executive Director of the Seven Ray Institute Inc., and University of the Seven Rays, is an innovative thinker in the field of Esoteric Psychology and author of *Tapestry of the Gods* Volumes 1 and 2. He is currently in the process of writing Volumes 3, 4 and 5 of *Tapestry of the Gods*. These volumes will focus on Esoteric Astrology and Cosmology.