

RENAISSANCE ON THE HORIZON

By Becky Dingle and Judi Laws

With stress having become an integral part of daily life, we are forced to bend the knee in obeisance to the fourth ray. This energy turns us every way but loose, thereby building spiritual muscle - a wrestling denoted by the ancient Greeks as *agonia* from whence we got *agony*.

"No pain, no gain" is the theme-song of planet earth, and nowhere is it sung more loudly and convincingly than by the droves of people exhibiting ray four in one or more of their vehicles. The chorus will swell as we approach the year 2025 when the fourth ray begins "to come slowly into manifestation" (EP II, p. 411). The authors have seen enough of it to know that its potency is already with us and conditioning us. It is readying the planet for a glorious Renaissance which will dwarf the magnificence seen in the city-states of Florence, Pisa, and Venice during the fifteenth century, as we will witness "the recurrence of the arts on a turn of the spiral far more exalted than any lately seen" (R& I, p. 244).

It is the fourth ray that prepares us for our eventual habitation on the buddhic plane. The two salient characteristics of this plane are discrimination and balance. Initially, we learn to discriminate between right and wrong. Then, usually through the medium of the arts, we develop taste. Later, we struggle to sort out the Real from the unreal. Finally, after the intellect has led us to this stage of refinement, we will, as Masters, function continuously on the intuitional plane. By then the intellect will have dropped below consciousness, being as vestigial as instinct presently is to us.

As the fourth ray occupies the intermediate point among the seven rays, it seeks to balance them. Harmonizing new ideas with the old is a ray four activity. This energy blends the Self with the not-Self, and the personality with the

soul, bringing unity to all forms of nature. No matter which of the five vehicles is on the fourth ray, the right cerebral hemisphere of the brain will be highly active, though not necessarily to the exclusion of the left hemisphere. The subjective half of the brain controls and directs rhythm and music, complex motor coordination, artistic abilities, perceptual gestalt, recognition of form-space relationships, symbolic structures, non-verbal ideation, etc.

Each of the four minor rays must be thought of as a combination of selected major rays. In the case of ray four, there is a blending of rays one and two, described by Bailey as "the will-to-love, expressed in harmony whilst in the midst of conflict" (*Discipleship in the New Age*, Vol. I, p. 258). It represents the eye of the hurricane, the center of spiritual whirlings (creating primordial atoms, raising Sufi dervishes to spiritual heights, etc.). Bailey also refers to ray four as "the will to destroy limitation" (*Esoteric Astrology*, p. 598) - limitation being the antithesis of ray two inclusiveness. Yet another way of describing the fourth ray is the overriding impulse toward resolution or at-one-ment of conflicting elements, whether within self or in the "world beyond one's skin." At times in one's life, the conflict may be predominantly active, alternating with periods of hard-won harmony.

The essence of the fourth ray conflict can be grasped quite easily when we understand the energy of the ray, depicted thus: There are periods of calm, harmony, inertia which trigger off, sooner or later, a conflict that builds until a "quantum leap" is taken out of the conflict bringing a resolve and restoration of peace and harmony. No matter how glorious the peace and harmony may be, the fourth ray will be impelled to improve it somehow, creating a

conflict which seeks a resolve.

One of the key functions of the fourth ray is to enable the individual to learn a lot, and quickly! Unlike any of the other rays, the fourth is constantly struggling for balance and is therefore in a sensitized state-open, agile, responsive and mutable. It is a commonly acknowledged fact that an animal in a state of stress will learn more quickly than one that is contented.

Another way of describing this energy is to view it as a struggle between outbursts of excited activity and periods of placidity or pleasure bordering on indolence. Fourth ray people (no matter what their level of evolution) experience both of these strong inclinations, and that is their "cross." At one moment, the high courage of a dashing leader, whilst at another, the ease of wine and cheese and Debussy, with no thought of the morrow. Now a wildly enthusiastic speculator; later, a Scarlet O'Hara saying, "I'll think about that tomorrow." Always one to indulge in bizarre capriccio (Dali with a ray four soul), the fourth ray person displays flare and colorful verve. An excellent color sense is preeminently theirs, whether it manifests in paintings, interior decorating or personal attire.

Both words, art and harmony, are derived from root words meaning "a joining." Ray four, the middle principle between the first and seventh rays, strives to blend the lower three with the higher three. For humanity, that will eventually involve the blending of the three lower kingdoms in nature with the three kingdoms above us. But for the present and for a long time to come, individuals with this energy will be more aware of conflict than art or harmony. That conditions on the planet are harsh and discordant is gainsaid. Therefore, those coming into incarnation with this energy in their complement have contracted to do their fair share of harmonizing dissonance, of blending opposing polarities, of beautifying the misshapen and ugly elements on earth. In a manner of speaking, such persons are microcosmic re-cycling plants who take the used, the trash, and transform them into

something clean and new and valued. To verify this transmutation process in human beings, one need only consider the life and work of a Shakespeare or Leonardo Da Vinci who had ray four in their mental bodies, as well as at the soul or personality level (EP II, p. 292).

Ample testimony to the process of *sturm und drang* culminating in at-one-ment is provided by numerous artists. The Mona Lisa, the works of the Impressionists (Renoir, Degas, Monet), and Rodin's sculptures are visual offerings of harmony achieved by aesthetic and enigmatic reconciliation of harsh this-worldliness with pacific otherworldliness. It may be easier to hear than to see the conflicts and the resolutions thereof. In passing, we might add that people who have this energy anywhere in their complement are extremely sensitive to sound, especially the spoken word. Illustrative of fourth ray music are Strauss' *Til Eulenspiegel*, Dvorak's *New World Symphony*, Liszt's *Dante Symphony*, Debussy's *Pelleas et Melissande*, Bach's chorales, Schubert's *Unfinished Symphony*, Stravinsky's *Pulchinelletta Suite*, Borodin's *Quartet #2 in D*, Vaughn Williams' *London Symphony* and *Fantasia on a Theme by Thomas Tallis*, Saint-Saens' *Organ Symphony*, Respighi's *Church Windows*, *Pines of Rome* and *Fountains of Rome*, and the music of Kay Gardner. Also, high drama whose essence is conflict is typically fourth ray.

Yellow is the color that corresponds to this ray. The base of the spine chakra where the kundalini force is seated is partially associated with ray four. The perennial problem of scholastics is geometrically embodied in this ray whose symbol is the squared circle. Before proceeding to particularize fourth ray characteristics of the various vehicles, a few additional points need to be mentioned concerning this energy:

1. Of the two rays that are "paramountly concerned with the evolution of man," ray four is one (TCF, p.441).
2. Yellow is one of the colors that came to us from the first solar system. "Yellow harmonizes, it marks completion and

fruition," as is apparent in autumn foliage (LOM, p.214).

3. Color, meaning "to veil," is the demonstration of manas-as-electricity on the buddhic plane (TCF, pp. 319-320).
4. The fourth ether is used as a medium by the violet ray (TCF, p.326).
5. It governs the fourth initiation which marks man's escape from the personality ring-pass-not on the fourth sub-plane of the mental plane, and to the intuitional plane (TCF, p. 114; IHS, p. 89).

Turning our attention to the manifestation of this ray at each level or vehicle, it is necessary to bear in mind that real live people often exhibit characteristics that do not match "textbook" criteria in every detail. In spite of our attempt to clearly distinguish the characteristics for each level of functioning, you can be sure that there are some fourth ray mental bodies that display features described under "personality," and vice versa, and so on to overlapping amongst other levels. Since we are on the cutting edge of a developing discipline, we speak from our experience and not ex cathedra, sharing what we have, and not what we haven't.

Ray Four Soul

Fourth ray souls who are presently incarnated are potentially the prototypes for the "Reniassance men" of the next century. Whether these people develop that potential is a matter of their own free will. It is a difficult assignment given to these individuals who often rightly feel that they are "strangers in a strange land." The rigors of a current life on this ray are rendered doubly difficult. On the one hand, they are here to harmonize elements in a hostile world that regards aesthetic matters as non-essential frou-frou. On the other hand there is, in these souls, the greatest sensitivity to the visual and auditory environment – milieu, which are for the most part, jarring and offensive.

Souls on this ray are almost as puzzled as

those on the first ray as to why they are here. Until they have found their work, all that they can tell you about their lives is that there has been one horrendous crisis after another, or that their lives have been lonely outposts of struggle, even though they may have been surrounded by families, friends, colleagues. Whether the sphere of activity is the arts (Shirley Maclaine) or social politics (Eleanor Roosevelt), you will find Herculean struggles, within and without, to fuse seemingly irreconcilable elements into a oneness of peace and purpose, and to somehow beautify the planet. Oscar Wilde, another fourth ray soul, said that he felt his best art was the way he lived his life.

No matter how smooth and comfortable their lives may be, they will confess to an existential schism within, an abiding and deep sense of conflict. In questioning such souls as to why they're on the planet or what they would like to be in the next life, typical answers are:

"Set an example"

"Inspire others through my singing"

"Be a gifted musician"

"Pull together art, theater, dance, color into productions exploding people's categories, leading to uplift and healing"

"Be a painter in the New Renaissance"

"Fly around and sprinkle fairy-dust on everyone"

"Teach people how to resolve conflicts - all fights are fights about love"

"Continue in the mediation business"

Owing to the blending of rays one and two, there will frequently be responses about healing and teaching, as well as about "fun for me," artistic soloist, etc.

These people are, quite literally, citizens of the world who owe allegiance only to the human kingdom on its way to the kingdom of souls. Fourth ray souls may feel a deep rapport and/or attachment to Austria, Brazil or Germany the souls of which are on this ray. Whether these people physically traverse the

globe, or mentally travel through the best minds in the world, their purpose is the same: to put together the many odd pieces of some jigsaw puzzle of life, and, in so doing, to add beauty to the world. Though they may be led to serve humanity or other kingdoms on earth, their search is for a synthesizing harmony that is higher than the mere absence of discord.

Ray Four Personality

According to the calculations of Dr. Douglas Baker, 25 percent of humanity is manifesting ray four in the personality at this time, giving us a glimpse of what is to come in the next century. Watch these people struggle valiantly, the while maintaining a surprising degree of composure and elegance of life-style. A fair number of those who come into this incarnation with ray four personalities use that energy only for 30 or 40 years. While balancing their karma, and rounding out their personalities, the fourth ray serves them well. The opportunity to extricate the individual life from conflicts dovetails with the opportunity to develop this energy for the next century by dissolving dissonance in this century. Once this has been accomplished by certain individuals, they change the energy of their personalities to an extroverted ray in order to express the art and/or harmony achieved in the first half of life. One fairly common pattern that calls for such a change is the following ray complement:

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The soul is on the second ray, the personality on the fourth, the lower mental vehicle on the fifth, the emotional nature on the sixth and the physical-etheric nature on the third. With this ray complement, the introverted line of energy (soul II-personality 4-astral 6) makes these people perfect set-ups for depression. Their overwhelmingly subjective, inwardly-oriented approach to life prevents them from externalizing their dearest hopes, wishes and plans. What is needed is to shift the personality on to an extroverted ray. Usually a change to ray one or ray four is the

most advisable.

The fourth ray personality characteristically "gives up" when thwarted in the materializing of a plan. Unlike the third ray personality, who will find a way around the obstacle, or the first ray who will crash through it, the fourth ray response is to say, "It's useless! I can't go on! There's no way to do it now - it can't be done!" Both Scorpio and Taurus are fourth ray signs - Scorpio rules blocks (until pressure builds up and the individual emerges suddenly, out of the dark), and Taurus rules things stuck in a rut (until the rut gets too uncomfortable and improvements are needed).

Whether the personality is on this ray for part or all of a life-time, it will demonstrate the art of living. Contrasting sharply with most people who grab a bite to eat at night, ray four personalities are more inclined to "sit down to dinner." Frequently, even though they may be dining alone, the table will be candle lit, and other traces of gracious living such as classical music will be apparent. No matter how limited their financial means, their homes display good taste in color schemes, spatial arrangement, wall decorations, lighting and touches of class. Even if they are people who are rarely at home, the home is terribly important as a sanctuary, a retreat, a quiet place amid the noise.

Not infrequently, ray four personalities are involved in musical or artistic activities as either participants or observers/appreciators. Participants usually have two fourth rays, whereas observers/appreciators have just one in their ray complement. With Congreve, they understand that "music hath charms to soothe the savage beast, to soften rocks, or bend a knotted oak." And no other ray can boast more success at plumbing the depths of truth-in-beauty, as Oscar Wilde so perfectly expresses:

It is through Art and through Art only that we can realize our perfection; through Art and Art only that we can shield ourselves from the sordid perils of actual existence.

Ray Four Mind

The simplest way to identify this energy is to ask whether the person's life has been characterized by a succession of mental crises or conflicts. With ray four in the mental body, these individuals suffer untold mental tortures. Yet when each crisis has been resolved, the person will tell you that, while it was awful, s/he learned a lot from it and is therefore grateful for the experience.

Virtually everything toward which the mental body is directed is viewed as a possible key to a sought-for unity amongst other ideas whirling around like flotsam and jetsam in the mind. When that unity or synthesis does drop into the conscious mind, it does not arrive via logical thought-train. It is a wholeness that, like Minerva springing full-grown from the head of Zeus, appears intuitively and is "all there" without any mental fabricating or constructing. Ray four minds will make a show of analyzing the factors in a problem, but they almost always arrive at conclusions and decisions intuitively.

Because of their extreme sensitivity to sound, they may do their best mental work, be it creative, intellectual or problem-solving, while listening to appropriate classical music. Don't expect these people to do any meaningful mental work where cacophony is rife. They just can't think when phones are ringing, people are noisily chatting and walking around, and office machines are clattering away. In super-gifted people such as Winston Churchill, the mental body is often ambivalent between the fourth and fifth rays. This type of individual can utilize both manas and buddhi, intellect and intuition, as needed for different aspects of a problem.

Ray Four Astral Body

The ray four astral body is rare, but when it is encountered in a ray analysis, it is virtually unmistakable. This is because there is an almost total lack of emotional responsiveness to anything encountered in daily life, e.g. relationships, traffic jams, other people's incompetence, unfair treatment, etc.,

coupled with an almost exclusive emotional expression through music or some other form of art. It is a paradox that the fourth ray, which rules humanity itself, should be so seemingly "inhuman" when manifesting in the astral body.

The fourth ray astral body is unflappable. It will not rise to anger no matter how provoked (sixth and first rays); but neither is there the compassion and empathy exhibited so beautifully in the second ray astral. These are individuals who are ideal for acting as a liaison or refereeing-totally unmoved by the usual range of human emotive situations. Unwittingly, they can provoke others because of their lack of temper!

Ray Four Physical

Not until the early 1980s was ray four "discovered" manifesting in physical bodies. The percent of people with fourth ray physicals is estimated to be negligible. They exhibit characteristics of both rays two and seven, tending to be petite, but with good, firm muscle tone and without the delicate skeleton of the pure second ray physical.

Like seventh ray bodies, they cannot wear unmatched clothes or too much clothing; they carry youthfulness into old age, and are very agile. Although they tan beautifully, they lose it quickly. Similarly, they bruise easily but heal quickly. Continuous balancing within the dense body is reflected in their need to have exactly the right amount of food. Too little or too much produces discomfort, leading some to call these people "finicky."

Extremes of heat or cold, as well as temperature changes are instantly and distressingly registered in fourth ray bodies. One woman said she sneezes every time the temperature changes, and has been told she has "thermal allergy." Such adverse reactions extend to noise or intense light. In spite of their sensitivity, they can be very strong, developing muscles easily. Yet they cannot take much alcohol, and after the administration of drugs for surgery or childbirth, it may take weeks to regain left-

brain functioning.

Often identified as "natural beauties" with harmonic disposition, their eyes and ears are attracted toward anything beautiful or unusual. Conversely, they cannot stand to feel dirty.

No discussion of those upon the fourth ray would be complete without mentioning the fear that they experience (especially when the fourth ray is placed in the mental body). It is a fear that seems to be associated with the conflict aspect of the ray, the result of which can send the individual into a no-man's land where s/he is blind, alienated and threatened by the unknown. But what this fear elicits is, of course, its opposite-courage-and there is no other ray that can match the fourth for this quality.

On the bigger screen, we see Man as a balance - the middle principle between the three lower kingdoms and the three higher. No other kingdom shows a mixture of as much crude matter with as much spirit. Herein lies the rationale for this kingdom's having a ray four soul, ultimately destined to blend brute and buddhi.

Becky Dingle and Judi Laws have studied closely with Dr. Douglas Baker, author of numerous books on astrology and the seven rays. Judi is the author of Esoteric Psychology: The Science of Human Energetics, and is also a founding director of the esoteric organization, Amethyst. Becky is a teacher and counselor in the field of esotericism. As Dr. Baker's assistant, she was instrumental in devising and supervising the Clairgate College Correspondence Course in esoteric studies.