

PROBLEM SOLVING

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There are any number of reasons why we experience problems in our lives: a lack of understanding of a given situation; insufficient control of our emotions; overemphasis on one minor condition; underemphasis concerning a more serious matter; and so on. The ways and means by which we deal with our problems often have far-reaching effects on our lives and the lives of those around us.

We might say that a problem is an unsettled matter demanding a solution, or at least a decision. It is normally an issue that requires concentrated thought or personal skill for its satisfactory solution. It usually entails doubt, uncertainty, and sometimes fear. There are various kinds of problems, such as social problems, problem neighborhoods, or problem children. The type of problem that we will focus on in this discussion is personal problems and their means of solution, using mysticism as a practical tool for accomplishment.

Problem solving has become a basic kind of thinking and has received much study by psychologists and other students

of human behavior, such as students of the Rosicrucian Order. Problem solving activity falls broadly into two categories: one emphasizes simple trial and error; the other requires some degree of what is sometimes referred to as insight. The

mystical connotations of this latter method shall be developed shortly.

In trial and error, the individual proceeds mainly by exploring and manipulating elements of the problem situation in an effort to sort out possibilities and to run across steps that might bring her closer to the goal in mind. Trial and

error activity is not necessarily overt, as in one attempting to fit together pieces of a jigsaw puzzle. It may be you, as the one attempting to solve your problem, simply reflecting on the dilemma and mentally testing possibilities. You may put forth a certain amount of intellectual exertion aimed at finding an answer to your question, or at least a means of achieving a desirable, practical goal. You want peace and harmony to reign within, with respect to the particular problem you have in mind.





You may decide to resort to the method utilized in some research institutes – namely, the use of diagrams to assist you in seeing the whole situation in a clearer light. Diagrams can be used as guides to explore the overall structure of a problem and to reveal possible courses of action that might otherwise be missed. In some cases, you may realize, upon studying your schematic, that your problem situation is too complicated to solve immediately. You may then find it necessary to approach your problem, in steps and degrees, rather than in a single move.

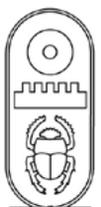
Before going any further, let us not forget the extreme importance of identifying your final objective. If your objective is vague, too general, or even overly idealistic, you may never arrive at a satisfactory conclusion. Therefore, your goal must be realistic, sufficiently clear, and precise enough to serve as your basis upon which to proceed. Unless your situation has been well explored by you, choices are not likely to be obvious once your work begins. Thus your first move is to develop as clear a formulation of your objective as possible. You may even find it necessary to consult with one or more persons whom you consider qualified in your area of

concern at this stage. But the question of your overall objective should never really be out of your mind.

It is interesting to note at this point that some elementary schools and high schools emphasize problem-solving techniques as a regular part of their curriculum. This provides children with the skills and attitudes to locate, define, and analyze problems as found in school or in community life. Extracurricular activities, such as student clubs and student government, serve to reinforce problem-solving skills. This becomes an additional frame of reference to the students for understanding to some extent what is expected of them in later life. This makes them more fully equipped as future world citizens.

Those who are creatively endowed often decide that the best solution to the problem they have in mind, if it is of sufficient intensity and general interest, is to write a play, novel, or essay that exposes and brings to light in a realistic manner some actual social ill. Such themes as racism, anti-Semitism, mysogyny, greed, or corruption have all been dealt with extremely effectively by several writers. Protest songs or plays often stimulate thought and discussion on the part of the audience. These provide encouragement, which relieves, to some extent, the pressure of the problem which plagued the creator of the art form.

Regarding the use of intuitive insight on personal problems, we must first stress that you should have a clear understanding of the various principles or factors that bear on the problem and solution sought. You then actively consider what is required by the problem – that is to say, you note how its elements seem to be interrelated and seek some rule or guideline that might lead directly to the goal. Mental discipline and a willing flexibility should characterize



your thinking as you guide yourself step by step according to your plan, and altering the plan itself, if need be, as you move toward a solution.

But there often comes a time when we are stumped for a solution. Even after the keenest and most penetrating consideration of a problem, we seem at a loss for an answer. At that point we should consider letting the problem go and handing it over to a Higher Judgment. In other words, we should release the entire issue to the subconscious mind for help and guidance. This is, admittedly, not an easy thing to do. People tend to want to hold on to problems and seek guidance from the reasoning mind only.

However, if we do successfully release our problem to our inner self, this greater guide within will at some time – be it hours, days, or weeks later – bring forcefully to our conscious mind an exalted judgment concerning our problem. The solution or method to proceed will seem completely right. We will entertain no doubts or hesitancy concerning the information given. In addition, there will be a kind of upliftment of our emotions or an excitement accompanying the message. The intuitive knowledge will either flash suddenly into the consciousness or slowly unfold in mind in progressive stages. This is the intelligence of the Cosmic Mind, which is resident within the inner subconscious arena. When this useful information enters our outer objective consciousness, it is commonly called a “hunch” or intuitive “feeling” – or to use current scientific terminology, which is just as accurate, “insight.”

It must be emphasized here that the inner self will not aid us in the form of intuitive insight for problem solving unless we have first applied ourselves in some way, objectively, to solving our own problem. In other words, preliminary

groundwork, as well as sincere effort and desire, must precede our handing over of the problem to the subconscious mind, for there to be the appropriate helpful insight. So, the more we know about our situation, the deeper we have penetrated and availed ourselves of problem-solving techniques as previously discussed, the more all-embracing we can expect our help to be from the Cosmic Mind, should we need it.

At any rate, the entire study of intuitive guidance is actually only one aspect of authentic mystical teachings. The overall nature of humanity – physical, mental, and spiritual – should be explored in great depth through years of study. The nature of the Cosmos, mental creating, development of psychic faculties, the strengthening of will, the elevation of character and personality, visualization, meditation, and many more categories, will aid in enriching the student’s life as these types of teachings are meant to be put into practical application in daily life.

