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MOMENTS WITH FRIENDS.

What is the sense of smell; how does it act; do physical particles engage in the production of the sensation, and what part does smelling play in living?

What is called smelling, is a perception of certain properties of objects. These properties act on man through his organ of smelling, whence they reach the olfactory nerve. The nerve communicates the subtle element, which is in the physical object, to an entity in the human body. This entity is the being which perceives the nature of the object through the information which it receives through the nerve of smelling. The entity is an elemental, a nature ghost of the class of earth ghosts. The smelling elemental is connected with and is one of the beings which enter into the constitution and structure of the human elemental. The smelling elemental is of the element of earth, and for that reason can perceive properties of the nature of earth, which are exhibited by physical objects. So the answer to the questions "What is the sense of smell and how does it act?" is that it is a being, an earth elemental within the human elemental in the physical body, which smelling elemental perceives the nature of certain attributes in physical bodies, which are called odors or smells.

These attributes are perceived by smelling only. Smelling is all this elemental does. Smelling is its food, which nourishes and sustains it. It perceives certain attributes and conditions of the earth element outside. Smell is the invisible, subtle earth element, which enters into the constitution of the smelling elemental and so into the human elemental.

Physical particles of the object which is perceived by its smell enter into the production of the sensation of smelling. Not alone particles which belonged to the physical object but also such particles of the earth element as had flowed through the object, cause the sensation of smell. The earth element is like a tide, flowing back and forth through the object. The flow is made up by infinitesimal, invisible particles which seem to be a compact mass; but if the inner sense of sight is keen enough and the mind can analyze the flow, that flow will be perceived as being made up of particles.

When the physical atmosphere of the individual contacts the physical atmosphere of the object smelled—that atmosphere being made up of the particles mentioned—the particles are perceived in the atmosphere of the smeller, when they contact the nerve of smell. Smelling is the distinctly physical characteristic of objects perceived. Every physical object has its own distinctive physical atmosphere, in which particles are suspended and circulating. But few objects can be smelled. The reason is that the perception by the sense of smell is not trained and not fine enough. When the sense of smell is trained, as in case of the blind, many objects can be smelled which are now generally regarded as being without odor.

There is yet a keener sense of smell, an inner sense, which may be developed and which some people have already developed, through which an odor of objects which is not physical can be perceived. Beings of another world may make themselves known by an odor, but this is not a physical odor.

The part which smelling plays in living is that smelling aids in the maintenance of life. The smell of food causes the gastric juices to flow and stimulates them, as does the sight of a well-prepared table. Animals detect by their sense of smell places where they can find food. They detect the presence of enemies and dangers by smell.

Whereas man is at present nourished through the absorption of a subtle essence which his system takes out of gross material food which he consumes, it will in the future, when man has better control of his physical body, be possible for him to extract by the sense of smell the essence he now has to get by digestion out of the transformation of physical food. His smelling elemental will then be charged with nourishing the physical body. The two senses of taste and smell will, however, have to be greatly changed from the conditions they are in at present before nourishment by smelling alone is possible. Then the subtle physical particles which will be absorbed by the smelling elemental will be the means of nourishing the physical body.

What is the imagination? How can it be cultivated and used?

Imagination is that state of the mind in which the image faculty of the mind works consciously to give form to the subject of thought which the motive faculty has conceived and which the focus faculty has brought into and holds within range. These three faculties of the mind have directly to do with imagination. The other four faculties are indirectly concerned. The dark faculty interferes with

imagination, as it does with every other work of the mind, and therefore the dark faculty must be in a state where it is controlled sufficiently to allow of the work of imagination. The time faculty furnishes the material used in the work of imagination. The light faculty shows how the work of imagination should be done. The I-am faculty gives identity and individuality to the work of imagination. Imagination is a state of the mind, and is in itself not of the senses. The work of imagination is carried on in the mind before it is related to the senses by the mind and before the senses are called upon to give expression in the physical world to that which has first been done in imagination. This is the case with imagination. However, it is to be borne in mind that that which is usually called imagination is really not imagination at all. What is broadly and without understanding of the meaning of the term called imagination is the play of the mind in the senses, or, in a higher degree, the working of the mind when it is compelled by the senses to reproduce or furnish the things which give pleasure to the senses and to provide new enjoyments or troubles which the senses have indicated and led the mind into. In the case of this condition, which is falsely termed imagination, all of the seven faculties of the mind are agitated through the focus faculty; but these agitations are merely excitations of the other faculties through the focus faculty and are not the work of the faculties. The focus faculty is the only faculty of the mind which is directly in contact with the brain of the average man. The other six faculties are not in contact. Their action is induced through the focus faculty.

To understand better what imagination—that is, the real imagination—is, it should be seen what the false imagination—that is, the mere agitation which is falsely called imagination—is. False imagination is not a conscious action of the faculties of the mind, but the action of one faculty, the focus faculty only, which is agitated by the senses and which when agitated causes an induced agitation of the other six faculties or some of them.

Fancies, day dreams, mooning, are not imagination. Reproductions of the forms and aspects of nature are not imagination. Copying any work, be it of nature or of man, is not imagination, however skillfully it may be performed. Imagination is creation. Every work of imagination is a new creation. Imagination does not copy nature. Nature does not show the mind how to do the work of imagination. Imagination furnishes nature with all her forms and colors and sounds and varied aspects. These are furnished to nature by mind and not by nature.

To cultivate imagination—that is, the state of mind in which the image faculty, the motive faculty, and the focus faculty are coordinated and perform their work in harmony, while the dark faculty is limited or suppressed, and the three other faculties, the time faculty, the light faculty, and the I-am faculty contribute to this work—it is necessary to understand the system here mentioned, which is the only system that gives an insight into the operations of the mind.

The second step is to be able to conceive a subject of thought, and the next step is to exercise the image faculty in harmony with the motive faculty and focus faculty. The questioner is referred to the two articles on imagination which appeared in the May and June issues of *The Word*, in 1913 [see the PDF editorial “Imagination”]. As to the faculties of the mind, information can be obtained in the article, “Adepts, Masters, and Mahatmas,” printed in *The Word* in April, May, June, July, and August, 1910 [pp. 79–123 in the PDF editorial “Adepts, Masters and Mahatmas”].

A FRIEND [H. W. Percival]



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