

Philosophic Encyclopedia

The Heart: A Wonderful Organ

The dense body of the human being is a wonderfully constructed instrument, composed of numerous cells. From these cells remarkable organs have been formed by the evolutionary needs of the indwelling Spirit. Some of the organs are in various stages of completion; others are in a state of development, such as for instance, the heart.

The heart is a superb mechanism, manifesting great wisdom in its construction. It is the central organ of the circulatory system, acting as a force and suction pump in relation to the blood vessels. Excepting the lungs, it is the only organ in the body through which the blood passes in every cycle. Activity of the heart is necessary to life on the material plane.

However, as marvelous an organ as the heart is from the physical viewpoint, it becomes much more so when considered in the light of the truths revealed by esoteric philosophy. One of the most important facts brought out by esoteric science is that there is a change going on in the human heart which, when understood, will give some idea of the importance which each Ego's heart is to play in his evolution.

We have two sets of muscles. One set—the voluntary muscles—is under the control of the will, can be moved by desire, and is striped both lengthwise and crosswise. The other set—the involuntary muscles—is not under the control of the will, cannot be moved by desire, and is striped lengthwise only.

The heart is the only exception to this. It is an involuntary muscle not normally under the control of the will, yet is beginning to show cross stripes like a voluntary muscle. The physical scientist has been unable to determine the reason for this.

The esoteric scientist finds the answer in the Memory of Nature. From that record, he learns that when the Ego first sought a stronghold in the heart, this organ was striped lengthwise only, the same as any other involuntary muscle. As the Ego gained more and more control over the heart, however, the cross stripes have gradually developed. They are not so numerous nor so well defined as those on the muscles under the full control of desire, but as the altruistic principles of love and brotherhood increase in strength and gradually overrule the reason, which is based in desire, so will these cross stripes become more numerous and more marked. The heart is always in closest touch with the Life Spirit, the Spirit of love and unity. Therefore, the heart is the home of altruistic love.

In our civilization, the chasm stretching between the heart, the organ of feeling, and the mind, the organ of reason, is wide. The mind demands a materially demonstrable explanation of man and his fellow-creatures that make up the phenomenal world. The heart feels instinctively that there is something greater, and it yearns for that which it feels is a higher truth than can be grasped by the mind alone.

The heart urges mercy and love, but the reason urges belligerent and retaliatory measures, if not as revenge, at least as a means of preventing a repetition of hostilities. It is this divorce of head from heart that hinders the growth of a true feeling of Universal Brotherhood and the adoption of the teachings of Christ—the Lord of Love.

But it is certain that, just as the mind is now forging ahead and wringing Nature's secrets from her by the very force of its audacity, so also will the heart find a way to burst its bonds and gratify its longing for the higher truth. Some day it will become a power greater than the mind.

Physical science knows that whatever the power which moves the heart, it does not come from without, but is inside the heart. The esoteric scientist sees a chamber in the left ventricle, near the apex, where a little atom, called the seed-atom, swims in a sea of the highest ether. The force in that atom, like the force in all other atoms, is the undifferentiated life of God; without that force the mineral could not form into crystals and the plant, animal, and human kingdoms would be unable to form their bodies.

The force within the seed-atom moves the heart and keeps the organism alive. All other atoms in the body must vibrate in tune with this atom. The forces of the seed-atom have been immanent in every dense body ever possessed by the particular Ego to whom it is attached, and upon it are inscribed all the experiences of that particular Ego in all its lives.

From the moment we are born, and continuing throughout our entire lives, the ether drawn into our lungs when we breathe carries with it a complete picture of our outside environment, of our actions, and of the actions of other people who are with us.

This record is impressed upon the seed-atom in the heart. Thus, all that we say or do, from the best to the worst, becomes written in our heart in indelible characters. This record is our life history, and its individuality is as indispensable to our evolution as the heart itself is indispensable to our survival in the physical world.

This panorama of our life history forms the basis of our post-mortem existence. The record of wrongdoing is erased in a painful purgatorial experience caused by the fire of remorse, which sears the Spirit as the pictures of its misdeeds unroll before its gaze. The Ego thus becomes less prone to repeat the same wrongdoing and mistakes in future lives. The Ego's reaction to the pictures showing the good that was done is a heavenly joy, the remembrance of which will in later lives prompt the Ego to do more good.

When a person has completed a lifetime in the physical world and the usefulness of the dense body has ended, the Ego withdraws from it by way of the head, taking with it the mind and the desire body, as it does every night during sleep. The vital body, which now has become useless, also is withdrawn. When the silver cord which united the higher to the lower vehicles snaps, it can never be repaired.

Before this final cleavage is made, however, it is essential for the progress of the Ego that it be left undisturbed to review the panorama of the life just ended. When a person is freed from the dense body at the moment of "death," the whole panorama of his past life begins to pass before him in reverse order, and he reviews his history as a spectator at a film showing. The pictures impress themselves upon his higher vehicles, although he has no feeling about them at this time.

It is very important, however, that there be no disturbance of any kind during the panorama, since the Ego's purgatorial experience, when his feelings about the pictures are to be made manifest, depends upon how clearly those pictures have been etched upon the higher vehicles.

The "silver cord," which unites the higher vehicles with the dense body, terminates at the seed-atom. When material life comes to an end in the natural manner the forces in the seed-atom disengage themselves, pass outward along the vagus nerve, the back of the head, and along the silver cord, to rupture in the heart, which marks physical death—but the connecting silver cord is not broken until the panorama has been viewed—sometimes not for several days.

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The vital body is the vehicle of sense perception. As that remains with the desire body and the etheric cord connects these two bodies with the discarded dense body, it will be evident that until the cord is severed, there must be a certain amount of feeling experienced by the departing Ego when the dense body is molested. Therefore, great care should be taken not to cause the passing Spirit discomfort.

In view of the current interest in, and increasing frequency of heart transplants, it is important to consider the phenomena of the donor's panorama and his immediate after-death experience in the light of these transplants.

Since heart transplants must take place immediately after the donor's death, it obviously is impossible to avoid interference with his panoramic process, which also takes place immediately after death. Possibly the panoramic process of the donor would continue

(though not perfectly, because of the pain of surgery) while the transplanting is being done, and at the end of the panorama the silver cord would snap and the higher vehicles be entirely freed from the physical body—including the heart.

Meanwhile, what of the seed-atom of the recipient? It is, so it would seem, still in the etheric counterpart of his heart, which still remains in his body. In cases where parts of the dense body are amputated, only the planetary ether accompanies the separated part. The etheric counterpart of the amputated member gradually disintegrates as the physical member disintegrates. It is known that persons who have had members amputated have complained of pain in the amputated part, since these persons still possessed the etheric part, which sometimes does not disintegrate for several years. The silver cord of the recipient of a heart transplant must also be intact, even though the physical heart has been removed, for if it had been ruptured or severed the recipient could not live.

Once the donor's physical heart (without the seed-atom) has been placed in the recipient's etheric heart, the question arises: would the angelic Beings and their helpers who wisely handle such matters transfer the recipient's dense seed-atom to the apex of the donor's heart, which is now pumping blood through it? No doubt it could be done, and if the recipient lives, it would seem that that is what is done.

The destiny of the recipient, and possible former-life relations between donor and recipient, could be important factors in the outcome of the transplant. Another factor would seem to be the recipient's archetype which he himself has worked on during his previous "heaven" life and which, we are taught, is "wound up" for a certain specific length of time and thus determines the length of his physical existence.

Also in connection with heart transplants—and transplants of all other organs as well—it should be remembered that every atom of each body belongs peculiarly to the Spirit inhabiting that body. The condition of the body and its organs, nerves, tissues, etc., is the sum total of the way the indwelling Spirit has lived in its previous lives on Earth and has been able to construct the counterpart of his body during the period between earth lives.

Herein lies the reason for the fact that an Ego cannot or will not accept certain types of blood or an organ from someone who is too much at variance with his own peculiar makeup. The Ego, or individual Spirit, must overcome or dominate the cells that are brought into its physical body, whether it be through eating and subsequent assimilation, or through blood transfusion, or by transplanting of an organ. The cells of animals are more highly developed than those of plants; therefore they are more difficult to make a part of the body polity than are those of plants by means of eating and assimilation. An organ is a group of special cells, and is imbued with the consciousness of its owner. This consciousness may differ sufficiently from that of the recipient to cause the rejection of the organ by the recipient. This may not be immediately evident, however, as the body of the recipient likely has been weakened by illness and the surgery performed. Medical science recognizes this “built-in” ability of the body to know what is needed, referring to it as the “rejection phenomenon.”

A record of all the Spirit’s experiences is embedded in the seed-atom, as previously stated, and during each new life this atom (or its forces), by virtue of its innate qualities, attracts material for a new body. If it has violated the laws of God, then the results are present in the bodily structure—and not only in the dense body, but also in the vital and desire bodies and in the mind.

Disease, then, including heart disease, is brought about by the Ego itself, is rooted in the spiritual realm, is a manifestation of ignorance and disobedience to higher laws, and can be permanently eradicated only by a change in the human being's inner spiritual nature. To transplant a healthy physical organ in the place of a diseased organ can be physically accomplished, and in some cases this seems to prolong the life of the recipient. The transplanting of a healthy organ to replace a diseased one, however, will not cure the underlying cause of the patient's disease and, unless he makes the necessary spiritual changes in his inner self, he will still have to learn the required lesson in this or another life.

The Law of Cause and Effect is the arbiter of the way this life is to be lived, and certain opportunities for spiritual growth are set before the Ego at various points in its Earth life. If these opportunities are made use of, the life will continue along the straight path, but if not, it diverges, as we might say, into a blind alley where the life then is terminated by the Creative Hierarchies, which destroy the archetype in the heaven world. Thus we may say that the ultimate length of an Earth life is determined before we are physically born, but the life may be shortened if we neglect opportunities.

There is also the possibility, in the case of a few, where the life has been thoroughly lived, where it has been very full, and where the person has endeavored in all cases to live up to his opportunities, that more life may be infused into the archetype than had been done in the first place, and so the life may be prolonged. This, however, be it remembered, occurs only in exceptional cases.

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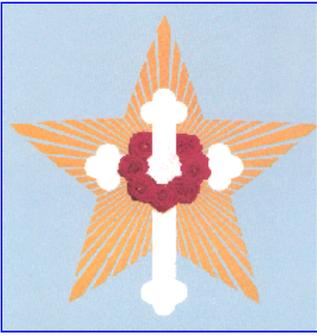
In summary, then, it may be said that the heart is an organ which is only beginning to show its glorious potential as the instrument through which the true Christ Love will become a universal reality. It is the organ in which the record of the essence of each Ego's individuality is stored throughout every physical lifetime. It is an organ which we have been developing throughout our previous lives, and each person's heart is as good or as bad as he himself has made it.

To attempt to transfer this organ from one human being to another may be to invite problems seemingly not intended by the Architects of our evolution. It may well be that solving these problems would be a far greater job for the recipient Ego than to have incurred whatever destiny was intended for him without having undergone a transplant.

Addendum: In modern science the term "magnetic field"  is often used in discussing the various peculiar traits, behavior, and characteristics of plant, animal, and man. This, in general, is the [vital body](#), the two lower ethers (Chemical and Life) which form an etheric matrix that holds the dense physical atoms of the body in formation. The two higher ethers (Light and Reflecting) are more attenuated and are volatile and migratory. Every organ of the body has its over-all etheric matrix, a part of the etheric matrix of the whole body. Planets also have their "magnetic fields," etheric counterparts, or vital bodies.

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