

**‘Wisdom forces in life and the elemental sense of individual plants.’**

*A chapter from the book Yoga and Christianity by Heinz Grill.*

*(Translated by Lisa Winchester, 2019)*

First soul exercise.

The whole of nature exists in a concrete order, which again, to the personal life of the human being stands. Nature is in itself an expression for purity and stands on the stage of life for an impersonal perfection. From the mountains to the individual mineral, from the trees to the blade of grass, and also from the weather conditions, seasons, the rhythms of growth and propagation there exists a wisdom-full, harmonious whole. If the eyes look upon the so diverse, once sprouting and once withering plant world, so they can perceive in it no disharmony. Every individual plant being possesses its own wondrous construction. Nature is in its multiplicity and in its individuality aesthetic. A tree, with or without leaves, thin or strong, is always aesthetic, since a perfect wisdom weaves through it as a creative force. But also the year with the seasons is guided by a higher, wise spirituality. Summer comes and brings to a rising high point the flowering of plants, on which autumn follows with the withering of the blossoms and leaves. Nature, the rhythms in her, the many manifestations of germinating, sprouting, blossoming, and flourishing, as well as those of wilting, dying and resting, are laid out in a belonging-together, creative, wisdom-full harmony, and symbolize the natural, impersonal reality of purity.

As human beings we live to a great extent embedded in this rhythm. We are with the body and with the life lying within, just like the animals and plants, a part of this earth. This body and the invigorating, energetic life in it, is created in a wisdom and harmony, but which nevertheless carries apparent deviations and the possibility for illness. The organs like the heart or the liver work according to natural rhythm. The cell as one of the smallest physical building blocks is integrated into a whole. Birth and death are the two boundary stones between which life is enclosed. Yet for nature and the plant world there exists a great difference with being human. We possess as human beings a free will, and are thus delivered to that temptation, which leads to sin and its ugly attachment.

But the wisdom forces, which with their harmonious play in the whole of nature, rule and work to order and balance, pour into all phenomena their silent forces, given like the light from the sun. We can ourselves become conscious through the appropriate development of attentiveness to their expression, if we learn to observe nature and its differentiated images more carefully and with some essential, creative thoughts. If the eyes observe to some extent in an unbiased manner and way the phenomena in nature, the mind becomes conscious of the multiplicity of a wisdom-full interaction, which in itself is boundless. A person, for example, surrenders receptively to the sunrise without indulging in romantic feelings, to lead to a richer, inner experience. The attentiveness lies in a calmer seeing, this is accompanied with concrete and yet contemplative thoughts, which grow into finer images and inner imaginations. This kind of special attentiveness in a concrete, concentrated, thoughtful alertness leaves one's own senses a free space. This freedom in the consciousness can contribute to expansion and it prepares a deeper willingness to experience through the senses.

The deeper life of insightful knowledge, however, is stimulated in a specific direction, when the observer, with or after this concrete thoughtful observing of nature and life, places the question: *‘What in reality are wisdom-forces?’*

Those, who would like to experience the higher or the wisdom-full dimension of creation with its spiritual influence must as a rule first form an inner sense for it. The impartial and emotion free, but yet concretely held observation, must the so nervous and restless mind, nearly always, first learn. The physical eyes cannot see the light-full, spiritual and essence-like forces who work according to a harmonious play in nature. For this must inner eyes, which lay in the fine-substance body, be formed through an appropriate schooling. These inner eyes eventually mature to a more comprehensive sense organism and give in a sensitive way the answer to the corresponding questions, which we direct to nature. The answer will be given out of that region, like a fine shimmer, the enhanced perception. It lies in a latent and mostly undeveloped inner soul world, and if this is awakened through conscious exercise, it gives enhanced impressions and a deep subtle-feeling about that fine-substance, being-like effect, which are revealed in nature. The questions, which we direct to nature and work for through appropriate observations and thought-formations, are answered out of an uplifting and revealing soul-light itself.

Give yourself for a minute to a concrete observation of any kind of natural phenomena. Observe in an unbiased way, yet still with a targeted, thoughtful but not rigid attentiveness, the outer appearance, like the color, the shape, the form and the conditions. You then place the question: What are wisdom forces? Or also the question ‘what substances work on this phenomena?’ The concrete observation paves here a first path through the thicket of the many swirling thought processes, which are mostly combined with emotions and desires. While observations, however, for a few minutes are aligned to a object, and a question about the higher sense-figure jerks into the centre, arises in the consciousness a first goal-directed and a natural centering of the thoughts in the forming imagination.

The name ‘soul exercise’ describes the character of the exercise, because with it an approach to the soul’s secrets as well as a natural subtle feeling enters. The soul is hidden invisibly in the inner of the body, it rests more behind the busy and nervous drives of everyday life. The more deeply, however, the attention and interest come together with the subtle feeling in the inner world, the more access is paved to the great world secrets. The subtle feeling may, however, not be confused with a romanticizing or with an emotion, with a heightened feeling. These more outwardly noticeable feelings are so much of a superficial nature, that they disturb the exercise and lead away from the real inner, and glide past genuine observations. Subtle feelings compared with this are very still in their nature, and they give an inner certainty, a breath of warmth in the heart and open up a first ray of a blessed contemplation.

To carry out this soul exercise it’s not necessary to seek a mediation place, it’s only important, that you for the duration of the practice, are completely freed-up from all outer circumstances and with this align the consciousness in an uninhibited and yet at the same time creative way. For this the routine of an exercise is not very helpful, because the exercise requires with every day a new decision and one that is at least once again aligned, watchful, observing and perceiving to thought, so that these thoughts can enliven the image or the imagination from anew.

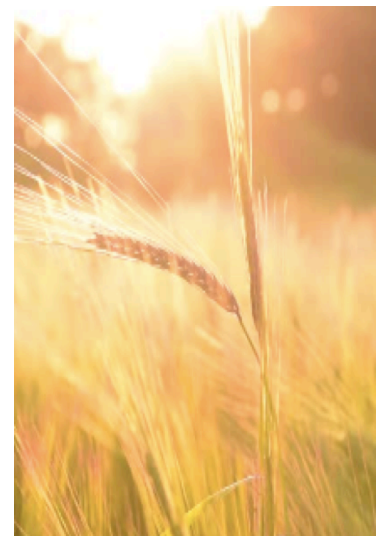
If this contemplative soul exercise is carried out over a long time, it leads the consciousness to a first more soul-like and body-free experience. The thinking purifies itself. The conventional, so very quickly evaluating logic, which is built up according to the visible phenomena and a definite fixation on her, dissolves more easily with the soul awakening in the broadening images and imaginations. In the expanding consciousness, that fine structured plane in the psyche, certain laws exist. One will, with the persistent observation of nature,

stumble upon various hidden secrets. Depending on how the question is directed and which objects we take into the light of attentiveness, the first fine answers arise in the inner. We will a sense for the wise and endless force-action, which comes out of the light, in nature and it's manifestations see, and with this force-action, the being-like and at the same time wisdom-full spirituality in it's harmonious play, have an inkling of. In nature work so-called substances, which come out of the light and which in the finest touches create the most diverse forms and phenomena.

In the comparative portrayal of plant entities and the human being with the free will, arises a sense for the one, what we describe as personality or self-consciousness and individuality in the will. Here a sense for the grasping power of sin can come to shaping-out, which the being-like creations cannot themselves take up, since they don't have their own freedom. The human will can, however, on the one hand yield entirely to unconscious drives and subordinate passions and thus to the power of sin, or they can embark on a gradual path to liberation and take up the purity of a universal wisdom. Eventually, out of these exercises can that sense thrive, which we as human beings, carry over in the giving and taking to nature. Nature is the descended realm of life, which as the essence-like cloak of the eternal Lord, shines towards our countenance. Through the observation of various natural phenomena the concrete sense of giving out of the soul unfolds and we learn with progressive practice, that through the possibilities of a deeply-founded contemplation and a creative development of thought, we can accompany this nature with a light and peace of the soul.

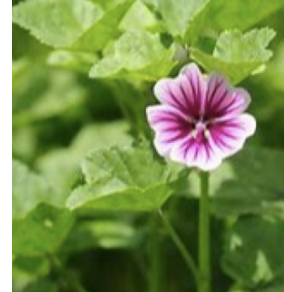
The exercise can furthermore be directed to very specific and well-chosen plants and thus obtain a practical and detailed application. Through the concrete and intense observing of a flower, a tree or a shrub, arise a deeper conscious impression and a first sense for that inner lying, secret, one being located in the form. These exercises would now be important in the detailed orientation for the naturopathic therapist, who prescribes herbal preparations and herbal teas for their patients, because they unfold a deeper and more sensitive sense for the elemental relation, which a plant or a herb has with the human body and its physiology. But also for those, who are ill or for those who want to express a religious consciousness and a deeper devoutness to nature, these exercises can bring a warm-hearted, up lifting, strengthening and purifying subtle perceiving.

Observe, for example, an ear of grain, which rises up, gently swaying in the light with its delicate hairs, like a graceful artwork. The gaze glides over the stem and over the little adjoining leaves, up to the ear. What colour has the plant? Where and on what ground does it grow? What meaning can the long, finely structured hairs have? The gaze should preferably be combined with concrete questions and natural thoughts, to lead to a deeper impression. This impression about the plant should now continue to have an effect in the memory, and in a few hours or a day later be recalled anew. The observation of the same ear of grain may perhaps require frequent repetition and only after several memories and over the days, you first guide to a real picture and a clear imagination. The consciousness needs mostly a rhythmic attuning of repeated active observations, which are followed by pauses, and it needs the work of remembering, and only with time awaken the fine, super-sensory impressions about the elemental sense of a plant.



The observation of the ear of grain will, as a rule, lead to a deep, warm impression in the heart, and it will appear in the image as a healing, yes, holy and golden light. Grain is spiritual nourishment, which carries the fire and light of the heavens, and it is, therefore, the golden plant and the spiritual nourishment for spirituality.

Or we observe the mallow with its beautiful and strong cherry-red blossom. With time we gain an impression about their calming and harmonizing effect, which is usually already noticeable with the first developed memories to their figure. The mallow is the calming plant, which as a tea is suitable in the evening, and it wants to adapt the so often incensed and heated metabolism life, more towards a harmonious working of the nerves.



A further example, of what the outcome of an exercise can look like is as follows: A look to the olive trees of the south, which with a vital fullness and a small and tough leaf structure, symbolizes an incredible strength, leads to the discovery of the high value of olives and their oil. The olive grows on a tree, which from its earthy wood-element barely takes on a proportional size, but the leaves and their round essence in the green show, however, the cosmic, vital nature of the tree. The olive is, therefore, a particular tonic, which can be used with many diseases in a simple way. When we look at these olive trees, our hearts also gain an impression of a cosmic entity, that works on these trees, and we take this being also into us to a certain degree.

This soul exercise leads through its careful practice, if it is once or twice a day practiced, to a natural quieting, ordering, devoutness to nature and to an uplifting, perception life in the soul. It is the exercise, which works through its character to stimulate and shape out the solar-plexus. Through it arises a sense for giving in the thought.