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# States of Obsession

The drama of obsession can be explained by the following analogy: You leave your car unlocked, and a thief comes and drives it away. Or, while you are sitting in your car, a person holds you up and makes you drive wherever he wants to go. Thus, obsession is a state of beingness in which the real you loses control over your mechanism.

Obsession is a state of mechanicalness. Other forces control you, and you have no control over yourself. In obsession, you may lose control over your physical, emotional, or mental bodies. The “thieves” are various strong thoughtforms that possess your mind, strong desires, post-hypnotic suggestions, and crystallized habits. These thoughtforms, desires, and habits control your physical, emotional, and mental vehicles, and you either act as an observer or you participate in the actions of the thieves.

There are three locations in which obsession takes place. They are the physical mechanism, the astral mechanism, and the lower mental mechanism. Let us discuss each one individually.

The lower mental mechanism can be a place of obsession by the means of thoughtforms, such as:

- Over-emphasized thoughtforms with which you are identified
- Thoughtforms of others which control your mind
- Direct, imposing thoughts of strong minds or groups
- Posthypnotic suggestions and commands which may obsess your mind
- Events which are deeply impressed in your mind
- Religious and political thoughtforms which obsess you
- Past-life traps in which you are caught

**1. Over-emphasized thoughtforms with which you are identified.** When you think continuously in one direction, you build a very strong thoughtform that becomes bigger and bigger until it eventually obsesses you and makes you its slave. Thus, people make their thoughtforms obsess their own minds. Other people think that they are obsessed by an entity, and they try to rid themselves of that entity through various forms of exorcism. But most fanatics are their own victims.

The ancients used to say that we should try not to be the slave of our mental children. Thoughtforms are like our children; we create them, but eventually they become causes and we become effects.

The Teaching suggests that when we start to meditate, we must occasionally change our seed thought because thinking or reflecting upon the same seed thought

month after month, or year after year, gradually makes the thoughtform related to our seed thought take control of us. This is why one must always increase his points of view and take a break to study related or non-related subjects so that he can keep his mind free from obsession.

**2. Thoughtforms of others which control your mind.** Obsession can take place through the thoughtforms of others. Strong thoughtforms exist in various groups, nations, and communities. If you do not have a well-prepared mind, these collective thoughtforms take over and you begin to think exactly like them. The collective thoughtforms of certain fanatical groups are so strong that once you enter into the sphere of such thoughtforms, your mentality changes and you follow their directions.

**3. Direct, imposing thoughts of strong minds or groups.** There is an Eastern proverb which says, “If you tell someone he is stupid forty times, he will eventually act stupid.” Some groups can change the character of their leader and make him a slave by thinking collectively about him in certain ways. If their thoughts are negative and destructive, the leader eventually falls and becomes their victim.

Thoughts charged with hatred, malice, and slander are very “sticky” thoughts. They attack their victim and gradually control him if he is not an extremely awake person. Most people’s lives are mechanical. Obsession controls their lives, giving the impression to the human soul that he is the boss and the originator of all activities.

**4. Posthypnotic suggestions and commands which may obsess your mind.** Posthypnotic suggestions are often given to us when we are in fear or pain or when we are semi-conscious. We are always hypnotized to a certain degree when we watch violent, criminal movies, or movies in which pain and suffering are dramatized. In such cases, we collect lots of posthypnotic suggestions that slowly accumulate and one day totally control our lives.

**5. Events which are deeply impressed in your mind.** Certain events are deeply impressed in our consciousness. For example, a teenager told me that he could not control his sexual urges. After counseling him for a few hours, I found that his parents used to have sex in front of him when he was three to four years old.

Heavily impressed events or words can obsess you, especially if you are emotionally aroused. For example, you have a fear of driving and are afraid that you are going to have an accident. You develop fear and say, "I think I am going to have an accident." What is the source of that fear? The source is that once you saw a terrible accident on the freeway, and you were impressed to such a degree that the impression gradually sank deeper and deeper into your mind, gathering strength from similar events you witnessed, eventually becoming a command post in your consciousness.

A woman comes to your door, smiles, and hands you a court order. You look at her face, read the order, then look at her face again. When you are in a state of fear, shock, or tension, the image of the woman will enter your

deeper mind. Then, whenever you meet a woman with a similar nose, the same hair, clothes, mannerisms, and so on, you develop rejection and automatic refusal. This is an example of being obsessed by an image or thought-form which controls you.

Once a young Vietnamese girl told me that her whole body shook and she lost control of her nerves whenever she saw a policeman or soldier. The reason was that while she was in Vietnam, her whole family of twelve people were killed by soldiers in front of her.

On the other hand, joyful, happy events also impress people very strongly, but unfortunately certain people have more painful moments than joyful moments in their lives.

**6. Religious and political thoughtforms which obsess you.** Certain religious or political thoughtforms can heavily control people's minds to such a degree that they are terrified to think anything else. Religious and political fanatics have obsessed people and nations throughout centuries, and they became the main cause of suffering, pain, and slavery. Such thoughtforms build a heavy layer above your brain and do not let your mind see a new light, or have a new idea or a new approach to life.

**7. Past-life traps in which you are caught.** Some people are obsessed by the images of their past lives. We have many people among us at present who think they are ancient prophets, Cleopatras, Apostles, or Napoleons, but they are the victims of their own obsessions. It is possible under certain conditions to dream about the past life or

see certain visions about the past life, but one cannot prove that such experiences are real. Before trying to find out the facts, a person may totally accept his dream or vision as reality and become obsessed by it to such a degree that his personality even changes. If one is trapped by a past-life image that he is an incarnation of one of the “remarkable leaders” of the past, it is very difficult to free him from this obsession.

Before a person totally yields himself to the imagery of his past life, he must conduct various tests to prove to himself whether or not his dream or vision was true and accurate. For example:

- Past lives can never be seen unless one is in the causal body or higher mind.
- If dates, locations, and names are not given, the dream or vision is most likely a fabrication. If this information is given, one must prove they are correct before one believes them.
- Most of our so-called past-life imagery is telepathic information coming from various minds. On certain occasions our minds can perceive part of the records, and we think that we are seeing the film of our own past. These recordings are distorted, just as we sometimes tape something and find that we have picked up a radio station or some other static over the main recording.

A past-life dream or vision that is not true often obsesses people. If it is true by chance, it does not obsess them. People who have real experiences of their past lives

are totally indifferent toward them; they do not mention them to anyone. They strive for the future and do not occupy themselves with the past.

Of course it is good to believe in the Laws of Reincarnation and Karma<sup>1</sup> because an understanding of such laws can solve most of the problems of humanity. But our belief must not be based in self-deception.

Sometimes if we have a serious problem in our family life, or in our health, our Solar Angel will show us a portion of a past life so that we see the source of our trouble. Such a revelation dissolves our tension and shows us that we were the cause of our own problem. But again, such a revelation gives more freedom on the path of self-actualization and does not lead us to slavery.

Let us now consider astral or emotional obsession. This is caused by

- our own strong desires
- the desires of those close to us
- the desires of those whom we hate
- subconscious, unfulfilled desires
- hypnotic and subliminal desires
- images of hatred, fear, anger, and greed

1. **Our own strong desires.** Strong desires gradually turn into glamors. A glamor is a crystallized desire form, built in your astral aura. Such glamors have a great power not only upon your emotional responses and reac-

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<sup>1</sup> See also *Karma and Reincarnation*.

tions but also upon your mental and physical actions and reactions. Once they possess you, you begin to act under their command.

Thus, glamor grows and pulls in mental matter and, through imagination, uses that matter to increase its power and spread into greater areas of control.

The most common desire is the desire for money. This desire is created from childhood. People on television increase your desire, telling you how you can make more money; they talk about investments, bank accounts, a luxurious life, and so on. Everybody talks about making more money. We often hear, “Be careful about your money. Protect it. . . .” Eventually the desire for money obsesses you and turns into the glamor of greed. Even if you make millions of dollars, you will want more money.

The same is true for sex. Our desire for sex is so stimulated that we break all the rules to satisfy that urge and eventually our life comes under the control of sex. Thus, our mental, emotional, and physical mechanism falls totally under the control of sexual obsession.

Movies, the theater, television shows, advertisements, pornographic literature, and so on all nourish our sex glamor. Under the obsession of sex, one commits many and various crimes. Never a moment comes when sex really satisfies; one becomes sexually bankrupt, or turns into a skeleton.

**2. The desires of those close to us.** You can be obsessed by the desires of others that are close to you, especially when those desires are galvanized with mental

matter. This gives them the ability to affect you strongly and often obsess you. For example, if a person near you continuously sends you sexual desire images, it is very possible that you will become obsessed by these images, unless you exercise strong control and avoid his or her influence. Such a person can affect your sexual desire from great distances and cause obsession.

If your partner is a materialist and has a strong desire for possessions, you gradually develop similar desires. Hating his desire will even make obsession easier. There are two ways to avoid this situation: one way is to be indifferent; the other way is to strive toward spiritual achievements.

**3. The desires of those whom we hate.** You can be obsessed by the desires of those whom you hate. Hatred opens the door for your enemies. We become that which we really hate. In hating someone, you absorb his desires. This was the underlying reason why Christ so strongly emphasized loving our enemies. He did not say to surrender to them but, rather, “Love your enemies.”

When you think about your enemy day and night, you impress his image into your consciousness and he is within you. When his image obsesses you, you fight against him. But, actually, the fight is organized by the obsessor to turn you into a faithful image of the one whom you hate.

**4. Subconscious, unfulfilled desires.** You can be obsessed by an unfulfilled desire. When you desire something long enough, and use lots of imagination about the

object of your desire, it slowly obsesses you and exercises heavy pressure upon your life. Sometimes people cannot succeed in their lives because a desire totally obsesses them and closes many avenues of new opportunity.

Some psychologists suggest that one can become free from such an obsession by attaining and enjoying the object of desire. But the Teaching tells us

- do not build strong lower desires
- do not nourish desire with imagination
- dissolve desire through logic and intuition

In order to make a common object desirable, certain people tease you with it by showing it to you, then hiding it. They know that a hidden object creates desire and that increased desire raises the value of a common object. Once the object assumes value, you desire it more, and then people can control you by using the objects of your desire.

**5. Hypnotic and subliminal desires.** Subliminal desires are commands recorded on tape at a very high speed, beyond the audible range of the human ear. These commands sink into your consciousness and command your life. There are hundreds of variations of these commands. For example, you may be commanded to use drugs, smoke marijuana, become a prostitute, buy certain products, or even commit suicide.

The black art of subliminal suggestion can become a great menace in the world. Once you are obsessed by a subliminal suggestion, you commit every kind of obnox-

ious action as if those actions were your natural way of living.

There are other ways to spread subliminal suggestions: through certain pictures, by display of pornographic scenes, through pictures of crime and horror, through ugliness, through radio short waves broadcast into space, and so on.

One may ask whether subliminal methods can be successfully used to “obsess” people with lofty ideas. Unfortunately, the principles of Beauty, Goodness, Righteousness, Joy, Freedom, Striving, and Sacrificial Service cannot be imposed on people without making them go through a process of conscious sublimation and transformation. It is possible to make people nice temporarily, but such “niceness” gradually becomes hypocrisy and treason.

One can protect himself from subliminal suggestions by developing sensitivity through observation, clear thinking, and control over his actions, emotional reactions, and thinking. If a person develops these abilities, he will immediately notice whether a subliminal desire or command is influencing him.

Every time you feel that a desire is trying to obsess you, observe that desire, analyze it, and examine it thoroughly. Use your thinking and intuition, and refuse that desire until you are able to control it. Desire is not controlled by fulfilling and satisfying it but by dissipating it intelligently.

**6. Images of hatred, fear, anger, and greed.** Make special efforts to avoid these four enemies because they will infect your whole life. If any of your objects of desire are related to anger, fear, hatred, or greed, it is very probable that you will become obsessed by those objects.

Dark forces try very hard to increase obsession and turn humanity into a machine. We must know that every obsession is sneaky and foxy. It wears many masks to deceive us regarding its identity. Hatred, jealousy, fear, anger, revenge, and greed are strong obsessors. Imagine a big man who told you when you were a child, “Sit there and do not move.” This frightens you to the point that the man and his image of fear obsesses you. Years pass and every time you see a similar man, you “sit down” mentally, emotionally, or even physically, falling into different situations, even into failure, because of that image.

Similar conditions are created by those obsessions created through jealousy, hatred, anger, revenge, or greed. Such negative emotions open a door in your system and extinguish the light of your consciousness so that they can sneak in and gain control.

There are three doors for obsession: maya, glamor, and illusion. If we recognize these three, it becomes possible to protect ourselves from obsession.

Maya, which can be defined as crystallized habits, is a form of low obsession related to the physical/etheric body. Glamors and illusions, which are astral and mental respectively, can also work for obsession. We must remember that desire is a force. A glamor is also a strong

force that can attack us, weaken us, and eventually obsess us if preventative steps are not taken. The “Dweller on the Threshold” is an accumulated and integrated form of many obsessions.

Physical obsession takes place through our habits. Habits are formed by repeated actions on the physical, emotional, and mental planes. Such repeated actions become a kind of programming that controls the repetition of actions over and over again, neglecting all rational complaints. When a habit obsesses us, it turns into a command center within us.

An action is a flow of energy or force. Such a flow is related to the nervous system, the glands, chakras, and brain centers. Of course, there are good habits and bad habits, but neither helps us to expand our consciousness or live a self-determined life. Habits are mechanical, and as long as we are obsessed by habits, we remain as machines.

A habit is an action repeated under the presence of a glamor. Some habits of the body are eating, sleeping, sex, the use of certain words, cursing, drugs, smoking, sitting, walking, and certain body movements. We can inherit habits from our parents or even from our past lives. We also import the habits of others through identification.

We must remember that each of us has been given a sensitive “photographic machine” which registers everything — bad or good. This is one of our survival mechanisms. An intelligent person uses his mechanism to photograph pro-survival images. The average person uses his equipment to photograph that which will lead him into trou-

ble because the “film” that is developed within himself turns into posthypnotic suggestions or commands.

In certain schools of wisdom, students are trained to “photograph” beauty, or any image that becomes a source of inspiration or nourishment. For example, the Teacher will say, “Do not listen to dirty gossip,” or “Do not watch crimes or ugly images,” or “Do not become involved in ugly or dishonest relationships.” In this way, the neophyte is taught how to use his sensitive photographic equipment. One can, to a certain degree, control the power of the image that is recorded in his machine.

Once two monks were traveling together and they arrived at a riverbank. There a young girl was sitting, looking out over the water. The monks asked the girl if they could help her, to which she replied, “Yes; I am afraid to cross the river, and I need to get across.” “Well,” said the older monk, “if you jump on my shoulders, I will carry you to the other shore.” The girl jumped on his shoulders, and all three of them crossed the river together. Upon reaching the other shore, the older monk blessed the girl and wished her a safe journey. The two monks continued their journey for several miles, when the young monk turned to the older monk and asked, “Did you feel her legs and her body on your shoulders?” The older monk looked at him and said, “You silly. I removed her from my shoulders and forgot all about her, but you are still carrying the weight of her in your mind.” Thus, the older monk had control over his mechanism, but the young monk was still subjected to the mechanical influence of the impressed event.

Obsession can occur at any time, to any person, in any form and intensity. It generally occurs when you lose control over your physical, emotional, or mental mechanisms and let them run by themselves, controlling your life through their impressions. The cause of all of our failures is that we are not in full command of our vehicles, and we have no steady, persevering interest in what it is we are doing. An obsession can have more than one command center within us. We cannot use our own will and follow our own plans because obsession controls the majority of our functions from many different command centers.

Observe your life and you will see how obsession works hand-in-hand with fear. Fear becomes the interpreter of all impressions — and it is the worst interpreter. Fear never understands the language of the event but pretends to know it.

Mediums can easily be obsessed by the transmission given to them by questionable sources. This leads them into health and social problems. Mediums speak about the orders they receive and the commands they must follow, but gradually we see how ridiculous these transmissions are and how embarrassing their situation is. Mediums not only receive commands to do certain things, but in their own turn they also try to control the lives of those who are trapped by them. The Great Teacher says:

*It should be remembered that no true initiate or disciple ever seeks to control any person nor will he indicate to him in the form of a positive command, any action that he should take. But many people tune in on teaching being given by trained minds to disciples, or*

*record telepathically the powerful thought forms, created by world thinkers or Members of the Hierarchy. Hence, the many misinterpretations and the so-called recorded guidances. Men appropriate to themselves sometimes that which is intended for a group or a hint given by a Master to a disciple.<sup>2</sup>*

### **What Obsession Does**

1. Obsession makes you a slave to certain impressions that act as command posts within you and take away your freedom to choose and to act.
2. Obsession prevents your progress on the path toward perfection and prevents your consciousness from expanding.
3. Obsession distorts and mistranslates impressions reaching you from Higher Sources.
4. Obsession disturbs the focus of your consciousness, if your consciousness is occupied with something higher and different from the obsession.
5. Obsession associates itself and you with the obsessions of others and complicates your life, bringing into you a greater force of obsession.

### **How to Dissipate Obsession**

1. Learn how to observe your actions, emotional reactions, and mental activities. If you notice

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<sup>2</sup> Alice A. Bailey, *Esoteric Psychology*, Vol. II, p. 491.

mechanicalness in any of these fields or deviations from your own points of view, it becomes possible for you to take the first steps to dissipate obsession.

2. Meditate. Meditation is a process through which you withdraw yourself for a certain length of time from identification with an obsession and stand in the clear light of reason, logic, or intuition.
3. Study astronomy, physics, chemistry, and mathematics, thus exercising not only logic but also an expansion of consciousness.
4. Cultivate inclusiveness and open-mindedness.
5. Try to be awake and conscious. Of course, this takes long training.
6. Use the “stop” exercise. Whatever you are doing, feeling, or thinking, give yourself a command to stop the activity and observe the frozen action as clearly as possible. This exercise is very effective in combating obsession. Through this method you can short-circuit the flow of obsession and learn to recognize it.

### **Higher Obsession**

The other side of the act of obsession is that a person is strongly impressed by a positive example of the life of an advanced person to such a degree that he is obsessed by that person, by his ideas, visions, and life directions. It is also possible to be obsessed by the influence

of souls living in the subjective levels — negatively or positively. The difference is that negative obsession leads to possession, while positive obsession does not. Positive obsession uses the person as a mechanism, and then leaves him free. Sometimes if the person is advanced and conscious of the obsession, he learns many mysteries. If not, he remains at the same level he was.

In higher degree obsession, the person's personality performs an important duty for higher forces. The person's activities may last one day, or as long as a lifetime. Higher obsession is carried on through certain forms of inspiration and to some degree by the conscious invitation of the subject. Lower obsession is carried on through imposition and hypnosis and is in most cases destructive. It creates cleavages, conflicts, and chaos while higher obsession manifests as devotion, dedication, and heavy labor.

Some great visions can obsess us, and we dedicate our whole life to those visions. Such visions are visions to uplift humanity, to create world peace, to liberate the animal kingdom, to clean noise and chemical pollution from the environment, to bring a new freedom to humanity. Of course, being obsessed by a vision is beneficial so long as it is carried on in freedom and wisdom; then it turns into a source of inspiration.

Higher obsession is not imposition. It is carried on with conscious admission and with full recognition of the consequences. One cannot be obsessed by a higher vision or idea if he is not cultivated and educated enough to be ready for it. One cannot be obsessed by a higher vision or

idea if his karma is loaded with past misdeeds. One cannot be obsessed by a higher vision or idea if the time for that vision to actualize has not yet come.

Higher obsession takes place on the higher mental plane, with conscious cooperation and admission of a high-level duty and a great responsibility offered by higher forces for which the person is ready. However, the person always retains full rights to refuse or reject the presented proposal.

Higher obsession begins through the inspiration of the Inner Guide, leading the person to his field of service, to heroism, and to dedication. It may be inspiration from the Spiritual Triad or from Great Ones to lead the person toward great sacrifice. But always, the person is free to accept or reject that sacrifice. Higher obsession takes place when a person fully understands the proposal, feels he is ready for it, and dedicates himself to it.