

Austin Community College

Austin, Texas, USA

Introduction to Philosophy (Phil 1301)

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## The Fundamentals of Self-Awareness and Practical Metaphysics

"It is your state of consciousness that attracts your life."

by Neville Goddard

From New Thought, the International New Thought Alliance Bulletin, summer, 1953

Found at <http://website.lineone.net/~cornerstone/neville1.htm>

I have edited this article slightly, to make it more readable. My own comments are underlined.-AD

1 WITH so vast a subject, it is indeed a difficult task to summarize in a few hundred  
2 words what I consider the most basic ideas on which those who seek a true  
3 understanding of [practical, applied] metaphysics should now concentrate. I shall  
4 do what I can in the shape of three fundamentals. These fundamentals are:

5 1. Self-Observation;

6 2. Definition of Aim;

7 3. Detachment.

### 8 **First Fundamental: Self-Observation**

9 The purpose of true metaphysics is to bring about a rebirth or radical  
10 psychological change in the individual. Such a change cannot take place until the  
11 individual first discovers the self that he would change. This discovery can be  
12 made only through a careful observation of his reactions to life. The sum total of  
13 these reactions defines the individual's state of consciousness, and it is the  
14 individual's state of consciousness that attracts the situations and circumstances  
15 of his life.

16 So the starting point of true metaphysics, on its practical side, is self-observation  
17 in order to discover one's reactions to life, reactions which form one's secret self –  
18 the cause of the phenomena of life.

19 Note that the deeper, "secret", self that Neville is talking about is  
20 the deepest personal or individual self, and not the ultimate,  
21 universal, formless self. Neville is thus referring to our deepest—  
22 and often buried and unconscious—self-concepts, not our ultimate  
23 true Self, which is conceptless.

24 With Emerson, I accept the fact that "Man surrounds himself with the true image  
25 of himself . . . what we are, that only can we see."

26 There is a definite connection between what is outer and what is inner in man,  
27 and it is ever our inner states that attract our outer life. Therefore, the individual  
28 must always start with himself.

29 It is one's self that must be changed.

30 Man, in his blindness, is quite satisfied with himself, but heartily dislikes the  
31 circumstances and situations of his life. He feels this way, not knowing that the  
32 cause of his displeasure lies not in the condition nor the person with whom he is  
33 displeased, but in the very self he likes so much. Not realizing that "he surrounds  
34 himself with the true image of himself" and that "what he is, that only can he  
35 see," he is shocked when he discovers that it has always been his own  
36 deceitfulness that made him suspicious of others.

37 Self-observation would reveal this deceitful one in all of us; and this one must be  
38 accepted before there can be any transformation of ourselves.

39 At this moment, try to notice your inner state. To what thoughts are you  
40 consenting? With what feelings are you identified? You must be ever careful  
41 where you are within yourself.

42 Most of its think that we are kind and loving, generous and tolerant, forgiving  
43 and noble; but a careful observation of our reactions to life will reveal a self that  
44 is not at all kind and loving, generous and tolerant, forgiving and noble. And it is  
45 this self that we must first accept and then set about to change.

46 Note what Neville is emphasizing here. If we want to become the  
47 person we always wanted to be, we must first accept what we are

48 now, even if we don't like it, even if it scares and repulses us. Don't  
49 suppress self-awareness, driving it deeper into unconsciousness,  
50 just because you don't like it. Don't ignore it, look straight at it. And  
51 don't try to change it before you have fully accepted it. Remember  
52 this principle of our course: Whatever you are, at any time in your  
53 life, is perfect. Why? Because God, Being, is perfect and all-in-all.  
54 Part of the great illusion is that there are imperfect and evil beings  
55 in the real world.

56 Rebirth depends on inner work on one's self. No one can be reborn without  
57 changing this self. Any time that an entirely new set of reactions enters into a  
58 person's life, a change of consciousness has taken place, a spiritual rebirth has  
59 occurred.

## 60 **Second Fundamental: Definition of Aim**

61 Having discovered, through a careful observation of your reactions to life, a self  
62 that must be changed, you must now formulate an aim. That is, **you must define**  
63 **the one you would like to be instead of the one you truly are in secret. With this**  
64 **aim clearly defined, you must, throughout your conscious waking day, notice**  
65 **your every reaction in regard to this aim.**

66 The reason for this is that everyone lives in a definite state of consciousness,  
67 which state of consciousness we have already described as the sum total of his  
68 reactions to life. Therefore, in defining an aim, you are defining a state of  
69 consciousness, which, like all states of consciousness, must have its reactions to  
70 life. For example: if a rumor or an idle remark could cause an anxious reaction in  
71 one person and no reaction in another, this is positive proof that the two people  
72 are living in two different states of consciousness.

73 If you define your aim as a noble, generous, secure, kindly individual—**knowing**  
74 **that all things are states of consciousness**—you can easily tell whether you are  
75 faithful to your aim in life by watching your **reactions** to the daily events of life. If  
76 you are faithful to your ideal, your reactions will conform to your aim, for you will  
77 be identified with your aim and, therefore, will be thinking from your aim. If your  
78 reactions are not in harmony with your ideal, it is a sure sign that you are  
79 separated from your ideal and are only thinking of it. **Assume** that you are the  
80 loving one you want to be, and notice your reactions throughout the day in regard  
81 to that assumption; for your reactions will tell you the state from which you are  
82 operating.

### 83 **Third Fundamental: Detachment**

84 This is where the third fundamental—detachment—enters in. Having discovered  
85 that everything is a state consciousness made visible and having defined that  
86 particular state which we want to make visible, we now set about the task of  
87 entering such a state, for we must move psychologically from where we are to  
88 where we desire to be.

89 The purpose of practicing detachment is to separate us from our present  
90 reactions to life and attach us to our aim in life. This inner separation must be  
91 developed by practice. At first we seem to have no power to separate ourselves  
92 from undesirable inner states, simply because we have always taken every mood,  
93 every reaction, as natural and have become identified with them. When we have  
94 no idea that our reactions are only states of consciousness from which it is  
95 possible to separate ourselves, we go round and round in the same circle of  
96 problems – not seeing them as inner states but as outer situations. We practice  
97 detachment, or inner separation, that we may escape from the circle of our  
98 habitual reactions to life. That is why we must formulate an aim and constantly  
99 notice ourselves in regard to that aim.

100 This teaching begins with self-observation. Secondly it asks, "What do you want?"  
101 And then it teaches detachment from all negative states and attachment to your  
102 aim. This last state—attachment to your aim—is accomplished by frequently  
103 assuming the feeling of your wish fulfilled.

104 We must practice separating ourselves from our negative moods and thoughts in  
105 the midst of all the troubles and disasters of daily life. No one can be different  
106 from what he is now unless he begins to separate himself from his present  
107 reactions and to identify himself with his aim. Detachment from negative states  
108 and assumption of the wish fulfilled must be practiced in the midst of all the  
109 blessings and cursings of life.

110 Note that detachment and separation from our undesired states and  
111 assumption of the kind of person we always wanted to be is an  
112 example of what Shinn called "the law of substitution".

113 By "assumption" Neville means "taking for granted", in our  
114 imagination, frequently during the day and especially at sensitive  
115 times—like when we are drifting into sleep at night—definite images  
116 and feelings of who we always wanted to be.

117 The way of true metaphysics lies in the midst of all that is going on in life. We  
118 must constantly practice self-observation, thinking from our aim, and  
119 detachment from negative moods and thoughts if we would be doers of truth  
120 instead of mere hearers.

121 Practice these three fundamentals and you will rise to higher and higher levels of  
122 consciousness. Remember, always, it is your state of consciousness that attracts  
123 your life.

124 Start climbing!

125 Neville