

# The First-Ray Cause of Inharmony and Disease

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## Abstract

The seven rays denote seven primary differentiations of energy, and doctrines on the seven rays have been expounded by various theosophical writers. Alice Bailey, in her book *Esoteric Healing*, presents seven symbolic stanzas that portray “The Seven Ray Causes of Inharmony and Disease,” but with very little explanation. She acknowledges that these stanzas are “abstruse and difficult,” but says that their comprehension leads to “the isolation of the seven psychological causes of disease, inherent in the substance of all forms in this world cycle.” This series of articles elucidates the practical significance of these seven stanzas. The present article, which is the sixth in the series, clarifies the first-ray stanza by assembling related quotations from the writings of Bailey and others, including psychologist Margaret Paul. As shown in this article, the first-ray cause of inharmony appears as the power to crystallize or harden. Moreover, this article illustrates that power by depicting the resulting stages in the crystallization of the personality, outer effects of such crystallization, and stages in the process of rebuilding the personality.

## The Seven Rays

The *seven rays* are mentioned in both the ancient Hindu *Rig Veda* and modern Theosophy,<sup>1</sup> and the following definition is often used: “A ray is but a name for a particular force or type of energy, with the emphasis upon the quality which that force exhibits and not upon the form aspect which it creates.”<sup>2</sup> Alice Bailey (1880 – 1949), a writer in the theosophical tradition, says, “Every unit of the human race is on some one of the seven rays,”<sup>3</sup> so the seven rays provide a way of characterizing human beings according to the qualities that they exhibit. She also says, “We must bear in mind that the ... synthetic characteristic of

each of the rays is denoted by the ray name,”<sup>4</sup> and gives the following ray names:

Ray I—Will or Power

Ray II—Love-Wisdom

Ray III—Active Intelligence or Adaptability

Ray IV—Harmony, Beauty, Art

Ray V—Concrete Knowledge or Science

Ray VI—Devotion or Idealism

Ray VII—Ceremonial Order or Magic.<sup>5</sup>

Bailey provides this definition, “When we speak of ray energy we are in reality considering the quality and the will-purpose aspect of a certain great Life to Whom we give the name ‘Lord of a Ray.’”<sup>6</sup> She considers the Lords of the Seven Rays to be “the seven Spirits who are before His throne,” as rendered in Revelation 1:4,<sup>7</sup> and gives this analysis:

The seven Spirits, we are told in the Scriptures of the world, are “before the Throne of God”; this signifies that They are not yet in a position to mount the Throne, symbolically speaking, owing to the fact that They have not yet achieved complete divine expression.<sup>8</sup>

Bailey concludes that the Lords of the Seven Rays must be imperfect Gods, so the seven rays, which are their emanations, must also be imperfect:

## About the Author

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It will be apparent to you that these streams of force, emanating from the Lords of the Seven Rays, are coloured, therefore, and “tainted”—if I may use such a word—by the limitations of these same great Beings; They are Gods, from our point of view, but in reality, Gods in the making, even though much nearer solar divinity than the most advanced human being is near to planetary divinity. They are the “imperfect Gods” spoken of in *The Secret Doctrine* and are the planetary Logoi of the sacred and non-sacred planets.<sup>9</sup>

Helena Blavatsky (1831 – 1891), a founder of the Theosophical Society, expresses a similar notion:

The millions upon millions of imperfect works found in Nature testify loudly that they are the products of finite, conditioned beings—though the latter were and are Dhyani-Chohans, Archangels, or whatever else they may be named. In short, these imperfect works are the unfinished production of evolution, under the guidance of the imperfect Gods.<sup>10</sup>

Blavatsky also writes, “There are seven chief groups of such Dhyani Chohans, which groups will be found and recognised in every religion, for they are the primeval SEVEN Rays,”<sup>11</sup> so her preceding quotation has this implication: the millions of imperfect works found in nature testify loudly to the imperfection of the seven rays.

According to these accounts from Bailey and Blavatsky, the Lords of the Seven Rays are imperfect Gods, and every human being shares in their imperfection by being on some one of the seven rays. Is it possible to identify specific human imperfections that reflect the imperfection of each Lord of a Ray?

## The Seven Stanzas

Bailey’s book *Esoteric Healing* addresses the various ways that the topic of healing is related to the seven rays. In its chapter on karmic liabilities, this book gives seven symbolic stanzas, one for each ray, that portray “The Seven Ray Causes of Inharmony and

Disease.”<sup>12</sup> Bailey introduces these stanzas with the following comment:

If the great informing Lives of the planets within our solar system are imperfect, the effect of this imperfection must inevitably affect Their planetary creations, Their bodies of manifestation, and thus introduce a karmic condition over which the individual human being has absolutely no control, but within which he moves and which he shares. It is obviously impossible for me to elucidate this theme. All I can do or am permitted to do is to give you seven stanzas from one of the most ancient volumes in the world; it deals with the seven ray causes of imperfections in our planetary manifestations.<sup>13</sup>

She also describes the comprehension that students might obtain from studying these stanzas:

The comprehension of the seven stanzas which I now propose to give you will lead eventually to the isolation of the seven psychological causes of disease, inherent in the substance of all forms in this world cycle, because all forms are infused with the life energy of the “imperfect Gods.”<sup>14</sup>

The purpose of this series of articles is to explain these stanzas. Even though *Esoteric Healing* was first published in 1953, and even though its seven stanzas are said to embody revelatory information, no publicized effort seems to have been made, prior to this series of articles, to explain any of these stanzas. A reason for this absence is that each stanza consists of very enigmatic sentences. Bailey herself acknowledges, “These are abstruse and difficult concepts, but they should be pondered upon, and deep reflection will lead to understanding.”<sup>15</sup> The five preceding articles in this series provide explanations of the third-ray,<sup>16</sup> sixth-ray,<sup>17</sup> second-ray,<sup>18</sup> fourth-ray,<sup>19</sup> and seventh-ray stanzas.<sup>20</sup>

The present article considers the first-ray stanza, which consists of ten symbolic sentences:

The Great One set Himself to follow by Himself alone His chosen path. He brooked

no interference. He hardened in His courses. From plane to plane, this hardening proceeded; it grew and stiffened. His will was set, and crystal-like, brilliant, brittle and hard. The power to crystallise was His. He brought not will-to-live but will-to-die. Death was His gift to life. Infusion and diffusion pleased Him not. He loved and sought abstraction.<sup>21</sup>

Bailey's entire commentary on the first-ray stanza is as follows:

As far as we can understand the significance of this stanza in relation to our theme of disease, the imperfection of this divine energy produces a peculiar attitude which expresses itself in the power to crystallise, to harden, to bring about attrition and cause the great abstracting process which we call death. Other results are the many crystallising processes going on in the physical form, all atrophying processes, and old age.<sup>22</sup>

Let us note that Bailey's commentary appears as brief and enigmatic as the stanza that it purports to explain, so there is a need for a more clarifying explanation.

### The First-Ray Stanza

The purpose of this article is to clarify the practical significance of the first-ray stanza by assembling related quotations from the writings of Bailey and others. Each sentence in the stanza is considered separately and is repeated in bold print.

#### **1. The Great One set Himself to follow by Himself alone His chosen path.**

In the first-ray stanza's first sentence, what does "the Great One" denote? The Lords of the Seven Rays are sometimes called "the seven great Lords,"<sup>23</sup> so the straightforward meaning of "the Great One" is that it denotes the Lord of the First Ray. With this meaning, however, the first sentence would depict events in the macrocosmic world that seem to have little practical significance for the mundane world of human beings. Bailey relates these two worlds by regarding the Lords of the Seven Rays as "the Prototypes of man."<sup>24</sup> Accordingly, the alternative meaning of "the Great One"

is that it denotes the people who are on the first ray, because such people reflect their prototype, namely, the great Lord of that ray.

This alternative meaning may seem unusual, but it is consistent with two biblical themes: one's name indicates one's nature,<sup>25</sup> and one is influenced by one's line of descent.<sup>26</sup> For example, in Genesis 32:28, the change in the patriarch's name from Jacob to Israel indicates the change in his nature: "Your name shall no longer be Jacob, but Israel; for you have striven with God and with men and have prevailed." Israel is also the name of Jacob's descendants (Joshua 3:17, 7:25). James Hastings, in *A Dictionary of the Bible*, is impressed by the remarkable way in which Jacob is the prototype of his descendants:

The patriarchs are ... idealized in another direction, in common with many of the other patriarchal figures in Genesis, by being invested with the characteristics which afterwards marked the tribes descended, or reputed to be descended, from them ... But, however that may be, it is impossible not to be impressed by the remarkable manner in which Jacob, both in the brighter and in the darker aspects of his character, is the prototype of his descendants.<sup>27</sup>

Consequently, as narrated in the Bible, Israel denotes the people who descend from and thereby reflect the patriarch known as Israel. Similarly, with the alternative meaning, "the Great One" denotes the people who are on the first ray and thereby reflect the Great One known as the Lord of the first ray. In either case, the progenitor is the prototype of the ensuing people, and a designation used for the progenitor is also used for the people themselves. Thus, even though the alternative meaning of "the Great One" may seem unusual, it resembles what can be found in biblical accounts. In what follows, we employ this alternative meaning, because our commentary shows that it yields practical significances that are consistent across all sentences of the stanza.

Who are the people on the first ray? Bailey says, "Many great world rulers are found on this ray, such as Julius Caesar,"<sup>28</sup> and,

This has been spoken of as the ray of power, and is correctly so called, but if it were power alone, without wisdom and love, a destructive and disintegrating force would result. When however the three characteristics are united, it becomes a creative and governing ray. Those on this ray have strong will power, for either good or evil, for the former when the will is directed by wisdom and made selfless by love.<sup>29</sup>

Before considering the rest of the stanza's first sentence, it is helpful to introduce some terminology. The *line of least resistance* denotes "the easiest way."<sup>30</sup> Bailey comments, "the lines of least resistance are seldom the lines to be followed."<sup>31</sup> Put differently, if we take the line of least resistance in a situation, we do what is easiest even though it may not be the best thing to do. Bailey also says, "It is ever easier for a first ray worker to proceed alone upon the way of his decision."<sup>32</sup> Accordingly, for first-ray people, the line of least resistance is to proceed alone upon their chosen path.

Consequently, the entire first sentence, "The Great One set Himself to follow by Himself alone His chosen path," depicts first-ray people as setting themselves to follow their line of least resistance. In other words, they are determined to proceed alone upon their chosen path without any deviation. Given that taking the line of least resistance may not be the best thing to do, such unwise determination typically occurs only at an early stage of development, so the first sentence has this meaning: *At an early stage in their development, first-ray people are determined to follow their line of least resistance, which is to proceed alone upon their chosen path.*

In contrast, Bailey instructs a first-ray student to deviate from the line of least resistance:

You, my brother, are afraid of your equals. You want to be the one alone as your first ray powerful personality ... would normally incline you. It is not easy for you to be one among the many—all equal, all working as one, all engrossed with the one work. This you must learn to do, or else you hinder the group.<sup>33</sup>

As indicated by this instruction, first-ray people need to learn when their group obligations are more important than their individual inclinations.

## 2. *He brooked no interference.*

In the second sentence, the verb *brook* is an uncommon word, so its synonym, "tolerate,"<sup>34</sup> is used in what follows. The sentence declares that the portrayed people do not tolerate any "interference," a type of which is discipline from others. As Bailey indicates, when first-ray people follow their line of least resistance, they do not tolerate any discipline from others:

The man who stands alone, and who has determined that condition of isolation *for himself* has a harder problem, in some ways, and certainly a different problem, than the man who is disciplined by the constant, ceaseless impact of others upon his consciousness.<sup>35</sup>

Apparently, the portrayed people have shifted from simply being determined to follow their line of least resistance, which was their decision in the first sentence, to truly following their line of least resistance, which yields their intolerance in the second sentence. Thus, the preliminary meaning of the second sentence can be expressed in this way: by following their line of least resistance, the portrayed people do not tolerate any discipline from other people.

Nevertheless, "interference" in the second sentence is taken as also including inner interference, so the portrayed people are depicted as not tolerating even self-discipline. Bailey considers the obstacle to self-discipline to be *laziness*,<sup>36</sup> and says, "This refers not so much to mental inertia (for it may accompany acute mental perception) as to that slothfulness of the entire lower man which prevents him from measuring up to the intellectual recognition and the inner aspiration."<sup>37</sup> Accordingly, the second sentence depicts the portrayed people as succumbing to their own laziness. Bailey tells a first-ray student, "You could have exerted a constructive influence during the last few years, but you were too lazy to do so,"<sup>38</sup> so laziness may be a common first-ray failing.

Based on the preceding remarks, the second sentence, “He brooked no interference,” is given this overall meaning: *By following their line of least resistance, they do not tolerate any discipline from other people; and by succumbing to their own laziness, they do not tolerate any self-discipline.*

In contrast, Bailey exhorts a first-ray student to impose self-discipline:

You function through a first ray personality ... There is no one to control you through your responsibility for them or to interfere with you, and hence the difficulty of your problem. You have to make your own way, then, of learning and of cultivating self-forgetfulness ... You stand very much alone. It has been your own wish, and the right way for you. But you must offset its unavoidable difficulties through a self-imposed discipline. I leave it to you to find the way. You will, I know, comprehend that whereof I speak.<sup>39</sup>

This exhortation illustrates the preceding definition of *laziness*: the student does not have mental inertia—as shown by the sentence “You will, I know, comprehend that whereof I speak”—but instead is prevented by slothfulness from measuring up to his or her intellectual recognition of what must be done. Moreover, this exhortation is predicated on the assumption that the student could overcome slothfulness if he or she felt it was important to do so.

### 3. *He hardened in His courses.*

The third sentence states: “He hardened in His courses.” Here, *courses* could be a synonym for “patterns,”<sup>40</sup> and to *harden* could mean this common definition: “To make fixed, settled, or less subject to change.”<sup>41</sup> Adam Eason, in *Psychology Today*, uses the term *psychological rigidity* to signify being set in fixed, or settled, patterns of thinking:

We get set in patterns of thinking and do not like to step out of those patterns. Sometimes those patterns of thinking are simply biases or heuristics that we are not even aware of, that forge and run our reality. From a contextual behavioural science per-

spective, this is called psychological rigidity and the opposite is psychological flexibility.<sup>42</sup>

Thus, the third sentence could mean: the first-ray people become psychologically rigid. As a corroboration, Bailey says that a characteristic first-ray vice is “obstinacy,”<sup>43</sup> which can be defined as “the quality of being unreasonably determined, especially to act in a particular way and not to change at all, despite what anyone else says.”<sup>44</sup> According to this definition, “obstinacy” denotes a high degree of psychological rigidity.

There is widespread agreement that psychological rigidity is injurious to health. For example, Steven Hayes, Kirk Strosahl, and Kelly Wilson, in *Acceptance and Commitment Therapy*, comment, “it is our claim that psychological rigidity is a root cause of human suffering and maladaptive functioning.”<sup>45</sup> Todd Kashdan and Jonathan Rottenberg, in *Clinical Psychology Review*, state: “Having synthesized various isolated literatures, we are struck by the rich evidence for the value of psychological flexibility.”<sup>46</sup>

In the third sentence, however, to *harden* could mean an alternative definition: “To make unfeeling, unsympathetic, or callous.”<sup>47</sup> How could one become hardened in this sense? Hoyle Leigh, in *Handbook of Consultation-Liaison Psychiatry*, speaks of “self-defeating life patterns of perception,”<sup>48</sup> so “courses” in the third sentence could refer to patterns of perception. Edmund Sherman, in *Meaning in Mid-Life Transitions*, mentions “rigid patterns of perception,”<sup>49</sup> so to harden in one’s courses could signify getting set in rigid patterns of perception, which is a definition of perceptual rigidity. Maurice Merleau-Ponty, in *The Primacy of Perception*, describes the relationship between these two notions of rigidity:

Psychologically rigid subjects could be expected to show, in the same way, a sort of perceptual rigidity. It would be hard for them to modify their attitude and to adopt a new account of new aspects of a problem. They would have a tendency to refer any new experience of a different type that

might be presented to them back to already familiar experiences.<sup>50</sup>

David Jones, in *Innovative Therapy*, observes, “Empathy and compassion for others are signs of perceptual flexibility and permit a more lively engagement with the world.”<sup>51</sup> This observation is well-taken, because both empathy and compassion entail the flexibility to perceive the world from the perspectives of other people.<sup>52</sup>

Our conclusion is that, as first-ray people become psychologically rigid, they tend to become perceptually rigid and thereby harden in the sense of becoming unfeeling, unsympathetic, or callous. As a corroboration, Bailey says that a characteristic first-ray vice is “lovelessness.”<sup>53</sup> This vice denotes a high degree of perceptual rigidity, because *lovelessness* is “the state or condition of being loveless,”<sup>54</sup> and the synonyms for *loveless* include “unfeeling,” “unsympathetic,” and “callous.”<sup>55</sup> As a further corroboration, Bailey tells a first-ray student, “Sympathy and compassion ... are almost totally lacking in your equipment.”<sup>56</sup>

As part of her earlier commentary on the first-ray stanza, Bailey states in part, “the imperfection of this divine energy produces a peculiar attitude which expresses itself in the power to crystallise, to harden.” In other words, the first-ray imperfection appears as the power to crystallize or harden. The stanza’s first, second, and third sentences portray first-ray people as succumbing to this imperfection, but with accumulating effects. In the first sentence, they are determined to follow their line of least resistance. In the second sentence, they follow their line of least resistance and succumb to laziness. In the third sentence, their experience can be described in this way: *By neither submitting to discipline from others nor applying it to themselves, they become psychologically rigid, leading to obstinacy, and perceptually rigid, leading to lovelessness.*

Nevertheless, there are ways to avoid these two kinds of rigidity. To assist a first-ray student to avoid psychological rigidity, Bailey prescribes a special kind of meditation:

One of the main things which I have to do for you at this time is to give you the kind of meditation which is needed. It should be one that will break down any tendency to crystallise which may be making its presence felt in your mental body, and so keep you free and plastically ready for use.<sup>57</sup>

To assist another first-ray student to avoid perceptual rigidity, she prescribes the “Review on Indifference,” which includes these questions:

Am I capable of seeing myself with indifference, detached emotionally from any event?

a. Can I see mentally, unbiased by any reaction from the emotional personal self?

b. Do I ever do this?

If it is true that the blind must advance by *touching*, by keeping attached, and by keeping hold; but that those with sight, by *seeing* and by keeping free and unattached; why then, having sight, do I close my eyes and hold on and feel my way instead of seeing it?

Is the mind the organ of vision for the spiritual man? If so,

a. Is my mind an organ of vision?

b. Can I hold my mind “steady in the light” and see life truly and free from any blinding attachments?<sup>58</sup>

As these examples show, first-ray people could avoid both psychological and perceptual rigidity by submitting to discipline from others and then applying it to themselves.

#### ***4. From plane to plane, this hardening proceeded; it grew and stiffened.***

This sentence requires additional terminology. According to Theosophy, the planetary life consists of seven worlds that are often called “planes” and have the following names: 1) lo-gic; 2) monadic; 3) spiritual; 4) intuitional; 5) mental; 6) emotional; and 7) physical.<sup>59</sup> These planes are regarded as being arranged metaphorically in an inner and outer manner. For example, the mental, emotional, and physical

planes, which are spoken of as “the three worlds of human endeavor,”<sup>60</sup> are regarded as the three outermost planes.

The physical body of a human being has both dense and subtle portions. The *dense physical body* contains the muscles, bones, and glands.

The *subtle physical body* is called the etheric or vital body in Theosophy;<sup>61</sup> “golden bowl” in the Bible (Ecclesiastes 12:6);<sup>62</sup> and *pranamaya kosha*, a Sanskrit name, in Hinduism.<sup>63</sup>

In the fourth sentence, the first clause states: “From plane to plane, this hardening proceeded.” Here, “this hardening,” which signifies both psychological and perceptual rigidity, occurs on the mental plane and then proceeds to more outward planes. In other words, the hardening of mental patterns manifests as the hardening of emotional patterns and then as the hardening of behavioral patterns. Bailey describes the law of manifestation by which these hardenings proceed:

The thinker on his own plane formulates a thought embodying some purpose or some desire. The mind vibrates in response to this idea and simultaneously produces a corresponding reaction in the kamic, desire or emotional body. The energy body, the etheric sheath vibrates synchronously, and thereby the brain responds and energises the nerve-system throughout the dense physical body, so that the impulse of the thinker works out into physical plane activity.<sup>64</sup>

As indicated by the stanza’s second sentence, the portrayed people neither receive discipline from others nor impose discipline on themselves. Thus, they blindly and ignorantly set the law of manifestation into motion in the following way: ceaselessly and irresponsibly, day after day, their idle, destructive, or negative thoughts work out into emotional and physical objectivity.

As a corroboration, Hayes et al. describe how psychological rigidity manifests on both the emotional and physical levels:

The psychological flexibility model holds that pain is a natural consequence of living but that people suffer unnecessarily when

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their overall level of psychological rigidity prevents them from adapting to internal or external contexts. Unnecessary suffering occurs when verbal/cognitive processes tend to narrow human repertoires in key areas through cognitive entanglement and experiential avoidance. When people overidentify, or

“fuse,” with unworkable verbal rules, their behavioral repertoire becomes narrow, and they lose effective contact with the direct results of action.<sup>65</sup>

The fourth sentence’s second clause states, “it grew and stiffened.” Here, “it” refers to the hardening of the personality depicted in the first clause. “Grew” suggests the meaning of *harden* in which the personality grows more callous. For example, Bailey says, “an unmodified first ray can produce a man of unrelenting cruelty and hardness of nature.”<sup>66</sup> “Stiffened” suggests the meaning of *harden* in which the personality becomes more fixed. For example, Bailey says, “Many first ray people become static or crystallised.”<sup>67</sup>

In summary, the fourth sentence is given this overall meaning: *By setting in motion the law of manifestation in a blind and ignorant manner, they manifest their psychological and perceptual rigidity as hardened emotional patterns and then as hardened behavioral patterns, thereby becoming more cruel and then more static.*

Nevertheless, these outer manifestations need not occur. For example, Bailey tells a first-ray student to oppose the hardening of emotional patterns:

The first ray type errs in not giving enough thought to the reaction of others to what he says and does; he prides himself on his detached attitude and on his immunity from attachment; he likes to have his strength and isolation appreciated ... It is this inner "isolation," deeply loved by you and fostered by early training and present circumstance which militates against your being telepathically sensitive to other people. Instead of so much "will to love," why not just love more simply? ... In you the head dominates, and you sit on the summit of your tower, whilst all the time the call of the heart sounds throughout your being and in your ears. Yet you fear to descend and walk among your fellowmen in loving identification with them. It is only through walking the dusty street of life with our brothers that we find ourselves passing eventually through the portal of initiation.<sup>68</sup>

She also tells another first-ray student to oppose the hardening of behavioral patterns:

See to it that the tendency of the first ray to withdraw from contact to the isolated aloofness of the first ray does not unduly condition you upon the physical plane. You will know to what tendency I refer.<sup>69</sup>

Thus, through self-discipline based on self-knowledge, first-ray people could resist the extension of hardening to emotional and physical levels.

##### **5. His will was set, and crystal-like, brilliant, brittle and hard.**

Before considering this sentence, it is helpful to introduce additional terminology. Every human being has both a *lower self* and a *higher self*. The lower self is the *personality*, and it consists of the mental, emotional, and physical bodies.<sup>70</sup> The higher self is the *soul*, and its characteristics are described later.<sup>71</sup>

The fifth sentence characterizes the portrayed people's will. Bailey provides a similar description that characterizes the "will of the devoted aspirant":

The steely, brittle, determined, dynamic will of the devoted aspirant must change in-

to the steadfast, powerful, calm purpose of the soul, working through the disciple.<sup>72</sup>

The fifth sentence's first phrase is "His will was set." In this context, to *set* means "to put into a stable or fixed position."<sup>73</sup> The above quotation says, however, that the "will of the devoted aspirant must change," so this will is fixed only as long as its possessor allows it to remain so. Thus, the first phrase is given this meaning: the portrayed people allow their will to remain fixed as devoted aspiration.

Let us consider the adjectives in the second phrase. What does it mean for devoted aspiration to be "crystal-like"? Kait Welch observes, "There are *so* many different variations of quartz, but the image of a clear quartz point is fairly synonymous with the idea of 'crystal' in many people's minds."<sup>74</sup> On the other hand, Bailey says that a characteristic first-ray vice is "Dynamic one-pointedness."<sup>75</sup> Accordingly, "crystal-like," which in many people's minds is synonymous with "a clear quartz point," signifies a motivation that is one-pointed, namely, towards some person or ideal.

What does it mean for devoted aspiration to be "brilliant"? Bailey speaks of "the brilliant fanatical devotion to this, that or the other person or ideal,"<sup>76</sup> so she uses *brilliant* in the sense of "intense." Indeed, one of the synonyms listed for *brilliant* is "intense."<sup>77</sup>

Devoted aspiration is "brittle" in the sense of breakable, because the object of devotion could suddenly change. Bailey gives this explanation:

See therefore how the life of all aspirants, if progressing with the desired rapidity, is one of constant movement, constant changes and differentiations, and continuous building and breaking, planning and seeing those plans disrupted ... Ideals are transcended only to be found to be stations on the road to higher; visions are seen, only to be replaced by others; dreams are dreamt only to be realized and discarded.<sup>78</sup>

Finally, devoted aspiration is "hard" in the sense of callous, because such devotion ignores larger human issues. Bailey gives this explanation:

Ideals, as usually held, feed pride, lead to stubbornness, and engender a separative superiority; they produce impractical attitudes and negative activities. The one who thus holds them frequently serves only in the limited field, conditioned by his chosen work and coloured by his idealism. He excludes the *Whole* and thinks in terms of the past and as he wants to think. There is no real understanding of an opposing idealism and often no real attempt to comprehend its basis. His emphasis upon his own ideals (in his own consciousness even when not imposed on others) prevents understanding, and he is so busy upholding them and defending them (oft again to himself) and being conditioned by them that the larger human issues escape his attention.<sup>79</sup>

In summary, the fifth sentence is given this meaning: *By allowing their will to remain fixed as devoted aspiration, they have a motivation that is one-pointed, intense, breakable, and callous.*

Nevertheless, such a motivation can be changed, as shown by Bailey's instruction to a first-ray student:

It is, for instance, your personality fanaticism and your personality devotions (both to people and to ideas) which need *tempering* if your first ray power is to manifest. Your fanatical devotee *will* must be superseded by the *purpose*, ordered and steadfast, of your first ray soul. In this last sentence is for you the key to your future unfoldment.<sup>80</sup>

Accordingly, first-ray people need to find a way of changing their motivation, because such change is a prerequisite for their future unfoldment.

#### **6. The power to crystallise was His.**

The sixth sentence states, "The power to crystallise was His," but what is this power? It is the first-ray imperfection that appears as the power to crystallize or harden. Bailey's earlier commentary on the first-ray stanza describes it in this way:

As far as we can understand the significance of this stanza in relation to our theme of disease, the imperfection of this divine energy produces a peculiar attitude which expresses itself in the power to crystallise, to harden, to bring about attrition and cause the great abstracting process which we call death.

In each preceding sentence, first-ray people partially succumb to this power, resulting in the crystallization of an aspect of their personality. These effects, however, accumulate. The sixth sentence depicts the stage in which first-ray people completely succumb to this power, resulting in the crystallization of their entire personality. Bailey describes the outcome:

As time goes on, crystallisation takes place. A "crystal barrier" is set up between the personality and the soul. The soul is seen but its influence is insulated. But—because there is a vision of the soul still persisting—the disciple is deeply dissatisfied. The crystallisation eventually affects all aspects of the nature. Emotions settle into "grooves of crystal"; the mind becomes set and brittle. The physical body crystallises also and gets old rapidly because there is no free flow of life.<sup>81</sup>

The Mayo Clinic, a top-ranked academic medical center, defines a *personality disorder* as follows:

A personality disorder is a type of mental disorder in which you have a rigid and unhealthy pattern of thinking, functioning and behaving. A person with a personality disorder has trouble perceiving and relating to situations and people. This causes significant problems and limitations in relationships, social activities, work and school. In some cases, you may not realize that you have a personality disorder because your way of thinking and behaving seems natural to you. And you may blame others for the challenges you face.<sup>82</sup>

Accordingly, a personality disorder is defined by "a rigid and unhealthy pattern of thinking,

functioning and behaving,” so the crystallization of the personality necessarily yields a personality disorder. The Mayo Clinic lists several ways that personality disorders cause problems:

Personality disorders can significantly disrupt the lives of both the affected person and those who care about that person. Personality disorders may cause problems with relationships, work or school, and can lead to social isolation or alcohol or drug abuse.<sup>83</sup>

Bailey’s earlier commentary describes other health effects of crystallizing the personality:

Other results are the many crystallising processes going on in the physical form, all atrophying processes, and old age.

Consequently, the sixth sentence is given this meaning: *By proceeding through the preceding stages, they completely succumb to the first-ray imperfection that appears as the power to crystallize or harden, resulting in: the crystallization of their entire personality, personality disorders, problems with relationships, atrophying processes, and premature ageing.*

In contrast, Bailey gives this instruction to a first-ray student:

See to it that you crystallise not. As one gets older in the physical sense (a thought which you ever evade, my brother) there is always the tendency to become set in one’s life rhythms and objectives; the life theme is steady and the danger of rigidity is very real. See to it that you keep flexible and fluid and *learning* all the time.<sup>84</sup>

Accordingly, through self-discipline and knowledge of the danger, first-ray people could avoid crystallizing their personality.

### **7. He brought not will-to-live but will-to-die.**

The sixth sentence depicts the stage in which first-ray people complete the internal crystallization of their personality. The seventh sentence builds upon the sixth sentence, because it represents the stage in which first-ray people use the method of working outwardly through their own crystallized personality. Bailey de-

scribes this stage in the following way: “Many first ray people become static or crystallised, as that is the method whereby the first ray destroyers work—and it is all part of the divine work.”<sup>85</sup>

Bailey says, “The first ray man will always ‘come to the front’ in his own line ... He is the born leader in any and every public career.”<sup>86</sup> Even though first-ray people are said to be born leaders in every public career, would organizations really want them to be their leaders if they were working through their own crystallized personality? Garry McGiboney, in *Leadership Theories and Case Studies*, observes that conventional organizations sometimes do desire rigid leaders:

Some leaders view rigidity and stubbornness as an asset and as a leadership function. Sometimes this type of leadership comes with the encouragement (intentionally or unintentionally) of the organization in which the leader works. It is an extension of the military model of leadership and is reinforced typically at the beginning of a leader’s time at the helm of an organization as a clear message to everyone that “a new sheriff is in town.”<sup>87</sup>

Some employees think a strong, dominating, overbearing, cruel leader is attractive and necessary. Typically, employees who fall into this category are those that had little respect for the previous leader and think a new “ass-kicking” leader will bring back past glory. However, there are employees with so little self-respect and self-confidence that they think they deserve someone that is cruel and insensitive. And, of course, there are employees who think being an insensitive and bullying leader fits their style of management, so they view the totalitarian leader as a role model.<sup>88</sup>

*Extremism* is defined as “any political theory that holds to uncompromising and rigid policies or ideology,”<sup>89</sup> so extremist organizations also provide job opportunities for rigid leaders. As indicated by the fifth sentence, a crystallized personality entails a will that remains fixed as devoted aspiration. Thus, an extremist organization would desire a leader with such a

will if he or she were devoted to the organization's rigid policies or ideology. Dennis Tourish, in *The Dark Side of Transformational Leadership*, speaks of such leaders:

leaders who hold followers in thrall by dint of their rabble-rousing oratorical gifts; who offer an appealing simplicity of purpose in the face of life's complexities; who compel a transformation in follower attitudes, thereby converting apparently "normal" people into devotees of rigid ideologies, totalistic beliefs and violent means; who exploit the devotion and commitment of their followers to further an agenda frequently at odds with its proclaimed emancipatory intent; and leaders who promise to right all wrongs, only to add fresh layers of hurt to an already besmirched human condition.<sup>90</sup>

The seventh sentence states: "He brought not will-to-live but will-to-die." In other words, the portrayed people intend to bring the "will-to-live," or vitality, to the organizations that they lead, but instead they bring the "will-to-die," or deterioration. Why is their leadership so self-defeating?

First, a crystallized personality has difficulty in adapting to change. Hayes et al. make a similar point: "psychologically rigid individuals tend to have difficulty in initiating and maintaining actions that are sensitive to contingencies, thus reducing their ability to adapt to changing circumstances."<sup>91</sup>

Second, a crystallized personality displays the first-ray vice that Bailey calls the "desire to control others."<sup>92</sup> Charis Psaltis and Anna Zapiti, in *Interaction, Communication and Development*, make a similar point: "Rigid behaviour is a symptom of conflict, or refusal to compromise or to make concessions, and of the will to impose one's own point of view at any cost."<sup>93</sup>

Third, a crystallized personality tends to drive away people with differing ideas and methods. Bailey gives this explanation to a first-ray student:

May I, in all love and tenderness, suggest that the ideas, methods, formulas and ways

of living which seem right to you (and *are* right for you) may be entirely undesirable for others and that, if you force them on those others, their *souls* may remove them from your influence in the cause of freedom to expand. In this suggestion lies for you the clue to much that is destructive in your best effort and this should convey to you the method for your and their deliverance.<sup>94</sup>

Consequently, when the portrayed people work as leaders through their own crystallized personality, their characteristics promote the crystallization of their organizations. Such an outcome illustrates the principle affirmed by Charlene Belitz and Meg Lundstrom: "External conditions mirror internal conditions."<sup>95</sup> Bailey states, "When crystallisation has reached a certain degree of density and so-called 'hardness,' it is easily shattered and destroyed."<sup>96</sup> Accordingly, the following sequence occurs: crystallized leaders promote the crystallization of their organizations, which in turn brings deterioration and death to their organizations.

The preceding sequence can be corroborated with empirical data. For example, Charles O'Reilly and Michael Tushman, in *Lead and Disrupt*, report on a number of well-known companies that failed:

Each of these failures is unique in its details but the same in that each represents a failure in leadership. Every company described was at one point a great success and had the resources and capabilities needed to continue to be successful. The failure was that ... the leaders of these companies were rigid in one way or another—unable or unwilling to sense new opportunities and to reconfigure the firm's assets in ways that permitted the company to continue to survive and prosper.<sup>97</sup>

Consequently, the seventh sentence is given this meaning: *By working as leaders through their own crystallized personality, they bring not vitality but deterioration, because they promote the crystallization of their organizations, which in turn brings deterioration and death to their organizations.*

### **8. Death was His gift to life.**

The seventh sentence depicts first-ray leaders as bringing deterioration and death to their organizations, but the eighth sentence, “Death was His gift to life,” indicates that such death is really a gift to life. How can that be? Bailey gives this explanation:

Our ideas about death have been erroneous; we have looked upon it as the great and ultimate terror, whereas in reality it is the great escape, the entrance into a fuller measure of activity, and the release of the life from the crystallised vehicle and an inadequate form.<sup>98</sup>

For example, Bailey describes how today’s religious, political, and educational organizations are outmoded:

Worn-out religious dogmas and the grip of theology and the orthodox churches have no longer sufficed to hold the allegiance of the potent, inner, spiritual life; humanity is deeply spiritual and innately religious but needs today a new form with which to clothe the ancient verities. Old political schools have been deemed inadequate and new ideologies bear witness to the strength of the life which is seeking more adequate expression; the educational systems, having served their purpose, are fast being recognised as inadequate to meet the need of the demanding life of the race.<sup>99</sup>

She concludes that the death of these outmoded organizations would be “beneficent and needed”:

There is everywhere a cry for change and for those new forms in the religious, political, educational and economic life of the race which will allow of freer and better spiritual expression. Such a change is rapidly coming and is regarded by some as death—terrible and to be avoided if possible. It is indeed death but it is beneficent and needed.<sup>100</sup>

Consequently, first-ray leaders make a gift to life by promoting the crystallization and death of outmoded organizations. Such organizations, however, are not necessarily politically conservative. For example, Herbert McClosky and Dennis Chong, in “Similarities and Differ-

ences Between Left-Wing and Right-Wing Radicals,” report:

Evidence from the OVS [Opinion and Values survey] and PAB [Political Affiliation and Belief] survey reveals that both left-wing and right-wing extremists show high levels of intolerance of ambiguity and psychological rigidity. On these dimensions, both the far right and far left are substantially more rigid and intolerant of ambiguity than the moderates ... Both the left and the right, for instance, are much more likely than moderates to believe that in politics, there is no middle ground—people are “either with you or against you” ... They tend to believe that there is only one answer to important social and philosophical issues. And they are less willing to settle for compromises in the political arena, as indicated by their greater tendency to agree to the statement that “in politics you should settle for nothing less than total victory.”<sup>101</sup>

Thus, the surveyed extremist organizations, whether left-wing or right-wing, are crystallizing and dying, as shown by their high levels of psychological rigidity. Their death, however, would bring gifts to today’s world, because it would bring improvements in these areas: mutual understanding, civility, use of reason, and willingness to compromise.

In summary, the eighth sentence is given this meaning: *By promoting the crystallization and death of outmoded organizations, they prepare the way for new modes of life, of religious presentation, of government, and of education.*

### **9. Infusion and diffusion pleased Him not.**

Bailey, in *Esoteric Psychology*, describes how a first-ray person eventually comes to “an inner point of change”:

Power selfishly used exhausts its user and evokes a display of power antagonistic to him; he is thereby destroyed, because he has destroyed. He is separated off from his fellow men because he has been isolated and separative in his nature. He walks alone because he has cried forth to the world: “I will brook no companion; I am the one alone.” This crisis of evocation

brings him to an inner point of change which involves an alteration in his direction, a change of method, and a different attitude.<sup>102</sup>

The first-ray stanza's first through eighth sentences evoke experiences that are like the foregoing description, so those experiences eventually bring first-ray people to an inner point of change. When a first-ray person comes to such a point, what does he or she then do? Bailey, also in *Esoteric Psychology*, gives this answer:

Slowly and laboriously, using every power of his aligned personality and, in his realised desperation, calling in the power of his soul, he proceeds one-pointedly to rebuild that which he has destroyed.<sup>103</sup>

Here, "that which he has destroyed" is the person's own personality, which he or she impaired by proceeding through the stanza's first through sixth sentences. Moreover, the above quotation gives two clues on how a first-ray person carries out the therapeutic task of rebuilding his or her personality: "using every power of his aligned personality"; and "calling in the power of his soul."

The stanza's ninth and tenth sentences depict a self-healing method that is consistent with the above clues and that is like Margaret Paul's Inner Bonding process. Paul's website provides brief accounts of Paul's background and process:

Margaret holds a PhD in psychology and is a relationship expert, noted public speaker, workshop leader, educator, chaplain, consultant and artist. She has appeared on many radio and TV shows, including the Oprah show. She has successfully worked with thousands of individuals, couples and business relationships and taught classes and seminars since 1967.<sup>104</sup>

Inner Bonding empowers you to self-heal the root causes of anxiety, depression, addictions, failed relationships and many other problems that inhibit your personal and spiritual growth and satisfaction. It teaches you how to love yourself rather than continue to abandon yourself, how to move beyond emotional dependency and attain

emotional freedom, how to heal the underlying control issues—stemming from self-abandonment—that destroy relationships, and how to maintain a strong connection with your personal source of spiritual guidance.<sup>105</sup>

Consequently, in what follows, Paul's material is used to illustrate the meaning of the ninth and tenth sentences.

What is the significance of "infusion" in the ninth sentence? Plato (c. 427 BC – c. 347 BC), in *Philebus*, mentions "the excessive infusion of pleasure."<sup>106</sup> More recently, Joseph Forgas, an Australian social psychologist writing in the 1990s, defines the term *affect infusion* as "the process whereby affectively loaded information exerts an influence on and becomes incorporated into the judgmental process, entering into the judge's deliberations and eventually coloring the judgmental outcome,"<sup>107</sup> and says:

Affect infusion occurs when feelings (moods, emotions) exert an invasive and subconscious influence on the way people think, form judgments, and behave in social situations.<sup>108</sup>

Accordingly, in the ninth sentence, "infusion" signifies the infusion of feelings, so "Infusion ... pleased Him not" has this meaning: the portrayed people choose to feel their infused unpleasant feelings—such as anxiety, depression, anger, guilt, shame, and jealousy—rather than ignore, avoid, or suppress them. In a similar manner, Paul describes the first step in the Inner Bonding process:

Choose to be *mindful* of your feelings, *attending* to your feelings with the *willingness* to feel your core pain, learn about and take responsibility for how you are causing your wounded feelings, and take responsibility for creating your peace and joy.<sup>109</sup>

What is the meaning of "diffusion" in the ninth sentence? Just as "infusion" can characterize feelings, "diffusion" can characterize thinking. Nora Rosendahl, an entrepreneur and writer, notes, "Diffused thinking happens when you allow your thoughts to wander freely, making connections at random, letting unstructured

thoughts take shape at the back of your mind.”<sup>110</sup> James Allen, a leader in the self-help movement, similarly notes that diffused thoughts occur when the mind is not disciplined:

The great enemy of concentration—and therefore of all skill and power—is a wavering, wandering, undisciplined mind; and it is in overcoming this that concentration is acquired. A scattered and undisciplined army would be useless. To make it effective in action and swift in victory it must be solidly concentrated and masterfully directed. Scattered and diffused thoughts are weak and worthless.<sup>111</sup>

Mame Freas, a New Thought writer, considers diffused thought to be the source of error: “Diffused thought, thought governed by the carnal mind, will bring us into that chaotic state of consciousness in which humanity is today enveloped.”<sup>112</sup>

In the ninth sentence, the conjunction *and* is used to show chronological order,<sup>113</sup> so the sequence “infusion and diffusion” shows that the discovery of the infused feelings is followed by the discovery of the diffused thoughts. More specifically, the portrayed people trace their infused feelings inwardly to discover the diffused thoughts and beliefs that underlie their feelings. This process of discovery is consistent with Bailey’s statement: “Always in the process of arriving at an understanding of nature, the occultist works inwards from the external form in order to discover the sound which created it, or the aggregate of forces which produced the external shape.”<sup>114</sup> Paul describes the corresponding step in the Inner Bonding process:

Explore what you are telling yourself and how you are treating yourself that is causing the wounded feelings; discover the programmed thoughts and false beliefs from

your wounded self that have led to the self-abandonment that is causing your current shame, fear, anxiety, depression, and other wounded pain.<sup>115</sup>

The ninth sentence also says, “diffusion pleased Him not,” but what does that mean? The portrayed people are not pleased by having discovered the diffused thoughts and beliefs that underlie their unpleasant feelings, because they are still feeling the same unpleasant feelings. Consequently, they realize that they must take the additional step of discovering the truth about those thoughts and beliefs. Paul also describes this realization:

Once you understand which of your thoughts/false beliefs and actions cause you pain, you are ready to learn the truth about those beliefs and discover what new, loving action you need to take on your behalf.<sup>116</sup>

Based on the preceding remarks, the ninth sentence is given this explanation: *In their effort to rebuild their personality, they choose to feel their infused unpleasant feelings—such as anxiety, depression, anger, guilt, shame, and jealousy—rather than ignore, avoid, or suppress them. They trace their unpleasant feelings inwardly to discover the diffused thoughts and beliefs that underlie their feelings, but realize that they must still discover the truth about those thoughts and beliefs.*

#### **10. He loved and sought abstraction.**

Before considering the tenth sentence, let us clarify some terminology. The mental body is the highest part of the personality, and it is that which is usually regarded as the mind, because it is the instrument of analysis and discrimination. Esoteric traditions, however, have the notion of a higher mind that is sometimes called the “causal body.” The Bible refers to this higher mind as the “house not made with

***See to it that you crystallise not. As one gets older in the physical sense ... there is always the tendency to become set in one's life rhythms and objectives; the life theme is steady and the danger of rigidity is very real. See to it that you keep flexible and fluid and learning all the time.***

hands, eternal in the heavens” (2 Corinthians 5:1),<sup>117</sup> and Hinduism calls it by its Sanskrit name, *karana sarira*. Here, *karana* means “cause” and *sarira* means “body.”<sup>118</sup>

Theosophy divides the mental plane into seven levels, or subplanes: four concrete, or lower, levels; and three abstract, or higher, levels.<sup>119</sup> The mental body is said to reside on the concrete levels of the mental plane, and the causal body on the abstract levels of the mental plane.<sup>120</sup> I. K. Taimni, a theosophical writer, refers to the mental body as “the vehicle of concrete thoughts,” and says, “The first function of the Causal body is that it serves as the organ of abstract thought.”<sup>121</sup> Accordingly, “abstraction” in the tenth sentence could denote the causal body, because this body is located on the abstract levels of the mental plane and serves as the organ of abstract thought.

The stanza’s tenth sentence depicts a process of meditation, for which Bailey, in *Letters on Occult Meditation*, provides this instruction:

The student having withdrawn his consciousness on to the mental plane at some point within the brain, let him sound forth the Sacred Word gently three times. Let him picture the breath sent forth as a clarifying, expurgating force that in its progress onward sweeps away the thoughtforms circulating within the mental ovoid. Let him then at the close realise that the mental body is free and clear of thoughtforms.

Let him then raise his vibration as high as may be, and aim next at lifting it clear of the mental body into the causal, and so bring in the direct action of the Ego upon the lower three vehicles. As long as he can keep his consciousness high and as long as he holds a vibration that is that of the Ego on its own plane, the mental body will be held in a state of equilibrium.<sup>122</sup>

Here, “Ego” is synonymous with the term *soul*,<sup>123</sup> which was used earlier, and “the lower three vehicles” are the mental, emotional, and physical bodies.

The first part of the tenth sentence is: “He loved ... abstraction.” Given that “abstraction” denotes the causal body, and to *love* means “to

need or require,”<sup>124</sup> the first part has this meaning: in the words of Bailey’s preceding quotation, “Let him [the student] then raise his vibration as high as may be, and aim next at lifting it clear of the mental body into the causal.”

Paul gives similar instruction for accomplishing this step:

In order to access the higher frequency of the spiritual realm, you must raise your own frequency. There are numerous things you can do to raise your frequency. First, though, you must truly have the intent to learn with your spiritual guidance about loving yourself and others. When you have a true, pure intent to learn, your frequency automatically raises. Your intent to learn is your most powerful tool for raising your frequency. None of the actions we suggest below will raise your frequency without this intent.<sup>125</sup>

Paul suggests the following supplemental actions for raising your frequency: moving into your imagination; keeping your body clear of drugs, alcohol, nicotine, etc.; sincere prayers of gratitude and asking God for help; repetitive prayers, chants, and mantras; rapid repetitive movements and other forms of expressive dancing; spending time in nature; listening to classical or spiritual music; doing creative, artistic activities; and using incense.<sup>126</sup>

Bailey, also in *Letters on Occult Meditation*, describes the result from the earlier raising of the vibration or frequency:

The vibrations of the abstract levels can then begin to be felt. You need to remember that they come via the causal body, the vehicle of the Higher Self, and the average causal body is on the third subplane of the mental plane. This is a point not sufficiently recognised. Ponder on it. Real abstract thought becomes possible only when the Personality has, by vibration reciprocal to that of the Ego, aligned itself sufficiently to form a fairly unimpeded channel. Then at intervals, rare at first but of increasing frequency, will abstract ideas begin to filter down, to be followed in due time by flashes of real illumination or intuition from the

spiritual Triad or the true threefold Ego itself.<sup>127</sup>

Here, “Higher Self,” “Ego,” and “spiritual Triad” are synonymous terms.<sup>128</sup> The word *abstraction* has such synonyms as “idea” and “visionary notion,”<sup>129</sup> so it could denote what the preceding quotation calls “flashes of real illumination or intuition.” Thus, the last part of the tenth sentence, “He ... sought abstraction,” could have this meaning: they seek “flashes of real illumination or intuition” that reveal the truth about their underlying thoughts and beliefs, as well as reveal their best actions to implement.

Paul gives corresponding instruction for the Inner Bonding process:

When you are ready to learn how to take loving care of yourself, then ask your Divine guidance how to do it, and you will be shown the way. Your guidance is just waiting for you to ask ... But because we have free will, Spirit cannot do anything about our intent or our frequency ... The universe is filled with the energy of love and truth. It is filled with all the information there is, and it has the answers to all our questions. Asking your guidance questions about the truth of your beliefs and about what loving behavior you can take for yourself will eventually result in answers ... When you sincerely ask the questions, “What is the truth about this belief?” and “What is the loving action in this situation?” you open the channel for this information to come through you. We have long been told to “ask and you shall receive.” Try it. It really works.<sup>130</sup>

This quotation alludes to Matthew 7:7–8:

Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened.

In summary, the tenth and final sentence is given this meaning: *They raise their vibration as high as may be, aiming at lifting it clear of the mental body into the causal body, and then seek flashes of real illumination or intuition*

*that reveal the truth about their underlying thoughts and beliefs, as well as reveal their best actions to implement.*

Let us revisit Bailey’s earlier clues about what a first-ray person does after coming to the inner point of change:

Slowly and laboriously, using every power of his aligned personality and, in his realised desperation, calling in the power of his soul, he proceeds one-pointedly to rebuild that which he has destroyed.

In the meaning given for the tenth sentence, “lifting it [their vibration] clear of the mental body into the causal body” is equivalent to aligning the personality with the causal body,<sup>131</sup> and to “seek flashes of real illumination or intuition” corresponds to calling in the power of the soul, so this meaning satisfies Bailey’s earlier clues.

## Conclusions

Bailey’s first-ray stanza, which we call the “First-Ray Cause of Inharmony and Disease,” consists of ten symbolic sentences that can be clarified in the following manner:

1. At an early stage in their development, first-ray people are determined to follow their line of least resistance, which is to proceed alone upon their chosen path.
2. By following their line of least resistance, they do not tolerate any discipline from other people; and by succumbing to their own laziness, they do not tolerate any self-discipline.
3. By neither submitting to discipline from others nor applying it to themselves, they become psychologically rigid, leading to obstinacy, and perceptually rigid, leading to lovelessness.
4. By setting in motion the law of manifestation in a blind and ignorant manner, they manifest their psychological and perceptual rigidity as hardened emotional patterns and then as hardened behavioral patterns, thereby becoming more cruel and then more static.

5. By allowing their will to remain fixed as devoted aspiration, they have a motivation that is one-pointed, intense, breakable, and callous.

6. By proceeding through the preceding stages, they completely succumb to the first-ray imperfection that appears as the power to crystallize or harden, resulting in: the crystallization of their entire personality, personality disorders, problems with relationships, atrophying processes, and premature ageing.

7. By working as leaders through their own crystallized personality, they bring not vitality but deterioration, because they promote the crystallization of their organizations, which in turn brings deterioration and death to their organizations.

8. By promoting the crystallization and death of outmoded organizations, they prepare the way for new modes of life, of religious presentation, of government, and of education.

9. In their effort to rebuild their personality, they choose to feel their infused unpleasant feelings—such as anxiety, depression, anger, guilt, shame, and jealousy—rather than ignore, avoid, or suppress them. They trace their unpleasant feelings inwardly to discover the diffused thoughts and beliefs that underlie their feelings, but realize that they must still discover the truth about those thoughts and beliefs.

10. They raise their vibration as high as may be, aiming at lifting it clear of the mental body into the causal body, and then seek flashes of real illumination or intuition that reveal the truth about their underlying thoughts and beliefs, as well as reveal their best actions to implement.

The first-ray imperfection appears as the power to crystallize or harden. The stanza's first through sixth sentences illustrate that power by depicting the resulting stages in the crystallization of the personality; the seventh and eighth sentences depict the outer effects of such crystallization; and the ninth and tenth sentences

depict the stages in the process of rebuilding the personality.

First-ray people could act contrarily to what each of the first through sixth sentences shows them as doing. In fact, our commentary on each of these sentences includes a quotation from Bailey that instructs a student to act contrarily to the sentence's portrayal. If first-ray students were receptive to such instruction at any of these stages, they could arrest the internal process of crystallization at that point and then begin the process of rebuilding their personality without proceeding through the remaining stages of crystallization. As Bailey explains to a first-ray student,

May I point out to you also that a recognition of those ray problems and liabilities which exist in your own life and in the lives of those around you involves no criticism on my part or any on yours. The facts of nature exist; the wise man faces them, knowing them for what they are and he then endeavours to transcend them.<sup>132</sup>

Similarly, the first-ray stanza is not meant to be a criticism of first-ray people, but is intended to be a source of wisdom for them.

The stanza's ninth and tenth sentences, which represent the stages of rebuilding the personality, depict first-ray people as acting contrarily to what each of preceding sentences shows them as doing:

In the first sentence, first-ray people are determined to follow their line of least resistance. In the tenth sentence, however, they seek flashes of illumination or intuition that reveal their best actions to implement, which may entail deviating from their line of least resistance.

In the second sentence, they do not tolerate self-discipline. In the ninth and tenth sentence, however, they practice a regime of self-discipline.

In the third sentence, they become psychologically and perceptually rigid. In the tenth sentence, however, they seek flashes of illumination or intuition that reveal the truth about their thoughts and beliefs.

In the fourth sentence, they set in motion the law of manifestation in a blind and ignorant manner, and thereby manifest their psychological and perceptual rigidity as hardened emotional patterns. In the ninth sentence, however, they work with this law in a conscious and knowledgeable manner, and thereby trace their unpleasant feelings inwardly to discover the thoughts and beliefs that underlie those feelings.

In the fifth sentence, they allow their will to remain fixed as devoted aspiration. In the tenth sentence, however, they seek to supersede their devoted aspiration with the purpose of the soul.

In the sixth through eighth sentences, they work through their own crystallized personality. In the ninth and tenth sentences, however, they slowly and laboriously work to undo their crystallization.

The stanza's ninth and tenth sentences are like Margaret Paul's Inner Bonding process. Paul emphasizes that this process needs to be repeated frequently:

The key to the process is to learn to stay in tune with your feelings all the time ... This way, you are alerted the moment you feel anything other than peace inside. As soon as you feel anything less than peace and fullness within, do the Inner Bonding process in any form you can.<sup>133</sup>

She also writes, "Turning this practice into a daily way of life is what will protect you from going back into the behaviors and patterns from the past."<sup>134</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Zachary F. Lansdowne, "Vedic Teachings on the Seven Rays," *The Esoteric Quarterly*, Spring 2010.  
<sup>2</sup> Alice A. Bailey, *Esoteric Psychology*, vol. I (1936; reprint; New York: Lucis Publishing Company, 1979), 316.  
<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 126-127.  
<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 69.  
<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 63-83.  
<sup>6</sup> Alice A. Bailey, *The Rays and the Initiations* (1960; reprint; New York: Lucis Publishing Company, 1976), 568.

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<sup>7</sup> All biblical quotations in this article come from the New American Standard Bible. Philippe Le Moigne, Jean-Daniel Macchi, Étienne Nodet, Pierre-Maurice Bogaert, and Christian Cannuyer, *The Bible: Its Languages and Its Translations* (New London, CT: Bayard, 2014), 64, write: "This New American Standard Bible is considered by nearly all evangelical Christian scholars and translators today to be the most accurate, word-for-word translation of the original Greek and Hebrew scriptures into modern English that has ever been produced. It remains the most popular version among theologians, professors, scholars, and seminary students."  
<sup>8</sup> Alice A. Bailey, *Esoteric Healing* (1953; reprint; New York: Lucis Publishing Company, 1978), 298.  
<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 292-293.  
<sup>10</sup> Helena P. Blavatsky, *Collected Writings* (Wheaton, IL: Theosophical Society in America, 2002), vol. XIV, 217.  
<sup>11</sup> Helena P. Blavatsky, *The Secret Doctrine*, vol.1 (1888; reprint; Pasadena, CA: Theosophical University Press, 1977), 573.  
<sup>12</sup> Bailey, *Esoteric Healing*, 298-304.  
<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 293.  
<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 297.  
<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 304.  
<sup>16</sup> Zachary F. Lansdowne, "The Third-Ray Cause of Inharmony and Disease," *The Esoteric Quarterly*, Spring 2017.  
<sup>17</sup> Zachary F. Lansdowne, "The Sixth-Ray Cause of Inharmony and Disease," *The Esoteric Quarterly*, Summer 2017.  
<sup>18</sup> Zachary F. Lansdowne, "The Second-Ray Cause of Inharmony and Disease," *The Esoteric Quarterly*, Summer 2018.  
<sup>19</sup> Zachary F. Lansdowne, "The Fourth-Ray Cause of Inharmony and Disease," *The Esoteric Quarterly*, Winter 2019.  
<sup>20</sup> Zachary F. Lansdowne, "The Seventh-Ray Cause of Inharmony and Disease," *The Esoteric Quarterly*, Spring 2019.  
<sup>21</sup> Bailey, *Esoteric Healing*, 298-299.  
<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 299.  
<sup>23</sup> Alice A. Bailey, *The Light of the Soul* (1927; reprint; New York: Lucis Publishing Company, 1978), 268.  
<sup>24</sup> Alice A. Bailey, *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire* (1925; reprint; New York: Lucis Publishing Company, 1973), 1201.  
<sup>25</sup> John L. McKenzie, *Dictionary of the Bible* (1965; reprint; New York: Simon and Schus-

- ter, 1995), 603, writes, “It is a widespread cultural phenomenon that the name is considered to be more than an artificial tag which distinguishes one person from another ... but it is thought to tell something of the kind of person he is.” Timothy F. LaHaye, *Understanding Bible Prophecy for Yourself* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 2009), 149, observes, “In the Bible, a name reveals the nature of the person.” For example, 1 Samuel 25:25 says: “for as his name is, so is he.” Roswell D. Hitchcock, *An Interpreting Dictionary of Scripture Proper Names* (New York: A. J. Johnson, 1871), gives meanings of nearly all the names of persons and places in the Bible.
- 26 William W. “Bill” Gothard, “How do the sins of my forefathers affect my life?” *Institute in Basic Life Principles*, <https://iblp.org/questions/how-do-sins-my-forefathers-affect-my-life> (accessed January 26, 2019), states: “Looking back to our parents, grandparents, and great-grandparents ... we can observe character traits and spiritual influences that span the generations. A Godly heritage offers a sturdy foundation of virtue and faithfulness, but deeds such as anger, lust, and bitterness set destructive patterns that need to be recognized and overcome. In the Biblical account of Abraham’s family, the iniquity of deception became a stronghold that affected the lives of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Jacob’s sons. (See Genesis 12:10–20, 20, 26:1–11, 27:1–40, 37:12–36.) On the other hand, the New Testament examples of Lois, Eunice, and Timothy demonstrate the richness of a heritage of faith. (See 2 Timothy 1:5.)”
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- <sup>51</sup> David Jones, *Innovative Therapy: A Handbook* (Maidenhead, Berkshire, England: Open University Press, 1994), 156.
- <sup>52</sup> Lori Chandler, “The Difference Between Empathy and Compassion Is Everything,” *Big Think*, October 26, 2015, <https://bigthink.com/ideafeed/compassion-is-an-action-not-an-emotion> (accessed April 4, 2019), makes this distinction: “We often conflate the words ‘compassion’ and ‘empathy’ but they have different meanings for a very important reason ... Empathy is a gateway to compassion. It’s understanding how someone feels, and trying to imagine how that might feel for you—it’s a mode of relating. Compassion takes it further. It’s feeling what that person is feeling, holding it, accepting it, and taking some kind of action.”
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