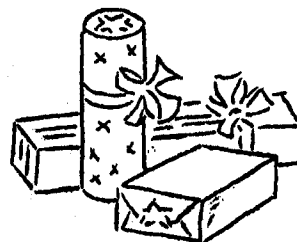


MERRY CHRISTMAS

and

A HAPPY NEW YEAR



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December 16, 1953

Dear friends:

I wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. It is nice to pause a moment in the mad rush of present times and reflect on what nice people I have come to know in this group. 'This group' is quite large and includes a lot of people I don't even know. Nevertheless, this year I feel lots of affinity for all my compatriots.

I wonder if anybody else has been thinking about the fine job of communicating which Clif Amesbury has been doing. He has been putting out a monthly collection of odd thoughts, etc., which impress me muchly. It's likely that he would be encouraged if he got more feedback.

Has anybody noted the similarities and differences between dianetics and religion? For me the easiest way is to use the ideas of "system vs. awareness." You can make a system out of anything...and many do. Or, on the other hand, you can work directly with awareness. You can even combine the two. Is it likely that people will get into disagreements about what each is aware of directly? I think not. I think that the arguments develop out of the systems that come from the awareness.

This is easily seen in religion. The various organized systems of religion, including in many cases the physical or MEST trappings, represent the group approach to a subject which can also be approached by direct awareness. Possibly the systems had to start with at least one individual who did work with direct awareness. But there has been such perversion [in many cases] of the insights of that original thinker that now "religion" means system to most people.

Three years ago it seemed that "dianetics" became a system which functioned as a system of religion sometimes works [for some]. Results were obtained within this system...but were these results permanent? How about the element of faith? Did dianetics work on people who didn't believe it would work? If true, this does not invalidate faith, but it would seem to call for an investigation of the role of faith in dianetics as well as in religion.

"...your destiny is really in your own hands, because it is impossible to think one thing and produce another...." That is a statement I agree with. It was taken from Power through constructive thinking, by Emmet Fox. The paradox is that he then goes on to deny self-determinism.

I have investigated many different approaches to the general problem of integration or happiness, etc., and have noted two fundamental approaches to the problem. The first approach is to by-pass the present time situation [in effect] by postulating something which is beyond present-time awareness. This includes such things as "God", "engram", "analytical mind", and so on. The other approach says develop your awareness of present time and see what happens. And back we come to system vs. awareness. The awareness approach is exemplified only by Gestalt Therapy as far as I know. Any others?

Does anybody recall an article by John Campbell in the ARC LIGHT in about July of 1952, this article being a view that eventually one must get into philosophy. I would like to see this again so if anybody has one, I would appreciate the loan of it for a few days. In it he said that one will get to such questions as "Who am I?" and "Why am I here?" and that one who did not know the answers to these questions had more work to do.

Compartmented thinking is a fine companion for projecting. What could be easier than to shut something off and then get rid of it by accusing somebody else of having it?

Do you think people ought to be come clear? Wouldn't this be a convenient way to avoid doing so? Because what does "ought" mean? Doesn't it have something to do with avoiding self-determinism in present time? [I still don't know what the term "clear" means.]

Well---I wish you all continued steady progress. More than that you will have to do.

ARC, 

Harry Fortune