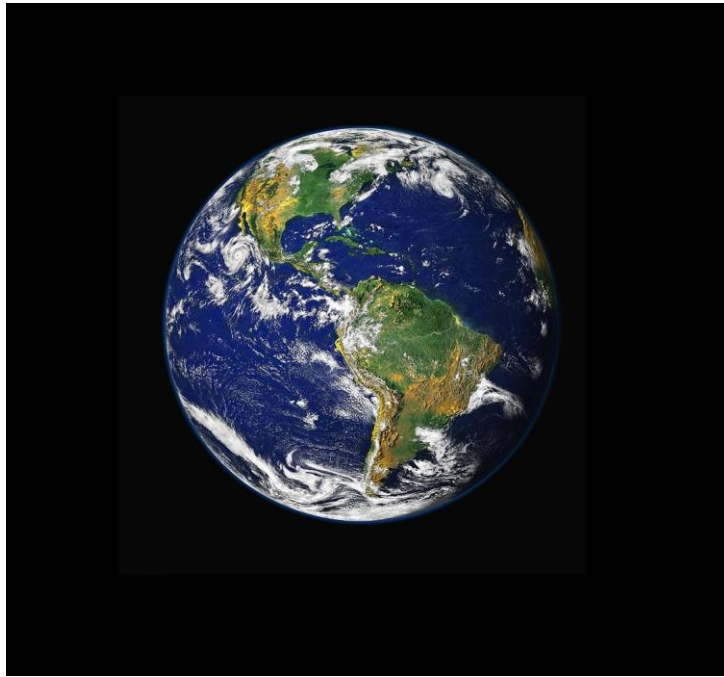


# Rule 10. Malkuth: The Kingdom; The Earth—The Physical World

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## Outline

Introduction

Malkuth

Basic Quality: Focusing on physical reality

Virtues and Vices

Challenge: Pursue something of value that you are passionate about

Magical Practice: Observe your routines.

Common Virtue: Well-being

Magical Virtue: A Quiet Ecstasy

Body Awareness—Meditation on the Feet

Divine Virtue: Silence

Biographical Note

Dream: Mastery and Love

Initiation: Bringing Nature into One's Role in Society

Mystery: The Five Elements in the Personality, Society, and Biosphere

## Introduction

*Ten Rules for Spiritual Beginners* (Volume I of II) is based on the Kabbalistic Tree of Life. I began reading books on this topic in the early 1970s beginning with Dion Fortune's *Mystical Qabalah*, William Grey's *Ladder of Lights*, and Gareth Knight's two volume *Tree of Life*. There are currently a great number of books that pursue the meaning of this magical diagram.

The Tree of Life theme has many advantages. It brings into one place astrology, spiritual kingdoms, planes of consciousness, and all manner of initiations. Since the Tree of Life is a kind of road map to the spiritual world, each occult writer can add the details of his own experience and visions of how the human and spiritual worlds interact.

Back in the 1990s I wrote a manuscript called *A Travel Guide to Life*. As a spiritual anthropologist, I studied and meditated with a great many masters and gurus. And I would notice that the Taoist master from the oldest Chinese lineage has quite different goals and methods than a master from the oldest Buddhist tradition in Tibet.

The Hopi Indian shaman works with the spiritual and physical universe in a different way than the Wiccan, Druid, Muslim, or Christian. Put simply, the various traditions on earth do not share each other's dreams. What is sacred in one tradition is not sacred in another. They seem oblivious to astral plane with its global dreamtime that supports every soul regardless of the individual's path and the religion or wisdom he practices.

My interest is straight forward and simple. With all the advantages technology offers the human race, the survival of our species remains at

risk. To use properly the immense powers we hold in our hands, we will need an equal level of wisdom to guide and inspire us.

And so my task has been to study all the various traditions I could gain access to. I have sought to distill and extract from them the universal aspects of their training systems. The goal is then to bring this wisdom together in one, user-friendly book that is neutral in regard to beliefs, doctrines, and religion.

One huge difference between myself and Dion Fortune, William Grey, Gareth Knight and others is that I am not expounding on theories, metaphysics, doctrines, or even ideas. I do use words. But the words I have written here offer directions so that you may experience these things for yourself. Then you can decide what is useful and what you wish to discard. The focus is on your needs and not on the preservation of a tradition or lineage.

The chapters of this book follow the ten sephira of the Kabbalah which is extremely useful because of its wide-ranging and universal approach to life experience. And for each sephira or domain, I present various themes such as the Basic Qualities which indicates the obvious and tangible aspects of the sephiroth.

The Challenge section is something to accomplish. The Magical Practice is a method. The Common Virtues tend to immerse an individual directly in the world of feeling that usually derives from uniting with some aspect of nature.

The Magical Virtues section is more spiritual realizations. The Divine Virtues sections are what you might experience once you know the sephiroth inside and out.

The Dream section is an animated visualization or symbolic picture through which we can use our imagination to bring the sephiroth to life. The Initiation section is a self-transformation to experience.

And the Mysteries section involves conflicts within the archetypes of the collective unconscious. For example, there are conflicts between the four elements in nature, in the nature of the astral plane, the quest for truth, in the attainment of oneness in personal relationships, and the relation between the personality and the higher self.

The Mysteries sections also involve perennial questions, Why are we here? What can we accomplish in life? What is human nature and what can we become? And how do we distinguish between doctrines formulated thousands of years ago and the search for truth we need to pursue in our own generation of the world?

I also give some autobiographical examples from my own life to illustrate my process of learning. This entire work is biographical. I am sharing personal experiences and visions.

For me, the prime directive governing all souls who incarnate on earth is “Decide for yourself what you wish to become.” This book is my attempt to assist others in the pursuit of this declaration of spiritual freedom.

## Malkuth

In Kabbalah, Malkuth relates to the physical world. Here you can encounter every kind of vibration from the densest physical to the highest light. The physical world has great variety. You can ride on a bus and have a drug dealer sit on one side of you and a saint on the other side.

In life, there is horror and great suffering as well as wonder and immense love. Formulate a plan. Experience all you can. Then offer to others the wealth and knowledge you have acquired.

Basic Quality: The basic quality of Malkuth is having your emotions and perceptions focused 100% on the physical world we share in common with others.

There are many things that can interfere with our ability to see clearly and understand the world. Among these are strong emotions, fixed beliefs, and attachment to ideologies, philosophies, or metaphysics. Or simply a failure to appreciate all the opportunities and lessons that the physical world offers.

Virtues—solid, stable, down to earth, reliable, adaptable, conscientious, hardworking, enduring, persevering, self-assured, and self-determining.

Vices—rigid, inflexible, non-responsive, insecure, anxious, eccentric, aberrant, stuck, greedy, self-centered, grim, menacing, feeling abandoned and without a home.

Negative: oppression, exhaustion, failure, defeat, exile, slavery, bondage, jail, captivity

## Challenge

The challenge of Malkuth is, *Find something worth doing that is right for you and totally captivating.*

“Worth doing” means it uplifts other’s lives and produces something of value to society. “Right for you” means by doing it your life is enhanced, your values furthered, and it is satisfying just to be involved with it. “Totally captivating” means that the ecstasy within these three things—feeling, will, and intellect—are strengthened, deepened, and working harmoniously together.

And,

*Do whatever it takes to make yourself a home in this world.*

Warren Buffett accumulates billions of dollars by buying high value companies and then, with great insight, he picks men to manage those companies who are honest, sincere, and love to work as Buffett himself loves to work. Buffet's attitude, like a gnome (an earth elemental), is to "find something you love and then work at it with all of your heart."

To do this, you will need to make peace with reality. If you have bills to pay, you will need a job. And yet, as Warren Buffett points out in the next section, never stop searching for work that you love. The assumption is that if you find work that you love, you will succeed (success including happiness, health, and well-being) far easier than you would by working at anything else.

Find something worth doing that gets you out of bed in the morning and gives you a sense of belonging because you are a productive member of society; and yet also deep inside you are so grounded and solid you have that sense of peace and well-being that makes you feel you are a part of the greater universe.

With the onset of puberty, your hormonal system throws everything it has at you to get you to put aside being your inner child in need of protection and supervision and to become an adult who determines his own course of action and finds his place in the world.

We are social creatures often requiring constant feedback and interaction with others in order to feel healthy and whole. Take this away and your overall energy level is greatly reduced.

Experience everything you can. Satisfy your every desire. Realize your potential. Make use of your talents. You have received the gift of life. Learn to give back. Leave the world a better place than the one you entered.

## Magical Practice

Make a habit of reviewing your daily life. Ask yourself, "How am I doing? Is there something else I can substitute for some of my routines that might produce better results?" How does my daily life support my long-range goals and express my deepest values?"

Some individuals may be able to visualize what they did during the day in a way similar to watching an instant replay on a tv. Others may want to keep a journal. Find what works for you so you are fully aware of your routines and how they affect you.

Over time, enlarge the time frame of your review. Consider where you have been, how you got to where you are now, and where you hope to be.



*Get in the habit of sitting each day and just thinking.*

—Warren Buffett

### Common Virtue: Well-being

Well-being” is the feeling that enables us to fully appreciate the physical world. With it, the world is far more alive, full of hope and love. With that positive outlook, we see more of what is going on around us and are open to new experiences. Without the feeling of well-being, the world is cold, menacing, and hostile. And this can lead us to narrowing our focus since our primary concern is preserving ourselves and maintaining strong defenses.

For individuals with well-being, an individual’s identity is not defined by the goals he pursues or what he accomplishes. There is, instead, a

feeling of being directly connected to nature that exists as an inexhaustible source of peace and renewal. Life is seen as being sheltering and fulfilling. This appreciation occurs on a level far deeper than the conscious mind, for it has nothing to do with beliefs, doctrines, theories, ideas, or positive thinking.

There is continuity. If I lose something important to me at one point in my life, it can be found again later during another stage. For these individuals, even relationships do not really end. What is begun in one relationship can be carried on and fulfilled in another relationship. One such person said, "I feel like I am in a river, flowing, and accepted. I don't have to do anything. I can just be. Things just happen."

Exercise. Recall times in which you were completely happy and satisfied, held and loved by another. Or you may have experiences, even moments, from childhood in which you felt completely safe and accepted by another person.

Review three of your best moments when you felt at peace being here in this world. Now hold these experiences before your mind. Let the feelings in each to flow into and through the others. This is what people with high well-being have inside of themselves all of the time. Joy and wonder, acceptance and peace are constantly before their eyes.

Well-being creates a different perception. Independent of physical circumstances, you feel that being here on earth is being home.

### Magical Virtue: A Quiet Ecstasy

In fairy tales, the elemental beings who associate with the earth element are called gnomes. Of all beings, they feel most at home in the physical world.

I said to one girl, "You have the vibration of a gnome."

She asked, "How so?"



I replied, “There is this feeling in your aura of being in a cave beneath the ground that is perfectly silent and still. And yet there is also a sense that you are a part of everything physical, as if matter itself is alive and imbued with spirit waiting to be awakened.”

She said to me, “Yes. That is the way I feel all of the time.”

## Meditation on the Feet

Your physical body is what enables you to be here in this world. Without it, you are on the astral plane among the departed or somewhere else. To be fully alive and active, make a point of keeping your body healthy. Exercise regularly. Eat with care. Monitor your stress levels.

There is a connection between the earth element, which is analogous to the sephiroth of Malkuth, and the lower area of the body—from the feet, lower and upper legs, up to and including the buttocks, genitals, and pelvic bone.

For some people, focusing on the feet as a meditation can get rid of some kinds of headaches, for example, from eye strain. And it also balances the typical focus of our awareness in our upper body and head. Over time it makes us more down to earth and grounded.

If it is comfortable for you, sit in a chair with your feet flat on the ground. Then focus your full attention on your feet. Become aware of everything you can about them without any distraction.

Sense the bottom of the feet as they touch the floor. Notice the toes, heel, and all sides of the feet. Visualize or imagine the bones, tendons, and muscles. Sense the skin moisture, sensitivity to hot and cold, tactile sensations such as texture and pressure. The skin surface will likely be warmer than the surrounding air.

Also imagine or sense the blood flow through the feet and/or the pulse of the heartbeat. When you breathe deeply in, see if you can sense any tingling sensations or presence of increased vitality in your feet as you do so.

I often begin by focusing on a tiny dot of white light in the center of the upper part of each big toe. Then after a few breaths, I focus on the entire big toes. And then I focus on both feet at once.

You might be able to sense the effects of the parasympathetic nervous system. As you relax, the blood vessels near the surface of the skin dilate, increasing the blood flow and producing warm sensations. Since blood is 80% water, you may be able to sense or at least imagine the sensation of water flowing through the feet. We will focus more on the element of water in the next chapter.

Also there is the experience of “zoning.” Zoning is when you are immersed in a stream of sensations and feelings without any thoughts occurring. In this awareness of the sensations and feelings within the feet, you may experience dopamine, endorphins, and opiates released into the blood stream. When this occurs, you may produce yogic experiences of bliss and shamanistic experiences of ecstasy.

Try this. Immerse yourself in a pure, sensory awareness of your feet. You can also move up from the feet through the ankles, lower and upper legs, to the pelvic bone including your buttocks and genitals.

At a certain point, you may feel the awareness of your lower body expanding into and including others aspects nature—an awareness of rocks, mountains, and forests. Again, over a period of time, weeks, months, or years, the energy system of your body begins to shift. You may welcome the increased balance produced by being more connected to the earth element in yourself.

The earth element has a power that Warren Buffett points out regarding the mind— “The thing to do is to keep your mind when the world around you is losing theirs.”

I sometimes meditate with individuals who have unusual auras. A few women I know are like the incarnation of gnomes. They have a woman’s body but a gnome’s soul.

When I get them to meditate with me on their feet, I notice that they have a very powerful connection to the earth element. I have not encountered any human masters who have an awareness of the density of their bodies to this extent. I have to concentrate on my feet being made out of solid steel to even approximate their awareness.

If you have the earth connection, then 90% of the things that are upsetting in life vanish. It is a good idea to give your emotions your full

attention to see what they are saying to you. But it helps to have as a resource an inner feeling that, under all the circumstances of life, stays focused on what is important to you. This is part of the purpose of the feet and lower body meditation.

## Divine Virtue: Silence



*In silence the universe reveals itself as moving unobstructed toward its goals.*

I like to tell the story of the time I attended my first Vipassana session. It was in Kahala on Oahu. I went into a house as others were coming in. There was no talking. Everyone was silent as we sat down on cushions arranged in a circle. We sat for about an hour. Again, no one spoke. It was just quiet sitting. At the end, everyone got up and left, again without any words spoken.

I thought to myself, “This is perfect. This is the kind of group I have always been looking for.” The next week went pretty much the same. Except at the end, one of the two “instructors” talked for about twenty-five minutes on the nature of Buddhist meditation.

I was shocked and appalled. How can someone take a divine virtue such as silence and twist it into a religious practice that requires

conformity of belief and action in order to gain group affiliation? But I am not filing a complaint here. I just never went back.

In the books written by Carlos Castaneda, the Yaqui sorcerer Don Juan has a practice he calls “stopping the world.” It is perceiving without thoughts arising. When you stop your mind from thinking and look around, it is like you are in a different world. Or, as I sometimes put it, “Perceiving without thoughts intervening is the foundation of all magical traditions.”

Silence is an unknown terrain and an invisible mountain range. No army can climb it. No commander or general can penetrate it and no reconnaissance plane can fly over it. You can neither lay siege to it nor assault it.

It is a country whose borders are guarded by nightmares, terror, and whirlwinds of despair. But those who cross over and explore these unknown lands find wealth beyond compare.

Silence is where dreams originate, visions are born, and passions enter to be transformed.

In war, silence is the element of surprise. It is the unthinkable. It does what the opponent cannot imagine. Whatever the odds, there is always a moment when success becomes inevitable. Silence sees what is invisible to everyone else.

Silence is beyond light and darkness, form and emptiness. Though silence never tampers with the ordinary and familiar, its response is always new.

Silence is the ability to take the most difficult of fates and karmas and turn them into something wonderful because you see the beauty within them. Law and limitation bind things giving them weight, shape, and place. But silence grants freedom because it knows how to wait. In the greatest darkness and the loneliest prison, silence finds gates leading to liberation. In silence, sorrow falls asleep in the arms of peace.

Silence is the inner strength individuals need to fashion the missing links between beginnings and endings, between dreams and their manifestations. This is because amid the routines and activities of life silence maintains an open space inside them. In this space the highest ideal can be present without being contaminated, compromised, or put

off to the side. Silence strengthens inner visions so there is never any doubt or uncertainty about their reality.

To summarize, in silence we shut down the world so it becomes still like moment frozen in time. Though remaining completely detached, we look around in wonder. Here is the mysterious and at times crazy on-going experiment of life—a mixture that we blend together of human and divine; ever so fragile, life is always willing to be shaped and transformed through our inner visions and the work of our hands.

## Biographical Note

I am the son of five generations of men who had great faith in God. They practiced the most powerful work ethic on earth—the Protestant Ethic—which is so successful because it declares that your personal faith connects you directly to God who will bless you in whatever path of life you take.

On the other hand, their weakness was that they were total extroverts. They lacked self-reflection other than their commitment to maintain the morality of their religious community. In a way, this extroversion and their orthodox faith worked well for them. It empowered them to focus 100 per cent of their attention on the external world.

Being an extreme introvert, I inherited 500 years of the intuitive insights given to them but which they ignored. Everything they might have learned through reflection and contemplation was deposited into a bank account with my name on it.

I know someone who was struck by lightning and survived. The lightning came right through the living room window and hit her. But it was okay. It cleared out her sinuses.

I was struck not by lightning but by silence. Unlike the girl struck by lightning, the silence was a shock to my nervous system. And this was because the religion I inherited had no guidelines, no manuals, and no information on how to see the world through spiritual perception.

Growing up, my Protestant teachers and university professors were incapable of comprehending a state of awareness in which the mind is

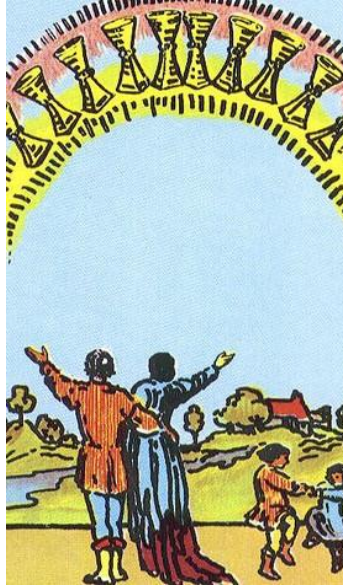
fully alert but does not use thoughts. And to stand back and focus on not just your own behavior but on human history as if you are looking in from outside—this level of detachment and intense scrutiny is necessary if we are to survive and to thrive.

## Dream

When you're associating with the people that you love, doing what you love, it doesn't get any better than that.

--Warren Buffett





Imagine a room with different windows. As you gaze through each window, you are looking into a dream. One window is the world as we know it. Another window expresses our worries, anxieties, and fears. And a third window shows the world in which everything has gone right. Life is bright and fulfilling.

Each domain or sephiroth has a window that shows the best experiences in life. Regardless of our actual situation and circumstances in life, we can still dream life as it is meant to be.

For Malkuth, the kingdom, this dream can be where we have mastered our work and profession. You feel at peace, at home in this world, secure, and surrounded by those you love.

In the Tarot, there are cards that illustrate this such as the ten of pentacles and the ten of cups. The ten of pentacles is a master sitting at a gate. And the ten of cups is a family beneath a rainbow who are filled with love and joy.

But this window is not just a way of looking at the world. We can imagine we are there in the picture by lucid dreaming while we are fully awake. Put yourself into that state of well-being and peace. Make this picture a part of yourself.

## Initiation



In initiation, something happens to us. We have become different. Some aspect of ourselves has transformed. Consciousness shifts and we see the world in a new way. The result is that the various forces within us—desires, dreams, motivations, and inspirations—are amplified, deepened, and redirected.

In the context of this book, initiation draws together the various aspects of the sephiroth and integrates them within ourselves. In the first five sephira, we are also uniting with nature in terms of making an inner connection to the four elements—earth, water, fire, and air. In doing so, something of the wonder and beauty in each element is transferred into us in a way that enriches our daily lives.

The initiation in Malkuth is not a rite of passage. There is no graduation ceremony from high school or college, no certificates, no metals or ribbons, no secret handshakes and no pins to wear. There is no one being welcomed into an ethnic or religious group. In the initiation of Malkuth, we are on our own.



Imagine going out into nature. Perhaps you are in a forest grove in a valley surrounded by mountains. Perhaps you are sitting on top of a mountain surrounded by a vast view of a mountain range and ocean beyond. Perhaps you are in a location like Sedona or the Grand Canyon in Arizona, Joshua Tree National Forest or Yosemite in California, or Monument Valley in Utah.

You sense the silence and enduring presence in the features of the landscape. You relax. You feel at peace. And something of that rock-solid landscape and geological time becomes a part of yourself.

There is no need for others to validate or recognize your experience. This is an inner connection to nature. But it is not enough to be immersed in the timeless peace of nature when you are in such a setting.

The goal is to bring back this silent endurance so it exerts its presence in your daily life. Your role in society is then strengthened by feeling solid, down to earth, and timeless in being. The result is that you possess a perseverance, patience, and incredible self-reliance that is far in excess of others who have no such inner connection to nature.

It is, of course, possible to go live out in nature for a week, months, or longer. But in another sense, we can exercise our imagination a few minutes each day as we evoke a feeling of being a part of nature.

Certainly, there are simple things many people are already doing that connects them to nature. Having a pet animal is one thing. Dogs, for example, have been with us for 20,000 to 40,000 years. They were our friend far back into the paleolithic era. Human animal contact reminds of a time when we were immersed in nature.

Having a garden is another thing. Agriculture began at least 12,000 years ago. There are simple activities that briefly suspend the rush of daily life and reconnect us to nature.

**Mysteries—The Four Elements in Nature, Society, and the Self**

*Water purifies and flows. Fire makes things happen. Air clarifies and balances. Earth insures that our results are stable and enduring.*

We live on an amazing planet. It is in the goldilocks zone in relation to the sun which is not too hot and not too cold. This enables liquid water to exist on the earth's surface. The iron in the moving magma in the earth's outer core generates the magnetosphere which protects life from solar radiation.

The active core also accounts for the movement of the tectonic plates that produce a vast range of ecosystems with their variety of life forms. And, after billions of years of development, our atmosphere has become rich enough in oxygen to enable animals to exist on land.

Human nature is analogous to the main characteristics of our planet. The sky, embodying the air element with its clarity, harmonizing influence, and freedom of movement is like the mind and intellect. We have the ability to solve problems and resolve conflict, to be curious always probing and discovering new things.

The enduring presence of the physical materials of our world is present in human beings as the capacity to work, to produce, and to innovate and shape nature. The fire element, especially seen in our technologies and industries, grants us mastery over the world and the power to take charge and command.

And the water element with its receptivity and nurturing capacities is similar to the receptivity and animating quality of feeling which enables us to bring things to life and to feel fully alive. And with feeling we have empathy—the ability to not only sense but also to feel that we share in the life of those around us.

But our planet comes with a high level of difficulty. Go back 70,000 years and a volcano named Toba erupted on Sumatra in Indonesia

sending 28,000 times more ash into the air than Mt. St. Helens. Such eruptions produce mini ice ages.

Genetic research concludes that at that time *Homo sapiens* may have shrunk to as little as 1,000 adults, perhaps even to 40 breeding pairs. We are very lucky to be here. In the geologic record, there is a list of intelligent beings like *Homo erectus* and Neanderthal who were less lucky than us and are now extinct.

The fire element in volcanoes can produce climactic changes that threaten our survival. Similarly, the other elements have their dangerous aspects as well. Oceans produce rogue waves, storm surges, and tsunamis. The weather can cause famines, droughts, hurricanes, and tornadoes. And other forms of life can attack us with poison and violence as well as through plagues, illness, and diseases.

And so in a similar way, since we embody untamed aspects of the four elements, our minds can be at odds with our feelings. In a rush to survive and to dominate, we often abuse and kill those with less power. In our race to discover new technologies, we fail to put in place safe guards for their misuse or we give these technologies to the worst people on earth who immediately turn them to malicious ends.

Though water covers 71% of the surface of the earth, we barely have any sympathy for those of a different nation, race, religion, or culture. Though water accounts for 73% of the mass of the blood, freely offering its nurturing, healing, purifying, and renewing presence, human beings have almost no capacity to feel what other people feel.

Back in the paleolithic age when we were hunter gatherers, we needed to stay focused on the well-being of those in our own tribe. Now, with a global community, one national leader or corporate CEO is in a position to threaten or damage the well-being of the entire planet.

Generals and politicians command the expansive and dynamic aspects of fire. Scientists, artists, and musicians enjoy the clarity and dramatic presentation of the air element. Societies and economies diligently preserve in producing wealth and material goods.

But our philosophers, psychologists, socialists, anthropologists, and ministers and priests have not yet brought the water element into their

consciousness. The consequence is that human beings take risks that threaten their own survival in order to feel more alive.

When our capacity to feel is so weak we are in a very dangerous situation. And thus we have this mystery—even the greatest of world teachers can talk about and illustrate love and compassion, but so far they have not figured out how to teach these things.

Throughout this book, we shall return again and again to the psychological and spiritual aspects of the four elements. They are the key to discovering that nature is at the core of our being. And they are part of the answer to the questions, “What is missing from life and what are we capable of becoming?”