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*Presents*

## Mysticism

by

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## Mysticism

Illumination redefines. That's a recognizable process of the spirit acting on the mind during the evolution of our consciousness. The mind really is the fulcrum of balance and translation between the energies of the body and those of the spirit. One redefinition I've found illuminating is that mysticism is an attempt to comprehend spiritual reality with the emotions.

Attempting to grasp a non-material reality with a physically oriented center of perception is destined to fall short from the start. However, every spiritual effort has value and we all start our journeys toward perfection with mysticism. That's the dominance of our animal nature. From our emotional centers, the solar plexus, we reach out with tendrils of energy to feel the qualities of material reality. It is perfectly normal for our first spiritual steps to be mystical. Miracles, signs and wonders are the emotional nourishment of the nascent seeker.

As we are animals (material beings) with a potential for an eternal existence we first need to deal with the survival of our physical forms. There's no time available for spiritual exploration when survival is at risk. A certain freedom from want is necessary, though that too is a balancing act between changing one's desires and satisfying them. Once our livelihood seems assured we can afford to consciously participate in the activity of progression toward the divine.

People tend to gather together in groups for emotional security. Spiritual advancement is really an evolving state of personal realization that grows beyond the emotions. The two aren't necessarily at odds. Grouping together is valuable for comfort and the opportunity to have a social Petri dish for experimentation. Usually the group effort is anchored in beliefs and rituals. That's fine until they become the entire rationale for the group's persistence. At some point the search for truth requiring the discomfort of change has been compromised in favor of protecting oneself from the necessity to grow. For example, being stuck in a rut of theology substitutes intensity of belief for actual spiritual progress.

Individuals who have left the comfort of groups to undertake a personal odyssey may exhibit this same sort of emotional defense-via-belief. Inevitably we have been attracted to overtly mystical stuff rather than the more covert and yet ubiquitous group mysticism. We'll read tomes so abstruse that only great effort and mental gymnastics seem to make contextual sense out of palpable nonsense. We'll buy into theories of wonder and grandeur but that really signifies more of a fundamental need for emotional protection. "I can understand this wonderful revelation of the mystery of the Universe and you can't. Ha ha!"

Each mystical endeavor truly is another rung up the ladder of religious ascent. As we grow in love, when we look back at our evolution, the rungs on which we've climbed have disappeared. They were the beliefs of spiritual infancy. We seem to be standing on nothing and yet our foundation feels rock solid. It's a mystery!