

Journal 314: Part VII, 47-52

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47. *Thomas Kempis*

- "If thou knewest the whole Bible, and the sayings of all the philosophers, what should all this profit thee without the love and grace of God? Vanity of vanities, all is vanity, save to love God, and Him only to serve. That is the highest wisdom, to cast the world behind us, and to reach forward to the heavenly kingdom."

- "There is naturally in every man a desire to know, but what profiteth knowledge without the fear of God? Better of a surety is a lowly peasant who serveth God, than a proud philosopher who watcheth the stars and neglecteth the knowledge of himself." (Me- entheogens, scientism)

- "Be not high-minded, but rather confess thine ignorance. Why desirest thou to lift thyself above another, when there are found many more learned and more skilled in the Scripture than thou? If thou wilt know and learn anything with profit, love to be thyself unknown and to be counted for nothing. That is the highest and most profitable lesson, when a man truly knoweth and judgeth lowly of himself. To account nothing of one's self, and to think always kindly and highly of others, this is great and perfect wisdom. Even shouldst thou see thy neighbor sin openly or grievously, yet thou oughtest not to reckon thyself better than he, for thou knowest not how long thou shalt keep thine integrity. All of us are weak and frail; hold thou no man more frail than thyself." (me- Vivekananda)

- "Oh how quickly passeth the glory of the world away!"

- "He is truly great who deemeth himself small, and counteth all height of honour as nothing. He is the truly wise man, who counteth all earthly things as dung..."

- "*We must not trust every word of others or feeling within ourselves, but cautiously and patiently try the matter, whether it be of God.*" (always doubting every thing, a disconnect between all humans, e.g. 'a conversation between two people is like having to conflicting monologues going on at the same time')

- "*Vain is the life of that man who putteth his trust in men or in any created Thing.*" (there is no reason for disappointment from other people, because there is nothing else to expect except disappointing behavior. This also applies to oneself)

- "Be not lifted up because of thy strength or beauty of body, for with only a slight sickness it will fail and wither away.

- "We must love all men, but not make close companions of all."

- "Avoid as far as thou canst the tumult of men; for talk concerning worldly things, though it be innocently undertaken, is a hindrance, so quickly are we led captive and defiled by vanity. Many a time I wish that I had held my peace, and had not gone amongst men."
- "How came it to pass that many of the Saints were so perfect, so contemplative of Divine things? Because they steadfastly sought to mortify themselves from all worldly desires, and so were enabled to cling with their whole heart to God, and be free and at leisure for the thought of Him. We are too much occupied with our own affections, and too anxious about transitory things. Seldom, too, do we entirely conquer even a single fault, nor are we zealous for daily growth in grace. And so we remain lukewarm and unspiritual."
- "If we look upon our progress in religion as a progress only in outward observances and forms, our devoutness will soon come to an end."
- "If we look upon our progress in religion as a progress only in outward observances and forms, our devoutness will soon come to an end." (The Kingdom within, Vivekananda, Symbolism, Tillich)
- "It is good that we sometimes endure contradictions, and are hardly and unfairly judged, when we do and mean what is good. For these things help us to be humble, and shield us from vain-glory."
- "So long as we live in the world, we cannot be without trouble and trial."
- "There is no position so sacred, no place so secret, that it is without temptations and adversities." (Ha! Total skepticism, Vivekananda 'believe nothing and disbelieve everything, finite/infinite gap)
- "Look well unto thyself, and beware that thou judge not the doings of others. *In judging others a man laboureth in vain*; he often erreth, and easily falleth into sin; but in judging and examining himself he always laboureth to good purpose."
- "Oh, he who hath but a spark of true charity, hath verily learned that all worldly things are full of vanity." (Me- Vivekananda)
- "Endeavour to be patient in bearing with other men's faults and infirmities whatsoever they be, for thou thyself also hast many things which have need to be borne with by others. If thou canst not make thine own self what thou desireth, how shalt thou be able to fashion another to thine own liking. *We are ready to see others made perfect, and yet we do not amend our own shortcomings.*" (this is an issue of mine)
- "We will that others be straitly corrected, but we will not be corrected ourselves. The freedom of others displeaseth us, but we are dissatisfied that our own wishes shall be denied us."
- "But now hath God thus ordained, that we may learn to bear one another's burdens, because none is without defect, none without a burden, none sufficient of himself, none wise enough of himself; but it behoveth us to bear with one another, to comfort one another, to help, instruct, admonish one another. How much strength each man hath is best proved by occasions of adversity: for such occasions do not make a man frail, but show of what temper he is."
- "O how many and grievous tribulations did the Apostles, Martyrs, Confessors, Virgins, endure; and all others who would walk in the footsteps of Christ. For they hated their souls in this world that they might keep them unto life eternal. O how strict and retired a life was that of the holy fathers who dwelt in the desert! what long and grievous temptations they did suffer! how often were they assaulted by the enemy! what frequent and fervid prayers did they offer unto God! what strict fasts did they endure! what fervent zeal and desire after spiritual profit did they manifest! how bravely did they fight that their vices might not gain the mastery! how entirely and steadfastly did they reach after God! By day they laboured, and at night they gave themselves oftentimes unto prayer; yea, *even when they were labouring they ceased not from*

mental prayer. 3. They spent their whole time profitably; every hour seemed short for retirement with God; and through the great sweetness of contemplation, even the need of bodily refreshment was forgotten. They renounced all riches, dignities, honours, friends, kinsmen; they desired nothing from the world; they ate the bare necessities of life; they were unwilling to minister to the body even in necessity. Thus were they poor in earthly things, but rich above measure in grace and virtue. Though poor to the outer eye, within they were filled with grace and heavenly benedictions. 4. They were strangers to the world, but unto God they were as kinsmen and friends. *They seemed unto themselves as of no reputation, and in the world's eyes contemptible; but in the sight of God they were precious and beloved.*"

- "Be thou never without something to do; be reading, or writing, or praying, or meditating, or doing something that is useful to the community." (Karma Yoga or the cobra at the door/air when head held under water, both?)

- *"If thou withdraw thyself from trifling conversation and idle goings about, as well as from novelties and gossip, thou shalt find thy time sufficient and apt for good meditation. The greatest saints used to avoid as far as they could the company of men, and chose to live in secret with God. 2. One hath said, "As oft as I have gone among men, so oft have I returned less a man." This is what we often experience when we have been long time in conversation. For it is easier to be altogether silent than it is not to exceed in word. It is easier to remain hidden at home than to keep sufficient guard upon thyself out of doors. He, therefore, that seeketh to reach that which is hidden and spiritual, must go with Jesus "apart from the multitude." No man safely goeth abroad who loveth not to rest at home. No man safely talketh but he who loveth to hold his peace."*

- "O how good a conscience should that man keep, who never sought a joy that passeth away, who never became entangled with the world!"

- "It is better to be unknown and take heed to oneself than to neglect oneself and work wonders. It is praiseworthy for a religious man to go seldom abroad, to fly from being seen, to have no desire to see men." (non-movement, selflessness, renouncement)

- "What canst thou see anywhere which can continue long under the sun? Thou believest perchance that thou shalt be satisfied, but thou wilt never be able to attain unto this. If thou shouldst see all things before thee at once, what would it be but a vain vision?"

- "When a man hath perfect compunction, then all the world is burdensome and bitter to him."

- *"There are many foolish and unstable men who say, "See what a prosperous life that man hath, how rich and how great he is, how powerful, how exalted." But lift up thine eyes to the good things of heaven, and thou shalt see that all these worldly things are nothing, they are utterly uncertain, yea, they are wearisome, because they are never possessed without care and fear. The happiness of man lieth not in the abundance of temporal things but a moderate portion sufficeth him. Our life upon the earth is verily wretchedness. The more a man desireth to be spiritual, the more bitter doth the present life become to him; because he the better understandeth and seeth the defects of human corruption. For to eat, to drink, to watch, to sleep, to rest, to labour, and to be subject to the other necessities of nature, is truly a great wretchedness and affliction to a devout man, who would fain be released and free from all sin. 3. For the inner man is heavily burdened with the necessities of the body in this world."*

- *"Oh foolish and faithless of heart, who lie buried so deep in worldly things, that they relish nothing save the things of the flesh! Miserable ones! they will too sadly find out at the last, how vile and worthless was that which they loved. The saints of God and all loyal friends of Christ held as nothing the things which pleased the flesh, or those which flourished in this life, but their whole hope and affection aspired to the things which are above. Their whole desire was*

borne upwards to everlasting and invisible things, lest they should be drawn downwards by the love of things visible."

- "Very quickly will there be an end of thee here; take heed therefore how it will be with thee in another world. To-day man is, and to-morrow he will be seen no more. And being removed out of sight, quickly also he is out of mind. O the dulness and hardness of man's heart, which thinketh only of the present, and looketh not forward to the future...If to-day thou art not ready, how shalt thou be ready to-morrow?"

- "If it is a fearful thing to die, it may be perchance a yet more fearful thing to live long. Happy is the man who hath the hour of his death always before his eyes, and daily prepareth himself to die. If thou hast ever seen one die, consider that thou also shalt pass away by the same road."

- "Always be thou prepared, and so live that death may never find thee unprepared. Many die suddenly and unexpectedly."

- "For a perfect contempt of the world, a fervent desire to excel in virtue, the love of discipline, the painfulness of repentance, readiness to obey, denial of self, submission to any adversity for love of Christ; these are the things which shall give great confidence of a happy death."

- "Trust not thy friends and kinsfolk, nor put off the work of thy salvation to the future, for men will forget thee sooner than thou thinkest."

- "If thou art not anxious for thyself now, who, thinkest thou, will be anxious for thee afterwards?"

- "Ah, foolish one! why thinkest thou that thou shalt live long, when thou art not sure of a single day? How many have been deceived, and suddenly have been snatched away from the body! How many times hast thou heard how one was slain by the sword, another was drowned, another falling from on high broke his neck, another died at the table, another whilst at play! One died by fire, another by the sword, another by the pestilence, another by the robber. Thus cometh death to all, and the life of men swiftly passeth away like a shadow. 8. Who will remember thee after thy death? And who will entreat for thee? Work, work now, oh dearly beloved, work all that thou canst. For thou knowest not when thou shalt die, nor what shall happen unto thee after death. While thou hast time, lay up for thyself undying riches. Think of nought but of thy salvation; care only for the things of God." (Maya, Tolstoy, Vivekananda, Cobra, Head under water, Seraphim, Pascal)

Start of the Second Book of The Imitation of Christ

- "The kingdom of God is within you,(1) saith the Lord. Turn thee with all thine heart to the Lord and forsake this miserable world, and thou shalt find rest unto thy soul. Learn to despise outward things and to give thyself to things inward, and thou shalt see the kingdom of God come within thee."

- "There is no great trust to be placed in a frail and mortal man, even though he be useful and dear to us, neither should much sorrow arise within us if sometimes he oppose and contradict us."

- "In heaven ought thy habitation to be, and all earthly things should be looked upon as it were in the passing by. All things pass away and thou equally with them."

- "Christ was willing to suffer and be despised, and darest thou complain of any?...If thou art unwilling to suffer any adversity, how shalt thou be the friend of Christ?"

- "...do many things displease thee and often trouble thee, that thou art not yet perfectly dead to thyself nor separated from all earthly things. Nothing so defileth and entangleth the heart of man as impure love towards created things. If thou rejectest outward comfort thou wilt be able to contemplate heavenly things and frequently to be joyful inwardly."

- "...all our peace in this sad life lieth in humble suffering rather than in not feeling adversities."

- "If thou reachest after and seekest, nothing but the will of God and the benefit of thy neighbour, thou wilt entirely enjoy inward liberty." (me- selflessness, renounce, Karma Yoga, live as the birds: willing to give your life for anyone or anything)
- *"...we blame little faults in others and pass over great faults in ourselves."*
- "Then thou shalt make great progress if thou keep thyself free from all temporal care. Thou shalt lamentably fall away if thou set a value upon any worldly thing. Let nothing be great, nothing high, nothing pleasing, nothing acceptable unto thee, save God Himself or the things of God. Reckon as altogether vain whatsoever consolation comes to thee from a creature. The soul that loveth God looketh not to anything that is beneath God. God alone is eternal and incomprehensible, filling all things, the solace of the soul, and the true joy of the heart."
- *"If thou considerest well what thou art inwardly, thou wilt not care what men will say to thee."*
- "The love of created things is deceiving and unstable, but the love of Jesus is faithful and lasting."
- "If thou wouldst learn to put away from thee every created thing, Jesus would freely take up His abode with thee."
- "For His sake and in Him let both enemies and friends be dear to thee..."
- *"...a diligent seeker after virtue, falleth not back upon those comforts, nor seeketh such sweetness as may be tasted and handled, but desireth rather hard exercises, and to undertake severe labours...When, therefore, spiritual comfort is given by God, receive it with giving of thanks, and know that it is the gift of God, not thy desert. Be not lifted up, rejoice not overmuch nor foolishly presume, but rather be more humble for the gift, more wary and more careful in all thy doings; for that hour will pass away, and temptation will follow. When comfort is taken from thee, do not straightway despair, but wait for the heavenly visitation with humility and patience, for God is able to give thee back greater favour and consolation. This is not new nor strange to those who have made trial of the way of God, for with the great saints and the ancient prophets there was often this manner of change. (First part is Participation, the second is THE mindset to have with entheogens! Humility.)"*
- "I have never found any man so religious and godly, but that he felt sometimes a withdrawal of the divine favour, and lack of fervour. No saint was ever so filled with rapture, so enlightened, but that sooner or later he was tempted."
- *"I desire no consolation which taketh away from me compunction, I love no contemplation which leadeth to pride."*
- *"Rarely is any one found so spiritual as to be stripped of all selfish thoughts, for who shall find a man truly poor in spirit and free of all created things? His value is from afar, yea from the ends of the earth." A man may give away all his goods, yet that is nothing; and if he do many deeds of penitence, yet that is a small thing; and though he understand all knowledge, yet that is afar off; and if he have great virtue and zealous devotion, yet much is lacking unto him, yea, one thing which is the most necessary to him of all. What is it then? That having given up all things besides, he give up himself and go forth from himself utterly, and retain nothing of self-love; and having done all things which he knoweth to be his duty to do, that he feel that he hath done nothing." (Vivekananda)*
- *"Why fearest thou then to take up the cross which leadeth to a kingdom?" (I need a stronger experience of Nihilism?)*
- "Behold everything dependeth upon the Cross, and everything lieth in dying; and there is none other way unto life and to true inward peace, except the way of the Holy Cross and of daily mortification."
- "The whole life of Christ was a cross and martyrdom, and dost thou seek for thyself rest and joy? Thou art wrong, thou art wrong, if thou seekest aught but to suffer tribulations, for this whole mortal life is full

of miseries, and set round with crosses. And the higher a man hath advanced in the spirit, the heavier crosses he will often find, because the sorrow of his banishment increaseth with the strength of his love.”

- “It is not in the nature of man to bear the cross, to love the cross, to keep under the body and to bring it into subjection, to fly from honours, to bear reproaches meekly, to despise self and desire to be despised, to bear all adversities and losses, and to desire no prosperity in this world.”

- “Know thou of a surety that thou oughtest to lead the life of a dying man. And the more a man dieth to himself, the more he beginneth to live towards God.”

- “For our worthiness and growth in grace lieth not in many delights and consolations, but rather in bearing many troubles and adversities.”

- *“Let, therefore, nothing which thou doest seem to thee great; let nothing be grand, nothing of value or beauty, nothing worthy of honour, nothing lofty, nothing praiseworthy or desirable, save what is eternal. Let the eternal truth please thee above all things, let thine own great vileness displease thee continually. Fear, denounce, flee nothing so much as thine own faults and sins, which ought to be more displeasing to thee than any loss whatsoever of goods. There are some who walk not sincerely before me, but being led by curiosity and pride, they desire to know my secret things and to understand the deep things of God, whilst they neglect themselves and their salvation.”*

- - “If I am left to myself, behold I am nothing, I am all weakness; but if suddenly Thou look upon me, immediately I am made strong, and filled with new joy.”

- “For it is not given unto all to renounce this world and its affairs, and to take up a religious life.”

- *“...contempt of all worldly things and in the avoidance of all worthless pleasures shall be thy blessing, and fulness of consolation shall be given thee. And the more thou withdrawest thyself from all solace of creatures, the more sweet and powerful consolations shalt thou find. But at the first thou shalt not attain to them, without some sorrow and hard striving.”*

- *“Be zealous against thyself, nor suffer pride to live within thee, but so show thyself subject and of no reputation, that all may be able to walk over thee, and tread thee down as the clay in the streets. What hast thou, O foolish man, of which to complain? What, O vile sinner, canst thou answer those who speak against thee, seeing thou hast so often offended God, and many a time hast deserved hell?”**

- *“Therefore, whatsoever seemeth to thee desirable, thou must always desire and seek after it with the fear of God and humility of heart, and most of all, must altogether resign thyself, and commit all unto Me and say, 'Lord, thou knowest what is best; let this or that be, according as Thou wilt.' (Vivekananda and Karma Yoga)*

- *“Grant that I may die to all worldly things, and for Thy sake love to be despised and unknown in this world.”*

- *“Let temporal things be in the use, eternal things in the desire. Thou canst not be satisfied with any temporal good, for thou wast not created for the enjoyment of these.”* (the human psychological principle that pushes one to the Infinite. The beginning of what Tillich refers to as the 'grasp')

- *“My Son! I came down from heaven for thy salvation; I took upon Me thy miseries not of necessity, but drawn by love that thou mightest learn patience and mightest bear temporal miseries without murmuring. For from the hour of My birth, until My death upon the Cross, I ceased not from bearing of sorrow; I had much lack of temporal things; I oftentimes heard many reproaches against Myself; I gently bore contradictions and hard words; I received ingratitude for benefits, blasphemies for My miracles, rebukes for My doctrine.”*

- "It is often a small thing which casteth me down and maketh me sad. I resolve that I will act bravely, but when a little temptation cometh, immediately I am in a great strait." (Vivekananda and the barking dog example)
- "...I remain in this most miserable life. Oh what a life is this, where tribulations and miseries cease not, where all things are full of snares and of enemies, for when one tribulation or temptation goeth, another cometh, yea, while the former conflict is yet raging others come more in number and unexpected."
- *"And how can the life of man be loved, seeing that it hath so many bitter things, that it is subjected to so many calamities and miseries. How can it be even called life, when it produces so many deaths and plagues? The world is often reproached because it is deceitful and vain, yet notwithstanding it is not easily given up, because the lusts of the flesh have too much rule over it. Some draw us to love, some to hate. The lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, these draw to love of the world; but the punishments and miseries which righteously follow these things, bring forth hatred of the world and weariness."*
- "Thee above every creature, above all health and beauty, above all glory and honour, above all power and dignity, above all knowledge and skilfulness, above all riches and arts, above all joy and exultation, above all fame and praise, above all sweetness and consolation, above all hope and promise, above all merit and desire, above all gifts and rewards which Thou canst give and pour forth, above all joy and jubilation which the mind is able to receive and feel..."
- "Thou hast no need to answer for others, but thou must give an answer for thyself. Why therefore dost thou entangle thyself?"
- *"...preserve me from the cares of this life, lest I become too much entangled; from many necessities of the body, lest I be taken captive by pleasure; from all obstacles of the spirit, lest I be broken and cast down with cares."*
- "...the universal curse of mortality..."
- "It is no small prudence to keep silence in an evil time and to turn inwardly unto Me, and not to be troubled by human judgment."
- "And except a man be lifted up in the spirit, and freed from all creatures, and altogether united to God, whatsoever he knoweth, whatsoever even he hath, it mattereth but little...*For whatsoever is not God is nothing, and ought to be counted for nothing.* Great is the difference between a godly man, illuminated with wisdom, and a scholar learned in knowledge and given to books."
- *"Many are found who desire contemplation, but they do not strive to practice those things which are required thereunto. It is also a great impediment, that much is made of symbols and external signs, and too little of thorough mortification. I know not how it is, and by what spirit we are led, and what we who would be deemed spiritual are aiming at, that we give so great labour and so eager solicitude for transitory and worthless things, and scarcely ever gather our senses together to think at all of our inward condition."*
- "As long as thou livest thou art subject to change, howsoever unwilling; so that thou art found now joyful, now sad; now at peace, now disquieted; now devout, now indevout; now studious, now careless; now sad, now cheerful. But the wise man, and he who is truly learned in spirit, standeth above these changeable things, attentive not to what he may feel in himself, or from what quarter the wind may blow, but that the whole intent of his mind may carry him on to the due and much-desired end. For thus will he be able to remain one and the same and unshaken, the single eye of his desire being steadfastly fixed, through the manifold changes of the world, upon Me."
- "Behold, God is mine, and all things are mine!" (Vivekanandaish?)

- "...the wisdom of the world is found utter vanity, and to be carnally minded is death. But they who follow after Thee through contempt of worldly things, and mortification of the flesh, are found to be truly wise because they are carried from vanity to verity, from the flesh to the spirit. They taste that the Lord is good, and whatsoever good they find in creatures, they count it all unto the praise of the Creator."
- "Many men have many opinions, and therefore little trust is to be placed in them. But moreover it is impossible to please all."
- *"Who art thou, that thou shouldst be afraid of a man that shall die? To-day he is, and to-morrow his place is not found. Fear God and thou shalt not quail before the terrors of men. What can any man do against thee by words or deeds? He hurteth himself more than thee, nor shall he escape the judgment of God, whosoever he may be."* (Ha!)
- "The true progress of man lieth in self-denial..."
- *"O Lord, we are in blindness, and are quickly seduced by vanity. If I look rightly within myself, never was injury done unto me by any creature, and therefore I have nought whereof to complain before Thee. But because I have many times and grievously sinned against Thee, all creatures do justly take arms against me."*
- "The deeper also he descendeth into himself, and the viler he appeareth in his own eyes, the higher he ascendeth towards God."
- "O Lord, to what have we come? Behold a temporal loss is mourned over; for a trifling gain we labour and hurry; and spiritual loss passeth away into forgetfulness, and we rarely recover it. That which profiteth little or nothing is looked after, and that which is altogether necessary is negligently passed by; because the whole man slideth away to outward things, and unless he quickly recovereth himself in outward things he willingly lieth down." (me- Kierkegaard)
- "And wherefore do such trivial matters go to thine heart, except that thou art yet carnal, and regardest men more than thou oughtest? For because thou fearest to be despised, thou art unwilling to be reproved for thy faults, and seekest paltry shelters of excuses." (I am a coward)
- *"For when thou fleest away from being abased and confounded for thy faults, it is plain that thou art neither truly humble nor truly dead to the world, and that the world is not crucified to thee."* (I feel mentally weak)
- *"Count the whole world as nought; seek to be alone with God before all outward things. For thou canst not be alone with Me, and at the same time be delighted with transitory things. Thou oughtest to be separated from thy acquaintances and dear friends, and keep thy mind free from all worldly comfort."* (who today with agree with this? Is there one person out there?)
- *"Oh how great a confidence shall there be to the dying man whom no affection to anything detaineth in the world? But to have a heart so separated from all things, a sickly soul doth not yet comprehend, nor doth the carnal man know the liberty of the spiritual man. But if indeed he desire to be spiritually minded, he must renounce both those who are far off, and those who are near, and to beware of no man more than himself."*
- "Give all for all; demand nothing, ask nothing in return..."

48. Therese of Lisieux

Chapter Viii- Profession of Sueur Therese

- *"The darkness was so bewildering that I understood but one thing—I had no religious vocation, and must return to the world. I cannot describe the agony I endured. What was I to do in such a difficulty? I chose*

the right course, deciding to tell my Novice Mistress of the temptation without delay. I sent for her to come out of choir, and though full of confusion, I confessed the state of my soul. Fortunately she saw more clearly than I did, and reassured me completely by laughing frankly at my story."

- "And just as Solomon, turning to all the works which his hand had wrought, and to the labours wherein he had laboured in vain, saw in all things vanity and vexation of mind,"[5] so experience showed me that the sole happiness of earth consists in lying hidden, and remaining in total ignorance of created things. I understood that without love even the most brilliant deeds count for nothing. These gifts, which Our Lord lavished upon me, far from doing me any harm,

drew me towards Him; I saw that He alone is unchangeable, He alone can fill the vast abyss of my desires."

- "I have obtained many spiritual lights through the works of St. John of the Cross. When I was seventeen and eighteen they were my only food; but, later on, and even now, all spiritual authors leave me cold and dry. However beautiful and touching a book may be, my heart does not respond, and I read without understanding, or, if I understand, I cannot meditate. In my helplessness the Holy Scriptures and the Imitation are of the greatest assistance; in them I find a hidden manna, genuine and pure. But it is from the Gospels that I find most help in the time of prayer; from them I draw all that I need for my poor soul. I am always discovering in them new lights and hidden mysterious meanings. I know and I have experienced that "the Kingdom of God is within us."[9] Our Lord has no need of books or teachers to instruct our souls."

- "Yet all souls cannot be alike. It is necessary that they should differ from one another in order that each Divine Perfection may receive its special honor."

Chapter IX- *The Night of the Soul*

- "But during the Paschal days, so full of light, our Lord made me understand that there really are in truth souls bereft of Faith and Hope, who, through abuse of grace, lose these precious treasures, the only source of pure and lasting joy. *He allowed my soul to be overwhelmed with darkness, and the thought of Heaven, which had consoled me from my earliest childhood, now became a subject of conflict and torture.* This trial did not last merely for days or weeks; I have been suffering for months, and I still await deliverance. *I wish I could express what I feel, but it is beyond me. One must have passed through this dark tunnel to understand its blackness.*" (Kierkegaard, Cioran, Ligotti, realization)

- "...the greatest is that He has shown me my littleness and how incapable I am of anything good." (Vivekananda-build hospitals? Otto)

- "...there are no words really to explain these things. The words will always fall short of the reality."

- "Let me suppose that I had been born in a land of thick fogs, and had never seen the beauties of nature, or a single ray of sunshine, although I had heard of these wonders from my early youth, and knew that the country wherein I dwelt was not my real home--there was another land, unto which I should always look forward."

- "...I felt that one day I should be set free from this land of darkness. I believed it, not only because I had been told so by others, but my heart's most secret and deepest longings assured me that there was in store for me another and more beautiful country--an abiding dwelling-place.

And suddenly the mists about me have penetrated my very soul and have enveloped me so completely that I cannot even picture to myself this promised country...all has faded away. *When my heart, weary of the surrounding darkness, tries to find some rest in the thought of a life to come, my anguish increases. It seems to me*

that out of the darkness I hear the mocking voice of the unbeliever: "You dream of a land of light and fragrance, you dream that the Creator of these wonders will be yours for ever, you think one day to escape from these mists where you now languish. Nay, rejoice in death, which will give you, not what you hope for, but a night darker still, the night of utter nothingness!"

- "No doubt, dear Mother, you will think I exaggerate somewhat _the night of my soul._ If you judge by the poems I have composed this year, it must seem as though I have been flooded with consolations, like a child for whom the veil of Faith is almost rent asunder. And yet it is not a veil--it is a wall which rises to the very heavens and shuts out the starry sky. When I sing of the happiness of Heaven and the eternal possession of God, I do not feel any joy therein, for I sing only of what I wish to believe. Sometimes, I confess, a little ray of sunshine illumines my dark night, and I enjoy peace for an instant, but later, the remembrance of this ray of light, instead of consoling me, makes the blackness thicker still."

- "How can it be said that it is more perfect to separate oneself from home and friends? Has anyone ever reproached brothers who fight side by side, or together win the martyr's palm? It is true, no doubt, they encourage each other; but it is also true that the martyrdom of each is a martyrdom to them all. And so it is in the religious life; theologians call it a martyrdom. A heart given to God loses nothing of its natural affection--on the contrary, this affection grows stronger by becoming purer and more spiritual. It is with this love, dear Mother, that I love you and my sisters."

- "My heart is naturally sensitive, and because this is a cause of much suffering."

- "Here, I am loved by you and all the Sisters, and this love is very sweet to me, and I dream of a convent where I should be unknown, where I should taste the bitterness of exile. I know only too well how useless I am..."

- *"And I should not suffer any disappointment, for when we expect nothing but suffering, then the least joy is a surprise; and later on suffering itself becomes the greatest of all joys, when we seek it as a precious treasure."*

- *I set myself to find out how He had loved His Apostles; and I saw that it was not for their natural qualities, for they were ignorant men, full of earthly ideas. And yet He calls them His Friends, His Brethren; He desires to see them near Him in the Kingdom of His Father, and in order to admit them to this Kingdom He wills to die on the Cross, saying: 'Greater love than this no man hath, that a man lay down his life for his friends.'* As I meditated on these Divine words, I saw how imperfect was the love I bore my Sisters in religion. I understood that I did not love them as Our Lord loves them. I know now that true charity consists in bearing all our neighbors' defects--not being surprised at their weakness, but edified at their smallest virtues.'

- *"If we are asked pleasantly, it is easy to give; but if we are asked discourteously, then, unless we are perfect in charity, there is an inward rebellion, and we find no end of excuses for refusing."* (Ha!)

- "Yes, I know when I show charity to others, it is simply Jesus acting in me, and the more closely I am united to Him, the more dearly I love my Sisters. If I wish to increase this love in my heart, and the devil tries to bring before me the defects of a Sister, I hasten to look for her virtues, her good motives; I call to mind that though I may have seen her fall once, no doubt she has gained many victories over herself, which in her humility she conceals. It is even possible that what seems to me a fault, may very likely, on account of her good intention, be an act of virtue. I have no difficulty in persuading myself of this, because I have had the same experience. One day, during recreation, the portress came to ask for a Sister to help her. I had a childish longing to do this work, and it happened the choice fell upon me. I therefore began to fold up our needlework, but so slowly that my neighbour, who I knew would like to take my place, was

ready before me. The Sister who had asked for help, seeing how deliberate I was, said laughingly: "I thought you would not add this pearl to your crown, you are so extremely slow," and all the Community thought I had yielded to natural reluctance. I cannot tell you what profit I derived from this incident, and it made me indulgent towards others. It still checks any feelings of vanity, when I am praised, for I reflect that since my small acts of virtue can be mistaken for imperfections, why should not my imperfections be mistaken for virtue?"

- "There are, of course, no enemies in the Carmel; but, after all, we have our natural likes and dislikes. We may feel drawn towards one Sister, and may be tempted to go a long way round to avoid meeting another. Well, Our Lord tells me that this is the Sister to love and pray for, even though her behaviour may make me imagine she does not care for me. "If you love them that love you, what thanks are to you? For sinners also love those that love them." *And it is not enough to love, we must prove our love; naturally one likes to please a friend, but that is not charity, for sinners do the same.*"

- "I am then like the poor who hold out their hands for the necessities of life, and, if refused, are not surprised, since no one owes them anything."

- "It is therefore not enough for me to give to whoever asks--I ought to anticipate the wish, and show myself glad to be of service; but if anything of mine be taken away, I should show myself glad to be rid of it. I cannot always carry out to the letter the words of the Gospel, for there are occasions when I am compelled to refuse some request...*The Divine precepts run contrary to our natural inclinations, and without the help of grace it would be impossible to understand them, far less to put them in practice.*"

- "A holy nun of our community annoyed me in all that she did; the devil must have had something to do with it, and he it was undoubtedly who made me see in her so many disagreeable points. I did not want to yield to my natural antipathy, for I remembered that charity ought to betray itself in deeds, and not exist merely in the feelings, so I set myself to do for this sister all I should do for the one I loved most...I did not rest satisfied with praying for this Sister, who gave me such occasions for self-mastery, I tried to render her as many services as I could, and when tempted to answer her sharply, I made haste to smile and change the subject, for the *Imitation* says: "It is more profitable to leave everyone to his way of thinking than to give way to contentious discourses." And sometimes when the temptation was very severe, I would run like a deserter from the battlefield if I could do so without letting the Sister guess my inward struggle. One day she said to me with a beaming face: "My dear Soeur Therese, tell me what attraction you find in me, for whenever we meet, you greet me with such a sweet smile." Ah! *What attracted me was Jesus hidden in the depths of her soul--Jesus who maketh sweet even that which is most bitter.*" (Vivekananda- see God in everything)

- "One morning, in my duty as sacristan, I came to put back the keys of the Communion-grating. This was my work, and I was very pleased to have an opportunity of seeing you, though I took good care not to show it. One of the Sisters, full of solicitude, feared I should awake you, and tried to take the keys from me. I told her as politely as I could, that I was quite as anxious as she was there should be no noise, and added that it was my right to return them. I see now that it would have been more perfect simply to yield, but I did not see it then, and so I followed her into the room. Very soon what she feared came to pass: the noise did awaken you. All the blame fell upon me; the Sister I had argued with began a long discourse, of which the point was: Soeur Therese made all the noise. I was burning to defend myself, but a happy inspiration of grace came to me. I thought that if I began to justify myself I should certainly lose my peace of mind, and as I had too little virtue to let myself be unjustly accused without answering, my last chance of safety lay in flight. No sooner thought than done. I hurried away, but my heart beat so violently, I

could not go far, and I was obliged to sit down on the stairs to enjoy in quiet the fruit of my victory. This is an odd kind of courage, undoubtedly, but I think it is best not to expose oneself in the face of certain defeat."

- *"When I recall these days of my noviciate I understand how far I was from perfection, and the memory of certain things makes me laugh...It may be that some day my present state will appear to me full of defects, but nothing now surprises me, and I do not even distress myself because I am so weak. On the contrary I glory therein, and expect each day to find fresh imperfections. Nay, I must confess, these lights on my own nothingness are of more good to my soul than lights on matters of Faith."*

- *"...I knew well that in curbing my natural affection I should have much to suffer."*

- *"This thought has helped me to soar above all created things."* (her thought doesn't matter, find your thought)

- *"From afar it seems so easy to do good to souls, to teach them to love God more, and to model them according to one's own ideas. But, when we draw nearer, we quickly feel that without God's help this is quite as impossible as to bring back the sun when once it has set. We must forget ourselves, and put aside our tastes and ideas, and guide souls not by our own way, but along the path which Our Lord points out."* (Vivekananda, symbolism, infinite/finite gap)

- *"Marie, though you are nothing, do not forget that Jesus is All. You have only to lose your own nothingness in that Infinite All, and thenceforth to think only of that All who alone is worthy of your love."* (Cioran)

- *"Seeing one of our Sisters very much fatigued, I said to Soeur Therese: "It grieves me to see people suffer, especially those who are holy." She instantly replied: "I do not feel as you do. Saints who suffer never excite my pity. I know they have strength to bear their sufferings, and that through them they are giving great glory to God. But I compassionate greatly those who are not Saints, and who do not know how to profit by suffering. They indeed awake my pity. I would strain every nerve to help and comfort them." -"**"One Sunday," Therese relates, "I was going toward the chestnut avenue, full of rejoicing, for it was spring-time, and I wanted to enjoy nature's beauties. What a bitter disappointment! My dear chestnuts had been pruned, and the branches, already covered with buds, now lay on the ground. On seeing this havoc, and thinking that three years must elapse before it could be repaired, my heart felt very sore. But the grief did not last long. 'If I were in another convent,' I reflected, 'what would it matter to me if the chestnut-trees of the Carmel at Lisieux were entirely cut down?' I will not worry about things that pass. God shall be my all."*

- *"If your desire be to draw great profit, do not go with the idea of procuring relaxation, but rather with the intention of entertaining others and practising complete detachment from self. Thus, for instance, if you are telling one of the Sisters something you think entertaining, and she should interrupt to tell you something else, show yourself interested, even though in reality her story may not interest you in the least. Be careful, also, not to try to resume what you were saying. In this way you will leave recreation filled with a great interior peace and endowed with fresh strength for the practice of virtue, because you have not sought to please yourself, but others. If only we could realise what we gain by self-denial in all things!"*

- *"Believe me, the writing of pious books, the composing of the sublimest poetry, all that does not equal the smallest act of self-denial..."*

- *"Remaining little" means--to recognise one's nothingness, to await everything from the Goodness of God, to avoid being too much troubled at our faults; finally, not to worry over amassing spiritual riches, not to be solicitous about anything. Even amongst the poor, while a child is still small, he is given what is necessary; but, once he is grown up, his father will no longer feed him, and tells him to seek work and*

support himself. Well, it was to avoid hearing this, that I have never wished to grow up, for I feel incapable of earning my livelihood, which is Life Eternal!"

49. Ernest Becker

The Denial of Death

- "This narcissism is what keeps men marching into point-blank fire in wars: at heart one doesn't feel that he will die, he only feels sorry for the man next to him." (Vivekananda- 'everyday people are dying around us, and yet men think they will never die', Maya, the path is narrow, Tolstoy and the farce of the 'individual life', i.e. as nothing)
- "We disguise our struggle by piling up figures in a bank book to reflect privately our sense of heroic worth. Or by having only a little better home in the neighborhood, a bigger car, brighter children. But underneath throbs the ache of cosmic specialness, no matter how we mask it in concerns of smaller scope."
- "It doesn't matter whether the cultural hero-system is frankly magical, religious, and primitive or secular, scientific, and civilized. It is still a mythical hero-system in which people serve in order to earn a feeling of primary value, of cosmic specialness, of ultimate usefulness to creation, of unshakable meaning. They earn this feeling by carving out a place in nature, by building an edifice that reflects human value: a temple, a cathedral, a totem pole, a skyscraper, a family that spans three generations. The hope and belief is that the things that man creates in society are of lasting worth and meaning, that they outlive or outshine death and decay, that man and his products count."
- "In this sense everything that man does is religious and heroic, and yet in danger of being fictitious and fallible." (Tillich)
- "Everything painful and sobering in what psychoanalytic genius and religious genius have discovered about man revolves around the terror of admitting what one is doing to earn his self-esteem. This is why human heroics is a blind drivenness that burns people up; in passionate people, a screaming for glory as uncritical and reflexive as the howling of a dog."
- "And the crisis of society is, of course, the crisis of organized religion too: religion is no longer valid as a hero system, and so the youth scorn it." (the attraction to the New Atheists)
- "As Montaigne said, the peasant has a profound indifference and a patience toward death and the sinister side of life; and if we say that this is because of his stupidity, then "let's all learn from stupidity."² Today, when we know more than Montaigne, we would say "let's all learn from repression" —but the moral would have just as much weight: repression takes care of the complex symbol of death for most people."
- "What we will see is that man cuts out for himself a manageable world: he throws himself into action uncritically, unthinkingly."
- "This is why people have psychotic breaks when repression no longer works, when the forward momentum of activity is no longer possible."
- "as the Eastern sages also knew, man is a worm and food for worms. This is the paradox: he is out of nature and hopelessly in it; he is dual, up in the stars and yet housed in a heart-pumping, breath-gasping

body that once belonged to a fish and still carries the gill-marks to prove it. His body is a material fleshy casing that is alien to him in many ways—the strangest and most repugnant way being that it aches and bleeds and will decay and die. *Man is literally split in two: he has an awareness of his own splendid uniqueness in that he sticks out of nature with a towering majesty, and yet he goes back into the ground a few feet in order blindly and dumbly to rot and disappear forever. It is a terrifying dilemma to be in and to have to live with.*" (the Divided-Self, Double-mindedness)

- "The knowledge of death is reflective and conceptual, and animals are spared it. They live and they disappear with the same thoughtlessness: a few minutes of fear, a few seconds of anguish, and it is over. *But to live a whole lifetime with the fate of death haunting one's dreams and even the most sun-filled days—that's something else.*"

- "It is only if you let the full weight of this paradox sink down on your mind and feelings that you can realize what an impossible situation it is for an animal to be in. I believe that those who speculate that a full apprehension of man's condition would drive him insane are right, quite literally right."

- "Babies are occasionally born with gills and tails, but this is not publicized—instead it is hushed up. Who wants to face up fully to the creatures we are, clawing and gasping for breath in a universe beyond our ken? I think such events illustrate the meaning of Pascal's chilling reflection: "*Men are so necessarily mad that not to be mad would amount to another form of madness.*" Necessarily because the existential dualism makes an impossible situation, an excruciating dilemma. Mad because, as we shall see, everything that man does in his symbolic world is an attempt to deny and overcome his grotesque fate. He literally drives himself into a blind obliviousness with social games, psychological tricks, personal preoccupations so far removed from the reality of his situation that they are forms of madness—agreed madness, shared madness, disguised and dignified madness, but madness all the same."

- "...wondered why most people did not become insane in the face of the existential contradiction between a symbolic self, that seems to give man infinite worth in a timeless scheme of things, and a body that is worth about 98 cents. How to reconcile the two?" (Huxley)

- "...the coolest repression, the most convincing equanimity, or the warmest self-satisfaction were accomplished lies both toward the world and to oneself."

- "...the costs of pretending not to be mad. If we had to offer the briefest explanation of all the evil that men have wreaked upon themselves and upon their world since the beginnings of time right up until tomorrow, it would be not in terms of man's animal heredity, his instincts and his evolution: it would be simply in the toll that his pretense of sanity takes, as he tries to deny his true condition." (Vivekananda- finite/infinite gap, everyone is an idol worshiper and they argue over their idols)

- "Otto talked about the terror of the world, the feeling of overwhelming awe, wonder, and fear in the face of creation—the miracle of it, the *mysterium tremendum et fascinans* of each single thing, of the fact that there are things at all."

- "The great boon of repression is that it makes it possible to live decisively in an overwhelmingly miraculous and incomprehensible world, a world so full of beauty, majesty, and terror that if animals perceived it all they would be paralyzed to act."

- "But look at man, the impossible creature!...He not only lives in this moment, but expands his inner self to yesterday, his curiosity to centuries ago, his fears to five billion years from now when the sun will cool, his hopes to an eternity from now. He lives not only on a tiny territory, nor even on an entire planet, but in

a galaxy, in a universe, and in dimensions beyond visible universes. It is appalling, the burden that man bears, the experiential burden."

- "Mans body is a problem to him that has to be explained. Not only his body is strange, but also its inner landscape, the memories and dreams. Mans very insides—his self—are foreign to him. He doesn't know who he is, why he was born, what he is doing on the planet, what he is supposed to do, what he can expect. His own existence is incomprehensible to him, a miracle just like the rest of creation, closer to him, right near his pounding heart, but for that reason all the more strange. Each thing is a problem, and man can shut out nothing."

- "This is one aspect of the basic human predicament, that we are simultaneously worms and gods." There it is again: gods with anuses."

- "Life can suck one up, sap his energies, submerge him, take away his self-control, give so much new experience so quickly that he will burst; make him stick out among others, emerge onto dangerous ground, load him up with new responsibilities which need great strength to bear, expose him to new contingencies, new chances. Above all there is the danger of a slip-up, an accident, a chance disease, and of course of death, the final sucking up, the total submergence and negation." (It feels as though my self-induced seclusion and use of cannabis has become too overwhelming for me)

- "This despair he avoids by building defenses; and these defenses allow him to feel a basic sense of self-worth, of meaningfulness, of power. They allow him to feel that he controls his life and his death, that he really does live and act as a willful and free individual, that he has a unique and self-fashioned identity, that he is somebody not just a trembling accident germinated on a hothouse planet that Carlyle for all time called a 'hall of doom.'" (Ligotti? Ha! Sounds identical)

- "the power of an all-absorbing activity, a passion, a dedication to a game, a way of life, that like a comfortable web keeps a person buoyed up and ignorant of himself, of the fact that he does not rest on his own center. All of us are driven to be supported in a self-forgetful way, ignorant of what energies we really draw on, of the kind of lie we have fashioned in order to live securely and serenely. Augustine was a master analyst of this, as were Kierkegaard, Scheler, and Tillich in our day. They saw that man could strut and boast all he wanted, but that he really drew his "courage to be" from a god, a string of sexual conquests, a Big Brother, a flag, the proletariat, and the fetish of money and the size of a bank balance."

- "The defenses that form a persons character support a grand illusion, and when we grasp this we can understand the full drivenness of man. He is driven away from himself, from self-knowledge, self-reflection."

- "It is fateful and ironic how the lie we need in order to live dooms us to a life that is never really ours."

- "...we could understand something the poets and *religious geniuses have long known: that the armor of character was so vital to us that to shed it meant to risk death and madness. It is not hard to reason out: If character is a neurotic defense against despair and you shed that defense, you admit the full flood of despair, the full realization of the true human condition, what men are really afraid of, what they struggle against, and are driven toward and away from.*"

- "Neurosis is another word for describing a complicated technique for avoiding misery, but reality is the misery." (Tillich says neurosis is avoiding nonbeing by avoiding being)

- "What does it mean "to be born again" for man? It means for the first time to be subjected to the terrifying paradox of the human condition, since one must be born not as a god, but as a man, or as a god-worm, or a god who shits."

(Ha!)

- *"It was Rank who very early admitted that anxiety could not all be overcome therapeutically, and this is what he meant: that it is impossible to stand up to the terror of one's condition without anxiety."* (Tillich, Kierkegaard, but not Vivekananda. Well, Vivekananda says this is some parts, while in others makes it seem as if there is a 'mysticism' that rises 'above' anxiety. I think Vivekananda does not believe this, since you cannot live in a 'nightmare' without anxiety. It's an ideal, but not a reality for humans: an anxiety free existence, Vivekananda's 'bliss' is an ideal as Kierkegaard's Knight of Faith is, i.e. an impossibility inside of the human condition)

- *"It is simply this: what sense does it make to talk about "enjoying ones full humanness" — as Maslow urges along with so many others—if "full humanness" means the primary mis-adjustment to the world? If you get rid of the four- layered neurotic shield, the armor that covers the characterological lie about life, how can you talk about "enjoying" this Pyrrhic victory? The person gives up something restricting and illusory, it is true, but only to come face to face with something even more awful: genuine despair. Full humanness means full fear and trembling, at least some of the waking day. When you get a person to emerge into life, away from his dependencies, his automatic safety in the cloak of someone else's power, what joy can you promise him with the burden of his aloneness? When you get a person to look at the sun as it bakes down on the daily carnage taking place on earth, the ridiculous accidents, the utter fragility of life, the powerlessness of those he thought most powerful—what comfort can you give him from a psychotherapeutic point of view?"*

- *"What would the average man do with a full consciousness of absurdity? He has fashioned his character for the precise purpose of putting it between himself and the facts of life; it is his special tour-de-force that allows him to ignore incongruities, to nourish himself on impossibilities, to thrive on blindness. He accomplishes thereby a peculiarly human victory: the ability to be smug about terror. Sartre has called man a "useless passion" because he is so hopelessly bungled, so deluded about his true condition"* (Ha! Kierkegaard)

- (the next two quotes are concerning unprepared people facing 'enlightenment' or the Nihilistic experience) *"This is a serious game, the defense of one's existence^how take it away from people and leave them joyous?"* (I used to refer to my ideas as 'poison' and therefore didn't want to express them to my family, in order to 'protect' them. That was premature of me)

- *"It can't be overstressed, one final time, that to see the world as it really is is devastating and terrifying...It makes thoughtless living in the world of men an impossibility. It places a trembling animal at the mercy of the entire cosmos and the problem of the meaning of it."*

- *"Rank understood that in the face of the overwhelmingness of the world the child could not out of himself muster the stamina and the authority necessary to live in full expansiveness with limitless horizons of perception an experience."* (Ligotti talks about how most people do not have the 'stamina' to do what Buddha did, to renounce everything. This is why it is so difficult to face reality and it's worthlessness 'head on' or have the Nihilism be exposed to you)

- *"The tragedy of life that Searles is referring to is the one we have been discussing: mans finitude, his dread of death and of the overwhelmingness of life. The schizophrenic feels these more than anyone else because he has not been able to build the confident defenses that a person normally uses to deny them. The schizophrenic's misfortune is that he has been burdened with extra anxieties, extra guilt, extra helplessness, an even more unpredictable and unsupportive environment."*

- *"We see again confirmed the point of view that a persons character is a defense against despair, an attempt to avoid insanity because of the real nature of the world. Searles looks at schizophrenia precisely as the result of the inability to shut out terror, as a desperate style of living with terror. Frankly I don't know anything more cogent that needs to be*

said about this syndrome: it is a failure in humanization, which means a failure to confidently deny mans real situation on this planet." (Ha! And I am "crazy"?)

- *"The creativity of people on the schizophrenic end of the human continuum is a creativity that springs from the inability to accept the standardized cultural denials of the real nature of experience. And the price of this kind of almost "extra human" creativity is to live on the brink of madness, as men have long known. The schizophrenic is supremely creative in an almost extra-human sense because he is furthest from the animal: he lacks the secure instinctive programming of lower organisms; and he lacks the secure cultural programming of average men. No wonder he appears to average men as "crazy": he is not in anything's world. (Ha!)*

- "The irony of mans condition is that the deepest need is to be free of the anxiety of death and annihilation; but it is life itself which awakens it, and so we must shrink from being fully alive."

- "What exactly would it mean on this earth to be wholly unrepressed, to live in full bodily and psychic expansiveness? It can only mean to be reborn into madness."

- "For now, it is enough to invoke Marcia Lee Anderson's complete scientific formula: "Stripped of subtle complications [i.e., of all the character defenses—repression, denial, misperception of reality], who could regard the sun except with fear?"

- "...the best existential analysis of the human condition leads directly into the problems of God and faith..."

- (on the Myth/Fall of Adam and Eve) "Man emerged from the instinctive thoughtless action of the lower animals and came to reflect on his condition. He was given a consciousness of his individuality and his part-divinity in creation, the beauty and uniqueness of his face and his name. At the same time he was given the consciousness of the terror of the world and of his own death and decay."

- "...the final terror of self-consciousness is the knowledge of one's own death, which is the peculiar sentence on man alone in the animal kingdom. This is the meaning of the Garden of Eden myth and the rediscovery of modern psychology: that death is man's peculiar and greatest anxiety."

- "For Kierkegaard "philistinism" was triviality, man lulled by the daily routines of his society, content with the satisfactions that it offers him: in today's world the car, the shopping center, the two-week summer vacation." (Ha!)

- "Man is protected by the secure and limited alternatives his society offers him, and if he does not look up from his path he can live out his life with a certain dull security...Why does man accept to live a trivial life? Because of the danger of a full horizon of experience, of course."

- "The depressed person is so afraid of being himself, so fearful of exerting his own individuality, of insisting on what might be his own meanings, his own conditions for living, that he seems literally stupid. He cannot seem to understand the situation he is in, cannot see beyond his own fears, cannot grasp why he has bogged down." (how does this relate to me? Is this too egotistical a question?)

- "This is precisely the condition of depression, that one can hardly breathe or move. One of the unconscious tactics that the depressed person resorts to, to try to make sense out of his situation, is to see himself as immensely worthless and guilty."

- "...the depressed person avoids the possibility of independence and more life precisely because these are what threaten him with destruction and death. He holds on to the people who have enslaved him in a network of crushing obligations, belittling interaction, precisely because these people are his shelter, his strength, his protection against the world. Like most everyone else the depressed person will not stand alone on his own center, who cannot draw from within himself the necessary strength to face up to life. So he embeds himself in others; he is sheltered by the

necessary and willingly accepts it. But now his tragedy is plain to see: his necessity has become trivial, and so his slavish, dependent, depersonalized life has lost its meaning. It is frightening to be in such a bind. One chooses slavery because it is safe and meaningful; then one loses the meaning of it. but fears to move out of it. One has literally died to life but must remain physically in this world."

- *"...the torture of depressive psychosis: to remain steeped in one's failure and yet to justify it, to continue to draw a sense of worthwhileness out of it."* (Ha! Kill yourself)

- *"...philistinism is what we would call "normal neurosis." Most men figure out how to live safely within the probabilities of a given set of social rules. The Philistine trusts that by keeping himself at a low level of personal intensity he can avoid being pulled off balance by experience; philistinism works, as Kierkegaard said, by "tranquilizing itself with the trivial."*

- *"There is the type of man who has great contempt for "immediacy," who tries to cultivate his inferiority, base his pride on something deeper and inner, create a distance between himself and the average man. Kierkegaard calls this type of man the "introvert." He is a little more concerned with what it means to be a person, with individuality and uniqueness. He enjoys solitude and withdraws periodically to reflect, perhaps to nurse ideas about his secret self, what it might be. This, after all is said and done, is the only real problem of life, the only worthwhile preoccupation of man: What is one's true talent, his secret gift, his authentic vocation? In what way is one truly unique, and how can he express his uniqueness, give it form, dedicate it to something beyond himself? How can the person take his private inner being, the great mystery that he feels at the heart of himself, his emotions, his yearnings and use them to live more distinctively, to enrich both himself and man kind with the peculiar quality of his talent?"*

- *"But usually life sucks us up into standardized activities...And instead of working our inner secret we gradually cover it over and forget it, while we become purely external men, playing successfully the standardized hero-game into which we happen to fall by accident, by family connection, by reflex patriotism, or by the simple need to eat and the urge to procreate."* (Ha! So good)

- *"I am not saying that Kierkegaard's "introvert" keeps this inner quest fully alive or conscious, only that it represents somewhat more of a dimly aware problem than it does with the swallowed-up immediate man. Kierkegaard's introvert feels that he is something different from the world, has something in himself that the world cannot reflect, cannot in its immediacy and shallowness appreciate; and so he holds himself somewhat apart from that world. But not too much, not completely. It would be so nice to be the self he wants to be, to realize his vocation, his authentic talent, but it is dangerous, it might upset his world completely. He is after all, basically weak, in a position of compromise: not an immediate man, but not a real man either, even though he gives the appearance of it."* (I completely feel like this, although the description Kierkegaard sounds less like me and more like 'normal' people)

- the consequences of attempting to live as an 'introvert'- *"And so he lives in a kind of "incognito," content to toy—in his periodic solitudes—with the idea of who he might really be; content to insist on a "little difference," to pride himself on a vaguely-felt superiority. But this is not an easy position to maintain with equanimity. It is rare, says Kierkegaard, to continue on in it. Once you pose the problem of what it means to be a person, even dumbly, weakly, or with a veneer of pride about your imagined difference from others, you may be in trouble. Introversion is impotence, but an impotence already self-conscious to a degree, and it can become troublesome. It may lead to a chafing at one's dependency on his family and his job, an ulcerous gnawing as a reaction to one's embeddedness, a feeling of slavery in one's safety. For a strong person it may become intolerable, and he may try to break out of it, sometimes by suicide,*

sometimes by drowning himself desperately in the world and in the rush of experience." (get some courage, you bitch. Renounce!)

- "The ugly side of this Promethianism is that it, too, is thoughtless, an empty-headed immersion in the delights of technics with no thought to goals or meaning; so man performs on the moon by hitting golf balls that do not swerve in the lack of atmosphere." (Ha!)

- "To be a "normal cultural man" is, for Kierkegaard, to be sick — whether one knows it or not..."

- "In order to transcend himself he must break down that which he needs in order to live. Like Lear he must throw off all his "cultural lendings" and stand naked in the storm of life."

- "In the prison of one's character one can pretend and feel that he *is somebody*, that the world is manageable, that there is a reason for one's life, a ready justification for one's action."

- "*Kierkegaard's torment was the direct result of seeing the world as it really is in relation to his situation as a creature. The prison of one's character is painstakingly built; to deny one thing and one thing alone: one's creatureliness. The creatureliness is the terror. Once admit that you are a defecating creature and you invite the primeval ocean of creature anxiety to flood over you. But it is more than creature anxiety, it is also man's anxiety, the anxiety that results from the human paradox that man is an animal who is conscious of his animal limitation. Anxiety is the result of the perception of the truth of one's condition. What does it mean to be a self-conscious animal? The idea is ludicrous, if it is not monstrous. It means to know that one is food for worms. This is the terror: to have emerged from nothing, to have a name, consciousness of self, deep inner feelings, an excruciating inner yearning for life and self-expression — and with all this yet to die. It seems like a hoax, which is why one type of cultural man rebels openly against the idea of God. What kind of deity would create such complex and fancy worm food?*" (this is a lot)

- "The flood of anxiety is not the end for man. It is, rather, a "school" that provides man with the ultimate education, the final maturity. It is a better teacher than reality, says Kierkegaard, because reality can be lied about, twisted, and tamed by the tricks of cultural perception and repression. But anxiety cannot be lied about*. Once you 'face up to it, it reveals the truth of your situation; and only by seeing that truth can you open a new possibility for yourself.'"

- "No mistake about it: the curriculum in the "school" of anxiety is. *the unlearning of repression*, of everything that the child taught himself to deny so that he could move about with a minimal animal equanimity."

- "Education for man means facing up to his natural impotence and death. As Luther urged us: "I say die, i.e., *taste death as though it were present*." It is only if you "taste" death with the lips of your living body that you can know emotionally that you are a creature who will die.

What Kierkegaard is saying, in other words, is that the school of anxiety leads to possibility only by destroying the vital lie of character. It seems like the ultimate self-defeat, the one thing that one should not do, because then one will have truly nothing left. But rest assured, says Kierkegaard, "the direction is quite normal...the self must be broken in order to become a self."

- "...by the destruction of the self through facing up to the anxiety of the terror of existence. The self must be destroyed, brought down to nothing, in order for self-transcendence to begin. Then the self can begin to relate itself to powers beyond itself. It has to thrash around in its finitude, it has to "die" in order to question that finitude, in order to see beyond it. To what? Kierkegaard answers: to infinitude, to absolute transcendence, to the Ultimate Power of

Creation which made finite creatures.” (indeed this is what the renunciation, the terror, the nightmare of existence seems to bring forth)

- “One goes through it all to arrive at faith, the faith that one’s very creatureliness has some meaning to a Creator; that despite one’s true insignificance, weakness, death, one’s existence has meaning in some ultimate sense because it exists within an eternal and infinite scheme of things brought about and maintained to some kind of design by some creative force.”

- “We can understand why anxiety “is the possibility of freedom,” because anxiety demolishes “all finite aims,” and so the “man who is educated by possibility is educated in accordance with his infinity.”⁴⁶ Possibility leads nowhere if it does not lead to faith.” (yes, this is what Kierkegaard says, renounce everything finite, Nihilism, Nothingness)

- “He links his secret inner self, his authentic talent, his deepest feelings of uniqueness, his inner yearning for absolute significance, to the very ground of creation. Out of the ruins of the broken cultural self there remains the mystery of the private, invisible, inner self which yearned for ultimate significance, or cosmic heroism. This invisible mystery at the heart of every creature now attains cosmic significance by affirming its connection with the invisible mystery at the heart of creation. This is the meaning of faith.” (Nihilism is the breakdown of everything Worldly)

- “He is absolutely alone and trembling on the brink of oblivion—which is at the same time the brink of infinity.”

- On Freud- “Despite all his leanings toward the idea of death, the hopeless situation of the child, the real terror of the external world, and the like, Freud did not need to give them a central place in his thought. He did not need to rework his vision of man from that of primarily a pleasure-seeker of sex to that of the terrified, death-avoiding animal.”

- “Sometimes just to admit an idea to consciousness is to experience that idea vitally. At other times to admit even a deep anxiety may not mean the actual experience of that anxiety, at least not the deep experience of it, as something else may be troubling the person. Psychoanalysts talk about anxiety without affect. Can one admit the terror of death and still not experience it on deeper levels? Are images of dying and farewell as deep as the real feeling that one has absolutely no power to oppose death? To what extent can there be a partial rationalization of even the deepest anxiety?”

- “What, after all, is more “mysterious” than hypnosis, the sight of adults falling into instant stupors and obeying like automatons the commands of a stranger?” (Tolstoy)

- “If you don’t have a God in heaven, an invisible dimension that justifies the visible one, then you take what is nearest at hand and work out your problems on that.” (Ha!)

- “He brought sexual taboos into being because he needed to triumph over the body, and he sacrificed the pleasures of the body to the highest pleasure of all: self-perpetuation as a spiritual being through all eternity.” (renouncing even sex: is this necessary? Why? Is it not a form of love? Isn't 'love' god? Or so they cram down our throats)

- “We saw that the child stands right at the crossroads of the human dualism. He discovers that he has a fallible body, and he is learning that there is a whole cultural world-view that will permit him to triumph over it. The questions about sex that the child asks are thus not— at a fundamental level—about sex at all. They are about the meaning of the body, the terror of living with a body. When the parents give a straightforward biological answer to sexual questions, they do not answer the child’s question at all. He wants to know why he has a body, where it came from,

and what it means for a self-conscious creature to be limited by it. He is asking about the ultimate mystery of life, not about the mechanics of sex."

- *"In other words the sexual partner does not and cannot represent a complete and lasting solution to the human dilemma. The partner represents a kind of fulfillment in freedom from self-consciousness and guilt; but at the same time he represents the negation of one's distinctive personality."*

- *"It is impossible to get blood from a stone, to get spirituality from a physical being, and so one feels "Inferior" that his life has somehow not succeeded, that he has not realized his true gifts, and so on."*

- *"We feel diminished by their human shortcomings. Our interiors feel empty or anguished, our lives valueless, when we see the inevitable pettinesses of the world expressed through the human beings in it."* (which is why I cannot simply 'ignore' people around me)

- When you narrow your meanings down to this world, you are still looking for the absolute, for the supreme self-transcending power, mystery, and majesty. Only now you must find it in the things of this world." (Tillich, Vivekananda, Ha- good luck)

- *"The great lesson of Rank's depreciation of sexuality was not that he played down physical love and sensuality, but that he saw—like Augustine and Kierkegaard, that man cannot fashion an absolute from within his condition, that cosmic heroism must transcend human relationships. What is at stake in all this is, of course, the question of freedom, the quality of one's life and one's individuality."*

- *"...people need a "beyond," but they reach first for the nearest one; this gives them the fulfillment they need but at the same time limits and enslaves them. You can look at the whole problem of a human life in this way. You can ask the question: What kind of beyond does this person try to expand in; and how much individuation does he achieve in it? Most people play it safe: they choose the beyond of standard transference objects like parents, the boss, or the leader; they accept the cultural definition of heroism and try to be a "good provider" or a "solid" citizen. In this way they earn their species immortality as an agent of procreation, or a collective or cultural immortality as part of a social group of some kind."*

- *"We should not be surprised that Rank was brought to exactly the same conclusion as Kierkegaard: that the only way out of human conflict is full renunciation, to give one's life as a gift to the highest powers. Absolution has to come from the absolute beyond. As Kierkegaard, Rank showed that this rule applied to the strongest, most heroic types—not to trembling and empty, weaklings. To renounce the world and oneself, to lay the meaning of it to the powers of creation is the hardest thing for man to achieve—and so it's fitting that this task should fall to the strongest personality type, the one with the largest ego. The great scientific world-shaker Newton was the same man who always carried the Bible under his arm."* (this is a lot)

- *"We know that he was a genius, and we can now see the real problem that genius has: how to develop a creative work with the full force of one's passion, a work that saves one's soul, and at the same time to renounce that very work because it cannot by itself give salvation."* (Ha!)

- *"Rank said: "...he himself could so easily confess his agnosticism while he had created for himself a private religion."*

- *"Here Rank joins Kierkegaard in the belief that one should not stop and circumscribe his life with beyonds that are near at hand, or a bit further out, or created by oneself. One should reach for the highest beyond of religion: man—should cultivate the passivity of renunciation to the highest powers no matter how difficult it is. Anything less is less than full development, even if it seems weakness and compromise to the best thinkers."*

- *"Do Freud and others imagine that surrender to God is masochistic, that to empty oneself is demeaning? Well, answers Rank, it represents on the contrary the furthest reach of the self, the highest idealization*

man can achieve. It represents the fulfillment of the Agape love-expansion, the achievement of the truly creative type. Only in this way, says Rank, only by surrendering to the bigness of nature on the highest, least-fetishized level, can man conquer death. In other words, the true heroic validation of one's life lies beyond sex, beyond the other, beyond the private religion—all these are makeshifts that pull man down or that hem him in, leaving him torn with ambiguity." (this is a common criticism from the New Atheists, of God as a 'dictator', which is silly)

- "Man is a "theological being," concludes Rank, and not a biological one. In all this it is as though Tillich were speaking and, behind him, Kierkegaard and Augustine; but what makes it uncanny in the present world of science is that these are the conclusions of the life-work of a psychoanalyst, not a theologian. The net effect of it is overwhelming, and to someone trained narrowly in a field of science the whole thing seems confused." (people spanning many lifetimes, cultures, backgrounds, etc. coming to the same conclusions)

- "At this point the "tough-minded" scientist (as he likes to call himself) slams shut the covers of the book by Rank and turns away with a shudder. "What a shame that Freuds closest collaborator should turn so soft in the head, should deliver over to the easy consolations of religion the hard-won knowledge of psychoanalysis. So he would think—and he would be wrong. Rank made complete closure of psychoanalysis., on Kierkegaard but he did not do it out of weakness or wishfulness. He did it out of the logic of the historical-pychoanalytic understanding of man." (this is the exact experience I receive when I think of the scientism/new atheist movement. One is perceived as 'cognitively deficient', what a strange idea, since the purely materialistic world is a nightmare beyond even beyond the Nihilistic horror, here even the scientist agrees with the 'theological' conclusion)

- "Neurosis has three interdependent aspects. In the first place it refers to people who are having trouble living with the truth of existence; it is universal in this sense because everyone has some trouble living with the truth of life and pays some vital ransom to that truth. In the second place, neurosis is private because each person fashions his own peculiar stylistic reaction to life. Finally, beyond both of these is perhaps the unique gift of Rank's work: that neurosis is also historical to a large extent, because all the traditional ideologies that disguised and absorbed it have fallen away and modern ideologies are just too thin to contain it." (agreed, which is why I have the delusion of "Nihiltheism" being some sort of 'answer', 'suggestion', 'help', or 'support' to or for the dying/dead theologies/philosophies)

- "When we say neurosis represents the truth of life we again mean that life is an overwhelming problem for an animal free of instinct."

- "We cannot repeat too often the great lesson of Freudian 'psychology: that *repression* is normal self-protection and creative self-restriction—in a real sense, mans natural substitute for instinct." (diversion, distractions)

- "Gods can take in the whole of creation because they alone can make sense of it, know what it is all about and for. But as soon as a man lifts his nose from the ground and starts sniffing at eternal problems like life and death, the meaning of a rose or a star cluster—then he is in trouble. Most men spare themselves this trouble by keeping their minds on the small problems of their lives just as their society maps these problems out for them. These are what Kierkegaard called the immediate" men and the "Philistines." They "tranquilize themselves with the trivial"—and so they can lead normal lives."

- "We can say that the essence of normality is the refusal of reality."

- "This is neurosis in a nutshell: the miscarriage of clumsy lies about reality."

- “Neurosis is, then, something we all share; it is universal. Or, putting it another way, nonfiat is neurosis, and vice versa. We call a man “neurotic” when his life begins to show damaging effects on him or on people around him and he seeks clinical help for it—or others seek it for him. *Otherwise, we call the refusal of reality “normal” because it doesn’t occasion any visible problems.* It is really as simple as that. After all, if someone who lives alone wants to get out of bed a half-dozen times to see if the door is really locked, or another washes and dries his hands exactly three times every time or uses a half-roll of toilet tissue each time he relieves himself—there is really no human problem involved. These people are earning their safety in the face of the reality of creatureliness in relatively innocuous and untroublesome ways.” (Ha! The existential problem is everyone’s problem, people ignore this— Kierkegaard’s ‘immediate/philistine’)
- “It is one thing to ritually wash one’s hands three times; it is another to wash them until the hands bleed and one is in the bathroom most of the day. Here we see in pure culture, as it were, what is at stake in all human repression: the fear of life and death. Safety in the face of the real terror of creature existence is becoming a real problem for the person. He feels vulnerable—which is the truth!”
- “You work out your need for perfection (bigness, invulnerability) in the symptom—say, hand-washing or the avoidance of sex in marriage. We might say that the symptom itself represents the locus of the performance of heroism. No wonder that one cannot jive it up): that would release all by itself the whole flood of terror that one is trying to deny and overcome.” (repression from the fear of life/death? The overwhelming nature of conscious existence? Anything less than this would not be a sufficient answer, the nightmare of existence is the only adequate answer that subsumes every other phobia, habit, pattern, repression, etc.)
- “We immediately recognize this as the same creative dynamic that the person uses in transference, when he fuses all the terror and majesty of creation in the transference-object. This is what Rank meant when he said that neurosis represents creative power gone astray and confused. The person doesn’t really know what the problem is, but he hits on an ingenious way to keep moving past it.”
- “There is a type of person who has difficulty fetishizing and narrowing-down; he has a vivid imagination, *takes in too much experience, too large a chunk of the world* —and this too must be called neurotic...We saw that these people feel their isolation, their individuality. *They stick out, are less built-into normal society, less securely programmed for automatic cultural action.* To have difficulty partializing experience is to have difficulty living.”
- his description of schizophrenia- “There are those who shrink back from experience out of greater life-and-death anxieties. They grow up not giving themselves freely to the cultural roles available to them. They can’t lose themselves thoughtlessly in the games that others play. One reason is that they have trouble relating to others; they haven’t been able to develop the necessary interpersonal skills. Playing the game of society with automatic ease means playing with others without anxiety. If you are not involved in what others take for granted as the nourishment of their lives, then your own life becomes a total problem. At its extreme this describes the schizoid type par excellence.”
- “We can see that neurosis is par excellence the danger of a symbolic animal whose body is a problem to him. Instead of living biologically, then, he lives symbolically. Instead of living in the partway that nature provided for he lives in the total way made possible by symbols. One substitutes the magical, all-inclusive world of the self for the real, fragmentary world of experience. Again, in this sense, *everyone is neurotic, as everyone holds back from life in some ways and lets his symbolic world-view arrange things: this is what cultural*

morality is for. In this sense, too, the artist is the most neurotic because he too takes the world as a totality and makes a largely symbolic problem out of it."

- when to get 'help'- *"the symptom or a bogging down in guilt and futility because of an unlived life."*

- *"We might say that both the artist and the neurotic bite off more than they can chew, but the artist spews it back out again and chews it over in an objectified way, as an external, active, work project. The neurotic can't marshal this creative response embodied in a specific work, and so he chokes on his introversions."*

- *"The neurotic exhausts himself not only in self-preoccupations like hypochondriacal fears and all sorts of fantasies, but also in others: those around him on whom he is dependent become his therapeutic work project; he takes out his subjective problems on them. But people are not clay to be molded; they have needs and counter-wills of their own. The neurotic's frustration as a failed artist can't be remedied by anything but an objective creative work of his own."*
(just put a book together?)

- *"Either you eat up yourself and others around you, trying for perfection; or you objectify that imperfection in a work, on which you then unleash your creative powers. In this sense, some kind of objective creativity is the only answer man has to the problem of life."*

- *"He takes in the world, makes a total problem out of it, and then gives out a fashioned, human answer to that problem. This, as Goethe saw in Faust, is the highest that man can achieve."*

- *"From this point of view the difference between the artist and the neurotic seems to boil down largely to a question of talent. It is like the difference between an illiterate schizophrenic and a Strindberg: one ends up on the backwards and the other becomes a culture hero—but both experience the world in similar ways and only the quality and the power of the reaction differ. If the neurotic feels vulnerable in the face of the world he takes in, he reacts by criticizing himself to excess. He can't endure himself or the isolation that his individuality plunges him into. On the other hand, he still needs to be a hero, still needs to earn immortality on the basis of his unique qualities, which means that he still must glorify himself in some ways. But he can glorify himself only in fantasy, as he cannot fashion a creative work that speaks on his behalf by virtue of its objective perfection. He is caught in a vicious circle because he experiences the unreality of fantasied self-glorification. There is really no conviction possible for man unless it comes from others or from outside himself in some way—at least not for long. One simply cannot justify his own heroism in his own inner symbolic fantasy, which is what leads the neurotic to feel more unworthy and inferior."* (this is a lot)

- *"There is no doubt that creative work is itself done under a compulsion often indistinguishable from a purely clinical obsession. In this sense, what we call a creative gift is merely the social license to be obsessed. And what we call "cultural routine" is a similar license: the proletariat demands the obsession of work in order to keep from going crazy. I used to wonder how people could stand the really demonic activity of working behind those hellish ranges in hotel kitchens, the frantic whirl of waiting on a dozen tables at one time, the madness of the travel agent's office at the height of the tourist season, or the torture of working with a jack-hammer all day on a hot summer street. The answer is so simple that it eludes us: the craziness of these activities is exactly that of the human condition. They are "right" for us because the alternative is natural desperation. The daily madness of these jobs is a repeated vaccination: against the madness of the asylum. Look at the joy and eagerness with which workers return from vacation to their compulsive routines. They plunge into their work with equanimity and lightheartedness because it drowns out something more ominous. Men have to be protected from reality."* (at least I am past this obliviousness)

- *"But it is very risky to try to be hard and fast about types of personality; there are all kinds of blends and combinations that defy precise compartmentalization. After all, one of the reasons we narrow down too much is that we must sense on some level of awareness that life is too big and threatening a problem. And if we*

say that the average man narrows down "just about right," we have to ask who this average man is. *He may avoid the psychiatric clinic, but somebody around has to pay for it.* We are reminded of those Roman portrait-busts that stuff our museums: to live in this tight-lipped style as an average good citizen must have created some daily hell. Of course we are not talking only about daily pettinesses and the small sadisms that are practised on family and friends. *Even if the average man lives in a kind of obliviousness of anxiety, it is because he has erected a massive wall of repressions to hide the problem of life and death. His anality may protect him, but all through history it is the "normal, average men" who, like locusts, have laid waste to the world in order to forget themselves.*" (Ligotti- a nihilistic, pessimistic, depressive person doesn't start wars, protest or make a big deal of anything, non-movement, etc. Pascal- if only men could learn to sit in their rooms)

- *"We have seen that what we call the human character is actually a lie about the nature of reality. The causa-sui project is a pretense that one is invulnerable because protected by the power of others and of culture, that one is important in nature and can do something about the world. But in back of the causa-sui project whispers the voice of possible truth: that human life may not be more than a meaningless interlude in a vicious drama of flesh and bones that we call evolution; that the Creator may not care any more for the destiny of man or the self-perpetuation of individual men than He seems to have cared for the dinosaurs or the Tasmanians. The whisper is the same one that slips incongruously out of the Bible in the voice of Ecclesiastes: that all is vanity, vanity of vanities."*

- *"Some people are more sensitive to the lie of cultural life, to the illusions of the causa-sui project that others are so thoughtlessly and trustingly caught up in. The neurotic is having trouble with the balance of cultural illusion and natural reality; the possible horrible truth about himself and the world is seeping into his consciousness. The average man is at least secure that the cultural game is the truth, the unshakable, durable truth. He can earn his immortality in and under the dominant immortality ideology, period."*

- the neurotic- *"He] perceives himself as unreal and reality as unbearable, because with him the mechanisms of illusion are known and destroyed by self consciousness. He can no longer deceive himself about himself and disillusion even his own ideal of personality. He perceives himself as bad, guilt laden, inferior, as a small, weak, helpless creature, which is the truth about mankind, as Oedipus also discovered in the crash of his heroic fate. All other is illusion, deception, but necessary deception in order to be able to bear one's self and thereby life."*

- *"In other words, the neurotic isolates himself from others, cannot engage freely in their partialization of the world, and so cannot live by their deceptions about the human condition. He lifts himself out of the "natural therapy" of everyday life, the active, self-forgetful engagement in it; and so the illusions that others share seem unreal to him. This is forced. Neither can he, like the artist, create new illusions. As Anaïs Nin put it graphically: "The caricature aspect of life appears whenever the drunkenness of illusion wears off." And don't some people drink to head off the despair of reality as they sense it truly is? Man must always imagine and believe in a "second" reality or a better world than the one that is given him by nature. In this sense, the neurotic symptom is a communication about truth: that the illusion that one is invulnerable is a lie."*

- quoting Otto Rank- *"With the truth, one cannot live. To be able to live one needs illusions, not only outer illusions such as art, religion, philosophy, science and love afford, but inner illusions which first condition the outer."*

- *"Rank calls this a paradoxical but deep insight into the essence of neurosis, and he sums it up in the words we have used as an epigraph to this chapter. In fact, it is this and more: it absolutely shakes the foundations of our conceptualization of normality and health. It makes them entirely a relative value problem. The neurotic opts out of life because he is having trouble maintaining his illusions about it, which proves nothing less than, that life is possible only with illusions."* (Ha!)

- *"We must remind ourselves that when we talk about the need for illusion we are not being cynical. True, there is a great deal of falseness and self-deception in the cultural causa-sui project, but there is also the necessity of this project. Man needs a "second" world, a world of humanly created meaning, a new reality that he can live, dramatize, nourish himself in. "Illusion" means creative play at its highest level. Cultural illusion is a necessary ideology of self-justification, a heroic dimension that is life itself to the symbolic animal. To lose the security of heroic cultural illusion is to die—that is what "deculturation" of primitives means and what it does. It kills them or reduces them to the animal level of chronic fighting and fornication. Life becomes possible only in a continual alcoholic stupor."*

- *"If history is a succession of immortality ideologies, then the problems of men can be read directly against those ideologies—how embracing they are, how convincing, how easy they make it for men to be confident and secure in their personal heroism. What characterizes modern life is the failure of all traditional immortality ideologies to absorb and quicken man's hunger for self-perpetuation and heroism. Neurosis is today a widespread problem because of the disappearance of convincing dramas of heroic apotheosis of man. The subject is summed up succinctly in Pinel's famous observation on how the Salpêtrière mental hospital got cleared out at the time of the French Revolution. All the neurotics found a ready-made drama of self-transcending action and heroic identity. It was as simple as that."*

- *"It begins to look as though modern man cannot find his heroism in everyday life any more, as men did in traditional societies just by doing their daily duty of raising children, working, and worshipping."*
(people are all too complacent with nihilism since they have been brought up in it)

- *"That is the price modern man pays for the eclipse of the sacred dimension. When he dethroned the ideas of soul and God he was thrown back hopelessly on his own resources, on himself and those few around him. Ever! lovers and families trap and disillusion us because they are not substitutes for absolute transcendence. We might say that they are poor illusions in the sense that we have been discussing."*

- *"Modern man became psychological because he became isolated from protective collective ideologies. He had to justify himself from within himself. But he also became psychological because modern thought itself evolved that way when it developed out of religion. The inner life of man had always been portrayed traditionally as the area of the soul. But in the 19th century scientists wanted to reclaim this last domain of superstition from the Church. They wanted to make the inner life of man an area free of mystery and subject to the laws of causality. They gradually abandoned the word "soul" and began to talk about the "self" and to study how it develops in the child's early relationship with his mother. The great miracles of language, thought, and morality could now be studied as social products and not divine interventions. It was a great breakthrough in science that culminated only with the work of Freud; but it was Rank who saw that this scientific victory raised more problems than it solved. Science thought that it had gotten rid forever of the problems of the soul by making the inner world the subject of scientific analysis.*

But few wanted to admit that this work still left the soul perfectly intact as a word to explain the inner energy of organisms, the mystery of the creation and sustenance of living matter. It really doesn't matter if

we discover that man's inner precepts about himself and his world, his very self-consciousness in language, art, laughter, and tears, are all socially built into him. *We still haven't explained the inner forces of evolution that have led to the development of an animal capable of self-consciousness, which is what we still must mean by "soul" — the mystery of the meaning of organismic awareness, of the inner dynamism and pulsations of nature.* From this point of view *the hysterical reaction of 19th-century believers against Darwin only shows the thinness and unimaginativeness of their faith. They were not open to plain and ordinary awe and wonder; they took life too much for granted: and when Darwin stripped them of their sense of "special wondrousness they felt as good as dead."* (the failure of positivism/scientism, Swinburne's teleological argument- biology explain in a Darwinian way does not answer the question of the 'force' that creates self-conscious creatures, 'why these laws?')

- This is why I never wanted to see a psychologist- *"Psychology narrows the cause for personal unhappiness down to the person himself, and then he is stuck with himself. But we know that the universal and general cause for personal badness, guilt, and inferiority is the natural world and the persons relationship to it as a symbolic animal who must find a secure place in it. All the analysis in the world doesn't allow the person to find out who he is and why he is here on earth, why he has to die, and how he can make his life a triumph. It is when psychology pretends to do this,*

when it offers itself as a full explanation of human unhappiness, that it becomes a fraud that makes the situation of modern man an impasse from which he cannot escape. Or, put another way, psychology has limited its understanding of human unhappiness to the personal life-history of the individual and has not understood how much individual unhappiness is itself a historical problem in the larger sense, a problem of the eclipse of secure communal ideologies of redemption." (the nightmare of existence does not get solved, Zapffe- 'sure you may be in a 'better' psychological state than me, but I am the better philosopher. *Man's Search for Meaning* sucks, since it denies the truth of the nightmare of existence and attempts to put forth a knowingly subjective, worthless illusion as 'truth' or 'worth living for')

- "We can conclude with Rank that religion is "just as good a psychology" as the psychology that pretended to replace it. "

- "Modern man needs a "thou" to whom to turn for spiritual and moral dependence, and as God was in eclipse, the therapist has had to replace Him—just as the lover and the parents did."

- "By now it should be clear that this blurring of Rank and Kierkegaard is not a weak surrender to ideology but an actual scientific working-through of the problem of human character. Both men reached the same conclusion after the most exhaustive psychological quest: that at the very furthest reaches of scientific description, psychology has to give way to "theology"— that is, to a world-view*^tBa^f"^aBsorBs the individual conflicts and guilt and offers him the possibility for some kind of heroic apotheosis. Man cannot endure his own littleness unless he can translate it into meaningfulness on the largest possible level."

- I don't think this describes me, but who knows- "Here Rank and Kierkegaard meet in one of those astonishing historical mergers of thought: that *sin and neurosis are two ways of talking about the same thing—the complete isolation of the individual, his disharmony with the rest of nature, his hyperindividualism, his attempt to create his own world from within himself.* Both sin and neurosis represent the individual blowing himself up to larger than his true size, his refusal to recognize his cosmic dependence. Neurosis, like sin, is an

attempt to force nature, to pretend that the causa-sui project really suffices. In sin and neurosis man fetishizes himself on something narrow at hand and pretends that the whole meaning and miraculousness of creation is limited to that, that he can get his beatification.” (Me: I don't feel that my 'confrontation' with what I take to be the 'nightmare of existence' to be a fetish, but maybe I am putting too much meaning on to 'nihilism'?)

- “But we know that this attempt is doomed to failure because man simply cannot justify his own heroism; *he cannot fit himself into his own cosmic plan and make it believable*. He must live with agonizing doubts if he remains in touch at all with the larger reality. Only when he loses this touch do the doubts vanish—and that is the definition of psychosis: a wholly unreal belief- in the self-justification of cosmic heroism. ‘*I am Christ.*’” (is this why the experience of Meaninglessness is stronger/more important than the Mystical experience, with Tillich, Vivekananda, Cioran, and myself?)

- this entire chapter is important, due to sections like this:

“Sin and neurosis have another side: not only their unreal self-inflation in the refusal to admit creatureliness but also a penalty for intensified self-consciousness: the failure to be consoled by shared illusions. The result is that the sinner (neurotic) is hyperconscious of the very thing he tries to deny: his creatureliness, his miserableness and unworthiness.⁴¹ The neurotic is thrown back on his true perceptions of the human condition, which caused his isolation and individuation in the first place. He tried to build a glorified private inner world because of his deeper anxieties, but life takes its revenge. The more he separates and inflates himself, the more anxious he becomes. The more he artificially idealizes himself, the more exaggeratedly he criticizes himself. He alternates between the extremes of “I am everything” and “I am nothing.” But it is clear that if one is going to be part of something else. There is no way to avoid paying the debt of dependency and yielding to the larger meaning of the rest of nature, to the toll of suffering and the death that it demands; and there is no way to justify this payment from within oneself, no matter how mightily one tries.” **(this sounds just like me, this should ease the guilt, see God in everything, the human condition is just that, human and universal)**

- “But now we see the historical difference between the classical sinner and the modern neurotic: both of them experience the naturalness of human insufficiency, only today the neurotic is stripped of the symbolic world-view, the God-ideology that would make sense out of his unworthiness and would translate it into heroism. Traditional religion turned the consciousness of sin into a condition for salvation but the tortured sense of nothingness of the neurotic qualifies him now only for miserable extinction. For merciful release -” “In lonely death. It is all right to be nothing vis-a-vis God, who alone can make it right in His unknown ways; it is another thing to be nothing to oneself, who is nothing.”

- “Thus the plight of modern man: a sinner with no word for it or, worse, who looks for the word for it in a dictionary of psychology and thus only aggravates the problem of his separateness and hyperconsciousness.”

- “This is Rank’s devastating Kierkegaardian conclusion: if neurosis is sin, and not disease, then the only thing which can “cure” world-view, some kind of affirmative collective ideology in which the person can perform the living drama of his acceptance as a creature.” (symbolism of God is the only cure)

- “All reflection and no plunging drives us mad; all plunging and no reflection, and we are brutes.”

- It is not astonishing that those who are unshaken in their courage to be as a part, either in its collectivist or in its conformist form, are disturbed by the expressions of the Existentialist courage of despair. They are

unable to understand what is happening in our period. They are unable to distinguish the genuine from the neurotic anxiety in Existentialism. *They attack as a morbid longing for negativity what in reality is courageous acceptance of the negative.* They call decay what is actually the creative expression of decay. They reject as meaningless the meaningful attempt to reveal the meaninglessness of our situation."

- *"The customs and myths of traditional society provided a whole interpretation of the meaning of life, ready-made for the individual; all he had to do was to accept living it as true. The modern neurotic must do just this if he is to be "cured": he must welcome a living illusion."*

- *"It is one thing to imagine this "cure," but it is quite another thing to "prescribe" it to modern man. How hollow it must ring in his ears. For one thing, he can't get living myth-ritual complexes, the deep-going inherited social traditions that have so far sustained men, on a prescription form from the corner pharmacy. He can't even get them in mental hospitals or therapeutic communities. The modern neurotic cannot magically find the kind of world he needs, which is one reason, he tries to create his own. In this very crucial sense neurosis is the modern tragedy of man; historically he is an orphan."* (this sounds just like me)

- *"A second reason for the hollowness of our prescription for neurosis follows. If there are no ready-made traditional world-views into which to fit oneself with dependency and trust, religion becomes a very personal matter—so personal that faith itself seems neurotic, like a private fantasy and an action taken out of weakness. The one thing modern man cannot do is what Kierkegaard prescribed: the lonely leap into faith, the naive personal trust in some kind of transcendental support for one's life. This support is now independent of living external rituals and customs: the church and the community do not exist, or do not carry much conviction. This situation is what helps make faith fantastic. In order for something to seem true to man, it has to be visibly supported in some way—lived, external, compelling. Men need pageants, crowds, panoplies, special days marked off on calendars—an objective focus for obsession, something to give form and body to internal fantasy, something external to yield oneself to. Otherwise the neurotic is brought back to the point of his departure: how is he to believe in his lonely, inner sense of specialness?"* (this is the issue of the divided-self, the double-mindedness. How does the neurotic take himself seriously? It's impossible to do so. this brings on a mental and physical paralysis; although, one can grow within the mental differentiation of the paralysis, while the physical paralysis is seen as something that needs to be 'treated' or diseased)

- The characteristic of the modern mind is the banishment of mystery, of naive belief, of simple-minded hope. We put the accent on the visible, the clear, the cause-and-effect relation, the logical—always the logical." (I can't remember, but someone said the modern man has been stripped of his metaphysical thinking, still can't remember, Ha!)

- *"What typifies the neurotic is that he "knows" his situation vis-a-vis reality. He has no doubts; there is nothing you can say to sway him, to give him hope or trust. He is a miserable animal whose body decays, who will die, who will pass into dust and oblivion, disappear forever not only in this world but in all the possible dimensions of the universe, whose life serves no conceivable purpose, who may as well not have been born, and so on and so forth. He knows Truth and Reality, the motives of the entire universe."* (well, this is me, Ha!)

- *"It was G. K. Chesterton who kept alive the spirit of Kierkegaard and naive Christianity in modern thought, as when he showed with such style that the characteristics the modern mind prides itself on are precisely those of madness. There is no one more logical than the lunatic, more concerned with the minutiae of cause and effect. Madmen are the greatest reasoners we know, and that trait is one of the accompaniments of their undoing. All their vital processes are*

shrunk into the mind. What is the one thing they lack that sane men possess? The ability to be careless, to disregard appearances, to relax and laugh at the world. They can't unbend, can't gamble their whole existence, as did Pascal, on a fanciful wager. *They can't do what religion has always asked: to believe in a justification for their lives that seems absurd. The neurotic knows better: he is the absurd, but nothing else is absurd; it is 'only too true.'* But faith asks that man expand himself trustingly into the nonlogical, into the truly fantastic. *This spiritual expansion is the one thing that modern man finds most difficult, precisely because he is constricted into*

himself and has nothing to lean on, no collective drama that makes fantasy seem real because it is lived and shared."
- "We said earlier that the question of human life is: on what level of illusion does one live? This question poses an absolutely new question for the science of mental health, namely: What is the "best" illusion under which to live? Or, what is the most legitimate foolishness? If you are going to talk about life-enhancing illusion, then you can truly try to answer the question of which is "best." You will have to define "best" in terms that are directly meaningful to man, related to his basic condition and his need."

- "Religion answers directly to the problem of transference by expanding awe and terror to the cosmos where they belong. It also takes the problem of self-justification and removes it from the objects near at hand. We no longer have to please those around us, but the very source of creation—the powers that created us, not those into whose lives we accidentally fell. Our life ceases to be a reflexive dialogue with the standards of our wives, husbands, friends, and leaders and becomes instead measured by standards of the highest heroism, ideals truly fit to lead us on and beyond ourselves. In this way we fill ourselves with independent values, can make free decisions, and, most importantly, can lean on powers that really support us and do not oppose us. The personality can truly begin to emerge in religion because God, as an abstraction, does not oppose the individual as others do, but instead provides the individual with all the powers necessary for independent self-justification. *What greater security than to lean confidently on God. on the Fount of creation, the most terrifying power of all?*" (the only illusion worth pursuing- Cioran)

- "Finally, religion alone gives hope, because it holds open the dimension of the unknown and the unknowable, the fantastic mystery of creation that the human mind cannot even begin to approach, *the possibility of a multidimensionality of spheres of existence, of heavens and possible embodiments that make a mockery of earthly logic—and in doing so, it relieves the absurdity of earthly life, all the impossible limitations and frustrations of living matter. In religious terms, to "see God" is to die, because the creature is too small and finite to be able to bear the higher meanings of creation. Religion takes one's very creatureliness, one's insignificance, and makes it a condition of hope. Full transcendence of the human condition means limitless possibility unimaginable to us.*"

- "Adler should have stressed more the sheer terror of individuation of difference, of being alone, of losing support and delegated power. He revealed to us the "life-lie" that people use in order to live, but we tended to overlook how necessary this lie is in some form or other for most men; how men simply do not have their own powers to rely on. *When we remind ourselves again how giants like Freud and Jung shrink and faint while buying simple travel tickets, perhaps we can get some correct feeling for the magnitude of the task of poor Mr. Average Man just daily trying to negotiate a semblance of tranquil heroism by embedding himself in the powers of others. When these tactics fail and he is threatened with*

the exposure of his life-lie, how logical it is that he give way to his own version of fainting by bogging down in a depressive withdrawal.”

- “When the average person can no longer convincingly perform his safe heroics or cannot hide his failure to be his own hero, then he bogs down in the failure of depression and its terrible guilt.”

- *“Boss says that the terrible guilt feelings of the depressed person are existential, that is, they represent the failure to live one’s own life, to fulfill one’s own potential because of the twisting and turning to be “good” in the eyes of the other. The other calls the tune to one’s eligibility for immortality, and so the other takes up one’s un-lived life.*

Relationship is thus always slavery of a kind, which leaves a residue of guilt.” (a limiting of freedom as necessary with relationships)

- “To judge by his own self-accusations of worthlessness, the patient feels an immense burden of guilt.”

- “The depressed person exaggerates his guilt because it unblocks his dilemma in the safest and easiest way. He also, as Adler pointed out, gets the people around him to respond to him, to pity him, and to value him and take care of him. He controls them and heightens his own personality by his very self-pity and self-hatred.” (how does he not do this if a person conscious of the human condition would ‘most definitely go mad’?)

- on the schizophrenic- *“There is a type of person for whom life is a more insurmountable problem than for others, for whom the burden of anxiety and fear is almost as constant as his daily breath. Rank used the term “neurotic” for one type of person who was without illusion, who saw things as they were, who was overwhelmed by the fragility of the human enterprise; and in this sense the term describes perfectly the schizophrenic type. He is the “realist” that William James talked about when he said that the right reaction to the horrors of organismic life on this planet is the psychotic one.”*

- *“Adler very early showed how the schizophrenic was crippled by the fear of life and its demands, by a low self-evaluation in the face of them. He mistrusts not only himself but also the knowledge and ability of others; nothing seems to him to be able to overcome the inevitable horrors of life and death—except perhaps the fantastic ideational system that he fabricates for his own salvation.”* (Ha! That sounds just like me and Haas)

- *“I mean the fact that human experience is split into two modes—the symbolic self and the physical body—and that these two modes of experience can be quite distinct. In some people they are so distinct as to be unintegrated, and these are the people we call schizophrenic. The hypersensitive individual reacts to his body as something strange to himself, something utterly untrustworthy, something not under his secure control. Right away we can see that the schizophrenic is burdened, like all of us, with an “alien” animal body.”* (this took a while to understand? This sounds like ‘science fiction’ to others? Ha!)

- “By pushing the problem of man to its limits, schizophrenia also reveals the nature of creativity. If you are physically unprogrammed in the cultural causa-sui project, then you have to invent your own: *you don’t vibrate to anyone else’s tune. You see that the fabrications of those around you are a lie, a denial of truth—a truth that usually takes the form of showing the terror of the human condition more fully than most men experience it. The creative person becomes, then, in art, literature, and religion the mediator of natural terror and the indicator of a new way to triumph over it. He reveals the darkness and the dread of the human condition and fabricates a new symbolic transcendence over it. This has been the function of the creative deviant from the shamans through Shakespeare.”*

- “But if the neurotic is the “artiste manque,” what is the schizophrenic who has no talent, who is not creative? He must be a completely inverted and pathetic failure, as the wards in our mental

hospitals attest. An impoverished and powerless person—*even when he is a perceiver of truth*—has no gift to offer to his fellows or to himself. The uncreative psychotic is simply totally crippled by life-and-death fears.” (I always wanted to be more creative. This would make the earthly world easier; and who says that an 'easier' existence is to be pursued? To avoid pain and fear? Ha! Weak and pathetic us human creatures are! Avoid because I don't like feeling a particular way. Just an arbitrary sensation? Naturalism)

- “The schizophrenic is not programmed neurally into automatic response to social meanings, but he cannot marshal an ego response, a directive control of his experiences. His own erupting meanings cannot be given any creative form. We might say that because of his exaggerated helplessness he uses his symbolic inner experiences alone as an experiential anchor, as something to lean on. He exists reflexively toward them, comes to be controlled by them instead of reshaping and using them. The genius too is not programmed in automatic cultural meanings; but he has the resources of a strong ego, or at least a sufficient one, to give his own personal meanings a creative form.”

- “In schizophrenia, like depression, we see the problem of heroics in its stark nudity. How does one become a hero from a position in which he has hardly any resources at all?—a position from which he sees more clearly than anyone else the menacing dangers of life and death and yet has no solid feeling of inner glory to oppose to them? He has to fabricate such a feeling in the best way he can, which will be a clumsy, crippled, and inverted way. No wonder that psychotic transferences are so total, so intense, so all-absorbing, so frightening (when they are not pathetic).”

- “All perversions, then, can truly be seen as 'private religions,' as attempts to heroically transcend the human condition and to achieve some kind of satisfaction in that condition. That is why perverts are forever saying how superior and life-enhancing their particular approach is, how they cannot understand why anyone would not prefer it. It is the same sentiment that animates all true believers, the trumpeting of who is the true hero and what is the only genuine path to eternal glory.” (I agree. Tillich on the importance and necessity of doubt in faith, on the importance of not idolizing the 'concrete' symbols of faith)

- “The religious geniuses of history have argued that to be really submissive means to be submissive to the highest power, the true infinity and absolute—and not to any human substitutes, lovers, leaders, nationstates.” (Vivekananda, Tolstoy, Tillich, Cioran)

- “From this point of view the problem of mental illness is one of not knowing what kind of heroics one is practising or not being able—once one does know—to broaden ones heroics from their crippling narrowness. Paradoxical as it may sound, mental illness is thus a matter of weakness and stupidity.” (Ha!)

- “All living organisms are condemned to perversity, to the narrowness of being mere fragments of a larger totality that overwhelms them, which they cannot understand or truly cope with—yet must still live and struggle in. We still must ask, then, in the spirit of the wise old Epictetus, what kind of perversity is fitting for man.”

Start of Chapter 11-

- “When we are young we are often puzzled by the fact that each person we admire seems to have a different version of what life ought to be, what a good man is, how to live, and so on. *If we are especially sensitive it seems more than puzzling, it is disheartening.*” (this is the absurd perspective, the problem of relativism/nihilism that is not seen by every one because they have been raised within the relativistic/nihilistic framework, nothing weird about everyone having a different opinion/not being able to find out who's right, if anyone is, and yet not figuring out that all your moral/important demands and

judgments are just as nonsensical as the person that you oppose, since there is no way to find out who is right, how come everyone doesn't find this weird?)

- Freud's quote- *"I have found little that is "good" about human beings on the whole. In my experience most of them are trash, no matter whether they publicly subscribe to this or that ethical doctrine or none at all...If we are to talk of ethics, I subscribe to a high ideal from which most of the human beings I have come across depart most lamentably."*

- on Freud, but relevant to almost all people today- *"He could not yield emotionally to superordinate power or conceptually to the transcendental dimension. He lived still wholly in the dimension of the visible world and was limited by what was possible in that dimension only; therefore, all his meanings had to come from that dimension."*

- on the knight of faith- *"He accepts whatever happens in this visible dimension without complaint, lives his life as a duty, faces his death without a qualm. No pettiness is so petty that it threatens his meanings; no task is too frightening to be beyond his courage. He is fully in the world on its terms and wholly beyond the world in his trust in the invisible dimension. It is very much the old Pietistic ideal that was lived by Kants parents. The great strength of such an ideal is that it allows one to be open, generous, courageous, to touch others' lives and enrich them and open them in turn. As the knight of faith has no fear-of-life-and- death trip to lay onto others, he does not cause them to shrink back upon themselves, he does not coerce or manipulate them. *The knight of faith, then, represents what we might call an ideal of mental health, the Continuing openness of life out of the 'death throes of dread'.*"* (jesus, no wonder Kierkegaard said he could never become the knight of faith. This faith is Vivekananda's mystical experience through meditation, or the optimistic way in which Vivekananda *sometimes* talks, it is not something that Tillich, Kierkegaard, or Vivekananda (in half or more of his moods/writings think is sustainable, i.e. the experience of Meaninglessness/Nihilism is the stronger, more true, experience, which did not allow for Kierkegaard to obtain this 'ideal of mental health', anxiety never leaves the creaturely human, no matter how 'holy' he thinks he has become. i.e. the finite/infinite gap)

- the selflessness of Vivekananda, the knight of faith for Kierkegaard are not possible, the experience of meaninglessness trumps these ideals, or the attitudes/psychological states that are needed to be obtained by a particular human, which make the ideals impossible- *"Put in these abstract terms the ideal of the knight of faith is surely one of the most beautiful and challenging ideals ever put forth by man. It is contained in most religions in one form or another although no one, I think, has described it at length with such talent as Kierkegaard. Like all ideals it is a creative illusion, meant to lead men on, and leading men on is not the easiest thing. As Kierkegaard said, faith is the hardest thing; he placed himself between belief and faith, unable to make the jump. The jump doesn't depend on man after all—there's the rub: faith is a matter of grace. As Tillich later put it: religion is first an open hand to receive gifts (grace) and then a closed hand to give them."*

- *"For every shortcoming that we can point to in Freud, we can find a corresponding one in Kierkegaard. If Freud can be said to have erred on the side of the visible, then Kierkegaard can surely be said to have equally erred on the side of the invisible. He turned away from life partly from his fear of life, he embraced death more easily because he had failed in life; his own life was not a voluntary sacrifice undertaken in free will, but a pathetically driven sacrifice. He did not live in the categories in which he thought."* (my mother asked me if I put people into 'categories', this makes me think of how I do that. I see how self-aware a person is. That says a lot, since the more self-aware, the 'further along' a person is)

- *"I am talking matter-of-factly about some of the surest giants in the history of humanity only to say that in the game of life and death no one stands taller than any other, unless it be a true saint, and only to conclude that sainthood itself is a matter of grace and not of human effort. My point is that for man not everything is possible. What is there to choose between religious creatureliness and scientific creatureliness? The most one can achieve is a certain relaxedness, an openness to experience that makes him less of a driven burden on others. And a lot of this depends on how much talent he has, how much of a daimonis driving him; it is easier to lay down light burdens than heavy ones. How does a man create from all his living energies a system of thought, as Freud did, a system directed wholly to the problems of this world, and then just give it up to the invisible one? How, in other words, can one be a saint and still organize scientific movements of world-historical importance? How does one lean on God and give over everything to Him and still stand on his own feet as a passionate human being? These are not rhetorical questions, they are real ones that go right to the heart of the problem of 'how to be a man' - a problem that no one can satisfactorily advise anyone else on, as the wise William James knew. The whole thing is loaded with ambiguity impossible to resolve."* (this is the issue of non-movement. What does a person do with this knowledge? Create something, e.g. art, science, etc.? And is that enough? It cannot be. Robin Williams. That keeps a person alive, it gives them a temporarily satisfactory illusion of meaning in their pathetic earthly lives. The person who has no creative outlet, or the person who loses interest/sees through the transitory illusion of meaning of one's 'interest', i.e. the arbitrary nature of pursuing one thing over the other, enjoying one thing over another, the idea of wanting this over that, the issue of deciding for this and therefore against that, and so on. Choose. Choose, go ahead. And, now: Why? Why *that*? Why not this? Or that over there? "Because you wanted to", you say? "Because you felt like it"?)

- *"...led Tillich to argue so penetratingly that Eastern mysticism is not for Western man. It is an evasion of the courage to be; it prevents the absorption of maximum meaninglessness into oneself. Tillich's point is that mystical experience seems to be near to perfect faith but is not. Mysticism lacks precisely the element of skepticism, and skepticism is a more radical experience, a more manly confrontation of potential meaninglessness. Even more, we must not forget that much of the time, mysticism as popularly practised is fused with a sense of magical omnipotence: it is actually a manic defense and a denial of creatureliness."* (Tillich pg. 178)

- *"James, again, knew how difficult it was to live astride both worlds, the visible and the invisible. One tended to pull you away from the other."* (James: the divided-self, Kierkegaard: double-mindedness, Heidegger 'Always' falling, Christianity: Original sin)

- *"And then the real tragedy, as Andre Malraux wrote in The Human Condition: that it takes sixty years of incredible suffering and effort to make such an individual and then he is good only for dying. This painful paradox is not lost on the person himself least of all himself. He feels agonizingly unique, and yet he knows that this doesn't make any difference as far as ultimates are concerned. He has to go the way of the grasshopper, even though it takes longer."* (Ha!)

- *"Finally, with these questions we saw that we could call into doubt the pretensions of the whole therapeutic enterprise. What joy and comfort can it give to fully awakened people? Once you accept the truly desperate situation that man is in, you come to see not only that neurosis is normal, but that even psychotic failure represents only a*

little additional push in the routine stumbling along life's way. If repression makes an untenable life liveable, self-knowledge can entirely destroy it for some people."

- Not everyone is as honest as Freud was when he said that he cured the miseries of the neurotic only to open him up to the normal misery of life." (Ha!)

- "I have never seen or heard them communicate the dangers of the total liberation that they claim to offer; say, to put up a small sign next to the one advertising joy, carrying some inscription like *"Danger: real probability of the awakening of terror and dread, from which there is no turning back."* It would be honest and would also relieve them of some of the guilt of the occasional suicide that takes place in therapy." (Camus: 'a man who is conscious of the absurd is forever bound to it', listen to a ton of McKenna before a psychedelic trip, Huxley)

- "As in any religion, the adept "swears by" it because he has lived it; the therapy is "true" because it is a lived experience explained by concepts that seem perfectly to fit it, that give form to what the patient actually is undergoing." (is this what I am doing here?)

- *"It is no wonder that when therapies strip man down to his naked aloneness, to the real nature of experience and the problem of life, they slip into some kind of metaphysic of power and justification from beyond. How can the person be left there trembling and alone? Offer him the possibility of mystical contact with the void of creation, the power of "It," his likeness to God, or at the very least the support of a guru who will vouch for these things in his own overpowering and harmonious-appearing person. Man must reach out for support to a dream, a metaphysic of hope that sustains him and makes his life worthwhile."*

- *"To talk about hope is to give the right focus to the problem. It helps us understand why even the thinkers of great stature who got at the heart of human problems could not rest content with the view of the tragical nature of man's lot that this knowledge gives,. It is today well known how*

Wilhelm Reich continued the Enlightenment in the direction of a fusion of Freud with Marxists' social criticism, only to reach finally for Orgone, the primal cosmic energy. Or how Jung wrote an intellectual apologia for the text of ancient Chinese magic, the I Ching. In this, as Rieff has so bitinglly argued, these men are of lesser stature than their master the great Stoic Freud." (why people 'ignore' or 'talk around' the consequences of Nihilism, Skepticism, etc. this is a true sense of awe or, more so, terror. It's 'too much' even for these 'strong men', Ha! The knight of faith, Tillich's 'Courage' is all a sham)

- *"How can a self-conscious creature change the dilemma of his existence? There is simply no way to transcend the limits of the human condition or to change the psychological structural conditions that make humanity possible. What can it mean for something new to emerge from such an animal and to triumph over his nature? Even though men have repeated such a notion since the most ancient times and in the most subtle and weightiest ways, even though whole movements of social action as well as thought have been inspired by such ideas, still they are mere fancy..."*

- *"Consider Paul Tillich: he too had his metaphysic of New Being, the belief in the emergence of a new type of person who would be more in harmony with nature, less driven, more perceptive, more in touch with his own creative energies, and who might go on to form genuine communities to replace the collectivities of our time, communities of truer persons in place of the objective creatures created by our materialistic culture. But Tillich had fewer illusions about this New Being than most of the psychotherapeutic religionists. He saw that the idea was actually a myth, an*

ideal that might be worked toward and so partly realized." (the knight of faith myth, the selflessness myth, getting 'beyond' the terror of existence, if rightfully understood, is not possible, only with repressions, distractions, diversions, can humans cope with living this existence)

- "If you are going to have a myth of New Being, then, like Tillich, you have to use this myth as a call to the highest and most difficult effort—and not to simple joy. A creative myth is not simply a relapse into comfortable illusion; it has to be as bold as possible in order to be truly generative." (Vivekananda, this is why Nihilism is God, reality cannot be what brings us pleasure, what a silly earthly ideal, pathetic)

- "What singles out Tillich's cogitations about the New Being is that there is no nonsense here. Tillich means that man has to have the "courage to be" himself, to stand on his own feet, *to face up to the eternal contradictions of the real world. The bold goal of this kind of courage is to absorb into ones own being the maximum amount of nonbeing.* As a being, as an extension of all of Being, man has an organismic impulsion: to take into his own organization the maximum amount of the problematic of life. His daily life, then, becomes truly a duty of cosmic proportions, and his courage to face the anxiety of meaninglessness becomes a true cosmic heroism." (Kierkegaard, Vivekananda)

- "The problem of meaninglessness is the form in which nonbeing poses itself in our time..."

- "Again, we are talking about the highest ideal things, which always seem most unreal—but how can we settle for less? We need the boldest creative myths, not only to urge men on but also and perhaps especially to help men see the reality of their condition. We have to be as hard-headed as possible about reality and possibility." (Tillich's symbolism, Vivekananda's praise of having *many* sects of religion, etc.)

- "As Tillich warned us, New Being, under the conditions and limitations of existence, will only bring into play new and sharper paradoxes, new tensions, and more painful disharmonies—a "*more intense demonism.*" Reality is remorseless because gods do not walk upon the earth; and if men could become noble repositories of great gulfs of nonbeing, they would have even less peace than *we oblivious and driven madmen* have today."

- "It is this therapeutic megalomania that must quickly been seen through if we are not to be perfect fools. The empirical facts of the world will not fade away because one has analyzed his Oedipus complex, as Freud so well knew, or because one can make love with tenderness, as so many now believe. Forget it. In this sense again it is *Freud's somber pessimism, especially of his later writings such as Civilization and Its Discontents, that keeps him so contemporary. Men are doomed to live in an overwhelmingly tragic and demonic world.*" (Zapffe and 'Happiness is for the pigs')

- "I think that taking life seriously means something such as this: that whatever man does on this planet has to be done in the lived truth of the terror of creation, of the grotesque, of the rumble of panic underneath everything. Otherwise it is false." (Tillich, which is why 'mysticism' is not the 'stopping point', it is a guide, but it does not overpower the experience of Meaninglessness, Nihilism)

50. Paul Tillich

Dynamics of Faith

- "Faith is the state of being ultimately concerned."
- speaking of in the Old Testament- "They state unambiguously the character of genuine faith, the demand of total surrender to the subject of ultimate concern." (this seems important, since is this an 'ideal' like Kierkegaard's Knight of Faith or Vivekananda's complete selflessness? Is it something that cannot seemingly be reached, but must still be thrived towards? Is this what martyrs are doing? Suicides too? It seems that they are ultimately surrendering. What about Muslim 'terrorists'? Of course they would be celebrated under other value structures that begin with Islam being the ultimate concern. I know that's too vague to say that all 'islam' would resort to this, but 'terrorism' does seem justified as an ultimate concern)
- "...the ultimate concern with 'success' and the social standing and economic power. It is the god of many people in the highly competitive western culture...even if the price is sacrifice of genuine human relations, personal conviction, and creative eros...misplaced faith is...When fulfilled, the promise of this faith proves to be empty."
- "Faith is not an act of any of his rational functions, as it is not an act of the unconscious, but it is an act in which both the rational and the nonrational elements of his being are transcended...It transcends them, but it does not destroy them. (Otto)
- "'Ecstasy' means standing 'outside of oneself' - without ceasing to be oneself. (One of the Nihilist speaks of the objectivity one gets from Nihilism, I say this in my journals, I just need to find the entry date, also that quote from 'solitude' is exactly this experience. Although all alone, you have a sense of something bigger that is connected with yourself and everyone else, Shrooms, cannabis, entheogens)
- "The reality of man's ultimate concern reveals something about his being, namely, that he is able to transcend the flux of relative and transitory experiences of his ordinary life."
- *"Man's experiences feelings, thoughts are conditioned and finite. They not only come and go, but their content is of finite and conditional concern..."*
- *"Man is driven towards faith by his awareness of the infinite."* (Zapffe and his term 'transcendental yearning', Vivekananda saying nothing will make us ultimately content in this world of Maya)
- Faith- "...is the passion for the infinite."
- Ultimate Concern- "...the ultimate is concern about what is experienced as ultimate."
- In reference to 'idols' which Tillich claims everything under the sun has been use as the 'ultimate' in religious history- "...a critical principle was and is at work in man's religious consciousness, namely, that which is really ultimate over against what claims to be ultimate but is only *preliminary, transitory, finite.*" (symbolism, the ultimate concern is supposed to 'unite' the subjective, human world, with the objective, infinite realm of Divinity, according to Tillich)
- "There is no faith without a content toward which it is directed."
- *"All speaking about divine matters which is not done in the state of ultimate concern is meaningless."* (if there is speak about the worldly, then it is meaningless with regards to the divine, which is why I find philosophy/abstractness to be a decently accurate symbol for speaking or thinking about God)
- *"In true faith the ultimate concern is a concern about the truly ultimate; while in idolatrous faith preliminary, finite realities are elevated to the rank of ultimacy. The inescapable consequence of idolatrous faith is 'existential disappointment,' a disappointment which penetrates into the very existence of man!"* (anything worldly must not be given any more value than a symbol, as a pretending to bridge the gap of the finite and the infinite. The disconnect, the doubt, the meaningless is always here, it is never overcome. The ones who have 'overcome' are the ones who have mistakenly, whether out of fear or just ignorance, elevated the finite to the level of

the infinite. They are idolatrous. Augustine makes this finite/infinite distinction very clearly. As does Kierkegaard and the mystics who hold that even the humans who don't recognize it, are stuck in the nightmare of existence, the human condition is universal)

- "...even an idolatrous faith can hide this consequence only for a certain time. But finally it breaks into the open." (Nihilism, meaninglessness, will come through, eventually, hopefully. A man only comes to religion when the patchwork does not hold anymore. When everything comes crashing.

- "The awareness of the holy is awareness of the presence of the divine, namely of the content of our ultimate concern."

- "It is a presence that remains mysterious in spite of its appearance, and it exercises both an attractive and a repulsive function of those who encounter it."

- "The human heart seeks the infinite because that is where the finite wants to rest. In the infinite it sees its own fulfillment."

- "...the infinite distance of the finite from the infinite and, consequently, the negative judgment over any finite attempts to reach the infinite. The feeling of being consumed in the presence of the divine is a profound expression of man's relation to the holy." (this is experienced in the mushroom trip. This experience of utter separation from the Divine, yet when on psilocybin, having a true sense of Humility in the face of something truly Other. This whole of love takes you from everything, even yourself, yet even though 'you' disintegrates, you are still 'there' somehow. All does become One. Such a counter experience from anything 'rational', anything our 'normal', boring, obnoxiously vain produces. This is not a philosophical argument, it's a call for experience. This cannot be logic chopped. The experience happened. The experience was real to me. TO ME, it's real. Now what do I do with that? Ha!)

- "'Holy' has become identified with moral perfection...Originally, the holy has meant what is apart from the ordinary realm of things and experiences.

- "Entering the sanctuary means encountering the holy.:

- "...the holy has been called the 'entirely other'..."

- "*The holy transcends this realm; this is its mystery and its unapproachable character.*"

- "...there is no way of reaching the infinite." (necessarily its symbolism)

- "The holy can appear as creative and as destructive."

- "...the terrifying and consuming element can be destructive and creative."

- "...the concept of the holy was changed. Holiness becomes justice and truth. It is creative and not destructive. The true sacrifice is obedience to the law. This is the line of thought which finally led to the identification of holiness with moral perfection. But when this point is reached, holiness loses its meaning as the 'separated', the 'transcending', the 'fascinating and terrifying', the 'entirely other'. All this is gone, and the holy has become the morally good and the logically true. *It has ceased to be the holy in the genuine sense of the word.*"

- "...one could say that the holy originally lies below the alternative of the good and evil; that it is both divine and demonic..." (Nietzsche would say 'Beyond', and Tillich would have to have known this when writing 'below')

- "The holy which is demonic, or ultimately destructive, is identical with the content of idolatrous faith. Idolatrous faith is still faith. The holy which is demonic is still holy."

- "...the danger of faith is idolatry..."

- "Our ultimate concern can destroy us as it can heal us." (indeed, Heisman)

- "An act of faith is an act of a finite being who is grasped by and turned to the infinite."
- "Faith is certain in so far as it is an experience of the holy. *But faith is uncertain in so far as the infinite to which it is related is received by the finite being.* This element of uncertainty in faith cannot be removed, it must be accepted. And the element in faith which accepts this is courage. Faith includes an element of immediate awareness which gives certainty and an element of uncertainty. To accept this is courage."
- "*Courage as an element of faith is the daring self-affirmation of one's own being in spite of the power of 'nonbeing' which are the heritage of everything finite.*" (acting in the face of death; in spite of how death takes away the meaning, purpose, value of all actions. 'We all end up the same', 'if we all die, if there is no ultimate justice, then all is permitted', etc.)
- "*The is a risk if what was considered as a matter of ultimate concern proves to be a matter of preliminary and transitory concern- as, for example, the nation. The risk to faith in one's ultimate concern is indeed the greatest risk a man can run. For if it proves to be a failure, the meaning of one's life breaks down; one surrenders oneself, including truth and justice, to something which is not worth it.*" (this is the sick joke that is life, it seems that everyone, no matter what is doing this. Ha! That's a maddening thought. Everything around me, including myself, is part of something insane, absurd, Nihilistic)
- "*The reaction of despair in people who have experienced the breakdown of their national claims is an irrefutable proof of the idolatrous character of their national concern. In the long run this is the inescapable result of an ultimate concern, the subject matter of which is not ultimate.*"
- on how all concrete elements of religion must be symbolic due to the finite/infinite distinction- "A god disappears; divinity remains."
- "If faith is understood as belief that something is true, doubt is incompatible with the act of faith. If faith is understood as being ultimately concerned, doubt is a necessary element in it." (finite/infinite distinction, the concrete symbols will never 'receive' the Other, the Holy 'in full')
- "The skeptical doubt is an attitude towards all beliefs of man, from sense experiences to religious creeds. It is more an attitude than an assertion. *For as an assertion it would conflict with itself. Even the assertion that there is no possible truth for man would be judged by the skeptical principle and could not stand as an assertion.*" (self-refuting nature, which means that the 'negative' to be coherent, must accept that they are taking something seriously, and therefore embrace that there is something behind this 'despair over meaninglessness, loss of truth, etc.' CTB pg. 176- 'The act of accepting meaninglessness is a meaningful act. It is an act of faith', a criticism that seemingly refutes Camus)
- on the self-refuting nature of 'skepticism'- "Genuine skeptical doubt does not use the form of an assertion. It is an attitude of actually rejecting any certainty. There, it cannot be refuted logically. It does not transform its attitude into a proposition. Such an attitude necessarily leads to either despair or cynicism, or to both alternately. *And often, if this alternative becomes intolerable, it leads to indifference and the attempt to develop an attitude of complete unconcern...such an escape finally breaks down. This is the dynamics of skeptical doubt. It has an awakening and liberating function...*"
- "*The despair about truth by the skeptic shows that truth is still his infinite passion.*" (Courage to be pg. 176, this is why suffering teaches you something, i.e. how could these sorts of experiences be generated from a mindless process with no ultimate purpose and only pragmatically?)
- "*The cynical superiority over every concrete truth shows that truth is still taken seriously and that the impact of the question of an ultimate concern is strongly felt.*" (Again, CTB, pg. 176, exactly: how is one from of concrete

worship 'less' than another? How do we criticize if we no longer have an ultimate concern for truth? Self-refuting)

- faith and doubt- "...the doubt of him who is ultimately concerned about a concrete content. One could call it existential doubt, in contrast to the methodological and the skeptical doubt. It does not question whether a special proposition is true or false. It does not reject every concrete truth, but it is aware of the element of insecurity in every existential truth."

- "The description of anxiety as the awareness of one's finitude is sometimes criticized as untrue from the point of view of the ordinary state of mind. Anxiety, one says, appears under special conditions but is not an ever-present implication of man's finitude."

- "But the underlying structure of finite life is the universal condition which makes the appearance of anxiety under special conditions possible. In the same what doubt is not a permanent experience with the act of faith. But it is always present as an element in the structure of faith."

- *"Many Christians, as well as other religious groups, feel anxiety, guilt and despair about what they call 'loss of faith.' But serious doubt is confirmation of faith. It indicates the seriousness of the concern, its unconditional character."* (again, CTB pg. 176, the seriousness in which one still takes a 'negation' turns it into a 'positive', unless sit wants to be self-refuting)

- "How can a faith which has doubt as an element within itself be united with creedal statements of the community of faith? The answer can only be that creedal expressions of the ultimate concern of the community must include their own criticism. *It must become obvious to them- be they liturgical, doctrinal or ethical expressions of the faith of the community- that they are not ultimate. Rather, their function is to point to the ultimate which is beyond all of them.* This is what I call the 'Protestant principle.'" (Vivekananda has the same view, since he also experiences the Divine in a 'entirely other' sort of view, rather than finite, transitory, worldly. The finite/infinite gap is unbridgeable. Hence, symbolism, i.e. everyone is an idolater)

- on chapter two of what 'faith is not'- Tillich wants to make sure that 'faith' is not a 'low degree of knowledge', it is when all finite things do not satisfy, when there is a pull towards the infinite, where we directly experience a sense of the infinite that we feel we may be able to be part of. We create symbols to reenact, interact, etc. with this experience, but they are only symbols; the finite/infinite distinction is unbridgeable. Therefore, the ultimate concern is not with the scientific, it is not with anything finite, it is not in 'conflict' with any empirical or transitory issues. Even when rallying against the 'ultimate concern', e.g. atheists, they are affirming a sense of 'rightness' and 'truth' that is showing some form of concern or ultimacy, and needs to recognize the symbolism of faith, and know that we are all striving towards the same infinite. Tillich speaks of being grasped, I would say by the feeling of Nihilism, i.e. the absurd perspective, and therefore in the face of death/meaninglessness, in order to even despair over the human situation, must take that meaninglessness as ultimate, hence the absurd perspective. The Human is forced to make moral judgments, it cannot escape it, but this is absolutely insane in a Nihilistic world, so there must be a 'truth' out there, and infinite something.)

- on chapter three about 'symbolism'-

- "Religiously speaking, God transcends his own name. This is why the use of his name easily becomes an abuse or blasphemy. Whatever we say about that which concerns us ultimately, whether or not we call it God, has a symbolic meaning."

- "In any case, he who denies God as a matter of ultimate concern affirms God, because he affirms ultimacy in his concern. God is the fundamental symbol for what concern us ultimately." (CTB pg. 176)

- "Here again it would be meaningless to ask whether one or another of the figures in which an ultimate concern is symbolized does 'exist.' If 'existence' refers to something which can be found within the whole of reality, no divine being exists. The question is not this, but: which of the numerable symbols of faith is most adequate to the meaning of faith? *In other words, which symbol of faith ultimately expresses the ultimate without idolatrous elements?*"
- *"All the qualities we attribute to him, power, love, justice, are taken from finite experiences and applied symbolically to that which is beyond finitude and infinity."*
- "Holy things are not holy in themselves, but they point, beyond themselves to the source of all holiness, that which is of ultimate concern."
- *"Those who live in an unbroken mythological world feel safe and certain. They resist, often fanatically, any attempt to introduce an element of uncertainty by 'breaking the myth,' namely, by making conscious its symbolic character."*
- "The resistance against demythologization expresses itself in literalism...The character of the symbol to point beyond itself to something else is disregarded...The fall of Adam is localized on a special geographical point and attributed to a human individual. The virgin birth of the Messiah is understood in biological terms, resurrection and ascension as physical events...The presupposition of such literalism is that God is a being, acting in time and space, dwelling in a special place..."
- "Literalism deprives God of his ultimacy and, religiously speaking, of his majesty. It draws him down to the level of that which is not ultimate, the finite and conditional."*
- *"Faith, if it takes its symbolism literally, becomes idolatrous! It calls something ultimate that is less than ultimate. Faith, conscious of the symbolic character of its symbols, gives God the honor which is due to him."*
- *"It grasps the mind with terrifying and fascinating power. It breaks into the ordinary reality, shakes it and drives it beyond itself in an ecstatic way."* (entheogens)
- "Man's faith is inadequate if his whole existence is determined by something that is less than ultimate."
- "...to face one's own relativity one the greatness and danger..." (courage in the face of knowing that you cannot bridge the finite/infinite gap and are therefore left with Nihilism, relativism, uncertainty, doubt, being 'wrong')
- faith- "...the infinite tension between the absoluteness of its claim and the relativity of its life." (Divided-self, double-mindedness, doubt, the courage that is needed to handle this sort of uncertainty/relativity)
- "This jar of water, this piece of bread, this cup of wine, this tree, this movement of the hands, of the knees, this building, this river, this color, this word, this book, this person is a bearer of the holy. In them faith experiences the content of its ultimate concern."
- sacraments- "They produce awe, fascination, adoration, idolatrous distortion, criticism, replacement by other bearers of the holy."
- "It is the state of being grasped by the holy through a special medium." (entheogens, Bach)
- *"As a theoretical judgement claiming general validity, it is a meaningless combination of words. But in the correlation between the subject and the author of faith, it has meaning and truth. The outside observer can only state that there is a correlation of faith between the one who has faith and the sacramental object of his faith. But he cannot deny or affirm the validity of this correlation of faith."* (Vivekananda, finite/infinite gap, James and the 'only self-justifying' nature of religious experience)
- *"There is no criterion by which faith can be judged from outside the correlation of faith."*
- HOWEVER- *"The faithful can ask himself or be asked by someone else whether the medium through which he experiences ultimate concern expresses real ultimacy."*

- "...the inadequacy of the finite...The human mind, however, forgets this inadequacy and identifies the sacred object with the ultimate itself. The sacramental object is taken as holy in itself. Its character as the bearer of the holy, pointing beyond itself, disappears in the act of faith. The act of faith is no longer directed toward the ultimate self, but toward that which represents the ultimate- the tree, the book, the building, the person." (symbolism, Vivekananda)
- Mystics- "They identified the ultimate with the ground or substance of everything- the one, the ineffable, the being above being." The interest in mystical faith is not to reject concrete, sacramental ways of faith, but to go beyond them."
- "Mysticism is not irrational."
- "But they realized that the true content of faith in an ultimate concern can neither be identified with a piece of reality, as sacramental faith desires, nor be expressed in terms of a rational system. It is a matter of ecstatic experience, and one can only speak of the ultimate in a language which at the same times denies the possibility of speaking about it." (negative theology, finite/infinite gap)
- "How is such an experience possible if the ultimate is that which transcends all possible experience?" (Indeed! Great question! Entheogens, suffering, etc.)
- "In order to go into it, man must empty himself of all the finite contents of his ordinary life; he must surrender all preliminary concerns for the sake of the ultimate concern. He must transcend the division of existence...The ultimate is beyond this division, and he who wants to reach the ultimate must overcome this division in himself by meditation, contemplation and ecstasy." (Vivekananda, renunciation! Entheogens, psilocybin, cannabis)
- "The mystic is aware of the infinite distance between the infinite and the finite, and accepts a life of preliminary stages of union with the infinite, interrupted only rarely, and perhaps never, in this life by the final ecstasy."
- "History has shown this weakness and final emptiness of all merely secular cultures."
- "The question of faith is not Moses or Jesus or Mohammed; the question is: Who expresses most adequately one's ultimate concern? The conflict between religions is not a conflict between forms of belief, but it is a conflict between expressions of our ultimate concern." (Vivekananda)
- "The ultimate shall always be present and remembered even in the smallest activities of the ordinary life."
- "It is this humanist faith of the moral type (moral demands, rather than rituals or ascetic practices, as with the mystical type of faith) which was taken over by the revolutionary movement of the proletarian masses in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Its dynamic is visible everyday in our present period. As for every faith, the utopian form of the humanist faith is a state of ultimate concern. This gives tremendous power to good and evil. (the opposite of any mystical type of faith, e.g. Nietzsche, Kierkegaard, Tolstoy, Vivekananda, Cioran, any Nihilist, mystic, other/worldly distinction, finite/infinite gap)
- "Faith, in the New Testament, is the state of being grasped by the divine Spirit." (being grasped, as Kierkegaard felt, others did as well, that this was something that was 'objectively' getting thrown onto them, it felt out of their control. The experience of Nihilism is something that is ultimately terrifying and overwhelming, i.e. grasps you)
- "A faith which destroys reason destroys itself and the humanity of man. For only a being who has the structure of reason is able to be ultimately concerned, to distinguish ultimate and preliminary concerns, to understand the unconditional commands of the ethical imperative, and to be aware of the presence of the holy." (faith and reason are not in conflict, science and religion are not in conflict. If they are, it's only superficially and due to naive misunderstandings or conceptions of existence/the human condition/the Divine)

- *"Man's reason is finite; it moves within finite relations when dealing with the universe and with man himself. All cultural activities in which he shapes his world have this character of finitude. Therefore, they are not matters of ultimate concern."*
- *"Man experiences a belonging to the infinite, which, however, is neither a part of himself nor something in his power. It must grasp him, and if it does, it is a matter of infinite concern. Man is finite, man's reason lives in preliminary concerns; but man is also aware of his potential infinity, and this awareness appears as his ultimate concern."*
- *"Reason can be fulfilled only if it is driven beyond the limits of its finitude, and experiences the presence of the ultimate, the holy. Without such an experience, reason exhausts itself and its finite content. Finally, it becomes filled with irrational or demonic contents and is destroyed by them."* (is this me? I agree with this, with McKenna, that it is about experience. I need to do mushrooms again. Another experiment is in order, Heisman is a testament to this)
- *"First, it must be acknowledged that man is in a state of estrangement from his true nature."*
- *"The criterion of the truth of faith, therefore, is that it implies an element of self-negation. That symbol is most adequate which expresses not only the ultimate but also its own lack of ultimacy."*
- *"The criterion contains a Yes- it does not reject any truth of faith in whatever form it may appear in the history of faith- and it contains a No- it does not accept any truth of faith as ultimate except the one that no man possesses it."* (Vivekananda- more sects of religion, the better, they all point beyond themselves, if they are not idolatrous, Karma Yoga, believe nothing/disbelieve everything. I could use cannabis, while others may not, I cannot criticize others for their 'brand' of faith, as long as they are only using these symbols as a 'latter' to God, to the Ultimate)
- on being 'grasped'- *"Without some participation in the object of one's ultimate concern, it is not possible to be concerned about it. In this sense every act of faith presupposes participation in that toward which it is directed. Without a preceding experience of the ultimate no faith in the ultimate can exist. The mystical type of faith has emphasized this the most strongly."*
- *"Without the manifestation of God in man the question of God and faith in God are not possible. There is no faith without participation!"* (participation! Turning inward, contemplation, meditation, solitude)
- *"He who has faith is separated from the object of his faith. Otherwise he would possess it...But the human situation, its finitude and estrangement, prevents man's participation in the ultimate without both the separation and the promise of faith. Here the limit of mysticism becomes visible; it neglects the human predicament and the separation of man from the ultimate. There is no faith without separation."* (the entire thought of Tillich rests on this finite/infinite distinction that is unbridgeable, CTB pg. 178- 'the experience of meaninglessness is more radical than mysticism. Therefore it transcends the mystical experience'- whether meaninglessness is 'more radical' or not is one question; what is not disputed is that meaninglessness is more prominent than the mystical experience, doubt shows how important we take our concern)
- *"Out of the element of participation follows the certainty of faith; out of the element of separation follows the doubt in faith."*
- *"Sometimes doubt conquers faith, but it still contains faith. Otherwise it would be indifference."*
- *"Since the life of faith is life in the state of ultimate concern and no human being can exist completely without such a concern, we can say: Neither faith nor doubt can be eliminated from man as man."*

- "The danger of this method, of course, is that the faith, *meditated in education*, will remain a traditional attitude and never break through to a state of living faith. However, if this causes people to become hesitant about communicating any of the given symbols and to wait until independent questions about the meaning of life have arisen, it can lead to a powerful life of faith, *but it also can lead to emptiness, to cynicism and, in reaction to it, to idolatrous forms of ultimate concern.*" (Vivekananda, direct experience, psilocibin, cannabis, academic philosophy is a joke)
- *"It is experienced in passion, anxiety, despair, ecstasy."*
- "In the mystical literature the 'vision of God is...In the complete reunion with the divine ground of being, the element of distance is overcome and with it uncertainty, doubt, courage and risk. The finite is taken into the infinite; it is not extinguished, but it is not separated either. *This is not the ordinary human condition.* To the state of separated finitude belong faith and the courage to risk. *The risk of faith is the concrete content of one's ultimate concern.*" (psilocibin is the mystical experience that does remove doubt, faith, courage, etc. The Nihilism of everyday experience is more 'prevalent' as Tillich mentions in both *Faith and Courage* pg. 178)
- *"We are never able to bridge the infinite distance between the infinite and the finite from the side of the finite. This alone makes the courage of faith possible. The risk of failure, of error and of idolatrous distortion can be taken, because the failure cannot separate us from what is our ultimate concern."* (sickness unto death, the doubt, the despair does not end, does not cease, it is omnipresent in the finite world)
- "The ultimate concern gives depth, direction and unity to all other concerns and, with them, to the whole personality."
- *"Ultimate concern is passionate concern; it is a matter of infinite passion."* (Vivekananda speaks of the thief left in the room with gold, the boy who has his head held under water, going 'mad' for God as Plato and Cioran testify to, Vivekananda also mentions that the religious believers around us are not infinitely passionate about God, as Kierkegaard, Tolstoy, Nietzsche all felt as well)
- *"The body can participate both in vital ecstasy and in asceticism leading to spiritual ecstasy."*
- "The objects of modern secular idolatry, such as nation and success, have shown healing power, not only by the magic fascination of a leader, a slogan or a promise but also by the fulfillment of otherwise unfulfilled strivings for a meaningful life. But the basis for integration is too narrow."
- Idolatrous faith- *"Spiritual creativity shows an increasingly shallow and empty character, because no infinite meaning gives depth to it. The passion of faith is transformed into the suffering of unconquered doubt and despair, and in many cases into an escape to neurosis and psychosis."* (the poison of naturalism)
- "One is ultimately concerned only about something to which one essentially belongs and from which one is existentially separated."
- *"Mystical love unites by negation of the self. Ethical love transforms by affirmation of the self. The sphere of activities following from mystical love is predominantly ascetic. The sphere of activities following from ethical love is predominantly formative"* (is this the difference between jnana and bhakti/karm yoga?)
- "That which is based on an ultimate concern is not exposed to destruction by preliminary concerns and the lack of their fulfillment."
- "Without symbols in which the holy is experienced as present, the experience of the holy vanishes."
- *"If the myth is understood literally, philosophy must reject it as absurd. It must demythologize the sacred stories, transform the myth into a philosophy of religion and finally into a philosophy without religion."* (Vivekananda- *The Necessity of Religion*, particularly the last two pages, an 'infinite religion')

- "...no one is completely without an ultimate concern." (in order to negate the claim of not having an ultimate concern, you'd have to ironically revolt against ultimate concerns, therefore putting a positive notion onto the lack of having an ultimate concern, i.e. showing ultimate concern, i.e. the self-contradictory nature of nihilism) (me, years later 2024: You can have it both ways, Tillich. You can't rant and rave about how a truly 'ultimate concern' is that which Is Infinite in nature. Unless, since I'm not reading directly from the book, maybe I am narrowing him down to much, and this criticism of mine is moot. Possible. I'll have to look into it, or not. But if I'm correct, then Tillich is wrong to state "Everyone has an ultimate concern". This sounds more like a tagline or talking point, or a "got'cha" sort of phrasing. This could be just one, of many, of the examples as to why I'm not convinced that Tillich took his own message seriously. Seriously? I'm a sense. But not "to heart". My suspicion is that he hoped...that's all. If he didn't, then he was able to pull the experiences of Nihilism out from others in his studying, and espouse them as if he confronted them first hand. Like everything else, I have my doubts. The latter seems more unreasonable than the former. what's "unreasonable" mean? ha! 2024 brings no such thing as clarity.)

- "Faith is a concept- and a reality- which is difficult to grasp and to describe."

The Courage To Be

- Pg. 175 *"The answer must accept, as its precondition, the state of meaninglessness. It is not an answer if it demands the removal of this state; for that is just what cannot be done. He who is in the grip of doubt and meaninglessness cannot liberate himself from this grip...if one does not try to escape the question...In this situation the meaning of life is reduced to despair about the meaning of life."* (this is the thesis/conclusion(?) of the entire book)

51. Swami Vivekananda

2.3 Hints of Practical Spirituality

- "We are always making the mistake of judging others; we are always inclined to think that our little mental universe is all that is; our ethics, our morality, our sense of duty, our sense of utility are the only things that are worth having."

- "I begin to understand the marvelous saying of Christ: 'Judge not that ye not be judged.' The more we learn, the more we find out how ignorant we are, how multiform and multi-sided is this mind of man."

- "But I must ask you to bear in mind that, as there is religious superstition, so also there is a superstition in the matter of science. There are priests who take up religious work as their speciality; so also there are priests of physical law, scientists. As soon as a great scientist's name, like Darwin or Huxley, is cited, we follow blindly. It is the fashion of the day...True science asks us to be cautious. *Just as we should be careful with the priests, so we should be with the scientists. Begin with disbelief. Analyse, test, prove everything, and then take it.*"

- "You will be astonished to hear that they have no churches, no Common Prayers, or anything of the kind; but they, every day, still practice the breathings and try to concentrate the mind; and that is the chief part

of their devotion." (all Truth should be available to everyone at 'anytime, if one puts in the effort/participation, Sam Harris said this in a recent talk, and it seems true if our consciousness has within itself the Divine, or whatever one wants to define as the 'divine')

- "The second is the fear of persecution. A man, for instance, would not like to practice breathing publicly in this country, because he would be thought so queer; it is not the fashion here. On the other hand, in India. if a man prayed, "Give us this day our daily bread", people would laugh at him. Nothing could be more foolish to the Hindu mind than to say, "Our Father which art in Heaven." The Hindu, when he worships, thinks that God is within himself."

- "The reality of everything is the same infinite. This is not idealism; it is not that the world does not exist. It has a relative existence, and fulfils all its requirements But it has no independent existence. It exists because of the Absolute Reality beyond time, space, and causation."

- "Everyone without exception, everyone of us, can attain to this culmination of Yoga. But it is a terrible task. If a person wants to attain to this truth, he will have to do something more than to listen to lectures and take a few breathing exercises. Everything lies in the preparation. How long does it take to strike a light? Only a second; but how long it takes to make the candle! How long does it take to eat a dinner? Perhaps half an hour. But hours to prepare the food! We want to strike the light in a second, but we forget that the making of the candle is the chief thing." (participation- mine seems to be in the form of contemplation)

- ""Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and everything shall be added unto you." This is the one great duty, this is renunciation. *Live for an ideal, and leave no place in the mind for anything else. Let us put forth all our energies to acquire that, which never fails — our spiritual perfection. If we have true yearning for realisation, we must struggle, and through struggle growth will come.* We shall make mistakes, but they may be angels unawares. The greatest help to spiritual life is meditation (Dhyâna). In meditation we divest ourselves of all material conditions and feel our divine nature. We do not depend upon any external help in meditation."

- "*For it is the body that drags us down. It is attachment, identification, which makes us miserable. That is the secret: To think that I am the spirit and not the body, and that the whole of this universe with all its relations, with all its good and all its evil, is but as a series of paintings — scenes on a canvas — of which I am the witness.*" (stop identifying with Naturalism, with the 'mindless' evolutionary tale of all life. The reduction of humans to mechanisms as such. Let this Heisman view disappear. Embrace the entheogens. Attempt to stop despairing over the material, the body, the physical)

2.4 Bhakti or Devotion

- "In various religions this love and devotion is manifested in various degrees, at different stages. The lowest stage is that of ritualism, when abstract ideas are almost impossible, and are dragged down to the lowest plane, and made concrete. Forms come into play, and, along with them, various symbols. Throughout the history of the world, we find that man is trying to grasp the abstract through thought-forms, or symbols. All the external manifestations of religion — bells, music, rituals, books, and images — come under that head. Anything that appeals to the senses, anything that helps man to form a concrete image of the abstract, is taken hold of, and worshipped." (Tillich?)

- "*From time to time, there have been reformers in every religion who have stood against all symbols and rituals. But vain has been their opposition, for so long as man will remain as he is, the vast majority will always want something*

concrete to hold on to, something around which, as it were, to place their ideas, something which will be the centre of all the thought-forms in their minds."

- "It is vain to preach against the use of symbols, and why should we preach against them? There is no reason why man should not use symbols. They have them in order to represent the ideas signified behind them. This universe is a symbol, in and through which we are trying to grasp the thing signified, which is beyond and behind. The spirit is the goal, and not matter. Forms, images, bells, candles, books, churches, temples, and all holy symbols are very good, very helpful to the growing plant of spirituality, but thus far and no farther. In the test majority of cases, we find that the plant does not grow. *It is very good to be born in a church, but it is very bad to die in a church.* It is very good to be born within the limits of certain forms that help the little plant of spirituality, but if a man dies within the bounds of these forms, it shows that he has not grown, that there has been no development of the soul. If, therefore, any one says that symbols, rituals, and forms are to be kept for ever, he is wrong; but if he says, that these symbols and rituals are a help to the growth of the soul, in its low and undeveloped state, he is right. But, you must not mistake this development of the soul as meaning anything intellectual. *A man can be of gigantic intellect, yet spiritually he may be a baby.* You can verify it this moment. All of you have been taught to believe in an Omnipresent God. Try to think of it. How few of you can have any idea of what omnipresence means! If you struggle hard, you will get something like the idea of the ocean, or of the sky, or of a vast stretch of green earth, or of a desert. All these are material images, and so long as you cannot conceive of the abstract as abstract, of the ideal as the ideal, you will have to resort to these forms, these material images. It does not make much difference whether these images are inside or outside the mind. We are all born idolaters, and idolatry is good, because it is in the nature of man. Who can get beyond it? Only the perfect man, the God-man. The rest are all idolaters. So long as we see this universe before us, with its forms and shapes, we are all idolaters. This is a gigantic symbol we are worshipping. He who says he is the body is a born idolater. We are spirit, spirit that has no form or shape, spirit that is infinite, and not matter. *Therefore, anyone who cannot grasp the abstract, who cannot think of himself as he is, except in and through matter, as the body, is an idolater. And yet how people fight among themselves, calling one another idolaters! In other words, each says, his idol is right, and the others' are wrong. Therefore, we should get rid of these childish notions. We should get beyond the prattle of men who think that religion is merely a mass of frothy words, that it is only a system of doctrines; to whom religion is only a little intellectual assent or dissent; to whom religion is believing in certain words which their own priests tell them; to whom religion is something which their forefathers believed; to whom religion is a certain form of ideas and superstitions to which they cling because they are their national superstitions.* We should get beyond all these and look at humanity as one vast organism, slowly coming towards light — a wonderful plant, slowly unfolding itself to that wonderful truth which is called God — and the first gyrations, the first motions, towards this are always through matter and through ritual."

- "In modern times, Christian clergymen have become a little kinder, and they allow that in the older religions, the different forms of worship were foreshadowings of Christianity, which of course, they consider, is the only true form. God tested Himself in older times, tested His powers by getting these things into shape which culminated in Christianity. *This, at least, is a great advance. Fifty years ago they would not have said even that; nothing was true except their own religion. This idea is not limited to any religion, nation, or class of persons; people are always thinking that the only right thing to be done by others is what they themselves are doing. And it is here that the study of different religions helps us. It shows us that the same thoughts that we have been calling ours, and ours alone, were present hundreds of years ago in others, and sometimes even in a better form*

of expression than our own. These are the external forms of devotion, through which man has to pass; but if he is sincere, if he really wants to reach the truth, he goes higher than these, to a plane where forms are as nothing. Temples or churches, books or forms, are simply the kindergarten of religion, to make the spiritual child strong enough to take higher steps..."

- *"Who is longing? That is the question. Religion is not in doctrines, in dogmas, nor in intellectual argumentation; it is being and becoming, it is realisation.* We hear so many talking about God and the soul, and all the mysteries of the universe, but if you take them one by one, and ask them, *"Have you realised God? Have you seen your Soul?" — how many can say they have? And yet they are all fighting with one another!* At one time, in India, representatives of different sects met together and began to dispute. One said that the only God was Shiva; another said, the only God was Vishnu, and so on; and there was no end to their discussion. A sage was passing that way, and was invited by the disputants to decide the matter. He first asked the man who was claiming Shiva as the greatest God, *"Have you seen Shiva? Are you acquainted with Him? If not, how do you know He is the greatest God?"* Then turning to the worshipper of Vishnu, he asked, *"Have you seen Vishnu?"* And after asking this question to all of them, he found out that not one of them knew anything of God. That was why they were disputing so much, for had they really known, they would not have argued. When a jar is being filled with water, it makes a noise, but when it is full, there is no noise. *So, the very fact of these disputations and fighting among sects shows that they do not know anything about religion.* Religion to them is a mere mass of frothy words, to be written in books. Each one hurries to write a big book, to make it as massive as possible, stealing his materials from every book he can lay his hands upon, and never acknowledging his indebtedness. Then he launches this book upon the world, adding to the disturbance that is already existing there." (symbolism, direct experience, ultimate concern, not an intellectual, at least not purely or not irrational, nonrational is a better term, not about security which breeds fundamentalism, but a search for Truth which breeds questioning everything, believe nothing and disbelieve everything)

- *"The vast majority of men are atheists. I am glad that, in modern times, another class of atheists has come into existence in the Western world — I mean the materialists. They are sincere atheists. They are better than the religious atheists, who are insincere, who fight and talk about religion, and yet do not want it, never try to realise it, never try to understand it."* (the materialists may be sincere in their logical conclusions of Naturalism, but that does not mean that they realize the Nihilism that stems from materialism anymore than the 'religious atheist', as Vivekananda defines him, that does not realize the truths of religion)

- *"Who wants God? That is the question. Do you think that all this mass of people in the world want God, and cannot have him? That cannot be."*

- *"This desire for perfection, for reaching the goal and getting beyond nature, how can it be there, until something has created it and drilled it into the soul of man, and makes it live there? He, therefore, in whom this desire is awakened, will reach the goal. We want everything but God. This is not religion that you see all around you.* My lady has furniture in her parlour, from all over the world, and now it is the fashion to have something Japanese; so she buys a vase and puts it in her room. Such is religion with the vast majority; they have all sorts of things for enjoyment, and unless they add a little flavour of religion, life is not all right, because society would criticise them."

- *"A disciple went to his master and said to him, "Sir, I want religion." The master looked at the young man, and did not speak, but only smiled. The young man came every day, and insisted that he wanted religion. But the old man knew better than the young man. One day, when it was very hot, he asked the young man to go to the river with him and take a plunge. The young man plunged in, and the old man followed him and held the young man down under*

the water by force. After the young man had struggled for a while, he let him go and asked him what he wanted most while he was under the water. "A breath of air", the disciple answered. "Do you want God in that way? If you do, you will get Him in a moment," said the master. Until you have that thirst, that desire, you cannot get religion, however you may struggle with your intellect, or your books, or your forms. Until that thirst is awakened in you, you are no better than any atheist; only the atheist is sincere, and you are not. A great sage used to say, "Suppose there is a thief in a room, and somehow he comes to know that there is a vast mass of gold in the next room, and that there is only a thin partition between the two rooms. What would be the condition of that thief? He would be sleepless, he would not be able to eat or do anything. His whole mind would be on getting that gold. Do you mean to say that, if all these people really believed that the Mine of Happiness, of Blessedness, of Glory were here, they would act as they do in the world, without trying to get God?" As soon as a man begins to believe there is a God, he becomes mad with longing to get to Him. Others may go their way, but as soon as a man is sure that there is a much higher life than that which he is leading here, as soon as he feels sure that the senses are not all, that this limited, material body is as nothing compared with the immortal, eternal, undying bliss of the Self, he becomes mad until he finds out this bliss for himself. And this madness, this thirst, this mania, is what is called the "awakening" to religion, and when that has come, a man is beginning to be religious. But it takes a long time. All these forms and ceremonies, these prayers and pilgrimages, these books, bells, candles, and priests, are the preparations; they take off the impurities from the soul. And when the soul has become pure, it naturally wants to get to the mine of all purity, God Himself."

- "Yet all these forms and symbols are simply the beginning, but the true love of God." (Tillich says the same thing, the god above God)

- "The first test of love is that it knows no bargaining. So long as you see a man love another only to get something from him, you know that that is not love; it is shopkeeping. Wherever there is any question of buying and selling, it is not love." (selflessness, Kierkegaard mentions the egotistical motivations of faith)

- "Lord give me more wealth, more children, more territory...' This is not the language of love."

- "Where do you ever see love in fear? It is always a sham. With love never comes the idea of fear. Think of a young mother in the street: if a dog barks at her, she flees into the nearest house. The next day she is in the street with her child, and suppose a lion rushes upon the child, where will be her position? Just at the mouth of the lion, protecting her child. Love conquered all her fear. So also in the love of God. Who cares whether God is a rewarder or a punisher? That is not the thought of a lover. Think of a judge when he comes home, what does his wife see in him? Not a judge, or a rewarder or punisher, but her husband, her love. What do his children see in him? Their loving father, not the punisher or rewarder. So the children of God never see in Him a punisher or a rewarder. It is only people who have never tasted of love that fear and quake. Cast off all fear — though these horrible ideas of God as a punisher or rewarder may have their use in savage minds. Some men, even the most intellectual, are spiritual savages, and these ideas may help them. But to men who are spiritual, men who are approaching religion, in whom spiritual insight is awakened, such ideas are simply childish, simply foolish. Such men reject all ideas of fear."

- "The perfect man sees nothing but God. So we always worship our highest ideal, and when we have reached the point, when we love the ideal as the ideal, all arguments and doubts vanish for ever. Who cares whether God can be demonstrated or not? The ideal can never go, because it is a part of my own nature. I shall only question the ideal when I question my own existence, and as I cannot question the one, I cannot question the other. Who cares whether God can be almighty and all-merciful at the same time or not? Who cares whether He is the rewarder of mankind, whether He looks at us with the eyes of a tyrant or with the eyes of a beneficent monarch? The lover has passed beyond all these things, beyond rewards

and punishments, beyond fears and doubts, beyond scientific or any other demonstration." (great description of the 'Knight of Faith')

- "Thus we come to what is called supreme Bhakti, supreme devotion, in which forms and symbols fall off. One who has reached that cannot belong to any sect, for all sects are in him. To what shall he belong? For all churches and temples are in him. Where is the church big enough for him? Such a man cannot bind himself down to certain limited forms."

- *"The true lovers of God want to become mad, inebriated with the love of God, to become 'God-intoxicated men.'"*

4.2.17 The Practice of Religion

52. Martin Heidegger

(21-22) seems like an important part about being in itself and the 'structures' that the world, in the form of culture, throws itself onto a form, or disguise of being, which allows for the discovery of Existence to never take place, since the role of explaining existence has been taken up in the role within a particular cultures/set of values, etc.

(251-254) is talk about the ignoring of death, similar to Vivekananda's Maya where people just 'put off' their own deaths, e.g. it happens to 'them', 'her' or 'him', but not to me. People live in this deluded state to ward off the anxiety of death, of nonbeing.

"...being towards death has turned out to be an evasion in the face of death- an evasion which conceals."
Heidegger-

52. Everyday being towards the end...

(261-262) the distinction between brooding over how or when we will die, and that we will die. One seems obsessive and neurotic, while the other seems philosophical. And this is exactly what he seems to say in 262-263, where he labels the awareness of death as an 'anticipation' rather than an 'actualizing' of death."

"In the anticipation of this possibility it becomes 'greater and greater;' that is to say, the possibility reveals itself to be such that it knows no measure at all, no more or less, but signifies the possibility of the measureless impossibility of existence." (Me: Ha! Pretty good) 263-263- our death is what separates us from others, it puts everything into our perspective, it ought to take away the influence of the 'others' who throw their nonsense onto you. Death ought to eliminate this pressure from others. The anticipation of my own death out to break me free to live in what Heidegger would could an authentic way.

"What anxiety is about is being in the world itself." (Me: universal in nature, Kierkegaard for sure)

"The moment of vision, however, brings existence into the Situation and discloses the authentic 'there'."

(Me: This seems to be in the context of finitude, man's 'normal' situation of ignoring/repressing his finitude, but the 'moment of vision' the anxiety in the face of Nothingness, of nonbeing, brings forth the 'now' instead of constantly thinking about the past or future. The future is the 'falling' into death, the transitory/fleeting nature of Being)

"Curiosity is 'activated' not by the endless immensity of what we have not yet seen, but rather by the falling kind of temporalizing which belongs to the present as it leaps away. Even if one has seen everything, this is precisely when the 'curiosity' fabricates something new." (Me: Transcendental yearning. It's not the distractions of the finite that leads us on, it's the desire for the Infinite. The transitory, 'leaping away', of the finite cannot satisfy our craving for the Infinite)

"Having been thrown into Being-towards-death, Dasein flees- proximally and for the most part- in the face of this thrownness, which has been more or less explicitly revealed."

"Dasein gets dragged along into thrownness: that is to say, as something that has been thrown into the world, it loses itself in the world in its factual submission to that with which it is to concern itself." 68

C(the need for renunciation, contemplation, meditation, inwardness, a separation from the worldly)

"To designate the authentic terminologically we have reserved the expression 'anticipation'. This indicates that Dasein, existing authentically, lets itself come towards itself as its ownmost potentiality-for-being- that the future itself must win itself, not from a Present, but from the inauthentic future." (Me- anticipating death allows us to see our existence for what it is, passing, falling, transitory. In order to exist authentically, we must reject the world, its cultures, its morals, its ideas, the arbitrary, unthinking influence of outsiders/others. We must be our own individuals of renunciation)

pg. 393: 68 B is huge

pg. 196 of 294,

side-note- 343

"In this, Dasein is taken back all the way to its naked uncanniness, and becomes fascinated by it. This fascination, however, not only takes Dasein back from its 'worldly' possibilities, but at the same time gives it the possibility of an authentic potentiality-for-being." (Me- this is so legit. This is the experience of Solitude, the idea of losing all subjectivity within subjectivity, which seems to allow for the 'objective' viewpoint, i.e. the renunciation of the worldly realm and the introduction, the experience of the Nothingness, the Nihilism, the Other, the Infinite)

"In particular, that in the face of which one has anxiety is not encountered as something definite with which one can concern oneself; the threatening does not come from what is ready-to-hand or present-at-hand, but rather from the fact that neither of these 'says' anything any longer. Environmental entities no longer have any involvement. *The world in which I exist has sunk into insignificance* (my emphasis); and the world which is thus disclosed is one in which entities can be freed only in the character of having no involvement. *Anxiety is anxious in the face of the nothing of the world* (my italics); but this does not mean that in anxiety we experience something like the absence of what is present-at-hand with-the-world. The present-at-hand must be encountered in just such a way that it does not have any involvement whatsoever, but can show itself in an empty mercilessness. This implies, however, that our concerned awaiting finds nothing in terms of which it might be able to understand itself; it clutches at the 'nothing' of the world; but when our understanding has come up against the world, it is brought to Being-in-the-world as such through anxiety. Being-in-the-world, however, is both what anxiety is anxious in-the-face-of

which one has anxiety is indeed already 'there'- namely, Dasein itself." (Tillich CTB pg.39- the great disgust, a human cannot stand in stark naked anxiety for too long without going mad, one must renounce to the point of mercilessness anxiety overwhelming you in order to discover your authentic self, the world itself is not the concern, the worldly affairs drop away, and there is only concern with what Tillich would refer to as the 'ultimate concern', or for Heidegger the Authentic-se that is not repressed by the worldly, material self, as with Kierkegaard, Tillich, Cioran, this anxiety is Universal to all humans, the human condition, it is part of Dasein or Being)

"Anxiety discloses an insignificance of the world; and this insignificance reveals the nullity of that with which one can concern oneself- or, in other words, the impossibility of projecting oneself upon a potentiality-for-Being be lit up. What is the temporal meaning of this revealing? Anxiety is anxious about naked Dasein as something that has been thrown into uncanniness.""

"Anxiety liberates him from possibilities which 'count for nothing', and lets him become free for those which are authentic." (The authentic is to live as a Self, to discover what the Self is. It is not distractions of earthly, finite, transitory life. Authenticity is the realization of the Self as something 'more' than material)

read pg. 394/side note 344 concerning the universality and inescapability of anxiety and how it is the 'mood' or a foundation for a 'moment of vision' which allows for a 'resolution'. The resolution is God, the anxiety is Nihilism, Nihilism is God. The 'worldly' possibilities cannot distract one anymore, in anxiety the world crumbles, everything is emptied, Nihilism shows the Nothingness of the world)

To say 'I know nothing about nothing' is to say, in the opposite, the same self-refuting nature of if Nihilism is true, then Nihilism cannot be true. Socrates' proposition was simply Nihilism in reverse. I know that I know nothing.

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Hope- is not said to be a hope for a 'future event', but rather it has the deeper significance of discovering your true Self. Heidegger is religious as fuck. "indifference' is not the same as embracing death and existence. end of pg. 395-396-

'As the Present leaps away...' even if one has experienced everything, curiosity fabricates something new. There is a transcendental yearning when faced with the Nothingness of the world. There is a constant moving forward. Is this a tale of survival? Or is there a deeper, 'religious' meaning behind this psychological human fact?
pg. 399, side-note 348- Curiosity.

"When Dasein is resolute, it takes over authentically in its existence the fact that it is the null basis of its own nullity. We have conceived death existentially as what we have characterized as the possibility of the impossibility of existence- that is to say, as the utter nullity of Dasein. Death is not 'added on' to Dasein at

its 'end' but Dasein, as care, is the thrown (that is, null) basis for death. The nullity by which Dasein's Being is dominated primordially through and through, is revealed to Dasein itself in authentic Being-towards-death. Only on the basis of Dasein's whole Being does anticipation make Being-guilty manifest. Care harbours itself in both death and guilt equiprimordially. Only anticipatory resoluteness understands the potentiality-for-Being-guilty authentically and wholly- that is to say, primordially. When the call of conscience is understood, lostness in the 'they' is revealed. Resoluteness brings Dasein back to its ownmost potentiality-for-Being-its-self. When one has an understanding Being-towards-death- towards death as one's ownmost possibility- one's potentiality-for-Being becomes authentic and wholly transparent. The call of conscience passes over in its appeal all Dasein's 'worldly' prestige and potentialities." (yes, of course the world becomes 'null', all possibilities become 'null', the question at the end of section 53 asks the question of how an existence in that is 'authentic', i.e. that lives fully in the face of the anxiety of the nothingness of the world, is possible)

pg. 354, side-note 304, 177 of 294-

"...authentic resoluteness which resolves to keep repeating itself." (it does not 'forget' or attempt to 'cover up' the anxiety of existence, i.e. it does not fall into the nothingness of the world and it's null possibilities)

Heidegger says that his sense of 'resoluteness' as the anticipation of Being-towards-death is 'unintelligible' to the common sense manner in which 'they' understand Dasein, or Being, to be. The path is narrow, Ha! pg. 357, side-note 310, 178 of 294-

pg. 396, 198 of 294, side-note 346- Heidegger makes a distinction between the worldly hope that allows one to distract oneself with worldly pleasure/issues, i.e. a sort of band-aid, worldly 'help' and an 'ecstatico-temporal relation to the thrown ground of itself', i.e. this sounds like a mystical, entheogenic experience.

162 of 294, 56. and, especially, 57. need to be re-read. Heidegger keeps speaking of the 'nothing of the world'. He also speaks of conscience as a negative that the 'nothing...signifies something positive." This is a great description of the Nihilistic Experience that sees the nothing of the world as a positive. Heidegger also dismisses the 'biological' dismissal of conscience being merely 'worldly' or not a Beyond that calls us, which in fact is actually still us. The 'caller' that breaks us away from the 'they' is indefinite, unknown, etc., and this call is brought on, or 'heard', from uncanniness. Ligotti mentions the uncanniness of the world, something is 'not right here', we are 'not at home'.

People that have spoken of Heidegger and about Heidegger by putting his biography forth, or the particular 'clashes' or how he distances himself from a Descartes, or some other philosopher, but these commentators never speak as much, if at all, of his dismissal of both the 'biological' and 'religious' explanations of this experience of the Nothing. Heidegger refers to this sort of experience, instead, as 'existential'. Maybe that's a good word.

Read about 'Being with Others'- I think that's the title of the section. Maybe he speaks in some sort of 'value' terms. Although, in 58., Heidegger states that the concept of 'Guilty!' must 'drop' the attachment to 'law-breaking' or an 'ought' or 'concerful being with others', i.e. guilt needs to be ridded of the 'false'

morality, i.e. it seems that Heidegger understands the Nothing of this world shows the nullity of all human/worldly morality.

37. *Ambiguity*- "Idle talk and curiosity take care in their ambiguity to ensure that what is genuinely and newly created is out of date as soon as it emerges before the public." (Ha!)

37. *Ambiguity*- "Dasein is always 'there'- that is to say, in that public disclosedness of Being-with-one-another where the loudest idle talk and the most ingenious curiosity keep 'things moving', where, in an everyday manner, everything (and at bottom nothing) is happening." (Ha!)

37. *Ambiguity*- paraphrase- the people keep things 'exciting' with illusions of existing in an inauthentic way, i.e. the others simply distract themselves with this or that thing that is all the rage, yet falls out of fashion almost as quickly as it appeared. Everyday interaction seems to be a 'tug-of-war' in figuring out the others illusions, to make sure they do not fully contradict or are too corrosive to our 'everyday' veils that we label as 'living'. "Under the mask of 'for-one-another', an 'against-one-another' is at play"

37. *Ambiguity*- paraphrase- The phenomenon of the 'false', 'worthless' mouth-noises of human interaction, i.e. two people attempting to communicate is like having two conflicting monologues going on at the same time. Heidegger states that this is not a 'conscious' act of the 'they', i.e. this is not a conscious act of confusion or 'disguise'. 'They' don't even realize the nullity of the possibilities of existence. That is to say, since everyone is 'thrown' into existence and all possibilities are nothing, all starting points for values or ways of being are ultimately false, and this is what 'ambiguity' seems to be. Moreover, it seems to be part of Dasein, something that needs to be 'worked through', i.e. McKenna says that 'culture is an 'intelligent test', and if you mesh into a culture, then you have failed. "They' won't agree to this interpretation since they do not experience their beliefs, their way of life, as an illusion; their lives still have significance. They, seemingly, only -semi-consciously 'flee' from the illusions that comfort them from their own deaths. This sentiment is found in 50. and claimed as a 'proof' that since this is not 'generally understood' by the masses, it shows that Dasein contains a sense of 'fleeing' from death. "It would be a misunderstanding if we were to seek to have the explication of these phenomena confirmed by looking to the 'they' for agreement."

57. has not only an amazing description of the Nihilistic experience, but also a great explanation for why the atheists and theists of today 'misinterpret' this experience; mainly due to no one wanting to be Authentic, i.e. not wanting any conflict with anxiety, never mind a true attempt at embracing/confronting anxiety; put in stronger terms: a chasing after the anxiety, i.e. a participation with the Other, with the Nothingness of this world.

Heidegger says that the 'call' does not 'report events' and that it 'keeps quite', that it is 'indefinite', indefinable, finite/infinite distinction, it is a call of oneself by oneself (Vivekananda and eastern/mystical conceptions of 'unity' or 'all is one'. 'Uncanniness' is 'covered up' within the world, everyday events and 'goings ons'. The others will not understand this because they repress their true Self. The 'call' which 'says

nothing' is yet, say Heidegger, still a 'positive'. I couldn't agree more, the Nihilism is God, but not the religious/moral law giver as understood by the masses.

Guilt-

"Uncanniness brings this entity face to face with its undisguised nullity, which belongs to the possibility of its ownmost potentiality-for-Being."

"...this thrownness as a null basis which it has to take up into existence."

"This calling-back in which conscience calls forth, gives Dasein to understand that Dasein itself- the null basis for its null projection, standing in the possibility of its Being- is to bring itself back to itself from its lostness in the 'they'; and this means that it is guilty." Guilt is therefore not a worldly guilt of 'failing' to not do what others expect, or a 'breaching of a moral requirement', etc. It is understanding that Guilt is fundamentally Dasein since there is no grounding or basis for existing in any way. All actions are absurd, the natural self cannot possibly Transcend its worldly self in order to 'reach' the Authentic Self. The Guilt is because of the finite/infinite gap; the world drags us down, no matter how hard we try, we cannot do this ourselves. Is this the concept of 'Salvation through Grace only'? Is 'Guilt' the finite/infinite distinction? Seems to be.

This clash, battle, unbridgable gap of the finite/infinite allows for a Heidegger to live most of his life away from people in a cabin, to write *Being and Time*, live in a secluded cabin most of his life, and yet also join the Nazi party. A person cannot be Authentic! Heidegger's 'Authentic' man is an ideal in itself; it is something to pursue, rather than achieve.

"Thus Being-a-basis means never to have power over one's ownmost Being from the ground up."

"Care itself, in its very essence, is permeated with nullity through and through. Thus 'care'- Dasein's Being- means, as thrown projection, Being-the-basis of a nullity (and this being-the-basis is itself null). This means that Dasein as such is guilty, if our formally existential definition of 'guilt' as 'Being-the-basis of a nullity' is indeed correct." (finite/infinite gap, estrangement)

59. "Conscience is the call of care from the uncanniness of Being-in-the-world- the call which summons Dasein to its ownmost potentiality-for-Being-guilty."

After speaking of 'the call' and the wonderful description of the Nihilistic experience, Heidegger goes on to push the 'theological' interpretation of his concepts even further with this quote: "It is easy to see that the conscience which used to be an 'effluence of the divine power' now becomes a slave of Pharisaism."

59. "We miss a 'positive' content in that which is called, because we expect to be told something currently useful about assured possibilities of 'taking action' which are available and calculable. This expectation has its basis within the horizon of that way of interpreting which forces Dasein's existence to be subsumed under the idea of a business procedure that can be regulated...The call of conscience fails to give any such 'practical' injunctions, solely because it summons Dasein to existence, to its ownmost potentiality-for-Being-its-Self. With the maxims which one might be led to expect- maxims which could be reckoned up unequivocally- the conscience would deny existence nothing less than the very possibility of taking action." (this is indeed correct, hence quietism, solitude, non-movement, etc. However, Heidegger then mentions one of his seemingly few 'optimistic' spins on his conceptions that are, to me, wholly Other and

world renouncing; as he does with suicide. He seems to try to 'push forward' with action in a similar, yet equally unsubstantial way, as he 'rids' suicide as being an option for Dasein. I am not sure if he himself believes this, or if this is a 'malfunction' on his part, or maybe even an inauthenticity in order to not seem utterly 'psychotic' to the 'they',

Pg. 323, 57., 161 of 294- "And yet, if the caller- who is 'nobody', when seen after the manner of the world- is interpreted as a power, this seems to be a dispassionate (a pushing off of responsibility to embrace the Self, to participate, to rush towards the Nothingness) recognition of something that one can 'come across Objectively'. When seen correctly, however, this interpretation is only a fleeing in the face of the conscience- a way for Dasein to escape by slinking away from that thin wall by which the 'they' is separated, as it were, from the uncanniness of its Being. This interpretation of the conscience passes itself off as recognizing the call in the sense of a voice which is 'universally binding, and which speaks in a way that is 'not just subjective'. Furthermore, the 'universal' conscience becomes exalted to a 'world-conscience', which still has the phenomenal character of an 'it' and 'nobody', yet which speaks- there in the individual 'subject'- as this indefinite something." (Just WOW, make sure to remember that 'This' interpretation is his interpretation that is being contrasted with the everyday conception of 'conscience', I wanted to italicize this entire section because it is so substantial, not to confuse it with Heidegger's own italics. This is a great 'middle ground' between the Naturalistic and Theistic interpretations of the 'conscience' being either entirely material or having the misconception of a 'God-like character with human qualities/a immaterial soul that has human qualities)

57. "A free-floating call from which 'nothing ensues' is an impossible fiction when seen existentially. With regard to Dasein, 'that nothing ensues' signifies something positive." (non-movement, for one. The nothing of the world, 'wakes one up' to the Nothingness that is the ground of being)

59. "We miss a 'positive' content in that which is called, because we expect to be told something currently useful about assured possibilities of 'taking action' which are available and calculable." ((Ha! There is no 'concern' for this world, only in a rushing after/participation with the Other as a necessarily limited finite being)

27. "As the 'they-self, the particular Dasein has been dispersed into the 'they', and must first find itself."

27. Proximally Dasein is 'they', and for the most part remains so (the path is narrow). If Dasein discovers the world in its own way and brings it close, if it discloses to itself its own authentic Being, then this discovery of the 'world' and this disclosure of Dasein are always accomplished as a clearing-away of concealments and obscurities, as a breaking up of the disguises with which Dasein bars its own way. (through idle talk, curiosity, and ambiguity. A disavowal of boundaries is what is needed, a participation/embracing/a rushing towards the Nothingness which is brought up with the help of anxiety)

pg. 173, 86 of 294, 29. "Both the undisturbed equanimity and the inhibited ill-humour of our everyday concern, the way we slip over from one to the other, or slip off into bad moods, are by no means nothing ontologically, even if these phenomena are left unheeded as supposedly the most indifferent and fleeting in Dasein." (Vivekananda- the most impressive things about human beings is that they see and live around death at all times, yet never think that they will die themselves, i.e. maya)

pg. 173, 86 of 294, 29, "The pallid, evenly balanced lack of mood, which is often persistent and which is not to be mistaken for a bad mood, is far from nothing at all. Rather it is in this that Dasein becomes satiated with itself. Being has become manifest as burden (my italics). Why that should be, one does not know. And Dasein cannot know anything of the sort..." (this seems to be the concept of 'doubt' within 'faith'. The exact grounding or flowing from with which the world becomes insignificant, or a burden, cannot be known to us, but that it is still 'far from nothing'. I think this either leaves the door open for Heidegger to not get caught in the trap of a simple theology or the 'they', yet it does explicitly state its significance as 'something'.

29. "Furthermore, a mood of elation can alleviate the manifest burden of Being; that such a mood is possible also discloses the burdensome character of Dasein, even while it alleviates the burden."

29. "'To be disclosed' does not mean 'to be known as this sort of thing'. And even in the most indifferent and inoffensive everydayness the Being of Dasein can burst forth as a naked 'that it is and has to be. The pure 'that it is' shows itself, but the 'whence' and the 'whither' remain in darkness.'" (again, this sounds like the necessary condition of doubt due to the finite/infinite gap; in other words, human beings estrangement, 'not at home', uncanniness within this world)

29. "In an onto-existential sense, Dasein for the most part evades the Being which discloses the mood." (The fleeing, the distractions, diversions, the covering up, always-have-to-be happy attitudes)

29. "The expression 'thrownness' is meant to suggest the facticity of its being delivered over." (the given fact that human beings just 'show up on the scene', arbitrarily here instead of there, in this place instead of that, from these parents instead of those, etc.)

29. On the 'they' character's expression/reaction to their 'thrownness'-

"As an entity which has been delivered over to its Being, it remains also delivered over to the fact that it must always have found itself- but found itself in a way of finding which arises not so much from a direct seeking as rather from a fleeing. The way in which the mood discloses is not one in which we at thrownness, but one in which we turn towards or turn away. For the most part the mood does not turn towards the burdensome character of Dasein which is manifest in it, and least of all does it do so in the mood of elation when this burden has been alleviated. It is always by way of a state-of-mind that this turning away is what it is." (my italics)

29. "Existentially, a state-of-mind implies a disclosive submission to the world, out of which we can encounter something that matters to us." (Ha! We 'submit' to the world, its null possibilities, we flee, run,

What is Metaphysics?

- "As surely as we never get a sure grasp of the generality of be-ing in itself, just assuredly do we all the same find ourselves somehow placed in the midst of the generality of bare be-ing. In the end, there continues to be [besteht]an essential difference between getting a grasp of the whole of be-ing in itself and finding oneself in the midst of be-ing as a whole. The former is impossible in principle. The latter happens all the time in our existence. Of course, it looks just as though in our everyday comings and goings we were holding fast to only just this or that [kind of] be-ing, as though we were lost in this or that realm of be-ing. But no matter how fragmented the daily round may seem, it always maintains be-ing in the unity of a "whole," although only in the shadows. Even then and precisely just then, when we are not especially busy with things, this "as a whole" overcomes us; for example, in genuine boredom. This is a long way off far off when this or that book or play, job or leisure activity, is boring. It breaks out when "it's boring."

Profound boredom, like a silent fog insinuating itself in the depths of existence, pulls things, others and oneself into it altogether with remarkable indifference. Such boredom reveals be-ing as a whole."

- "Does such being attuned in which no-thing itself is brought before us happen in human existence?" (oh, indeed it does!)

- "This event is possible and happens, though only rarely and only for an instant, in the fundamental mood of dread [Angst]. In this sense, dread does not refer to the regularly occurring anxiety that has its source in the fearfulness that so easily appears in us. Dread is fundamentally different from fear. We are afraid of this or that determinate [kind of] be-ing which threatens us in this or that regard. Fear of . . . is also in every case being afraid of something determinate. Since fear has about it the limitation of an "of what" and "about what," the frightening and frightful become bound by that in which one finds himself. In striving to save himself from it, from this determinate [something], one becomes unsure of himself with regard to everything else, that is, "in a panic" about everything. Dread does not give rise to such confusion. On the contrary, an odd calm pervades it. Dread is indeed always dread of . . ., but not of this or that. Dread of. . .is always dread about. . ., but not about this or that. The indeterminacy of and about what we are in dread is not some sort of failure of determinacy, but rather the essential impossibility of determinacy. This is illustrated by the following familiar explanation. In dread, as we say, "something is uncanny." What do we mean by "something" and "is"? We cannot say what the uncanny something is about. There is something like this about the "as a whole": all things and we ourselves sink into indifference. Not in the sense of merely disappearing, but rather, in its very moving away, it turns to us. This moving away of be-ing as a whole that closes in on us in dread pressures us. There's nothing to get a hold on. All that remains and comes over us in the slipping away of be-ing is this "no-thing." "Dread reveals no-thing." (every thing becomes Nothing, all actions become the same, the Absurd Perspective, all finitudes become Nothing)

- "We are "suspended" in dread. More clearly, dread leaves us hanging because it brings on the slipping away of be-ing. So it is that we actual human beings slip away from ourselves in the midst of be-ing. For at bottom this is not uncanny to you or me, but rather "it" is like that. In the shuddering of this suspense, where one can hold on to nothing, only really being there [Da-sein] remains."

- "Dread strikes us dumb. Because be-ing as a whole slips away and straight away no-thing rushes in, every saying "Is" about it is silent in the face of it. That in the uncanniness of dread we even often attempt to break the empty stillness with random chatter is only proof of [the] present [of] no-thing. That dread discloses no-thing is then immediately confirmed when dread has eased off. In light of what we had just seen while it was still fresh in our memory, we are forced to say that that about and of which we were in dread was "really" nothing at all. Indeed, no-thing itself, as such, was there." (Ha! Almost an exact quote from Being and Time
- "This demands that we transform our human being into its openness (dread effects this transformation in us) so that we can grasp the nothing that shows up in dread exactly as it shows up. It also demands that we expressly avoid all characterizations of the nothing that do not come from a corresponding experience of the nothing." (this is so important. He states, multiple times, in Being and Time that one cannot rush to the extremes of God or Naturalism, but needs to focus on the human experience of Nothingness)
- "In dread, being as a whole becomes untenable."
- "In dread there is found a giving way to..., which is admittedly not so much a fleeing as a spellbound calm." (something that is 'overwhelming', that overwhelms)
- "In the clear night of dread's no-thing, the original openness of being as such arises for the first time in such a way that it is [a kind of] being and not no-thing." (In Being and Time, 56. 57. 58. 59, even though the 'call' does not give any 'practical information' or specifics in which it can communicate to another, there is a 'positive' content to the seeming 'empty' experience, I would call this 'God' or at least some aspect of something Other, rather than just a naturalistic explanation, i.e. 'the call seems like its coming from me, and beyond me'- found in 57.)
- "Being there means beholdenness to no-thing."
- "Beholden to no-thing, existence is already beyond being as a whole. We call this being above and beyond being transcendence."
- "If existence were not of essence fundamentally transcending, which now means, were it not already beholden to no-thing, then it could not relate itself to being and so not even to itself. Without [the] original manifestness of no-thing, no selfhood and no freedom." (Nothing brings one to God. Maybe a better way to put it, is that the Nothing breaks open the mysterious abyss of the Other)
- "But now, finally, we must put into words a reservation we have so far withheld. If existence only relates itself to being by being aimed in advance at no-thing in order to be able to exist, and if no-thing originally becomes manifest only in dread, must we not then remain permanently suspended in this dread in order to be able to exist at all? Yet have we ourselves not already admitted that this original dread is rare? But above all, all of us exist and relate ourselves to being which we ourselves are not and which we ourselves are—without such dread. Is this not an arbitrary finding and the no-thing attributed to it an exaggeration? (Being and Time- 53. at the very end Heidegger admits that this 'being-towards-death' seems 'fantastical' and further asks if this 'position' of anxiety is something that reason even demands of us)
- "Now what does it mean that this original dread happens only in rare instances? Nothing other than this: no-thing is at first and for the most part disguised in its originality. But how? By our getting lost in being in certain ways. The more we turn to being in our dealings, the less we let being as such slip away, the more we turn away from no-thing. Thus all the more certainly are we forced into the public superficialities of existence." (as to whether this position of anxiety is something that can be held to at all times, is patently not possible. This is due to 'always falling' into everydayness, 74.)

- "That existence is pervaded by nihilating behavior attests to the permanent and indeed obscured manifestness of no-thing that dread originally discloses. But this means original dread is suppressed for the most part in existence. Dread is there. It's only napping. Its breath permanently trembles in existence, only slightly in the apprehensive, and inaudibly in the "Uh húh!" and "Húh uh!" of those who are busy; best of all in the reserved, surest of all at the heart of existence that is daring. But this happens only in those for whom it expends itself in order to preserve the ultimate greatness of existence."
- "For the daring, dread is not an opponent of joy or even of the comfortable pleasures of quiet busyness. It shares a secret bond with the cheerfulness and mildness of creative yearning."
- "Original dread can awaken in existence at any moment. It does not need wakening by an unaccustomed eventuality for that. The depth of its sway corresponds to the scarcity of its possible occasioning. It is permanently on the verge and yet only seldom comes into play to hold us in suspense. The beholdenness of existence to no-thing on the basis of hidden dread makes man the placeholder of no-thing. We are so finite that we are not even able to bring ourselves face to face with no-thing by our own will and resolve. So deeply is mortality buried in our existence that it denies our freedom its very own and deepest finiteness." (very poetic expression of the 'rarity' of the Nihilistic experience)
- "The beholdenness of existence to no-thing on the basis of hidden dread is the surmounting of being as a whole, transcendence."
- "Pure being and pure no-thing is the same." This proposition of Hegel's (Science of Logic) is correct. Being and no-thing belong together, not because both of them agree in their indeterminacy and immediacy, but rather because being itself is in essence finite and revealed only in the transcendence of existence enduring no-thing." (this sounds like a good expression of 56. 57. 58. 59., the 'positive' content of Nothing)
- "Being as a whole first comes to itself in accordance with its very own possibility, that is, only in the no-thing of existence." (the 'nothing of the world', 68. b)
- why science needs to be grounded in this interpretation of metaphysics, i.e. 'take on' the Nothing through facing the uncanniness and anxiety of existence- "Only because no-thing is manifest at the heart of existence can the full strangeness of being come over us. Only if the strangeness of being impresses us does it waken us and open us up to wonder. Only on the basis of wonder, that is, the manifestness of no-thing, does the "Why?" come up." (this seems to be the reason why most scientists do not understand the consequences of their theories, let alone world-views. They are not motivated by the terror of existence, but rather are totally content, i.e. they are unaware of the assumptions they are making or the consequences of their ideas, or both, philosophy/science must be motivated not simply by 'wonder' by through despair, this allows one too look 'deeper' and ask the 'why' questions that seek the ground of a thing, subject, etc.)
- "Human existence can relate to being only if it is itself beholden to no-thing. Going above and beyond be-ing is of the essence of existence." (this is the 'participation' of transcendence)
- "Philosophy can never be measured by the yardstick of the idea of science." (Ha!)
- "Philosophy comes about only through our own life's undergoing a curious engagement with the fundamental possibilities of existence as a whole. Decisive for this engagement is, first of all, making room for be-ing as a whole; next, letting oneself come to no-thing, that is, becoming free of the idols which everyone has and among [which] we are in the habit of losing our way; finally, letting this suspense range

out into what it permanently swings round to in the basic question of metaphysics which no-thing itself forces on us: Why be-ing, after all, and not rather no-thing?"

My Insights

Tonight, read starting at 156 of 294, 54. pg, 312- Heidegger seems to be explaining the reason why there is a 'disconnect' between the 'instinct' and this something Other that he refers to as "conscience". This seems to relate directly to Becker's interpretation of why humans can idealize and not act, or the constant guilt of not being able to be the 'Knight of Faith', the 'Uberman', which is a result of the 'divided-self', 'double-mindedness', etc. There seems to be a 'calling' that does not seem to be me, but almost must be me. It seems to go against what my 'natural-self' desires, but it seems to be the 'more-real' of the two phenomena. This would explain why Heidegger could join the Nazi party. This is why people 'slip up' or always seem to disappoint. The most 'famous' man will be accused of something horrid, e.g. the priests, the CEO, the teacher, the writer, the philosopher, etc. I need to explicitly make this connection between Heidegger and Becker; it was brought into my mind with such clarity before. It seems to be extremely hazy right now, but I am sure it will come back with a reading of Heidegger tonight.

Re-read 29., filled with great stuff.

Last paragraph on pg. 177, 88 of 294, 29.- Heidegger has a similar sentiment as Nietzsche with regards to science, Nietzsche used music as an example- even if science describes a symphony, mathematically, this says nothing about the lived experienced of hearing the music. Heidegger mentions how science, looking at the world theoretically, has 'dimmed it down' and that 'moods', as with music and Nietzsche, still play a role in science; he further makes the point that this does not reduce science to pure 'feeling'.

12/5

After reading/listening to The Death of Ivan Illych, the illusion of everyone's actions around you is so transparent that it becomes an agony, i.e. 'hell is other people'. It's impossible not to see through the actions of all, once they are seen once.

46-53 are very important on the 'everydayness' of the evasion of death. Also important on the crucial aspect of anxiety which draws one away from the world, it's preconceived notions of culture, of 'they', and allows one to see one's true self: a nothingness. The world is a nothing. Yet, Heidegger asks if this anxiety-ridden existence is even possible, e.g. Nietzsche's breakdown says no, Kierkegaard's 'knight of faith' seems impossible/idealistic, Vivekananda's totally 'selfless' being also seems impossible, Becker agrees that these are not seemingly possible, even though correct interpretations of the human condition and what is needed. Anxiety opens discloses the Nothingness of all possibilities of everydayness and turns existence into an impossibility, i.e. Nihilism. Where do we go from here?

Section 54., pg. 247, side-note 268 'begins' to answer this question. (133 of 253 on the pdf file)

Uncanniness = 'a nothing of the world', a 'not at home' feeling'. The "Call of Conscious" = a voice both from within and yet seemingly from beyond ('alien voice') that tries to pull us away from the 'they' and back to our authentic/true Self, this 'voice' says nothing pragmatically, this voice in its 'negation' is a 'positive', i.e. a path/revelation to our true selves, it is both 'us' and 'beyond us', i.e. Vivekananda's Oneness/Psychedelics. Heidegger- 57.