

# Journal314 Part VII 47-52 Recall Summary

## Quotes from Influential Figures and Thomas Kempis on Loving and Serving God

- The section of the document 'Journal314\_47-52' features quotes from various influential figures, including Thomas Kempis, [Therese of Lisieux](#), [Ernest Becker](#), [Paul Tillich](#), [Swami Vivekananda](#), and [Martin Heidegger](#), although only Thomas Kempis is directly quoted in this part.
- Thomas Kempis emphasizes the importance of loving and serving [God](#), stating that all other knowledge and pursuits are vanity without the love and grace of God, and that true wisdom lies in casting the world behind and reaching for the heavenly kingdom.
- He also stresses the value of humility, encouraging individuals to recognize their own ignorance and limitations, and to avoid pride and self-elevation, instead striving to think kindly and highly of others, even when they sin or falter.
- Kempis warns against trusting every word or feeling, and instead advises cautious and patient discernment to determine what is truly of God, and he cautions against putting trust in men or created things, which can lead to disappointment and disillusionment.
- He advocates for loving all men, but not making close companions of all, and avoiding the tumult of worldly conversations and desires, which can lead to defilement and distraction from divine things.
- Kempis emphasizes the importance of mortifying worldly desires and clinging to God with one's whole heart, and he notes that true progress in religion involves inner growth and transformation, rather than just outward observances and forms.
- He also acknowledges the value of enduring contradictions and unfair judgments, when one is acting with good intentions, as a means of spiritual growth and refinement.

# Emphasis on Humility, Self-Reflection, and Avoiding Judgment

- The provided text from 'Journal314\_47-52' emphasizes the importance of humility, self-reflection, and patience in bearing with the faults and infirmities of others, as well as recognizing one's own shortcomings and need for correction.
- It highlights the need to avoid judging others and instead focus on examining and improving oneself, while also being mindful of the temptations and adversities that can arise in any situation, as noted by Vivekananda's philosophy of "believe nothing and disbelieve everything, finite/infinite gap".
- The text also references the lives of holy figures, such as the Apostles, Martyrs, Confessors, and Virgins, who endured great tribulations and temptations, yet persevered in their devotion to [God](#) through strict lives of prayer, fasting, and contemplation, demonstrating the value of a simple and virtuous life.
- Additionally, the text advises being constantly engaged in productive activities, such as reading, writing, praying, or meditating, and avoiding idle conversation and novelties, in order to cultivate a deeper sense of spirituality and connection with God, as reflected in the principles of Karma [Yoga](#).
- The importance of community and mutual support is also emphasized, with the recognition that individuals are not sufficient on their own and need to bear with and help one another, as stated in the phrase "we may learn to bear one another's burdens, because none is without defect, none without a burden".
- The text concludes by encouraging individuals to prioritize their spiritual growth and development, and to strive for a life of simplicity, virtue, and devotion, as exemplified by the holy fathers who dwelt in the desert and renounced worldly riches and dignities.

## Living a Simple and Spiritual Life, Detachment from Worldly Things

- The text emphasizes the importance of living a simple and spiritual life, free from the distractions and temptations of the world, as [Jesus](#) taught his

followers to go "apart from the multitude" to reach that which is hidden and spiritual.

- It is noted that a person who seeks to live a spiritual life must be mindful of their words and actions, and that it is better to be unknown and take heed to oneself than to neglect oneself and work wonders, as stated in the phrase "it is better to be unknown and take heed to oneself than to neglect oneself and work wonders".
- The text also warns against becoming entangled with the world and its fleeting joys, stating that "no man safely goeth abroad who loveth not to rest at home" and that "what canst thou see anywhere which can continue long under the sun", emphasizing the impermanence of worldly things.
- The idea that true happiness does not lie in the abundance of temporal things, but rather in a moderate portion, is also presented, with the statement that "the happiness of man lieth not in the abundance of temporal things but a moderate portion sufficeth him".
- The text critiques those who are consumed by worldly desires, stating that "oh foolish and faithless of heart, who lie buried so deep in worldly things, that they relish nothing save the things of the flesh", and encourages readers to focus on the things that are above, as the saints of [God](#) and loyal friends of Christ have done.
- The importance of being prepared for death and the afterlife is also emphasized, with the warning that "very quickly will there be an end of thee here; take heed therefore how it will be with thee in another world", and the encouragement to "always be thou prepared, and so live that death may never find thee unprepared".
- The text ultimately encourages readers to adopt a mindset of selflessness, renouncement, and non-movement, letting go of worldly attachments and desires, and instead focusing on spiritual growth and preparation for the afterlife.

## **Virtuous Life, Preparation for Death, and Trust in God**

- The section from the document 'Journal314\_47-52' emphasizes the importance of living a virtuous life and being prepared for death, as many people die

suddenly and unexpectedly, and it is crucial to trust in God rather than in worldly relationships or material possessions.

- The quotes from various spiritual leaders, including Maya, Tolstoy, [Vivekananda](#), and [Pascal](#), stress the need to focus on one's salvation and to prioritize the things of [God](#), rather than being anxious about worldly concerns or seeking comfort in earthly things.
- The Start of the Second Book of [The Imitation of Christ](#) is referenced, with quotes highlighting the importance of turning to God and forsaking the worldly life, learning to despise outward things and focus on inward spiritual growth, and recognizing that true peace and liberty come from humble suffering and selflessness.
- The text also warns against placing too much trust in mortal men, even if they are useful or dear, and advises against becoming overly attached to earthly things, as they are fleeting and can defile the heart, and instead encourages the reader to seek inward joy and contemplation of heavenly things.
- The importance of selflessness and renunciation is emphasized, with the suggestion to live a life of willingness to give one's life for others, as exemplified by the concept of Karma [Yoga](#), and to prioritize the will of God and the benefit of one's neighbor above all else.
- The text concludes by cautioning against blaming others for small faults while ignoring one's own greater faults, and advises the reader to remain free from temporal cares and to value nothing above God Himself or the things of God, recognizing that all consolation from creatures is ultimately vain.

## Humility, Detachment, and Seeking Jesus

- The text from 'Journal314\_47-52' emphasizes the importance of humility and detachment from worldly desires, stating that [God](#) alone is eternal and incomprehensible, and that the love of created things is deceiving and unstable, whereas the love of [Jesus](#) is faithful and lasting.
- It highlights the need to put away every created thing and seek Jesus, who would freely take up His abode with those who do so, and to consider all people, whether friends or enemies, as dear for His sake and in Him.

- The text also discusses the concept of spiritual comfort and the importance of receiving it with gratitude and humility, recognizing that it is a gift from God, and warns against becoming lifted up or presumptuous when comfort is given, and against despairing when it is taken away.
- It quotes various spiritual leaders and saints, including [Vivekananda](#), to emphasize the importance of stripping oneself of selfish thoughts and desires, and of embracing a life of humility, mortification, and detachment from worldly comforts.
- The text emphasizes the need to take up the cross and follow the way of the Holy Cross, which is the path to true inward peace, and notes that the whole life of Christ was a cross and martyrdom, and that those who advance in the spirit will often find heavier crosses to bear.
- It concludes by stating that it is not in the nature of man to bear the cross or love the cross, but that one ought to lead the life of a dying man, despising self and desiring to be despised, and bearing all adversities and losses with humility and patience.

## Spiritual Growth, Detachment, and Humility

- The section from the document 'Journal314\_47-52' emphasizes the importance of spiritual growth and detachment from worldly desires, as stated in the quotes, including the phrase "the more a man dieth to himself, the more he beginneth to live towards [God](#)."
- The text highlights the need to prioritize eternal truth and please God above all things, while continually disliking one's own vileness and fearing one's own faults and sins, as mentioned in the quote "Fear, denounce, flee nothing so much as thine own faults and sins."
- It is noted that not everyone is called to renounce the world and take up a religious life, but contempt of all worldly things and avoidance of worthless pleasures can lead to blessings and consolation, as stated in the phrase "contempt of all worldly things and in the avoidance of all worthless pleasures shall be thy blessing."
- The text also emphasizes the importance of humility, as seen in the quote "Be zealous against thyself, nor suffer pride to live within thee," and the need to resign oneself to God's will, as stated in the phrase "Therefore, whatsoever

seemeth to thee desirable, thou must always desire and seek after it with the fear of God and humility of heart."

## Reflections on Life, Patience, and Trust in God

- The section includes references to the ideas of [Vivekananda](#) and Karma [Yoga](#), as well as the human psychological principle that pushes one to the Infinite, which is related to the concept of the "grasp" referred to by Tillich.
- The text also includes quotes that reflect on the nature of life, including the statement "Oh what a life is this, where tribulations and miseries cease not," and the question "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."
- The section concludes with a reflection on the importance of patience and trust in [God](#), as seen in the quote "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."

## Worldly Desires vs. Spiritual Priorities

- The world is often criticized for being deceitful and vain, yet people find it difficult to give up due to the strong influence of the lusts of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, which can lead to a love of the world, but ultimately result in hatred and weariness.
- It is emphasized that one should prioritize their relationship with God above all else, including health, beauty, glory, honor, power, dignity, knowledge, skill, riches, arts, joy, exultation, fame, praise, sweetness, consolation, hope, promise, merit, desire, gifts, and rewards.
- Individuals are advised to focus on their own spiritual journey and not worry about what others think, as they will be held accountable for themselves, and it is prudent to keep silence in evil times and turn inwardly to God.
- The text highlights the importance of mortification and turning away from worldly desires, as anything that is not [God](#) is considered nothing, and it is essential to strive for a deep understanding and connection with God, rather than just accumulating knowledge.

- It is noted that many people desire contemplation but fail to practice the necessary disciplines, and instead, get caught up in external symbols and signs, and that true wisdom can only be achieved by those who are truly learned in spirit and stand above the changing circumstances of life.
- The wise and truly learned individual is able to remain steadfast and unshaken, fixing their desire on God, despite the manifold changes of the world, and recognizing that God is the source of all things, and that those who follow God through contempt of worldly things and mortification of the flesh are truly wise.
- The text also warns against the vanity of the world and the dangers of being carnally minded, and encourages individuals to trust in God and not be afraid of the opinions or actions of others, as they are fleeting and insignificant in comparison to God's power and wisdom.

## Spiritual Growth through Self-Denial and Detachment

- The section from the document 'Journal314\_47-52' contains a collection of spiritual and philosophical quotes and passages, including those from unknown authors, as well as references to notable figures such as [Kierkegaard](#) and [Therese of Lisieux](#), that emphasize the importance of self-denial, humility, and detachment from worldly things in order to achieve spiritual growth and closeness to [God](#).
- The passages suggest that true progress and happiness can only be achieved by looking inward and recognizing one's own flaws and weaknesses, rather than focusing on external things or seeking validation from others, and that this process of self-reflection and introspection is essential for spiritual development.
- The quotes also touch on the idea that spiritual growth requires a willingness to let go of attachments to worldly things and to be open to criticism and reproach, with one passage stating that "the whole world is to be counted as nought" and that one should "seek to be alone with God before all outward things".
- Therese of Lisieux is quoted in the section, sharing her personal struggles with feelings of darkness and uncertainty, as well as her experiences with spiritual

growth and development, including her realization that "the sole happiness of earth consists in lying hidden, and remaining in total ignorance of created things".

- The section also references the works of St. John of the Cross, which had a significant impact on Therese of Lisieux's spiritual development, particularly during her younger years, and notes that while she once found solace in the works of various spiritual authors, she now finds that they "leave me cold and dry" and that she can only respond to spiritual guidance through personal experience and introspection.
- Overall, the section presents a nuanced and multifaceted exploration of the human experience, highlighting the complexities and challenges of spiritual growth, and offering insights and guidance for those seeking to deepen their relationship with God and cultivate a greater sense of inner peace and understanding.

## **Solace in Scriptures, Spiritual Struggle, and the Night of the Soul**

- The author finds solace in the Holy Scriptures and the Imitation, particularly the [Gospels](#), which provide guidance and comfort during times of prayer and help them discover new meanings and insights.
- The author acknowledges that each soul is unique and must differ from one another to receive special honor from Divine Perfection, and they have experienced a period of darkness and spiritual struggle, which they describe as the "Night of the Soul".
- During this period, the author felt overwhelmed with darkness and doubt, and the thought of Heaven, which had previously brought them comfort, became a source of conflict and torture, making them feel incapable of anything good and questioning their faith.
- The author references various philosophers and thinkers, including [Kierkegaard](#), Cioran, Ligotti, [Vivekananda](#), and Otto, and notes that there are no words to fully explain the depths of their emotional and spiritual struggles.
- The author uses a metaphor of being born in a land of thick fogs and never seeing the beauties of nature or a single ray of sunshine to describe their feelings of disconnection and longing for a more beautiful and spiritual realm.



- Despite their struggles, the author holds onto the hope of a better life to come, but is tormented by the mocking voice of the unbeliever, which tells them that death will bring only a darker night of utter nothingness.
- The author confesses that their poems and writings may seem to convey a sense of joy and consolation, but in reality, they are singing of what they wish to believe, and that even the occasional ray of sunshine only makes the darkness seem thicker and more overwhelming.
- The author questions the idea that it is more perfect to separate oneself from home and friends, and notes that even in the religious life, theologians refer to it as a form of martyrdom, where the struggles and sacrifices of each individual are a martyrdom to all.

## Love, Charity, and Spiritual Growth in Community

- The heart that is given to [God](#) does not lose its natural affection, but instead, this affection grows stronger and becomes purer and more spiritual, as seen in the love the author has for their Mother and sisters.
- The author acknowledges that they have a naturally sensitive heart, which can be a cause of much suffering, but they find comfort in the love they receive from their Mother and the Sisters, and they dream of being in a convent where they can taste the bitterness of exile and find joy in suffering.
- The author reflects on how [Jesus](#) loved His Apostles, not for their natural qualities, but despite their imperfections, and they realize that they do not love their Sisters in the same way, understanding that true charity consists in bearing all neighbors' defects and being edified by their smallest virtues.
- The author notes that it is easy to give when asked pleasantly, but when asked discourteously, it can be difficult to show charity, and they recognize that when they show charity to others, it is Jesus acting in them, and the more closely they are united to Him, the more dearly they love their Sisters.
- To increase their love for their Sisters, the author makes an effort to look for their virtues and good motives, rather than focusing on their defects, and they recall a personal experience where they were misunderstood by their Community, which taught them to be indulgent towards others and to reflect on their own imperfections.

- The author emphasizes the importance of loving and praying for those who may not seem to care for them, as Jesus teaches, and they recognize that even in the Carmel, where there are no enemies, they may still have natural likes and dislikes, but they strive to love and pray for all their Sisters, regardless of their behavior.

## Charity in Action and the Importance of Humility

- The author, Soeur Therese, discusses the importance of proving one's love through actions, not just feelings, and notes that it is not enough to simply love those who love us, but rather to show charity to all, even those who may not deserve it.
- Soeur Therese reflects on her own struggles with charity, particularly in her interactions with a holy nun in her community who annoyed her, and how she made a conscious effort to do good deeds for this sister and to pray for her, despite her natural antipathy.
- The author also shares an anecdote about an incident where she was accused of making noise while performing her duty as sacristan, and how she resisted the temptation to defend herself and instead chose to flee the situation, recognizing that justifying herself would lead to a loss of peace of mind.
- Soeur Therese acknowledges that she is far from perfection and that her past actions and thoughts are often imperfect, but she has come to accept and even glory in her weaknesses, recognizing that they are an opportunity for growth and improvement.
- The author's approach to charity and self-mastery is influenced by spiritual teachings, including the Imitation, which advises leaving others to their own way of thinking rather than engaging in contentious discourse, and the idea of seeing [Jesus](#) hidden in the depths of every soul, as expressed by [Vivekananda](#).
- Throughout the text, Soeur Therese emphasizes the importance of grace and the need for humility, recognizing that without the help of grace, it would be impossible to understand and put into practice the Divine precepts that run contrary to our natural inclinations.

## Self-Denial, Humility, and Trust in God's Goodness

- The section from the document 'Journal314\_47-52' contains a collection of quotes and reflections from various individuals, including Therese, Vivekananda, and Cioran, that emphasize the importance of self-denial, humility, and trust in God's goodness.
- The quotes highlight the need to recognize one's own nothingness and to seek guidance from [God](#), rather than relying on one's own strength or ideas, as expressed in the statement "Marie, though you are nothing, do not forget that Jesus is All."
- The text also touches on the theme of suffering, with Therese noting that she does not pity saints who suffer, but rather those who do not know how to profit from their suffering, and that saints have the strength to bear their sufferings and give glory to God.
- The importance of detachment from self and the practice of self-denial is also emphasized, as seen in the advice to approach recreation with the intention of entertaining others and practising complete detachment from self, rather than seeking relaxation or personal enjoyment.
- The value of self-denial is further highlighted in the statement that it is more valuable than writing pious books or composing sublime poetry, and that it is a key aspect of "remaining little" and recognizing one's dependence on God's goodness.
- The concept of "remaining little" is also explored, with Therese explaining that it means recognizing one's nothingness, awaiting everything from God's goodness, and avoiding worry over faults or spiritual riches, and that it is a state of being that allows one to receive guidance and support from God.

## Becker's Denial of Death and the Cultural Hero-System

- The concept of narcissism, as discussed by [Ernest Becker](#) in "The Denial of Death", is what drives individuals to take risks, such as going to war, because they do not truly believe they will die, but rather feel sorry for those around them who may die.
- According to Becker, people disguise their struggle with mortality by accumulating wealth, material possessions, and social status, which serves as a

way to reflect their sense of heroic worth and mask the ache of cosmic specialness that throbs beneath the surface.

- The cultural hero-system, whether magical, religious, or secular, is a mythical system in which people serve to earn a feeling of primary value, cosmic specialness, and ultimate usefulness to creation, by creating things that reflect human value, such as buildings, families, or artistic expressions.
- Becker notes that everything humans do is, in a sense, religious and heroic, yet also in danger of being fictitious and fallible, as people are driven by a blind desire for self-esteem and glory, which can lead to a crisis of society and organized religion.
- The crisis of society and religion is also reflected in the attraction to new ideologies, such as the New Atheists, as traditional religious systems are no longer seen as valid hero systems, and the youth, in particular, are scornful of them.
- Becker references the ideas of various thinkers, including [Vivekananda](#), Tolstoy, Tillich, and Montaigne, to highlight the human condition, where individuals are torn between their awareness of their own uniqueness and the reality of their mortality, which is a terrifying dilemma to live with.
- The knowledge of death is a uniquely human experience, as animals are spared the reflective and conceptual awareness of their own mortality, and instead live and die thoughtlessly, whereas humans are forced to confront and live with the awareness of their own death.
- Becker also discusses the concept of the divided self, where humans are split between their awareness of their own uniqueness and their physical body, which is subject to decay and death, and this paradox is at the heart of the human condition, making it a complex and challenging existence to navigate.

## **The Human Condition, Existential Dualism, and the Burden of Self-Awareness**

- The human condition is characterized by an impossible situation, where individuals are aware of their own mortality and the fleeting nature of their existence, which can be overwhelming and potentially drive them to madness if fully apprehended.

- According to the text, babies are occasionally born with gills and tails, but this is often hushed up, as it forces people to confront the reality of their own existence and the fact that they are creatures clawing and gasping for breath in an incomprehensible universe, as reflected in Pascal's statement that "Men are so necessarily mad that not to be mad would amount to another form of madness".
- The existential dualism between humanity's symbolic self, which gives them a sense of infinite worth, and their physical body, which is fragile and ephemeral, creates an excruciating dilemma, leading people to engage in social games, psychological tricks, and personal preoccupations that serve as a form of denial and madness, as noted by Huxley, who wondered how people reconcile the two.
- The text suggests that the costs of pretending not to be mad, and the toll that this pretense takes on individuals and society, is a major contributor to the evil that men have wreaked upon themselves and their world, rather than their animal heredity or instincts, as noted by [Vivekananda](#), who discussed the finite/infinite gap and the tendency for people to worship idols.
- The concept of the "mysterium tremendum et fascinosum" is introduced, which refers to the feeling of overwhelming awe, wonder, and fear in the face of creation, and the miracle of existence, as discussed by Otto, who talked about the terror of the world and the beauty and majesty of creation.
- Repression is seen as a necessary mechanism that allows humans to live decisively in an overwhelmingly miraculous and incomprehensible world, by making it possible to ignore or deny the full weight of their existential situation, and to focus on their daily lives and goals, rather than being paralyzed by the terror and wonder of existence.
- The text concludes by highlighting the burden that humans bear, with their expanded inner self, curiosity, fears, and hopes, which makes their existence even more complex and incomprehensible, and notes that even their own body and inner landscape are foreign to them, making their existence a miracle and a mystery that is closer to them, but also more strange and incomprehensible.

## Defenses Against Despair and the Importance of Facing Reality

- The human condition is characterized as a fundamental predicament, where individuals are simultaneously aware of their own mortality and fragility, yet strive to feel a sense of self-worth, power, and control over their lives, as noted by philosophers such as Carlyle, who referred to life as a "hall of doom".
- People often build defenses to avoid the despair and anxiety that comes with this awareness, which can include distractions like all-absorbing activities, passions, or dedications that provide a sense of security and serenity, as discussed by thinkers like [Augustine](#), [Kierkegaard](#), Scheler, and Tillich.
- These defenses, however, can also prevent individuals from truly understanding themselves and their place in the world, leading to a life that is never really theirs, and this concept is echoed by philosophers like Rank, who acknowledged that anxiety is an inherent part of the human condition.
- The idea of "being born again" is also explored, suggesting that it means being subjected to the terrifying paradox of the human condition, where one must confront their own mortality and limitations, and this idea is supported by the works of Tillich and Kierkegaard, who emphasize the importance of acknowledging and accepting this reality.
- The text also touches on the idea that neurosis is a complicated technique for avoiding misery, but ultimately, reality is the source of this misery, and this concept is related to the idea that character is a neurotic defense against despair, as noted by Tillich, who says that neurosis is avoiding nonbeing by avoiding being.
- Furthermore, the text highlights the importance of acknowledging and accepting the human condition, rather than trying to escape or avoid it, and this is supported by the ideas of various philosophers and thinkers, including Ligotti, who is mentioned as having a similar perspective.
- Ultimately, the text suggests that true self-awareness and understanding can only be achieved by shedding the armor of character and confronting the full reality of the human condition, which is a terrifying and anxiety-provoking prospect, but one that is necessary for true growth and understanding, as noted by philosophers like Rank, who admitted that anxiety could not be fully overcome therapeutically.

## **Anxiety, Consciousness, and the Limits of Human Experience**

- The concept of an anxiety-free existence is considered an ideal, but not a reality for humans, as philosophers like Vivekananda and [Kierkegaard](#) have noted, with the latter's "Knight of Faith" being an impossibility within the human condition.
- According to the text, the idea of "enjoying one's full humanness," as suggested by Maslow, is problematic because it implies that individuals can find joy in a state of being that is inherently characterized by fear, trembling, and despair, as they confront the harsh realities of life without the protective shield of illusions.
- The average person is not equipped to handle a full consciousness of the absurdity and terror of life, having developed a character that allows them to ignore these facts and thrive on blindness, as noted by philosophers like Sartre, who calls man a "useless passion" due to his delusions about his true condition.
- The text suggests that true enlightenment or a nihilistic experience can be devastating and terrifying, making it impossible for individuals to continue living thoughtlessly, and instead, placing them at the mercy of the cosmos, as noted by thinkers like Rank and Ligotti, who highlight the difficulty of facing reality head-on.
- The text also discusses the concept of [schizophrenia](#), citing Searles' view that it is a result of the inability to shut out terror, and a desperate attempt to live with it, ultimately representing a failure in humanization, which means a failure to confidently deny the harsh realities of human existence, as noted by the author.
- The idea that a person's character is a defense against despair, and an attempt to avoid insanity, is a recurring theme in the text, highlighting the human struggle to cope with the overwhelmingness of life, finitude, and the dread of death, as discussed by various philosophers and thinkers, including Searles and Kierkegaard.
- The creativity of individuals on the schizophrenic end of the human continuum is rooted in their inability to accept the standardized cultural denials of the real nature of experience, which allows them to be supremely creative in an almost extra-human sense, but also leads them to live on the brink of madness.

- According to the text, the human condition is characterized by the deepest need to be free of the anxiety of death and annihilation, but it is life itself that awakens this anxiety, causing people to shrink from being fully alive, and the idea of being wholly unrepressed and living in full bodily and psychic expansiveness can only mean to be reborn into madness.
- The text references Marcia Lee Anderson's scientific formula, which suggests that stripped of subtle complications, such as character defenses like repression, denial, and misperception of reality, one would regard the sun with fear, highlighting the terror of the world and the human condition.
- The myth of the Fall of Adam and Eve is mentioned as a representation of the human condition, where man emerged from instinctive thoughtless action and gained consciousness of his individuality and part-divinity in creation, but also became aware of the terror of the world and his own death and decay.
- The final terror of self-consciousness is the knowledge of one's own death, which is unique to humans in the animal kingdom, and this is reflected in the Garden of Eden myth and modern psychology, which suggests that death is man's peculiar and greatest anxiety.

## **Depression, Philistinism, and the Fear of Independence**

- The text also references Kierkegaard's concept of "philistinism," which refers to triviality and the daily routines of society, and how people often accept to live a trivial life due to the danger of a full horizon of experience, and instead opt for a certain dull security.
- The depressed person is described as being afraid of being themselves, exerting their own individuality, and insisting on their own meanings and conditions for living, which leads to a state of stagnation and a lack of understanding of their situation, and they often resort to unconscious tactics like seeing themselves as immensely worthless and guilty to make sense of their situation.
- Ultimately, the depressed person avoids independence and more life because it threatens them with destruction and death, and instead holds on to people who enslave them in a network of crushing obligations, belittling interaction,



and relies on them for shelter, strength, and protection against the world, rather than drawing strength from within themselves to face up to life.

- The individual described in the text embeds himself in others and accepts a life of necessity, which eventually becomes trivial and loses its meaning, leading to a state of slavery and a fear of moving out of it.
- This situation is compared to the torture of depressive psychosis, where one remains steeped in their failure and tries to justify it, and to philistinism, or "normal neurosis," where people live safely within social rules by keeping their personal intensity low and avoiding being pulled off balance by experience.

## **Introversion, Individuality, and the Challenges of Self-Discovery**

- The concept of the "introvert" is introduced, as described by [Kierkegaard](#), referring to a type of person who tries to cultivate their individuality and uniqueness, and is concerned with what it means to be a person, often enjoying solitude and reflection to nurse ideas about their secret self.
- However, life often sucks people into standardized activities, causing them to cover up their inner secrets and forget them, leading to a life of playing a standardized hero-game, rather than working on their inner being and expressing their uniqueness.
- Kierkegaard's "introvert" is not necessarily someone who keeps their inner quest fully alive or conscious, but rather someone who is dimly aware of the problem of being something different from the world, and holds themselves apart from it, but not completely, due to a position of compromise and weakness.
- The consequences of attempting to live as an "introvert" can be difficult to maintain, as it requires posing the problem of what it means to be a person, and may lead to trouble, as described by Kierkegaard, where one may be content to toy with the idea of who they might really be, but struggle to maintain this position with equanimity.

## **Impotence, Character, and the Anxiety of Existence**

- The concept of introversion is described as a form of impotence that can lead to feelings of dependency and a desire to break free from the constraints of family and job, which can sometimes result in extreme measures such as suicide or reckless behavior, as noted in the context of Journal314\_47-52.
- According to [Kierkegaard](#), being a "normal cultural man" is equivalent to being sick, whether one is aware of it or not, and that in order to transcend oneself, one must be willing to break down the very things that are needed to survive, much like the character of Lear who must throw off all his "cultural lendings" and stand naked in the storm of life.
- The idea of being trapped in one's character is also explored, where one can pretend to be somebody and feel that the world is manageable, but this is ultimately a prison that is painstakingly built to deny one's creatureliness, which is the true source of terror and anxiety.
- Kierkegaard's torment is said to have stemmed from his awareness of the world as it really is, and the anxiety that results from being a self-conscious animal, aware of one's own mortality and the fact that one is food for worms, is a fundamental aspect of the human condition.
- However, the flood of anxiety is not the end for man, but rather a "school" that provides the ultimate education and maturity, as it reveals the truth of one's situation and allows for the possibility of growth and change, and as Kierkegaard notes, anxiety is a better teacher than reality because it cannot be lied about or twisted.
- The "school" of anxiety is a process of unlearning repression and facing up to one's natural impotence and death, as Luther urged, to "taste" death with the lips of one's living body, and it is only by doing so that one can truly know emotionally that they are a creature who will die, and this is a crucial step in the process of education and self-discovery, as discussed in the context of Journal314\_47-52.

## Kierkegaard on the Self, Anxiety, and Faith

- According to [Kierkegaard](#), the self must be broken in order to become a self, which involves facing the anxiety of the terror of existence and destroying the self to achieve self-transcendence and relate to powers beyond itself.

- This process of self-destruction allows the self to question its finitude and see beyond it, ultimately leading to infinitude, absolute transcendence, and the Ultimate Power of Creation that made finite creatures.
- Kierkegaard believes that one goes through this process to arrive at faith, which is the understanding that one's existence has meaning in an ultimate sense because it exists within an eternal and infinite scheme of things brought about and maintained by a creative force.
- Anxiety is seen as the possibility of freedom because it demolishes all finite aims, and the person who is educated by possibility is educated in accordance with their infinity, ultimately leading to faith.
- The breakdown of the cultural self, or Nihilism, allows the private, invisible, inner self to yearn for ultimate significance and attain cosmic significance by affirming its connection with the invisible mystery at the heart of creation.

## Freud, Tolstoy, and the Human Need for Meaning

- In contrast to [Kierkegaard](#), Freud did not need to rework his vision of man to focus on the terrified, death-avoiding animal, despite acknowledging the idea of death and the real terror of the external world.
- The text also touches on the idea that admitting an idea to consciousness does not necessarily mean experiencing it vitally, and that there can be a partial rationalization of even the deepest anxiety, such as the terror of death.
- Additionally, the text mentions the concept of hypnosis as a mysterious phenomenon, and quotes Tolstoy, highlighting the human need for an invisible dimension that justifies the visible one.
- The text also explores the idea of renouncing worldly desires, including sex, in order to achieve self-perpetuation as a spiritual being, and questions whether this is necessary or if love can be a form of [god](#).
- Finally, the text notes that the child stands at the crossroads of human dualism, highlighting the complexities and contradictions of human existence.

## The Search for Fulfillment and the Limitations of Human Relationships

- The discovery of a fallible body leads to a deeper inquiry into the meaning of life, as individuals seek to understand the limitations and mysteries of their physical existence, with questions about sex being a gateway to exploring the ultimate mystery of life and the human dilemma.
- The search for fulfillment and transcendence is a fundamental human drive, but the sexual partner or any human relationship cannot provide a complete and lasting solution to this dilemma, as they represent both a kind of fulfillment and a negation of one's distinctive personality.
- According to philosophers like Tillich, [Vivekananda](#), and others, the pursuit of absolute power, mystery, and majesty is inherent in human nature, but when narrowed down to the physical world, it leads to feelings of emptiness, anguish, and inferiority, as individuals struggle to find spirituality and meaning in a world marked by human shortcomings and pettiness.
- The ideas of [Otto Rank](#), [Augustine](#), and [Kierkegaard](#) emphasize that human relationships and physical love are insufficient to provide an absolute sense of fulfillment and transcendence, and that true freedom and individuality can only be achieved by transcending human relationships and seeking a connection with a higher power or the absolute beyond.
- People often settle for a "beyond" that is nearest to them, such as parents, leaders, or cultural definitions of heroism, which provides a sense of fulfillment but also limits and enslaves them, and it is only through full renunciation and surrender to a higher power that individuals can achieve true absolution and transcendence, a task that requires great strength and courage, particularly from those with strong personalities and large egos.
- The concept of "beyond" is crucial in understanding human behavior, as individuals seek to expand and find meaning in their lives, and the type of "beyond" they choose determines the level of individuation and fulfillment they achieve, with the ultimate goal being to find a connection with the absolute beyond and achieve a sense of cosmic heroism that transcends human relationships.

## **Rank on the Highest Beyond and the Importance of Renunciation**

- The section discusses the idea that even a genius like Newton, who was a scientific world-shaker, carried the Bible with him, highlighting the importance of spirituality in one's life, and the challenge of balancing passion and creativity with the pursuit of salvation.
- According to Rank, a psychoanalyst, one should strive for the highest beyond of religion and cultivate the passivity of renunciation to the highest powers, rather than stopping at near or self-created beyonds, in order to achieve full development and true fulfillment.
- Rank's ideas are compared to those of [Kierkegaard](#), who believed that one should not limit themselves to earthly or self-created beyonds, but rather reach for the highest beyond of religion, and that surrender to [God](#) is not masochistic, but rather the highest idealization man can achieve.
- The concept of Agape love-expansion is mentioned as the achievement of the truly creative type, and it is stated that only by surrendering to the bigness of nature on the highest level can man conquer death and achieve true heroic validation of one's life.
- Rank concludes that man is a "theological being," not a biological one, and that this conclusion is supported by the work of theologians such as Tillich, Kierkegaard, and [Augustine](#), and that it is surprising that a psychoanalyst would come to the same conclusions.
- The section also discusses how some scientists may react with skepticism or even disdain to Rank's ideas, perceiving them as a weakness or a betrayal of the principles of psychoanalysis, but it is argued that Rank's conclusions are based on the logic of his historical and psychoanalytic understanding of man.
- Finally, the concept of neurosis is discussed, with Rank identifying three interdependent aspects: the universal trouble of living with the truth of existence, the private and individualized reaction to life, and the idea that everyone pays a vital ransom to the truth of life.
- The work of Rank highlights that neurosis is, to a large extent, a historical phenomenon, as traditional ideologies that once disguised and absorbed it have fallen away, and modern ideologies are too thin to contain it, which is why concepts like "Nihiltheism" may be seen as a potential answer or support to dying or dead theologies and philosophies.

## Neurosis, Repression, and the Refusal of Reality

- According to Freudian psychology, repression is a normal self-protection mechanism and a creative self-restriction that serves as a substitute for instinct, allowing individuals to cope with the overwhelming problems of life, such as the meaning of existence, death, and the universe.
- Most people avoid dealing with these existential problems by focusing on the small, immediate issues of their daily lives, as mapped out by their society, and by "tranquilizing themselves with the trivial", which is a form of neurosis that allows them to lead normal lives by refusing to confront the reality of their existence.
- The essence of normality can be seen as the refusal of reality, and neurosis can be understood as the miscarriage of clumsy lies about reality, which is a universal phenomenon that affects everyone, although it is only labeled as neurosis when it begins to cause visible problems for the individual or those around them.
- The examples of people who engage in repetitive behaviors, such as washing their hands multiple times or using a specific amount of toilet tissue, illustrate how individuals earn their safety in the face of the reality of creatureliness, and how these behaviors can be seen as a form of repression, driven by the fear of life and death, which is a fundamental aspect of the human experience.
- The work of [Kierkegaard](#) is also referenced, particularly his concept of the "immediate" men and the "Philistines" who avoid dealing with existential problems by focusing on trivial matters, and how this avoidance is a form of neurosis that allows them to maintain a sense of normality and avoid the terror of creature existence.
- Ultimately, the text suggests that neurosis represents a creative power gone astray and confused, as individuals attempt to cope with the overwhelming nature of conscious existence, and that this creative dynamic is also present in the phenomenon of transference, where individuals fuse their fears and anxieties onto a transference-object, as noted by Rank.

## Neurosis, Creativity, and the Symbolic World

- The text discusses the concept of neurosis and its relationship to the human experience, highlighting that individuals who have difficulty narrowing down their experiences and fetishizing certain aspects of life may be considered

neurotic, as they take in too much of the world and struggle to live in a normal society.

- According to the text, people with neurotic tendencies, such as those with [schizophrenia](#), often have trouble relating to others and developing necessary interpersonal skills, which can lead to feelings of isolation and anxiety, causing them to shrink back from experience and struggle to live biologically, instead living symbolically through the use of symbols.
- The text also explores the idea that everyone is neurotic to some extent, as they all hold back from life in certain ways and rely on their symbolic worldview to arrange things, with cultural morality serving as a means to cope with this neurosis, and that the artist is the most neurotic because they take the world as a totality and make a largely symbolic problem out of it.
- The text suggests that individuals may need to seek help when they experience symptoms such as guilt and futility due to an unlived life, and that the difference between the artist and the neurotic lies in their ability to objectify their problems and create something meaningful, with the artist being able to spew out their experiences and chew them over in an objectified way, as seen in the examples of Strindberg and Goethe's Faust.
- The text concludes that objective creativity is the only answer to the problem of life, allowing individuals to take in the world, make a total problem out of it, and then give out a fashioned, human answer to that problem, with the quality and power of the reaction being the key difference between the artist and the neurotic, as noted by the comparison between an illiterate schizophrenic and a culture hero like Strindberg.

## Heroism, Creativity, and the Illusion of Character

- The individual needs to be a hero and earn immortality through their unique qualities, but this can only be achieved through fantasy, as they cannot create a perfect work that speaks on their behalf, leading to a vicious circle of unreality and self-doubt, where one cannot justify their own heroism without external validation.
- Creative work is often driven by a compulsion that is similar to a clinical obsession, and what is considered a creative gift is actually a social license to be obsessed, while cultural routines and daily work activities serve as a

distraction from the desperation and madness that would otherwise arise from the human condition, as seen in the eagerness with which workers return to their jobs after vacation.

- It is difficult to categorize personality types, as there are many blends and combinations that defy precise classification, and even the average person, who may appear to be well-adjusted, has likely erected a wall of repressions to hide the problem of life and death, and it is often these "normal, average men" who have caused destruction and chaos throughout history in an attempt to forget themselves, as noted by authors like Ligotti and [Pascal](#), who suggest that a more nihilistic and pessimistic approach to life, such as simply sitting in one's room, may be a more peaceful and less destructive path.
- The concept of human character is actually a lie about the nature of reality, as the *causa-sui* project, which is the attempt to be invulnerable and important, is a pretense that hides the possibility that human life may be meaningless and insignificant in the grand scheme of evolution, and that the [Creator](#) may not care about the destiny of humanity or individual men, much like the fate of the dinosaurs or the Tasmanians.

## Vanity, Meaning, and the Neurotic's Struggle with Reality

- The concept of vanity and the search for meaning in life are central themes, as expressed in the Bible through the voice of Ecclesiastes, highlighting the idea that all is vanity, and this notion is echoed in the human experience of feeling disconnected from the truth.
- The neurotic individual is particularly sensitive to the disparity between cultural illusions and natural reality, struggling to maintain a balance between the two, and as a result, they perceive themselves as unreal and reality as unbearable, leading to feelings of guilt, inferiority, and helplessness, as they are unable to deceive themselves about their own flaws and the flaws of the world.
- According to [Otto Rank](#), illusions are necessary for human survival, and the neurotic symptom can be seen as a communication about the truth that the illusion of invulnerability is a lie, and this idea is further emphasized by the



fact that people often turn to substances or other forms of escapism to avoid the despair of reality.

- The need for illusion is not a cynical concept, but rather a necessary aspect of human existence, as people require a "second" world of humanly created meaning to live, dramatize, and nourish themselves, and this is evident in the way that cultural illusions serve as a heroic dimension that gives life meaning and purpose.
- The failure of traditional immortality ideologies to provide a sense of security and confidence in personal heroism is a characteristic of modern life, and this has led to a crisis of meaning, as people are no longer able to find solace in the dominant immortality ideology, and instead, they are forced to confront the reality of their own mortality and the impermanence of human existence.

## **The Need for Illusion and the Crisis of Meaning in Modern Life**

- The idea that life is only possible with illusions is a profound insight into the human condition, and it highlights the importance of creative play and self-deception in maintaining a sense of purpose and meaning, as expressed by Anais Nin's statement that "the caricature aspect of life appears whenever the drunkenness of illusion wears off", and this notion is further supported by the fact that people often engage in activities that allow them to temporarily escape the harsh realities of life.
- The concept of neurosis has become a widespread problem in modern times due to the lack of convincing dramas of heroic apotheosis of man, as observed by Pinel during the French Revolution, where individuals found a sense of purpose and heroic identity in the revolutionary movement.
- Modern man can no longer find heroism in everyday life, as people in traditional societies once did through their daily duties, and instead, has become complacent with nihilism, which has led to a sense of disillusionment and disconnection from absolute transcendence.
- The eclipse of the sacred dimension has resulted in modern man being thrown back on his own resources, leading to a focus on the self and personal relationships, which are insufficient substitutes for absolute transcendence, as noted by the idea that lovers and families can trap and disillusion us.

# The Shift from Soul to Self and the Limitations of Psychology

- The development of modern thought, particularly in the 19th century, led to a shift from the concept of the soul to the concept of the self, with scientists seeking to reclaim the inner life of man from the Church and make it subject to the laws of causality, ultimately leading to the work of Freud and the study of the self as a social product.
- However, as Rank noted, this scientific victory raised more problems than it solved, as it failed to explain the inner forces of evolution that have led to the development of self-consciousness, which is still referred to as the soul, and the mystery of the meaning of organismic awareness and the inner dynamism of nature.
- The limitations of psychology in addressing personal unhappiness are highlighted, as it narrows the cause down to the individual themselves, rather than considering the universal and general causes, such as the natural world and the person's relationship to it as a symbolic animal, which is necessary to understand one's place in the world and find a sense of purpose and meaning.
- The text discusses the limitations of psychology in explaining human unhappiness, suggesting that it becomes a fraud when it attempts to provide a full explanation, as it fails to consider the historical and communal aspects of individual unhappiness, a concept also explored by philosophers like Zapffe.
- According to the text, psychology has limited its understanding of human unhappiness to the personal life-history of the individual, whereas thinkers like Rank and [Kierkegaard](#) have concluded that psychology must give way to a broader worldview, akin to theology, in order to provide a meaningful framework for understanding human character and the search for heroic apotheosis.
- The text highlights the idea that sin and neurosis are two ways of talking about the same thing, namely the complete isolation of the individual, his disharmony with nature, and his hyperindividualism, as discussed by Rank and Kierkegaard, who both reached the same conclusion after exhaustive psychological quests.

## Sin, Neurosis, and the Search for Heroic Apotheosis

- The individual's attempt to create his own world from within himself, as seen in sin and neurosis, is doomed to failure, as man cannot justify his own heroism and must live with agonizing doubts if he remains in touch with the larger reality, a concept that is also related to the idea of the "nightmare of existence" discussed by Zapffe.
- The text also explores the idea that the sinner or neurotic is hyperconscious of their creatureliness, miserableness, and unworthiness, and is thrown back on their true perceptions of the human condition, which can lead to a deeper understanding of the human condition, as discussed by thinkers like Tillich, [Vivekananda](#), and Cioran.
- Ultimately, the text suggests that modern man needs a "thou" to turn to for spiritual and moral dependence, and that the therapist has replaced [God](#) in this role, but that this replacement is not a sufficient solution to the problem of human unhappiness, and that a more comprehensive worldview is needed to address the human search for meaning and heroic apotheosis.

## Neurosis as Sin and the Need for a Collective Ideology

- The text discusses the concept of neurosis and its relation to the human condition, highlighting that the more an individual separates and inflates themselves, the more anxious they become, alternating between extremes of self-importance and self-deprecation.
- The author notes that the historical difference between the classical sinner and the modern neurotic lies in the lack of a symbolic world-view or God-ideology that would provide meaning to their unworthiness, leaving the neurotic with a sense of nothingness that qualifies them only for miserable extinction.
- According to Otto Rank's conclusion, neurosis is not a disease, but rather a sin, and the only cure is a world-view or collective ideology that allows the individual to accept their place as a creature, with the symbolism of God being a potential cure.
- The text also explores the idea that modern man is plagued by hyperconsciousness and separateness, and that the only way to overcome this is through a balance of reflection and action, as excessive reflection can drive one mad, while excessive action without reflection can make one a brute.

- The author criticizes those who reject the existentialist courage of despair as a morbid longing for negativity, arguing that it is actually a courageous acceptance of the negative, and that the creative expression of decay can be a meaningful attempt to reveal the meaninglessness of one's situation.
- The text concludes that the modern neurotic must find a way to welcome a living illusion, or a collective ideology, in order to be "cured", but notes that this is a difficult task, as traditional world-views are no longer readily available, and religion has become a highly personal matter that can be seen as neurotic or a private fantasy.
- The author ultimately suggests that neurosis is the modern tragedy of man, as individuals are left to create their own meaning and purpose in life, without the guidance of traditional world-views or collective ideologies, leaving them feeling like orphans in a world without a clear sense of direction.

## The Modern Mind, Faith, and the Rejection of Mystery

- The modern individual is unable to take the "lonely leap into faith" as prescribed by [Kierkegaard](#), due to the lack of external rituals and customs that once provided a sense of transcendental support for one's life, making faith seem fantastic and unattainable.
- The characteristic of the modern mind is the rejection of mystery, naive belief, and simple-minded hope, instead emphasizing the visible, clear, cause-and-effect relation, and the logical, which can lead to a sense of mental and physical paralysis in individuals who are unable to find meaning or purpose in life.
- The neurotic individual is characterized by their complete certainty about their situation in relation to reality, having no doubts and being convinced of the meaninglessness and purposelessness of life, which is exemplified by their awareness of their own mortality and the impermanence of all things.
- G. K. Chesterton is noted for keeping alive the spirit of Kierkegaard and naive [Christianity](#) in modern thought, highlighting that the modern mind's emphasis on logic and reason can be a trait of madness, and that the ability to be careless, disregard appearances, and relax is a key aspect of sanity that is often lacking in neurotic individuals.

- Faith requires individuals to expand themselves trustingly into the nonlogical and fantastic, which is difficult for modern individuals who are constricted into themselves and lack a collective drama or shared illusion to make fantasy seem real, and this spiritual expansion is necessary for finding meaning and purpose in life.

## **The Science of Mental Health and the Role of Illusion**

- The question of human life is what level of illusion one lives on, and the science of mental health must consider what is the "best" illusion under which to live, or what is the most legitimate foolishness, in order to promote life-enhancing illusions that address human basic conditions and needs.
- Religion provides a solution to the problem of transference by expanding awe and terror to the cosmos, and removes the problem of self-justification from objects near at hand, offering a way to find meaning and purpose in life beyond individual mortal concerns.
- The pursuit of independent values and self-justification is facilitated by religion, as it allows individuals to lean on a higher power, specifically [God](#), who does not oppose them, but rather provides the necessary support for personal growth and development, as noted by the quote from Cioran, "the only illusion worth pursuing".
- Religion offers hope by introducing the concept of the unknown and the unknowable, which transcends the limitations and frustrations of earthly life, and provides a sense of limitless possibility and multidimensionality, making the human condition more bearable, and as stated, "relieves the absurdity of earthly life".

## **Individuation, Depression, and the Burden of Heroic Expectations**

- The process of individuation, as discussed by Adler, can be a terrifying experience, as it involves being alone and losing the support and delegated power of others, which is why many people rely on a "life-lie" to cope with the demands of daily life, and even prominent figures like Freud and Jung can be

overwhelmed by simple tasks, highlighting the magnitude of the task for the average person.

- The failure to live up to one's own potential and the inability to convincingly perform heroic actions can lead to [depression](#) and feelings of guilt, as the individual is no longer able to hide their failure to be their own hero, and as Boss notes, these guilt feelings are existential, representing the failure to fulfill one's own potential and live one's own life.
- The depressed person often exaggerates their guilt as a way to unblock their dilemma and garner sympathy and support from others, as pointed out by Adler, and this can be seen in their self-accusations of worthlessness and their desire to be pitied and taken care of by those around them, which can be a limiting factor in their relationships and a hindrance to their personal freedom.

## Schizophrenia, Anxiety, and the Nature of Creativity

- The schizophrenic individual is characterized by an overwhelming burden of anxiety and fear, which is almost as constant as their daily breath, and this is due to their realistic perception of the human condition, as described by [William James](#) and [Otto Rank](#), who used the term "neurotic" to describe someone who sees things as they are and is overwhelmed by the fragility of human existence.
- According to [Alfred Adler](#), the schizophrenic person is crippled by the fear of life and its demands, and has a low self-evaluation, mistrusting not only themselves but also the knowledge and ability of others, which leads them to fabricate a fantastic ideational system for their own salvation.
- The human experience is split into two modes, the symbolic self and the physical body, and in some people, including schizophrenics, these two modes can be quite distinct and unintegrated, leading to a hypersensitive individual reacting to their body as something strange and untrustworthy.
- [Schizophrenia](#) can also reveal the nature of creativity, as the individual who is physically unprogrammed in the cultural causa-sui project must invent their own, and the creative person becomes a mediator of natural terror and an indicator of a new way to triumph over it, as seen in art, literature, and religion, with examples including shamans and Shakespeare.

- However, if the schizophrenic individual is not creative, they can be a completely inverted and pathetic failure, as seen in mental hospitals, and an impoverished and powerless person, even if they perceive truth, has no gift to offer to their fellows or themselves, and is totally crippled by life-and-death fears.

## Schizophrenia, Symbolic Experience, and the Struggle for Heroism

- The schizophrenic person is not programmed neurally into automatic response to social meanings, and cannot marshal an ego response or directive control of their experiences, leading them to use their symbolic inner experiences as an experiential anchor, and becoming controlled by them instead of reshaping and using them, as described by theorists such as Rank and Adler.
- The concept of heroism is explored in the context of mental illness, where individuals with schizophrenia or [depression](#) may struggle to find inner glory and instead fabricate a sense of heroism in a clumsy and inverted way, leading to intense and all-absorbing psychotic transferences.
- Perversions can be seen as "private religions" that attempt to transcend the human condition and achieve satisfaction, with perverts often believing their approach is superior and life-enhancing, similar to true believers who trumpet their own path to eternal glory, as noted by philosophers such as Tillich, [Vivekananda](#), Tolstoy, and Cioran.
- The problem of mental illness is framed as a matter of not knowing what kind of heroics one is practicing, or being unable to broaden one's heroics from their crippling narrowness, which can be attributed to weakness and stupidity, rather than a lack of resources or a strong ego.

## Perversity, Relativism, and the Search for Meaning

- All living organisms are inherently limited and condemned to perversity, being mere fragments of a larger totality that they cannot fully understand or cope with, and therefore must ask what kind of perversity is fitting for humans, as philosophized by Epictetus.

- The issue of relativism and nihilism is raised, where individuals may be puzzled or disheartened by the fact that each person has a different version of what life ought to be, and may struggle to find a moral framework, as highlighted by the absurd perspective and the problem of not being able to determine who is right.
- The quotes from Freud highlight his pessimistic view of human nature, where he found most people to be "trash" and departing from high ethical ideals, and his own limitations in yielding emotionally to superordinate power or conceptually to the transcendental dimension, being confined to the visible world.

## The Knight of Faith and the Ideal of Mental Health

- The concept of the "knight of faith" is introduced, who accepts whatever happens in the visible dimension without complaint, lives their life as a duty, and faces death without a qualm, embodying a sense of acceptance and duty in the face of uncertainty and mortality.
- The concept of the "knight of faith" is discussed, which represents an ideal of mental health characterized by openness, generosity, and courage, allowing individuals to touch others' lives and enrich them without causing them to shrink back in fear or being coerced.
- This ideal is considered beautiful and challenging, but ultimately unattainable for most people, including prominent thinkers like [Kierkegaard](#), Tillich, and [Vivekananda](#), who acknowledged the experience of meaninglessness and nihilism as a stronger and more true experience that cannot be overcome by human effort alone.
- The idea of the knight of faith is compared to the concept of selflessness, which is also considered impossible to achieve, as the experience of meaninglessness and the finite/infinite gap between human limitations and the infinite cannot be bridged by human effort, and faith is ultimately a matter of grace.
- The text also critiques the ideas of Kierkegaard and Freud, suggesting that they both have shortcomings, with Kierkegaard erring on the side of the invisible and Freud on the side of the visible, and that their ideas, although influential, are not without flaws and limitations.



- The author concludes that true sainthood is a matter of grace, not human effort, and that the most one can achieve is a certain relaxedness and openness to experience, which depends on individual talent and the presence of a driving force or "daimonis", and that even the greatest thinkers and achievers are not immune to the limitations and burdens of human existence.

## **The Pursuit of Ideals and the Limits of Human Fulfillment**

- The text ultimately suggests that the pursuit of ideals like the knight of faith or sainthood is a creative illusion that can inspire and guide individuals, but that true fulfillment and transcendence are not within human reach, and that the best one can strive for is a sense of openness and relaxedness in the face of life's challenges and uncertainties.
- The problem of being a human being and finding one's place in the world is a complex and ambiguous issue that cannot be satisfactorily advised on by others, as noted by [William James](#), and it requires individuals to find their own way to balance their passion and autonomy with their reliance on a higher power.
- The search for meaning and purpose in life can lead individuals to create something, such as art or science, but this can only provide a temporary illusion of meaning, as seen in the example of Robin Williams, and ultimately, it is not enough to give life lasting significance.

## **Eastern Mysticism, the Courage to Confront Meaninglessness, and the Divided Self**

- The philosopher [Paul Tillich](#) argued that Eastern mysticism is not suitable for Western individuals because it evades the courage to confront and absorb the meaninglessness of life, and instead, it can be a form of manic defense and denial of one's creatureliness, lacking the element of skepticism that is necessary for a more radical and authentic experience.
- The difficulty of living with the tension between the visible and invisible worlds, as noted by James, can lead to a divided self and double-mindedness,

where individuals are pulled in different directions and struggle to find a sense of unity and purpose.

- The human condition, as described by Andre Malraux, is marked by a painful paradox, where individuals spend their lives developing and growing, only to ultimately face death and oblivion, and this realization can lead to a sense of agonizing uniqueness and desperation.
- Ultimately, the therapeutic enterprise is called into question, as it may not be able to provide sufficient comfort and joy to individuals who are fully awakened to the desperate situation of human existence, and it may even be seen as inadequate in addressing the normality of neurosis and the inevitability of stumbling through life.

## **The Dangers of Self-Knowledge and the Limits of Therapy**

- The concept of self-knowledge can be devastating for some individuals, as it can reveal the harsh realities of life, and some therapists fail to warn their patients about the potential dangers of total liberation, which can lead to feelings of terror and dread.
- The idea that therapy can provide a sense of liberation and joy is often accompanied by a lack of acknowledgment of the potential risks involved, and therapists like Freud have been honest about the fact that curing neuroses can simply reveal the normal miseries of life.
- Many therapies rely on metaphysical concepts and promises of mystical contact or connection to a higher power to provide support and hope to individuals who are struggling with the realities of their existence, as seen in the ideas of Wilhelm Reich and Carl Jung, who both reached for metaphysical solutions to the human condition.
- The search for hope and meaning is a fundamental aspect of human nature, and even great thinkers like Reich and Jung have been unable to rest content with the idea of the tragic nature of human existence, instead seeking out more optimistic and hopeful solutions, such as Reich's concept of Orgone or Jung's interest in the I Ching.

# The Limits of Human Nature and the Myth of New Being

- The human condition is inherently limited, and there is no way to transcend these limits or change the psychological structural conditions that make humanity possible, as noted by philosophers like Freud, who recognized the impossibility of truly overcoming human nature.
- The idea of a "New Being" or a new type of person who can emerge and overcome the limitations of human nature is a notion that has been repeated throughout history, but it is ultimately a fanciful idea, as seen in the concepts of [Paul Tillich](#), who believed in the emergence of a new type of person who would be more in harmony with nature, but also recognized the limitations and illusions of this idea.
- The concept of the "knight of faith" or achieving complete selflessness is considered a myth, an ideal that can be worked towards but not fully realized, as humans can only cope with the terror of existence through repressions, distractions, and diversions.
- According to Tillich, a creative myth, such as the concept of New Being, should be used as a call to the highest and most difficult effort, rather than a means to simple joy, and should be bold and generative in order to be truly effective.

## Tillich's New Being, Courage, and the Problem of Meaninglessness

- Tillich's idea of the New Being emphasizes the importance of having the "courage to be" oneself, to face the eternal contradictions of the real world, and to absorb the maximum amount of nonbeing into one's own being, which is a truly cosmic heroism.
- The problem of meaninglessness is a fundamental issue that poses itself in the form of nonbeing, and requires the boldest creative myths to help men see the reality of their condition and to urge them on to face the anxiety of meaninglessness.

- The pursuit of New Being, however, will only bring into play new and sharper paradoxes, new tensions, and more painful disharmonies, as reality is remorseless and gods do not walk upon the earth, and men who become noble repositories of great gulfs of nonbeing will have even less peace.
- The idea of therapeutic megalomania, which suggests that analyzing one's psychological complexes or making love with tenderness can solve the problems of the world, is considered foolish, and it is Freud's somber pessimism that keeps him contemporary, as men are doomed to live in an overwhelmingly tragic and demonic world.
- Taking life seriously means acknowledging the terror of creation, the grotesque, and the rumble of panic underneath everything, and living in the lived truth of this reality, rather than trying to escape or deny it, which is why mysticism is not a stopping point, but a guide that does not overpower the experience of meaninglessness and nihilism.

## **Faith as Ultimate Concern and the Justification of Actions**

- Paul Tillich's concept of faith is defined as the state of being ultimately concerned, and genuine faith requires total surrender to the subject of ultimate concern, which is an ideal that may seem impossible to reach, but must still be strived towards, as seen in the examples of martyrs and suicides who ultimately surrender to their beliefs.
- The concept of ultimate concern is discussed in relation to various value structures, including Islam, and how it can lead to the justification of actions such as terrorism when a particular ideology is given ultimate importance.
- The idea of faith is explored, with references to philosophers such as Otto, who describes faith as an act that transcends both rational and non-rational elements of human being, and Tillich, who states that faith is the passion for the infinite and that there is no faith without a content toward which it is directed.
- The distinction between true faith and idolatrous faith is highlighted, with true faith being concerned with the truly ultimate, while idolatrous faith elevates preliminary, finite realities to the rank of ultimacy, leading to existential disappointment and a sense of meaninglessness.

# Transcendence, the Infinite, and the Search for Meaning

- The concept of transcendence is also discussed, with references to the idea of ecstasy, or standing outside of oneself, and the use of entheogens such as shrooms and cannabis to experience a sense of connection to something bigger than oneself.
- The idea that human experiences and concerns are finite and conditional is emphasized, and that humans are driven towards faith by their awareness of the infinite, as described by philosophers such as Zapffe and [Vivekananda](#).
- The importance of recognizing the difference between the ultimate and the preliminary, finite realities is stressed, with Tillich noting that a critical principle is at work in human religious consciousness to distinguish between what is truly ultimate and what is only preliminary or transitory.
- The text also touches on the idea that all speaking about divine matters that is not done in the state of ultimate concern is meaningless, and that philosophy and abstractness can be seen as a decently accurate symbol for speaking or thinking about [God](#).
- The concept of existential disappointment is explored, with the idea that idolatrous faith will eventually lead to a sense of disappointment and meaninglessness, as noted by philosophers such as [Augustine](#) and [Kierkegaard](#), and that even those who do not recognize this disappointment are still stuck in the human condition, which is characterized by a sense of disconnection and doubt.

## The Holy, the Infinite, and the Human Heart

- The concept of the holy is described as the awareness of the presence of the divine, which is a mysterious and powerful force that can be both attractive and repulsive to those who encounter it, as noted by philosophers such as Tillich.
- The human heart seeks the infinite because it is where the finite wants to rest, and in the infinite, it sees its own fulfillment, which is a profound expression of man's relation to the holy, as experienced by the author in a mushroom trip where they felt a sense of humility and oneness with something truly Other.

- The holy has been identified with moral perfection, but originally, it meant what is apart from the ordinary realm of things and experiences, and it transcends this realm, making it mysterious and unapproachable, with philosophers like Nietzsche and Tillich discussing its complexities.
- The holy can appear as both creative and destructive, and it has been called the "entirely other", which is a concept that goes beyond the alternative of good and evil, and is both divine and demonic, as noted by Tillich, who would have been aware of Nietzsche's concept of "Beyond".

## **The Changing Concept of the Holy and the Nature of Faith**

- The concept of the holy has changed over time, and it has become identified with justice and truth, but in doing so, it has lost its meaning as the "separated", the "transcending", and the "fascinating and terrifying", and has become the morally good and the logically true, which is a point also discussed by philosophers like Heisman.
- Faith is an act of a finite being who is grasped by and turned to the infinite, and it includes an element of immediate awareness which gives certainty, but also an element of uncertainty, which cannot be removed and must be accepted with courage, as noted by the author and supported by the ideas of Tillich and other philosophers.
- The author emphasizes that the experience of the holy is not a philosophical argument, but a call for experience, and that it is a real and profound experience that cannot be logic-chopped, and that the danger of faith is idolatry, but faith can also heal and destroy, as noted by the author and supported by the ideas of Heisman and other philosophers.

## **Courage, the Risk of Faith, and the Finite/Infinite Distinction**

- The concept of courage is closely tied to faith, as it involves the daring self-affirmation of one's own being in spite of the power of "nonbeing" that is

inherent in everything finite, as noted in the discussion of courage as an element of faith.

- The risk of faith is that what is considered a matter of ultimate concern may ultimately prove to be a matter of preliminary and transitory concern, leading to a breakdown in the meaning of one's life, as seen in the example of national claims.
- 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, highlighting the importance of distinguishing between ultimate and non-ultimate concerns.
- The finite/infinite distinction is crucial in understanding the nature of faith and doubt, as it recognizes that concrete elements of religion must be symbolic and that a [god](#) may disappear, but divinity remains, as stated in the discussion of the finite/infinite distinction.

## Faith, Doubt, and the Importance of Skepticism

- Faith can be understood in two ways: as belief that something is true, in which case doubt is incompatible with the act of faith, or as being ultimately concerned, in which case doubt is a necessary element, as noted in the distinction between these two understandings of faith.
- Skeptical doubt is an attitude towards all beliefs of man, from sense experiences to religious creeds, and is more an attitude than an assertion, as it would conflict with itself if it were to be made into an assertion, as seen in the discussion of the self-refuting nature of skepticism.
- The self-refuting nature of skepticism is highlighted by the fact that 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, as noted in the critique of skepticism.
- Genuine skeptical doubt does not use the form of an assertion, but rather is an attitude of actually rejecting any certainty, which can lead to despair, cynicism, or indifference, but ultimately breaks down, as seen in the discussion of the dynamics of skeptical doubt.
- The despair about truth shown by the skeptic demonstrates that truth is still their infinite passion, and the cynical superiority over every concrete truth

shows that truth is still taken seriously, as noted in the discussion of the relationship between skepticism and truth.

- Faith and doubt are intertwined, with existential doubt being a necessary element of faith, as it involves the doubt of one who is ultimately concerned about a concrete content, and is distinct from methodological and skeptical doubt, as seen in the discussion of the relationship between faith and doubt.

## **Anxiety, Doubt, and the Awareness of Finitude**

- The concept of anxiety is closely tied to the awareness of one's finitude, and while it may not be a permanent experience, it is always present as an underlying structure of finite life, making its appearance under special conditions possible, as noted by philosophers such as [Paul Tillich](#).
- Serious doubt is not a rejection of faith, but rather a confirmation of it, indicating the seriousness of one's concern and its unconditional character, which is a perspective shared by many Christians and other religious groups who experience anxiety, guilt, and despair about what they call a "loss of faith".
- The relationship between faith and creedal statements is complex, and according to Tillich, creedal expressions of the ultimate concern of a community must include their own criticism, acknowledging that they are not ultimate, but rather pointing to the ultimate which is beyond all of them, a concept he refers to as the "Protestant principle", which is also reflected in the views of [Vivekananda](#).
- Faith is not a low degree of knowledge, but rather a response to the infinite, which is beyond all finite things, and is experienced through symbols that are created to interact with this experience, but are only symbols, as the finite/infinite distinction is unbridgeable, a idea that is central to Tillich's philosophy.

## **Ultimate Concern, Atheism, and the Symbolism of Faith**

- The ultimate concern is not in conflict with empirical or transitory issues, and even those who rally against it, such as atheists, are affirming a sense of



"rightness" and "truth" that shows some form of concern or ultimacy, and needs to recognize the symbolism of faith, as Tillich argues that we are all striving towards the same infinite.

- The use of symbols, such as the name of [God](#), can easily become an abuse or blasphemy, as God transcends his own name, and whatever is said about that which concerns us ultimately has a symbolic meaning, a point that Tillich emphasizes in his discussion of symbolism.
- The question of whether a particular symbol of faith "exists" is meaningless, as existence refers to something within the whole of reality, and the question is rather which of the numerous symbols of faith is most adequate to the meaning of faith, a question that is at the heart of Tillich's philosophy, and is also relevant to the ideas of [Vivekananda](#).

## **Faith, Symbols, and the Inadequacy of the Finite**

- The discussion revolves around the concept of faith and its relationship with symbols, highlighting that the qualities attributed to the ultimate reality are derived from finite experiences and applied symbolically to that which is beyond finitude and infinity, as noted in the context of 'Journal314\_47-52'.
- The text emphasizes that holy things are not holy in themselves, but rather point beyond themselves to the source of all holiness, which is of ultimate concern, and that those who live in an unbroken mythological world resist any attempt to introduce uncertainty by making conscious the symbolic character of their beliefs.
- Literalism is criticized for depriving [God](#) of his ultimacy and majesty by drawing him down to the level of the finite and conditional, and for disregarding the symbolic character of symbols, which can lead to idolatry when faith takes its symbolism literally.
- The importance of recognizing the symbolic character of faith's symbols is stressed, as it allows faith to give God the honor due to him, and the text also touches on the idea that faith is inadequate if one's whole existence is determined by something that is less than ultimate.

## **Entheogens, the Infinite Tension of Faith, and the Relativity of Life**

- The concept of entheogens is mentioned as something that can grasp the mind with terrifying and fascinating power, breaking into ordinary reality and driving it beyond itself in an ecstatic way, and the text also references the courage needed to face one's own relativity and the greatness and danger that comes with it.
- The idea of the infinite tension between the absoluteness of faith's claim and the relativity of its life is discussed, highlighting the divided-self and double-mindedness that can result from this tension, and the text notes that faith experiences the content of its ultimate concern through various mediums, such as sacraments, which can produce awe, fascination, and adoration.
- The text also references the thoughts of various individuals, including [Vivekananda](#) and James, in discussing the correlation between the subject and the author of faith, and the idea that there is no criterion by which faith can be judged from outside the correlation of faith, although the faithful can ask themselves whether the medium through which they experience ultimate concern expresses real ultimacy.
- Ultimately, the discussion highlights the importance of recognizing the inadequacy of the finite and the need to distinguish between the sacred object and the ultimate reality, as the human mind often forgets this inadequacy and identifies the sacred object with the ultimate itself, losing sight of its character as a bearer of the holy that points beyond itself.

## **Mysticism, Sacramental Faith, and the Ultimate Reality**

- The act of faith is no longer directed towards the ultimate self, but rather towards symbols that represent the ultimate, such as the tree, the book, the building, or the person, as noted by Vivekananda in the context of symbolism.
- Mystics identify the ultimate with the ground or substance of everything, and their interest in mystical faith is not to reject concrete, sacramental ways of faith, but to go beyond them, recognizing that mysticism is not irrational.
- The true content of faith in an ultimate concern cannot be identified with a piece of reality or expressed in terms of a rational system, but is rather a matter of ecstatic experience that can only be spoken of in a language that

denies the possibility of speaking about it, as described in the concept of negative theology.

- In order to experience the ultimate, one must empty themselves of all finite contents of their ordinary life, surrender all preliminary concerns, and transcend the division of existence through meditation, contemplation, and ecstasy, as advocated by [Vivekananda](#) and achievable through means such as entheogens, suffering, or renunciation.

## **The Mystic's Awareness of the Infinite and the Presence of the Ultimate**

- 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 by the final ecstasy, and recognizes that the ultimate shall always be present and remembered even in the smallest activities of ordinary life.
- The question of faith is not about specific religious figures such as Moses, [Jesus](#), or Mohammed, but rather about who expresses one's ultimate concern most adequately, and the conflict between religions is a conflict between expressions of ultimate concern, as noted by Vivekananda.

## **Humanist Faith, the Revolutionary Movement, and the Power of Belief**

- The humanist faith of the moral type, which emphasizes moral demands rather than rituals or ascetic practices, has been taken over by the revolutionary movement of the proletarian masses and is visible in everyday life, giving tremendous power to both good and evil, and is distinct from the mystical type of faith, as seen in the works of philosophers such as Nietzsche, [Kierkegaard](#), Tolstoy, [Vivekananda](#), and Cioran.
- Faith, as described in the New Testament, is the state of being grasped by the divine Spirit, and a faith that destroys reason destroys itself and the humanity of man, as reason is necessary to distinguish ultimate and preliminary concerns, understand the unconditional commands of the ethical imperative, and be aware of the presence of the holy.

- Man's reason is finite and moves within finite relations when dealing with the universe and himself, and all cultural activities have this character of finitude, making them not matters of ultimate concern, but rather man experiences a belonging to the infinite, which is neither a part of himself nor something in his power.

## **The Finite and Infinite in Human Reason and Ultimate Concern**

- The concept of ultimate concern is crucial, as it must grasp an individual and is a matter of infinite concern, with human reason being driven beyond its finite limits to experience the presence of the ultimate, the holy, as noted by philosophers such as Mckenna and Tillich.
- Human beings are finite, yet aware of their potential infinity, and this awareness appears as their ultimate concern, which can be fulfilled through experiences that transcend the limits of finitude, such as those induced by mushrooms or cannabis, as mentioned in the context of personal experimentation and exploration.

## **Estrangement, Self-Negation, and the Pursuit of Spiritual Growth**

- The state of estrangement from one's true nature is a fundamental aspect of the human condition, and the criterion of the truth of faith is that it implies an element of self-negation, acknowledging the lack of ultimacy in any symbol or representation of the ultimate, as discussed in the context of various sects of religion and philosophical perspectives, including those of [Vivekananda](#) and Karma [Yoga](#).
- Faith is not possible without participation in the object of one's ultimate concern, and every act of faith presupposes participation in that toward which it is directed, with the mystical type of faith emphasizing this aspect the most strongly, and highlighting the importance of turning inward, contemplation, meditation, and solitude in the pursuit of spiritual growth and understanding.

# Participation, Separation, and the Interplay of Faith and Doubt

- The human situation, with its finitude and estrangement, prevents participation in the ultimate without both separation and the promise of faith, and there is no faith without separation, as noted by Tillich, who emphasizes the finite/infinite distinction that is unbridgeable, and the importance of acknowledging this distinction in the pursuit of spiritual growth and understanding.
- The experience of meaninglessness is a prominent aspect of the human condition, and it transcends the mystical experience, with doubt being an inherent part of faith, as it follows from the element of separation, and faith being certain due to the element of participation, as discussed in the context of the interplay between faith and doubt.
- Ultimately, neither faith nor doubt can be eliminated from human existence, as the life of faith is a fundamental aspect of the human condition, and the danger of traditional attitudes and education is that they may prevent faith from breaking through to a state of living faith, as noted in the context of the importance of personal experience and experimentation in the pursuit of spiritual growth and understanding.

## The Pursuit of Ultimate Concern and the Dangers of Idolatry

- The pursuit of ultimate concern can lead to a powerful life of faith, but it can also result in emptiness, cynicism, and idolatrous forms of ultimate concern if individuals become hesitant to communicate symbols and wait for independent questions about the meaning of life to arise, as noted by philosophers such as [Vivekananda](#) and Tillich.
- Ultimate concern is experienced in intense emotions, including passion, anxiety, despair, and ecstasy, and it is characterized by infinite passion, as emphasized by Vivekananda, who speaks of the thief left in the room with gold and the boy who has his head held under water, going 'mad' for [God](#), a concept also testified to by Plato and Cioran.

- The ultimate concern gives depth, direction, and unity to all other concerns and to the whole personality, and it is only possible because of the infinite distance between the infinite and the finite, which makes the courage of faith possible, as discussed in the context of the sickness unto death and the omnipresent doubt and despair in the finite world.

## Mystical and Ethical Love, Idolatrous Faith, and the Use of Symbols

- The body can participate in both vital ecstasy and asceticism leading to spiritual ecstasy, and ultimate concern is passionate concern that unites individuals with something to which they essentially belong and from which they are existentially separated, as seen in the distinction between mystical love, which unites by negation of the self, and ethical love, which transforms by affirmation of the self.
- Idolatrous faith, on the other hand, can lead to spiritual creativity showing an increasingly shallow and empty character, and the passion of faith can be transformed into the suffering of unconquered doubt and despair, and in many cases into an escape to neurosis and psychosis, as warned against by philosophers such as [Kierkegaard](#), Tolstoy, and Nietzsche.
- The use of symbols is essential for experiencing the holy, and without them, the experience of the holy vanishes, and the distinction between mystical and ethical love can be seen in the difference between ascetic and formative activities, which may be related to the difference between jnana and bhakti/karm [yoga](#), as hinted at in the text.
- Ultimately, that which is based on an ultimate concern is not exposed to destruction by preliminary concerns and the lack of their fulfillment, and the experience of the holy is not limited to religious contexts, but can also be found in secular idolatry, such as nation and success, which can have healing power, but the basis for integration is often too narrow, as noted in the context of the poison of naturalism.

## Demythologizing Sacred Stories and the Question of Ultimate Concern

- The text discusses the concept of religion and spirituality, citing Swami Vivekananda's idea that sacred stories must be demythologized and transformed into a philosophy of religion, and ultimately into a philosophy without religion, as mentioned in his work "The Necessity of Religion".
- The text also references Paul Tillich's statement that "no one is completely without an ultimate concern", but the author questions the validity of this claim, suggesting that it may be self-contradictory and that Tillich may not have taken his own message seriously, instead using it as a talking point or "got'cha" phrase.
- The author notes that faith is a difficult concept to grasp and describe, as mentioned in "The Courage To Be", and that the answer to the question of meaning must accept the state of meaninglessness as its precondition, rather than trying to escape or remove it, as stated on page 175 of the book.

## Practical Spirituality, Critical Thinking, and the Search for Truth

- The text also quotes Swami Vivekananda's "Hints of Practical Spirituality", where he discusses the importance of not judging others and recognizing the limitations of one's own knowledge and understanding, citing the saying of [Christ](#) "Judge not that ye not be judged" and emphasizing the need for humility and caution in both religious and scientific pursuits.
- Additionally, the text highlights the importance of critical thinking and analysis, encouraging readers to approach both religious and scientific claims with a healthy dose of skepticism and to test and prove everything before accepting it, as advised by [Swami Vivekananda](#), who suggests beginning with disbelief and analyzing and testing claims before accepting them.
- The text also touches on the idea that true spirituality and devotion can be practiced in various ways, without the need for formal churches or rituals, and that the divine or ultimate reality can be accessed through individual effort and participation, as mentioned by Sam Harris in a recent talk, and as illustrated by the example of people practicing breathing and concentration as a form of devotion.

# The Hindu Mindset, Yoga, and the Pursuit of Spiritual Enlightenment

- The Hindu mindset believes that [God](#) is within oneself, and the reality of everything is the same infinite, with the world having a relative existence that fulfils its requirements but lacks independent existence, relying on the Absolute Reality beyond time, space, and causation.
- Attaining the culmination of [Yoga](#) is possible for everyone, but it requires a tremendous amount of effort and preparation, involving more than just listening to lectures or practicing breathing exercises, and instead demands a deep commitment to contemplation and spiritual growth.
- The key to spiritual life is to seek the kingdom of God first, and everything else will follow, which involves renunciation and living for an ideal, leaving no room in the mind for anything else, and meditation, or Dhyâna, is a crucial tool in this pursuit, allowing individuals to divest themselves of material conditions and connect with their divine nature.
- The body and attachment to it are major obstacles to spiritual growth, and individuals must learn to think of themselves as spirits, not bodies, and view the universe as a series of paintings or scenes on a canvas, of which they are the witness, rather than being dragged down by materialism and naturalism.

## Bhakti, Ritualism, and the Use of Symbols in Spiritual Growth

- The concept of Bhakti, or devotion, is manifested in various degrees and stages across different religions, with the lowest stage being ritualism, where abstract ideas are made concrete through symbols and forms, and while some reformers have opposed the use of symbols, they can be helpful tools for spiritual growth, as long as they are not mistaken for the ultimate goal, which is the spirit.
- The use of symbols, such as bells, music, rituals, books, and images, can be beneficial for representing abstract ideas and facilitating spiritual growth, but they should not be confused with the ultimate goal of spirituality, and individuals must be careful not to become too attached to these symbols,



instead using them as a means to an end, which is the attainment of spiritual perfection.

## **Spiritual Tradition, Intellectual Development, and the Transcendence of Idolatry**

- The text emphasizes that being born into a spiritual tradition or church can be beneficial, but dying within its rigid forms and structures can indicate a lack of spiritual growth and development, as it is essential to move beyond these external forms to achieve true spiritual understanding.
- The development of the soul is not solely an intellectual process, and a person can be highly intelligent yet spiritually immature, as evidenced by the fact that many people struggle to conceive of abstract concepts like omnipresence, instead relying on material images and idolatry.
- Idolatry is a natural part of human nature, and people are born with a tendency to worship symbols and forms, but the goal of spiritual growth is to transcend this idolatry and recognize one's true nature as spirit, which is infinite and formless.
- The text criticizes the tendency of people to fight over whose idol or form of worship is correct, and instead encourages readers to look beyond these superficial differences and recognize the unity of humanity as a single organism slowly evolving towards spiritual truth.
- The study of different religions can help people recognize that their own thoughts and ideas are not unique, but rather part of a larger universal quest for truth, and that the external forms of devotion are merely a kindergarten or preparatory stage for higher spiritual growth.
- Ultimately, the text suggests that true spiritual longing and sincerity are what matter, and that individuals must be willing to move beyond the external forms and structures of religion to reach a deeper level of understanding and connection with the divine.

## **True Religion as Being and Becoming, and the Importance of Realization**

- The concept of religion is not about doctrines, dogmas, or intellectual argumentation, but rather about being and becoming, and realizing the truth, as emphasized by the author of the text in Journal314\_47-52.
- Many people claim to believe in [God](#) and the soul, but when asked if they have actually realized or seen them, few can say they have, and this lack of personal experience is what leads to disputes and fighting among different sects, as illustrated by the story of the representatives of various sects in India who were arguing over which God was the greatest.
- A sage who was invited to decide the matter asked each of the disputants if they had seen their respective Gods, and when he found that none of them had, he realized that their arguments were based on a lack of knowledge, and that if they had truly known God, they would not have been arguing, much like a jar that is full of water makes no noise, but one that is being filled does.
- The author also notes that many people are atheists, but some, like the materialists, are sincere in their beliefs, whereas others, who claim to be religious but do not truly practice or understand their faith, are insincere, and that the desire for perfection and reaching the goal of spiritual enlightenment can only be achieved by those who truly want it and are willing to make an effort to realize it.

## The Desire for Spiritual Growth and the Search for Self-Realization

- The author criticizes the way many people approach religion, using the example of a woman who collects furniture from all over the world and adds a little bit of religion to her life as a fashion statement, and instead suggests that true religion is about a deep desire for spiritual growth and self-realization, as illustrated by the story of the disciple who wanted religion and was taught by his master that he must want it as desperately as he wants a breath of air when he is underwater.
- The author, who is likely [Vivekananda](#), given the style and content of the text, emphasizes that the search for truth and spiritual growth is not about security or intellectual argumentation, but about a non-rational, direct experience of the ultimate reality, and that this desire for truth is what drives individuals to

seek spiritual enlightenment, rather than just following religious dogma or seeking material possessions.

## **The Awakening of Spiritual Desire and the Longing for God**

- The attainment of true religion requires a deep-seated desire or thirst for a higher power, and until this desire is awakened, one's efforts to achieve spiritual growth are insincere, as they are driven by intellect or external influences rather than a genuine longing for connection with a higher power.
- A person who has awakened to this desire becomes consumed by a longing to connect with [God](#), and this longing is characterized by a sense of madness or urgency that drives them to seek out a deeper understanding of the divine, as illustrated by the example of a thief who becomes obsessed with obtaining a vast treasure that is just out of reach.

## **Preparations for Spiritual Growth and the True Love of God**

- The process of spiritual growth and development involves a series of preparations, including the use of forms, ceremonies, prayers, and other rituals, which serve to purify the soul and prepare it for a deeper connection with God, but these preparations are only the beginning, and true love of God requires a selfless and unconditional devotion.
- According to Tillich, the true love of God is not about seeking rewards or avoiding punishment, but rather about cultivating a deep and abiding connection with the divine, and as [Kierkegaard](#) notes, this connection is often motivated by egotistical desires rather than a genuine desire for spiritual growth.

## **The Test of True Love and the Nature of Devotion**

- The first test of true love is that it knows no bargaining, and as long as one's devotion to [God](#) is motivated by a desire for personal gain or reward, it is not

true love, but rather a form of spiritual shopkeeping, as illustrated by the example of a person who prays for wealth, children, or territory.

- True love of God is characterized by a willingness to let go of fear and to approach the divine with a sense of openness and vulnerability, as illustrated by the example of a mother who protects her child from harm, and this love is not motivated by a desire for reward or a fear of punishment, but rather by a deep and abiding connection with the divine.
- As the text notes, even intellectual and spiritual leaders, such as Tillich and Kierkegaard, recognize that the true love of God is not about fear or reward, but rather about cultivating a deep and abiding connection with the divine, and that this connection is characterized by a sense of selflessness, openness, and vulnerability.

## **The Knight of Faith and the Transcendence of Forms and Symbols**

- The concept of a "Knight of Faith" is described as someone who has passed beyond concerns about God's nature, rewards, punishments, fears, and doubts, and has reached a state of supreme devotion, where forms and symbols fall off, and they cannot belong to any particular sect.
- This state of supreme devotion is characterized by a desire to become "God-intoxicated" and to transcend limited forms and symbols, allowing the individual to experience a deeper connection with the divine, as discussed in the context of Bhakti.

## **Heidegger on Death, Authenticity, and Being-Towards-Death**

- The philosopher [Martin Heidegger](#) is referenced, particularly in relation to his ideas about the human tendency to evade the reality of death, and how this evasion conceals the true nature of existence, leading to an inauthentic way of being.
- Heidegger's concept of "being towards death" is explored, highlighting the distinction between obsessing over the details of one's own death and

acknowledging the inevitability of death, with the latter being seen as a more philosophical and authentic approach.

- The anticipation of one's own death is seen as a liberating force, allowing individuals to break free from the influence of others and live more authentically, and this anticipation is characterized as an "anticipation" rather than an "actualizing" of death.

## **Anxiety, Curiosity, and the Authentic Experience of Existence**

- The idea of anxiety is discussed in relation to being in the world, and how it can bring about a moment of vision, disclosing the authentic "there" and allowing individuals to experience existence in a more authentic way, as noted in the context of finitude and the human situation.
- The concept of curiosity is also explored, suggesting that it is driven by a desire for the infinite, rather than a fascination with the finite, and that it is activated by the fleeting nature of the present moment, which is characterized by a "falling kind of temporalizing".

## **Dasein, Thrownness, and the Search for Authenticity**

- The concept of "Being-towards-death" is discussed, where [Dasein](#), or human existence, is thrown into the world and initially flees from the reality of its own mortality, becoming lost in the world and its factual concerns.
- In order to exist authentically, Dasein must reject the worldly influences and arbitrary norms, and instead, anticipate its own death, allowing it to see its existence as transitory and fleeting, and to renounce the worldly realm and its unthinking influences.
- The experience of anxiety is described as a state where Dasein is taken back to its "naked uncanniness" and becomes fascinated by the nothingness and insignificance of the world, which reveals the nullity of worldly concerns and the impossibility of projecting oneself upon a potentiality-for-Being.
- This anxiety is not a fear of something specific, but rather a feeling of uncertainty and insignificance in the face of the unknown, and it is through

this experience that Dasein can discover its authentic self, unencumbered by worldly affairs and material concerns.

## **Anticipation, Renunciation, and the Authentic Existence of Dasein**

- The concept of "anticipation" is introduced, which refers to the authentic existence of [Dasein](#), where it lets itself come towards itself as its ownmost potentiality-for-being, and this anticipation is not based on a present or past, but rather on the future, which must be won from the inauthentic future.
- The idea of renunciation is emphasized, as seen in the works of philosophers such as [Kierkegaard](#), Tillich, and Cioran, where the individual must renounce the worldly realm and its influences in order to discover their authentic self, and this renunciation is necessary to experience the "ultimate concern" or the authentic self that is not repressed by worldly concerns.
- The temporal meaning of this revealing is also discussed, where the experience of anxiety discloses the insignificance of the world and reveals the nullity of worldly concerns, allowing Dasein to understand its authentic potentiality-for-being and to exist in a state of authenticity.

## **Authenticity, Nihilism, and the Discovery of the True Self**

- The concept of anxiety is discussed as a fundamental aspect of human existence, where individuals are anxious about their own mortality and the uncertainty of the world, and this anxiety can liberate them from inauthentic possibilities and allow them to become free for authentic ones.
- According to Heidegger, authenticity is the realization of the Self as something more than material, and it involves living as a Self, discovering what the Self is, and embracing the nothingness of the world, which is a concept closely related to Nihilism.
- The text highlights the idea that Nihilism, or the nothingness of the world, can be a foundation for a moment of vision, which allows for a resolution,

and this resolution is related to the concept of [God](#), suggesting that Nihilism and God are intertwined.

- The idea of hope is also discussed, and it is not seen as a hope for a future event, but rather as a discovery of one's true Self, and Heidegger's philosophy is described as having a deep religious significance.
- The concept of curiosity is also explored, and it is seen as a transcendental yearning that arises when faced with the nothingness of the world, and it is this curiosity that drives humans to move forward, even in the face of uncertainty and mortality.

## **Resoluteness, Being-Towards-Death, and the Nullity of Dasein**

- Heidegger's concept of resoluteness is discussed, which involves taking over authentically in one's existence the fact that one is the null basis of one's own nullity, and this resoluteness is characterized as an anticipation of Being-towards-death, which reveals the nullity of [Dasein](#) and allows for an authentic understanding of one's potentiality-for-Being-guilty.
- The text also touches on the idea that authentic resoluteness involves keeping repeating itself, and not falling into the nothingness of the world, and that this path is narrow and unintelligible to the common sense manner in which people understand Dasein or Being.
- Finally, Heidegger makes a distinction between worldly hope, which is seen as a distraction from the anxiety of existence, and an ecstatico-temporal relation to the thrown ground of itself, which is described as a mystical or entheogenic experience, highlighting the complexity and depth of human existence.

## **The Nothing of the World, Conscience, and the Nullity of Existence**

- Heidegger's concept of the 'nothing of the world' is described as a negative that signifies something positive, which is a key aspect of the Nihilistic Experience, and he dismisses both biological and religious explanations of this experience, instead referring to it as 'existential'.

- The idea of conscience is also explored, with Heidegger stating that the concept of 'Guilty!' must be rid of its attachment to law-breaking or an 'ought' and instead be understood as a fundamental aspect of human existence, unencumbered by false morality.
- The phenomenon of ambiguity in human interaction is discussed, where people engage in 'idle talk' and 'curiosity' to distract themselves from the nullity of their existence, and this ambiguity is seen as a fundamental aspect of [Dasein](#), or human existence, that needs to be worked through.

## Heidegger's Philosophy, Biography, and the Concept of Being with Others

- Heidegger's ideas are contrasted with those of other philosophers, such as Descartes, and his biography is often discussed, but his dismissal of biological and religious explanations of the Nothing is rarely mentioned by commentators.
- The concept of 'Being with Others' is also touched upon, with Heidegger suggesting that genuine human interaction is often obscured by the 'false' and 'worthless' mouth-noises of everyday conversation, where people engage in conflicting monologues without realizing the nullity of their possibilities.
- The idea that people 'flee' from the illusions that comfort them from their own deaths is also mentioned, with the suggestion that they only semi-consciously avoid confronting the reality of their own mortality, and that this is a fundamental aspect of human existence that needs to be acknowledged and worked through, as suggested by thinkers like Mckenna, who argues that culture is an 'intelligent test' that one must not become too comfortable with.

## Dasein, Fleeing from Death, and the Call of Conscience

- The concept of [Dasein](#) is discussed, where it is claimed that the masses do not generally understand the phenomenon of "fleeing" from death, and that seeking agreement from the masses would be a misunderstanding, as stated in section 50 of the text.



- Heidegger's explanation of the Nihilistic experience in section 57 is highlighted, where he notes that atheists and theists misinterpret this experience due to their reluctance to be authentic and confront anxiety, instead chasing after it and participating with the Nothingness of the world.
- The "call" of conscience is described as indefinite, indefinable, and a call of oneself by oneself, which is a concept also found in the ideas of [Vivekananda](#) and eastern/mystical conceptions of "unity" or "all is one", and this call is said to be a positive force that brings Dasein face to face with its own nullity.

## Uncanniness, Guilt, and the Finite/Infinite Gap

- The concept of "Uncanniness" is covered up in everyday events, and others will not understand this because they repress their true Self, leading to a sense of guilt that is not a worldly guilt of failing to meet expectations, but rather a fundamental aspect of Dasein due to the finite/infinite gap.
- Heidegger's idea of guilt is explored, where it is understood that guilt is not a result of breaching a moral requirement, but rather a result of the finite/infinite distinction, and that all actions are absurd, making it impossible for the natural self to transcend its worldly self and reach the Authentic Self.
- The concept of "Salvation through Grace only" is touched upon, and it is suggested that guilt may be the finite/infinite distinction, which allows for the pursuit of authenticity, but not its achievement, as Heidegger's "Authentic" man is an ideal to strive for, rather than a reality that can be attained.

## Heidegger's Authenticity, Guilt, and the Limitations of Human Existence

- Heidegger's own life is cited as an example, where he lived a secluded life, yet joined the Nazi party, illustrating the impossibility of being truly authentic, and that care itself is permeated with nullity, making [Dasein](#) guilty, as stated in the formally existential definition of guilt as "Being-the-basis of a nullity".
- The relationship between conscience, care, and guilt is further explored, where conscience is seen as the call of care from the uncanniness of Being-in-the-world, summoning Dasein to its ownmost potentiality-for-Being-guilty, and

that this call is often misinterpreted due to expectations of being told something useful about taking action.

- The concept of conscience, as discussed by Heidegger, is not about providing practical injunctions or maxims that can be reckoned up unequivocally, but rather about summoning Dasein to its ownmost potentiality-for-Being-its-Self, which can lead to a sense of quietism, solitude, and non-movement.

## Conscience, Care, and the Call to Authenticity

- Heidegger's interpretation of the conscience is contrasted with the everyday conception, where the conscience is seen as a universal voice that is objectively binding and not just subjective, but this interpretation is actually a fleeing in the face of the conscience, allowing Dasein to escape the uncanniness of its Being.
- The call of conscience, according to Heidegger, is not about taking action in the world, but rather about recognizing the Nothingness that is the ground of being, which can be seen as a positive content, signifying something like non-movement or a waking up to the Nothingness.

## Dasein, the "They", and the Discovery of Authentic Being

- [Dasein](#), in its everyday existence, is dispersed into the "they" and must first find itself, and this discovery of the world and disclosure of Dasein's authentic Being is accomplished through a clearing-away of concealments and obscurities, such as idle talk, curiosity, and ambiguity.
- Heidegger's conception of the conscience is seen as a middle ground between the Naturalistic and Theistic interpretations, where the conscience is neither entirely material nor a God-like character with human qualities, but rather an indefinite something that speaks in the individual subject.
- The call of conscience, as seen existentially, is not an impossible fiction, but rather a call that signifies something positive, such as non-movement, and it is only when seen in this way that Dasein can truly understand its own authentic Being and the world around it.

# Dissolution of Boundaries and the Embracing of Nothingness

- The concept of a dissolution of boundaries is necessary, which involves participating in and embracing the Nothingness that is brought about by anxiety, as discussed in the context of Heidegger's philosophy and referenced in Journal314\_47-52.
- According to Heidegger, everyday human experiences, such as equanimity and ill-humour, are not ontologically insignificant, even if they are often overlooked, and this idea is also reflected in the thoughts of [Vivekananda](#), who notes that humans live with death all the time yet never think they will die themselves, illustrating the concept of maya.
- The state of being in a lack of mood, which is often persistent and not to be mistaken for a bad mood, is actually a manifestation of [Dasein](#) becoming satiated with itself, and this burden of Being is something that cannot be fully understood or known, leaving room for the concept of doubt within faith.
- A mood of elation can temporarily alleviate the burden of Being, but this also discloses the burdensome character of Dasein, and even in everydayness, the Being of Dasein can burst forth, showing the pure existence of being, but the reasons behind it remain in darkness, highlighting the finite-infinite gap and human estrangement.

## The Burden of Being, Moods, and the Evasion of Dasein

- Heidegger notes that Dasein often evades the Being that discloses the mood, and instead, people tend to flee, distract, or cover up their true feelings, adopting a "fleeing" attitude, and this is related to the concept of "thrownness," which refers to the facticity of being delivered over to one's existence.
- The "they" character, as described by Heidegger, reacts to their thrownness by turning away from the burdensome character of Dasein, and this turning away is often done through a state-of-mind that implies a disclosive submission to the world, which can lead to encountering things that matter, but also to losing one's true Self in the process.

- Ultimately, the text touches on the idea that while we may not be able to fully grasp the generality of being in itself, we do find ourselves placed in the midst of the generality of bare being, and this existence is characterized by an essential difference between understanding the whole of being and finding oneself in the midst of being, with the former being impossible in principle and the latter happening all the time in human existence.

## **The Presence of Be-ing, Boredom, and the Revelation of Existence**

- The concept of be-ing is always present in our daily lives, even when we are not actively engaged with it, and it maintains a unity as a whole, although this unity may be hidden in the shadows, and it can be revealed in moments of profound boredom or dread.
- Profound boredom is a state where everything, including oneself, is pulled into a state of indifference, and it reveals be-ing as a whole, whereas dread is a fundamental mood that is distinct from fear and anxiety, and it is characterized by an odd calm and a sense of indeterminacy.
- Dread is not fear of something specific, but rather a feeling of uncertainty and unease that is not directed at any particular object or situation, and it is in this state that we are suspended, leaving us hanging and unable to hold on to anything, and it reveals no-thing, making everything seem indifferent and unimportant.

## **Dread, No-thing, and the Nature of Be-ing**

- The experience of dread is one of slipping away from ourselves and from be-ing, and it leaves us speechless, as every attempt to say something about it is silenced by the overwhelming presence of no-thing, and it is only by transforming our human being into its openness that we can grasp the nothing that shows up in dread exactly as it shows up.
- The author suggests that dread is a rare and fleeting experience, but one that is essential for revealing the nature of be-ing and our existence, and it is through this experience that we can gain insight into the concept of no-thing and its

relationship to be-ing, and the author's ideas are reminiscent of those expressed in "[Being and Time](#)".

## **Nothingness, Being, and the Importance of Personal Experience**

- The concept of nothingness is crucial in understanding human existence, and it is essential to approach it through personal experience, as emphasized by Heidegger in *Being and Time*, rather than rushing to extremes like [God](#) or Naturalism.
- In the state of dread, being as a whole becomes untenable, and it is characterized by a spellbound calm, which is overwhelming and can lead to a deeper understanding of existence, as described in the phrases "In dread, being as a whole becomes untenable" and "In the clear night of dread's no-thing, the original openness of being as such arises for the first time".
- The experience of nothingness, or the "no-thing", is what allows existence to transcend being and relate to itself, and without this original manifestness of no-thing, there can be no selfhood and no freedom, as stated in the text "Being there means beholdenness to no-thing" and "Without [the] original manifestness of no-thing, no selfhood and no freedom".
- Heidegger notes that this original dread is rare, and it is often disguised by our everyday dealings with being, which can lead to a superficial existence, but it is still present and can awaken at any moment, as mentioned in the text "Now what does it mean that this original dread happens only in rare instances" and "Original dread can awaken in existence at any moment".

## **The Nothingness, Creativity, and the Greatness of Existence**

- The nothingness is not something to be feared, but rather it shares a secret bond with creativity, cheerfulness, and mildness, and it is what allows existence to be daring and to preserve its ultimate greatness, as described in the phrases "For the daring, dread is not an opponent of joy or even of the comfortable pleasures of quiet busyness" and "It shares a secret bond with the cheerfulness and mildness of creative yearning".

- Heidegger also acknowledges that this position of anxiety may seem arbitrary and exaggerated, and that it may not be possible to hold onto it at all times, but it is still a fundamental aspect of human existence, as stated in the text "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" and "Is this not an arbitrary finding and the no-thing attributed to it an exaggeration".

## **Nothingness, Dread, and the Transcendence of Being**

- The concept of nothingness is deeply rooted in human existence, and its rarity makes it a profound experience that can evoke feelings of hidden dread and suspense, as it is permanently on the verge of being realized but only seldom comes into play.
- According to Hegel's proposition in the Science of Logic, "Pure being and pure no-thing is the same," which suggests that being and nothingness belong together because being itself is finite and revealed only in the transcendence of existence enduring nothingness.
- The beholdenness of existence to nothingness on the basis of hidden dread is the surmounting of being as a whole, transcendence, and it is only through this transcendence that human existence can relate to being, by being beholden to nothingness and going above and beyond being.
- The manifestation of nothingness at the heart of existence is what allows the full strangeness of being to come over us, evoking wonder and prompting us to ask the question "Why?", which is the foundation of philosophical inquiry and the driving force behind science.
- Philosophy, as distinct from science, requires a deeper engagement with the fundamental possibilities of existence as a whole, involving making room for being as a whole, letting oneself come to nothing, and embracing the suspense that arises from the basic question of metaphysics: "Why be-ing, after all, and not rather no-thing?"

## **Heidegger, Instinct, Conscience, and the Divided-Self**

- The author reflects on the insights of Heidegger, who explains the disconnect between instinct and conscience, relating to the idea of the "divided-self" and the tension between the natural self and a higher calling, which can lead to feelings of guilt and disappointment, as seen in Heidegger's own decision to join the Nazi party.
- The author reflects on the idea that prominent figures, such as priests, CEOs, teachers, writers, and philosophers, can be accused of something terrible, and they need to make a connection between Heidegger and Becker, which was previously clear but now seems hazy.

## **Heidegger, Nietzsche, and the Limits of Science**

- The author discusses Heidegger's sentiment, similar to Nietzsche's, that science, despite its ability to describe the world theoretically, cannot capture the lived experience of human emotions, such as the experience of listening to music, and that moods still play a role in science without reducing it to pure feeling.
- After reading "The Death of Ivan Illych", the author feels that the illusion of people's actions around them has become transparent, making it agonizing to see through the actions of others, and they note that sections 46-53 of Heidegger's work are important for understanding the "everydayness" of the evasion of death and the role of anxiety in drawing one away from the world.
- The author explores the idea that anxiety discloses the nothingness of all possibilities of everydayness, turning existence into an impossibility, and that this is a form of nihilism, citing the examples of Nietzsche's breakdown, Kierkegaard's "knight of faith", and Vivekananda's "selfless" being as seemingly impossible ideals.

## **Anxiety, Nihilism, and the Nothingness of Possibilities**

- The author introduces the concept of "uncanniness" as a feeling of being "not at home" in the world, and the "Call of Conscious" as a voice that tries to pull individuals away from the influence of others and back to their authentic

selves, which is seen as a path to revelation and understanding of one's true self, as discussed in Heidegger's section 57 and Vivekananda's idea of Oneness.

- The author notes that this voice of consciousness is both internal and external, saying nothing pragmatically, but serving as a positive force that guides individuals towards their true selves, and they mention that section 54 and side-note 268 begin to answer the question of where to go from this point of existential crisis.