

cannot touch the tip of the iceberg. We need to go deep, deep within ourselves to places where a serpent lies coiled under every flower. It is only when we truly question ourselves that we can break apart the Real from the Unreal. *The Voice of the Silence* states that “The Mind is the great slayer of the Real. Let the disciple slay the slayer.” (I think of the Goddess Kali holding a human head in her one hand and a saber in another.) In other words the work we need to do cannot be done by the mind. It must come from a deeper place within us where the ego does not reside, where we give up our attachment to being right, to feeling powerful and having control, to our feeling of importance. So when we state that we are living a clean life — are we? Are we honest with ourselves? Do we give freedom to the other sentient beings around us or is it a relationship based on what is best for us? Are we who we say we are, or are we living a life according to an image? Are we transparent like a clean piece of glass?

A great test for open-mindedness is to walk in circles where we aren't comfortable, to be with people who live differently from ourselves, whether culturally, economically, or even personally. I often think of the number of people H. P. B. met who were so different from herself. Can we still be as loving with others as we are with those whose lifestyles match our own? Are we being genuine or are we just “tolerating” others? This is where our pure heartedness comes into question. Are we being pure hearted? What does pure hearted mean? How do we know when we aren't being pure hearted?

It is only the individual who can answer these questions about his or her life. No one can walk the journey of another and we should try — “try” being the key word here — as much as possible to step back to allow others to make their own decisions. And we should try never to judge another for what they have chosen to do or experience. We are not living their life. Every experience can only be seen through the eyes of the experimenter.

It is no wonder that H. P. B. discusses the Path as an arduous journey. Not only do we have to contend with the emotions of the personality, but the mind as well. And knowing this to be so, she is careful to note that through our own will, we are the makers of our own destiny. She is constantly stressing the need for the individual to decide what is right for them. Thus she provides an example of one of the qualities of love: freedom. Connecting to the Higher Self cannot be achieved if we are restricted in our journey. We must