

RIGHT
USEFULNESS

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The PAGL Foundation, Inc.

New York, NY

2013

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ISBN 0-913105-12-0

ISBN series 0-913105-01-5

The PAGL Foundation, Inc.

New York, New York

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INTRODUCTION

Thomas Hora, M.D., (1914-1995), was a psychiatrist with a passion for seeking spiritual understanding. His search led him beyond psychology to study philosophy, phenomenology, world religions and other existential and metaphysical teachings. The spiritual teachings of Jesus Christ became the cornerstone of his practice that he called Metapsychiatry.

Metapsychiatry offers a unique method of spiritual growth and understanding that manifests in healing of all kinds. It is not a religion. Dr. Hora's patients and students included followers of diverse religions, as well as non-religious individuals.

From 1983 to 1987 a group of his students* led by Jan Linthorst, D. Min., distilled the essence of this wisdom on twelve vital subjects and published them as a series of booklets, of which this is one. These, as well as books of Dr. Hora are available at www.Amazon.com. Audio recordings of classes with Dr. Hora are available through the PAGL Foundation at: www.pagl.org. PAGL is an acronym for Peace, Assurance, Gratitude, and Love. The presence of PAGL in consciousness, as taught in Metapsychiatry, is evidence of the existence of God and can be seen as a way by which to measure individual spiritual progress.

*Ann Linthorst, Joan Taylor, Joan Rubadeau and Gloria Spurgeon

WORK

Most of us work to earn a living and that is a legitimate motivation. Beyond that, work needs to be regarded from a more spiritual perspective, namely, we have to scrutinize carefully what our motivation is. Are we using work for self-confirmatory purposes, or is our activity a manifestation of God's Omniaction? If we know we are here for God, we will work intelligently, efficiently, effectively and effortlessly, and our work will truly be a response to manifest needs. The Metapsychiatric definition of work is: useful activity in response to manifest needs.

When a need for a job change occurs in the life of a student on the spiritual path, the question is sometimes asked: is it right to scan newspaper ads for job opportunities or contact employment agencies, etc., or is this operationalism? It is not operationalism to submit resumes, to visit agencies or take similar steps to find gainful employment. It is an intelligent and appropriate response to a legitimate need. We are neither passively waiting for a job to fall into our lap, so to speak, nor are we aggressively and anxiously pursuing the search. We are intelligently responsive to whatever needs or contingencies arise in our daily lives. The Taoist sage, Lao-tse, put it this way: "The way to do is to be."

There is a great difference between a responsive individual and an operational one. The responsive individual meets situations without anxiety or doubt; he goes about daily tasks with peace, assurance, gratitude and love (PAGL). And PAGL is the indicator that his activity is not operational, but that he is on the right track.

RIGHT USEFULNESS

In order to respond intelligently to a need for employment it is necessary to take stock of what our qualifications are, what skills we have to offer and what contributions we are able to make to a prospective employer. Should we have no marketable skills, we need to develop some, and, with ability, opportunity will come. We may have certain talents we are not putting to use. If this is the case, such a talent is practically useless, buried and benefiting no one. Jesus spoke of the necessity to use our talents to the fullest in one of his parables (see Matthew 25:14-30).

In a certain sense, looking for a job is a mistake. We are looking to be useful, to contribute. While it is intelligent to be concerned with what benefits we may derive from our employment, we must also be interested in what way we may benefit the company or institution we work for. When we understand we are here for God to manifest His qualities, our real job is to be a beneficial presence wherever we may find ourselves. In the divine economy there is no unemployment.

As mentioned earlier, our ability and willingness to be useful and helpful in business or employment determines the prospering of it. Should we experience insufficient income or a slowdown in our business, we need to improve our ability to be helpful.

We need to understand the meaning of this seeming lack or slowdown and find ways of becoming more effective. The understanding of the meaning of this is only the first step; we have to recommit ourselves to manifesting spiritual qualities and values and sincerely desire to be here for God. When this becomes our first priority, everything else that may be needed will appear.

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Jesus commented on the issue of lack the following way: “Whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath” (Matthew 13:12). The meaning of this “koan” (riddle) is that if we have the right idea of what abundance is and what its source is, we will never lack an opportunity for being useful and helpful. But if we are ignorant of this fact and feel deprived or sorry for ourselves, we have closed the floodgates of the good that God is generously pouring out continuously. So what is needed is an increased awareness of the good of God as already present, an interest in it, appreciation of it and receptivity to it.

Our immediate environment and the world at large are by-products of interaction thinking. An individual who is in the habit of thinking in terms of interaction is a victim of a constricted outlook on life. Metapsychiatry teaches us to expand our mental horizon and see life in the context of God, which is infinite.

If we happen to work in a discordant, interactive environment, we have to be able to discern the thoughts that contribute to and determine the mental climate of that environment. If we are able to pinpoint it in terms of thought, we can heal it by bringing the meaning of that thought into juxtaposition with the truth, or the spiritual counter-fact. We replace the conflict-producing, invalid thought with a harmonious, valid one in our own consciousness. Through the discernment of the meaning, we gain the right perspective on the environment and our place in it. Being a beneficial presence in the world implies that we have transcended the narrow, personal perspective on life with its limitations of good, and that our horizon has

expanded into infinity. The Bible speaks of it, in the words of the prophet Isaiah: “Enlarge the place of thy tent” (Isaiah 54:2).

FATIGUE

The most frequent complaint concerning work is pressure to meet deadlines, being overworked and the resulting fatigue. We may ask, “What is the meaning of being tired?” It is a self-confirmatory experience based on a thought: “I have a demanding job, I work under pressure, therefore I am; I deserve credit; I am entitled to feel sorry for myself;” etc.

We are not concerned with how much work or how little is required of us but how useful our activity is in performing the task of bearing witness to the truth. If we work that way, and if that is our aim, then work will never be a hardship. What does the Bible have to say about tiredness? In Isaiah we read: “They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength. They shall mount up with wings as eagles. They shall run and not be weary. They shall walk and not faint” (Isaiah 40:31).

When we understand what it means to be here for God, we will find that our energies are constantly renewed and that we are strengthened by the power of God, the source of all energy. Then there will be no occasion for complaining or feeling sorry for ourselves.

As mentioned earlier, we define work as useful activity in response to manifest needs. When we work in the spirit of this definition, other benefits accrue as well. Our work will be satisfying and fulfilling, always accompanied by joy and

gratitude. In addition, we gain through it a right sense of self-esteem that comes from knowing that we are contributing to society rather than leading a parasitic existence.

THE “WORKAHOLIC”

There exists a mode of work that is commonly called workaholism. It is a compulsion to work and, like all compulsions, it is a way of coping with unmanageable anger and hostility. The workaholic represses his anger and hostility—which are socially unacceptable—and sublimates them into a more suitable form, namely, useful work. But this process is strenuous and exhausting, requiring personal effort, and the workaholic is rarely creative in his work.

Ordinarily, everyone’s goal in life is to be successful and avoid failure in whatever endeavor one may be engaged. But success and failure are dualistic concepts; they are two sides of the same coin—therefore they are existentially invalid. Sooner or later the ambition to succeed leads to interaction—to competition with others active in the same or similar field. Competition, in turn, unleashes the four galloping horsemen identified in Metapsychiatry as envy, jealousy, rivalry and malice. When any of these are entertained in consciousness, even though on the surface material success may appear, they inevitably lead to existential failure—the flip side of success—and various physical problems may develop.

We may add here that there is such a thing as healthy competition, the purpose of which is to achieve excellence through honing and perfecting skills and talents.

PROSPERING

In Metapsychiatry we speak of harmonious prospering rather than the dualism of success and failure. Harmonious prospering has no flip side; it is non-dual because it is realized through constant conscious attentiveness to the good of God, a sincere interest in it, exclusive of all other distracting pursuits. An enlightened individual's mode of being-in-the-world is that of harmonious prospering.

Prospering is a quality of being, while prosperity connotes a quality of having. The word "prospering" points to well-being, peacefulness, assurance, joy, harmony, love, gratitude and freedom from anxiety, fear or torment. These qualities are present in everyone but they may be dormant and can be awakened through the process of study, prayer and meditation. Through such consistent study we can gain a spiritual perspective on Reality, revealing to us the fact that we are perfect spiritual beings, created by God for His own purpose, and that the abundant life Jesus spoke of is our birthright. If we follow Jesus' recommendation: "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matthew 6:33), then our harmonious prospering will become a reality.

The word "abundant" is semantically inappropriate and could possibly conjure up materialistic notions. But the good life cannot be quantified; it is qualitative rather than quantitative, and can only be achieved through spiritual means, not by an accumulation of material possessions.

An example from Greek mythology underscores the frustration of an ambitious way of life. Sisyphus was an ambitious king of Corinth, condemned by the gods to roll a

heavy stone to the top of a hill for the rest of his life. As soon as he reached the summit, the stone would roll down and he had to start rolling it uphill all over again. This is a mythological representation of ambitious man who is success oriented and thereby condemns himself to a life of struggle. Jesus commented on the orientation to success this way: “What shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?” (Mark 8:36).

The word “ambition” means movement in two directions at the same time, forward and backward. In the genuine progress of harmonious prospering, there is movement in only one direction—from good to better.

UNIQUENESS

Infinite Love-Intelligence, the Metapsychiatric name for God, implies an infinite source of ideas. These ideas are not duplications of one another; they are unique in content and character. We understand man to be a manifestation of this unique Mind. Therefore, every individual is unique and capable of manifesting this uniqueness in his or her individual way. The understanding of this uniqueness invalidates the tendency to compare ourselves to others to see how we stack up against them, to compete with others for a “place in the sun,” so to speak. Every individual is here to bear witness to God in a unique and individual way.

The world encourages competition. But we live by a different standard. We are in this world but not of it, as the Bible states. The world cannot bring us peace, assurance, gratitude and love (PAGL), which is the standard to which we adhere. A spiritual being’s uniqueness is determined and

maintained by the creative Mind, which is God. It is devoid of self-confirmation.

The standard of the world—or the society we happen to live in—consists of self-confirmatory ideas, mostly beliefs that we are persons, separated from God and having to rely on our own resources and live by our own wits. This orientation necessarily leads to comparisons, competition, gossiping and deriding others in order to appear superior in our own eyes as well as in the eyes of the world. The current fad in our society is to “express oneself.” It is most pronounced in teenagers who “express” themselves through weird clothing and hair styles, a particular choice of music and even a separate language. They have the impression that they are expressing their individuality, not realizing that they imitate one another and so lose their own individuality through conformity to others. Uniqueness cannot be done; it is a manifestation of God’s creativity and infinity.

HOW MUCH ARE WE WORTH?

There is a tendency, particularly in the world of finance, to speak of an individual’s worth in terms of money. Here again, the standard of the world does not apply to students on the spiritual path. We understand ourselves as children of God, spiritual beings. Can we put a monetary value on a spiritual being? We measure worth by the good accomplished as a beneficial presence in the world. A beneficial presence can be a blessing to his or her immediate environment as well as to the world at large by the quality of his spiritualized consciousness.

The news media constantly bombard us with reports of

crimes, pictures of violence and depravity, various diseases, etc. A spiritualized consciousness does not ignore these reports but is able to transcend them through the understanding of God as the only Reality. In other words, a beneficial presence transcends in his or her own consciousness the media presentations of an evil, depraved world by applying the following Metapsychiatric principle: “The understanding of what really is, abolishes all that seems to be.” This understanding acts on the surrounding mental climate by neutralizing the appearances or phenomena of evil and depravity.

A beneficial presence is not a passive observer of world events. He is receptive to intelligent ideas constantly flowing from divine Love-Intelligence into consciousness. Receptivity is attentiveness to communications from God. These communications supply man with every needed helpful idea, enabling him to become immune to invalid ideas presented by the world. This has a beneficial effect on the noosphere—the collective mental climate—somewhat like the ever-widening ripples on the surface of a body of water when a pebble has been thrown into it.

The news media reports often come across as influencing public opinion. In the human context of interaction living this is considered normal, but it is not a happy or healthy state to be in. It is called “the human condition” and, as we all know, it is replete with problems of every kind. Metapsychiatry focuses on the context of God, where influencing others is considered a sin, a trespass. In this context, “There is no interaction anywhere, only Omniaction everywhere” (third principle of Metapsychiatry). The context of God is not determined by environmental factors but by our consciousness of this context.

LEADERSHIP

The desire to influence and manipulate pervades all segments of society, notably political life. The most important qualification of a political leader is his ability to influence people. It is an operational idea and usually troublesome, creating resistance in people because basically no one likes to be an object of manipulation. The Metapsychiatric concept of a leader is one who is influential through the spiritual qualities he manifests. This has helpful applications for work. It is much more beneficial to think of ourselves as guides, teachers, or facilitators if we are in charge.

The mode of influencing and manipulating has entered the business world as well, and experts are often consulted on how to create an atmosphere of cooperation in a given company. But results are usually unsatisfactory.

TRENDS

A recent front page article in The New York Times (September 29, 1986) under the heading "Spiritual Concepts Drawing Different Breed of Adherents" describes a new approach of corporate America to improve its competitive edge in world markets. Some of the largest and best known companies are sending their top executives to attend seminars on Metaphysics. The expectations are that spiritual ideas applied in the market place will increase productivity. The fallacy of this approach lies in the naive, if not altogether ignorant, assumption that spiritual ideas can be used for

operational purposes. One is reminded of Jesus' statement about the error of patching up an old garment with a new piece of cloth: "No man putteth a piece of new cloth unto an old garment, for that which is put in to fill it up taketh from the garment, and the rent is made worse" (Matthew 9:16).

Actually, the new wave of thought the Times article refers to is not really based on spiritual values. It is a hodgepodge of various cults, spiritualism, reincarnation, psychic healings, satanism, chanting, use of tarot cards, various methods of mind control, altering of consciousness, hypnotism, etc., with a smattering of spiritual ideas. All these have one common denominator—self-confirmation. This explains the concept's rapid spread and ready acceptance by the business community, because people like nothing better than to be encouraged in self-confirmatory ideation. But self-confirmation is self-destruction and these corporations' attempts to use it are doomed to failure.

COOPERATION

Cooperation is an operational concept and rarely contributes to harmony and the smooth running of a business. On the other hand, a beneficial individual can be an inspiring presence contributing to an atmosphere of joint participation of all in the good of God. Under such conditions there is no influencing, no manipulation, no undue pressure and tension, and work proceeds efficiently and effectively with improvement in productivity because there is no friction.

The concept of cooperation is based on behavior, which

is basically a pretense; one can put on the appearance of cooperation if the demand for it is important enough. Joint participation in the good of God does not involve behavior; it is not concerned with doing. It is the result of transformation of character through truths integrated in individual consciousness.

The founding fathers of our nation were God-inspired individuals who derived their foresight and wisdom from divine Love-Intelligence. Our nation is founded on the concept of participatory democracy which is a great discovery for a government.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

We often hear complaints by students that interaction in their places of work is so pervasive that it is difficult not to get involved with it. Jesus said: “Agree with thine adversary quickly, whiles thou art in the way with him” (Matthew 5:25). What could be the meaning of this saying? Jesus was primarily a teacher and this admonition teaches us to learn to look at a situation of conflict from the perspective of the adversary, to see his or her side of the story. More often than not we will find that he is not an adversary at all, and if we have been negligent in our work or less than honest, we correct these mistakes and that heals the situation. There is no need to feel persecuted and to harbor a grudge. The conflict will be resolved.

When this is pointed out, often the question arises: “Does that mean I have to give up my viewpoint?” This is an invalid question because it personalizes the situation and obscures the issue. The conflict can get resolved only when we are

issue-oriented, devoid of personal opinions. We are not interested in being right; we are interested in truth, harmony, and fairness.

There is another statement of Jesus' which puzzles many: "Resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also" (Matthew 5:39). If we resist evil we honor it as a reality, we engage in a wrestling match, and this seldom resolves the problem. The cheek or face expresses certain values. If someone confronts us with aggression and hostility—invalid values—we counter with intelligent and loving values. Thus, we turn a different cheek.

THE RIGHT MOTIVATION

People who have difficulty demonstrating affluence in their lives very often have an invalid motivation for work. They do not work for money but for ego gratification. Since this is a self-confirmatory idea, it interferes with achieving affluence. Affluence is the flow of good from Love-Intelligence to human consciousness, and ego gratification is a great obstacle, blocking this flow. Therefore it is important to remind ourselves that we work to earn a living and that our goal in life is not ego gratification but to bear witness to the affluence of God. When we realize we are here for God, not only will we be blessed by affluence, but our work will be fulfilling and satisfying.

Jesus spoke of ego gratification in a parable where he juxtaposed it with existential fulfillment. He said: "Whosoever drinketh of this water (ordinary well water) shall thirst again. But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst" (John 4:13,14).

RIGHT USEFULNESS

As discussed earlier, motivation for work can have many meanings beyond the need to earn money. Many people willingly accept dangerous assignments, even volunteer for them, because of the excitement generated by the danger. It confirms their sense of personhood.

The pursuit of exciting experiences is a self-confirmatory idea, therefore invalid—and often results in disaster. One can also observe this in other activities that cannot be considered work in the strict sense of the word. The so-called “stunt men” of the motion picture industry are examples of this desire for excitement and so is the well-known motorcyclist who is famous for having broken every bone in his body, and who, despite numerous operations, continues to perform his daredevil feats. Circus performers, wild animal tamers and mountain climbers, in many cases, are further examples of the lure of excitement and the desire for fame and personal recognition.

There are more passive and subtle ways of seeking excitement. The great majority of television programs present dramatic, intense, pleasurable images and create in the audience a desire to participate in the drama vicariously. To most viewers, this may seem to be innocent entertainment, but this is a demonic trap. The viewer gets hooked on desiring excitement and finds himself dwelling on it more and more. His values become distorted and he gradually accepts the belief that exciting experiences are the essence of the good life. This is a dangerous state to be in—where one gets a distorted value system and cannot differentiate between what is valid and what is not. It invariably leads to problems. In extreme cases this may lead to an ever-increasing and urgent pursuit of excitement and pleasure, as seen in alcoholism and drug addiction.

But there is an alternative. In contrast to the previously mentioned sense-existence, enlightened man is seeking the realization of soul-existence, which is a conscious union with omniactive, omnipotent, infinite Love-Intelligence. Instead of excitement there is peace, harmony, beauty, joy, love, assurance, gratitude. These are not experiences—this is Reality. The ninth Metapsychiatric principle states: “Reality cannot be experienced or imagined; it can only be realized.” So when we shift our interest and attention from fantasy to something more valid and solid, namely Reality, we gain a transcendent view of life, and a supreme intelligence becomes available to us. Then we can live and work effortlessly, effectively and efficiently.

SELF-ESTEEM

Another invalid motivation for work or so-called performance on the job is an “ego trip,” or ego-gratification. We get elated when we are praised for a job well-done and our self-esteem is raised. The next day we may not perform as well as we did the day before, and our self-esteem gets deflated. And so we are riding on an emotional roller coaster which is the kind of self-esteem that is psychological, and therefore always accompanied by anxiety.

Right self-esteem is spiritual, born of divine Love; it has no flip side. Spiritual self-esteem is not fed by the ego—it is gained from knowing that our work is a contribution and a blessing. Then we perform for the love of God with no thought of personal recognition. Because this kind of self-esteem is not precarious, it will not lead to a let-down. When our motivation for work is valid, the work will be

spontaneous and creative, since we will be freed of “self” concerns: self-consciousness, self-promotion, self-confirmation. We will only be interested in being helpful and useful through manifesting spiritual qualities.

When we are on an ego trip, our attention and mental energies are spent to a great extent on promoting ourselves, comparing ourselves with others, competing with them, etc., and our work is neither efficient nor effective nor effortless. The constant preoccupation with self blocks the flow of intelligent, helpful, inspiring ideas pouring out of infinite Love-Intelligence, the source of inspired wisdom.

We have seen by now that none of these motivations for work is effective, and the fulfillment we seek eludes us. If we have realized the futility, the wasted energies of invalid pursuits, we may be ready and willing to turn our attention to the only valid and fulfilling mode of being-in-the-world, namely, being here for God. The greatest sense of fulfillment comes from an awareness that God is our life and that His good, which is spiritual, is the only good there is.

Through study, prayer and meditation we attain an increased awareness and appreciation of the truth that God is the only power capable of harmonizing our lives down to the minutest detail. We discover that a higher intelligence is active in our work. We begin to understand that indeed, “All things were made by Him and without Him nothing was made that seems to be made,” to paraphrase the apostle John (John 1:1-3).

MENTAL WORK

In a recent class the question was asked, “Is the study of

Metapsychiatry appealing to the intellect?” Let us first examine the difference between intellect and intelligence. Intellect is an ego-function, or the function of the so called personal mind. It is active in the study of academic subjects where logic and memorizing are required. It is applied to some extent in the business world, in finance, banking, accounting, calculations, etc., but it is not creative. Therefore, even in the business world, when creative ideas are needed, the intellect has to be temporarily suspended, and we need to remind ourselves that the human brain is not capable of producing intelligent, inspired ideas. We need to turn our attention to the divine Mind and acknowledge it to be the source of all inspiration and wisdom.

The many inventions and advances in technology did not happen through the application of the intellect. From the discovery of electricity to the light bulb, the steam engine to the automobile, the telephone and television to computer technology, the first airplane to present day space travel, inspired, intelligent ideas were instrumental in their development. Where did these ideas come from? From the source of all intelligence—from God, or omniactive Love Intelligence, which is the Metapsychiatric name for God.

It frequently happens when we are working on some project where the intellect is involved, such as using a computer, that a snag develops and we find ourselves unable to continue. It is then we can see that suspending the intellect and appealing to intelligence supplies the solution. We stop trying to figure out the problem and at that moment an inspired idea obtains in consciousness and the solution is found.

The intellect wants to be known as knowing, and is always involved with hubris—mental vanity. It likes to confirm

itself through engaging in competition, rivalry and contentiousness. The academic world's motivation is fraught with rivalry. But the personal mind, like everything in the phenomenal world, is an illusion. Metapsychiatry heals this mistaken notion by understanding personal mind's motivation.

Intelligence, on the other hand, is not an ego function, but an essential quality of infinite Mind—therefore it is spiritual. It expresses itself as inspired wisdom in receptive consciousness, which is capable of spiritual discernment. Spiritual discernment can be cultivated through study and meditation, and the more we have developed these faculties and put them to use, the more harmonious our work becomes.

It may be useful here to comment briefly on the phenomenon of intuition. Intuition is a human interpretation of sudden flashes of insight coming from the divine Mind. But the unenlightened human mind, not understanding the source of these insights, ascribes them to the body and calls them “gut feelings”.

SUPPLY

It is crucial that our motivation for work be existentially valid in order to have fulfilling and rewarding employment. If we own a business, we need to spiritualize our concept of business. We may ask, What is business from the standpoint of spiritual values? If a businessman is committed to being here for God, cherishes spiritual values and expresses them consistently in his business activities; his business will prosper. And should he find that he is in an unsuitable kind

of business, he will be lifted out of that situation and led to something else, more appropriate for his stage of development, and he can rest assured that the move will be a progressive one because on the spiritual path we always move from good to better.

Sometimes business people get annoyed at their customers, especially if they do not make a purchase. This indicates that they consider the customers to be their source of supply. It can be very unpleasant to be at the mercy of others for one's livelihood. But this is a horizontal perspective on business.

We need to understand that we must be “after our Father's business” and that He is the only power and intelligence. We need to transcend the horizontal outlook and discover the right one—the vertical, or the context of God. We then find that “all things work together for good” when we are consciously living and moving and conducting our business in the context of God. “Blessed are they that do hunger and thirst after righteousness (right usefulness): for they shall be filled” (Matthew 5:6).

When we have embarked on a particularly challenging project and the work has proceeded smoothly and harmoniously all along to a satisfactory conclusion, we can either say, “Look, what an able person I am,” and feel proud and elated, or we can sense the hand of God guiding the work and stand in awe and gratitude for this gift.

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**This booklet is one of a series of twelve essays
by Thomas Hora, M.D.**

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