



COURSE ON SPIRITISM

WORKBOOK 5A:

**Fundamental Principles
of the Spiritist Teachings**

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This material is an adaptation of the “Systematic Study of the Spiritist Doctrine”, edited by the Brazilian Spiritist Federation.

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This material is subjected to improvement.

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“A regular course on Spiritism would be given in order to develop the principles of Science and to promote the fondness for serious studies. This course would have the advantage of laying the foundation for the unit of principles, of forming enlightened followers, capable of spreading the spiritist ideas, and developing a great number of mediums. I consider this course of a nature to exercise capital influence on the future of Spiritism and its consequences.”

Allan Kardec

“Posthumous Works” - Project, 1868

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INTRODUCTION AND EXPLANATORY NOTES.

It is with great pleasure that the Spiritist Society of Baltimore (SSB), an educational non-profit organization established at the city of Baltimore, Maryland, offers this material for the dissemination of Spiritism in English. The main purpose of this work is to fulfill, in the English language, Kardec's ideas about a systematic study of Spiritism principles. Accordingly, the interested student has an opportunity to build up a fundamental understand of the scientific, moral and philosophic aspects of Spiritism, as well as a scholar of Spiritism, with knowledge acquired after many years of study, should also find interesting references in this material.

The material presented herein is an adaptation of the "Systematic study of Spiritism" as assembled by the Brazilian Spiritist Federation (BSF). This source was selected because of many years of experience with its use by SSB and of its widespread and unquestionable efficacy in disseminating Spiritism in Brazil. However, this work is not a direct translation of the material available in Portuguese. Great care was taken in order to adapt all lessons to the bibliography available in English at the time of its publication. With this in mind, and scrupulously adhering to Kardec's work, many lessons of the original BSF work were combined as well as new lessons were included. All references used are clearly cited at the end of each lesson.

The lessons are assembled as instructions in how to develop and accomplished each topic. A coordinator should be assigned to each lesson, carefully review the material in advance and use the instructions to address each topic. This material should be used in a regular study setting and many lessons were planned to be worked by students divided in teams. As much emphasis as possible was given to build active lessons that would involve and demand the participation of all students. This should foster friendship among all class members and allow all students to participate and to develop their knowledge as the course progress. It is estimated that each lesson should take between 1 – 1 ½ hours to be completed. The use of projection resources, like overhead or slide presentations during the suggested brief introductions is recommended, but not indispensable.

As in every human activity, no matter how simple or complex, it is necessary to establish since the beginning rules and regulations that will: (1) help guide the work in order that the objectives are attained and (2) to clarify all expectations and to assign responsibilities so that all fell as part of a team. In the next section, we show the rules and regulations for our study section at SSB, which is discussed with everyone who intends to coordinate lesson. Of course, these are guidelines and each Spiritist group should make the necessary adaptations.

Finally, we offer a special thanks to Mr. Jorge Godinho, BSF member, for his distinctive friendship and to all of our spiritual Mentors and Guides who supported us throughout this endeavor.

With Love to all,
-The SSB family

Sample of rules and regulations for coordinators

The Spiritist Society of Baltimore, Inc. (SSB) is an educational non-profit organization that offers spiritual, psychological and material assistance to all in need. One of its services is the study group meetings in which Spiritism is thoroughly studied as recommended by Allan Kardec. Each meeting comprises of a 1 ¼ hour-study session, followed by a passes session. The coordinators of these meetings have two major responsibilities: (1) to guarantee participant's study and understanding of Spiritism as contained in Kardec's books; (2) the organization of the study group meeting. The SSB may appoint coordinators that will take turns in the conduction of the meetings. It is essential that each coordinator follows the rules and regulations contained in this memorandum in order to guarantee an optimal level of achievement from participants.

Each coordinator shall:

1. Be committed to the two major responsibilities stated above.
2. Study the topic above and beyond its goals in order to be a good coordinator. Be a faithful facilitator of Spiritism. Please, do not emit personal opinions as they are not the focus of the study. Instead, make efforts to facilitate the understanding of the Superior Spirits' statements contained in Kardec's works. If during the study group session you are not sure of something, it is always better to say you will search for the answer and will bring it to them next week.
3. Run spell check on the text and also in any presented material, like power point presentations. Also, check special pronunciation at Merriam Webster Dictionary online (<http://www.merriam-webster.com>).
4. Study the meaning of the main spiritist vocabulary that will be studied on that day.
5. Print and distribute to participants a copy of the lesson to be studied.
6. Arrive at least 15-30 minutes prior to the beginning of the study session. The coordinator is responsible for the room set up. Both the study session and the passes service shall have a proper environment.
7. Welcome participants and begin the study meeting with a prayer.
8. Choose a volunteer for the initial reading and final prayer.
9. Be the primary responsible for welcoming newcomers and assisting anyone who is in need of counseling and/or spiritual treatment.
10. Please, incentive participants to kindly speak English only before, during and after the meeting.

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Now, continue your Course on Spiritism by studying its sequence
compiled in the

**Workbook 5A – The *Fundamental Principles of*
*the Spiritist Doctrine***

OBJECTIVES:

- Characterize the states of the cosmic fluids
- Explain the qualities of fluids

METHODS:

1. The coordinator shall begin with an introduction on a review on fluids. Remember that the Spiritist definition of fluids is related to the quintessenced level of matter at the perispirit dimension.

2. In pairs, read the following text⁽¹⁾ and discuss it. Each pair will address one of the following questions.

- a) What are the known states of the cosmic fluid? Characterize them.
- b) What types of phenomenon can be generated by the modifications of the states of cosmic fluid?
- c) What is Earth's spiritual atmosphere composition?
- d) What is the Spiritist hypothesis to explain the tangibility of matter?
- e) Through which means thought expresses itself?
- f) How fluids become good or bad?

2. The universal cosmic fluid is, as has been demonstrated, elementary primitive matter, of which the modifications and transformations constitute the innumerable varieties of the bodies of nature (Chap. X). So far as the elementary universal principle is concerned, it offers two distinct states; that of etherealization, or imponderability, that one can consider as the primitive and normal state, and that of materialization, or ponderability, which is in some sort only consecutive. The intermediary point is that of the transformation of the fluid into tangible matter; but there still is no sudden transition, for one can consider our imponderable fluids as a boundary between the two states (chap. IV, from n° 10 on).

Each one of these two states gives place necessarily to special phenomena. To the second belong those of the visible world, and to the first those of the invisible one. Those called material phenomena are, properly speaking, in the domain of science. The solution of the others, designated spiritual or psychical phenomena, because they are allied more especially to the existence of spirits, is among the prerogatives of Spiritism. But, as spiritual and material lives are in incessant contact, the phenomena of these two orders are presented often simultaneously. Man, in a state of incarnation, can have only the perception of the physical phenomena which are connected with the material life. Those

which belong to the exclusive domain of spiritual life escape the eye of the material senses, and can be perceived only in the spiritual state.^a

5. The starting-point of the universal fluid is the degree of absolute ethereality, of which nothing can give us an idea. Its opposite point is its transformation into material substance. Between these two extremes there exist innumerable transformations, which are allied more or less to one another. The fluids which are the nearest materiality – consequently the least pure – are composed of that which might be called the spiritual terrestrial atmosphere. In this midst are found the widely different degrees of ethereality whence the incarnated and discarnated inhabitants of the Earth draw the necessary elements for the economy of their existence. These fluids, however subtle and impalpable they may be to us, are nevertheless of comparatively gross nature to the ethereal fluids of the superior regions.

It is the same on the surface of all worlds, saving the differences of constitution and vitality proper to each. The less material life there is there, the less the spiritual fluids have of affinity with matter.

The name “spiritual fluid” is not rigidly accurate as it is really always matter more or less refined. There is nothing really spiritual, but the soul or intelligent principle. We designate fluids thus by comparison, and chiefly by reason of their affinity with spirits. They constitute the substance of the spiritual world. That is why they are called spiritual fluids.

6. Who understands the intricate constitution of tangible matter? It is, perhaps, compact only in relation to our senses; and that which seems to prove this is the facility with which it is traversed by spiritual fluids, and the spirits to whom it is no more of an obstacle than are transparent bodies to light.

Tangible matter, having for a primitive element the ethereal cosmic fluid, must be able, by becoming disintegrated, to return to a state of etherealization, as the diamond, the hardest of bodies, can be volatilized into impalpable gas. The solidification of matter is in reality only a transitory state of the universal fluid, which can return to its primitive state when the conditions of cohesion cease to exist.

Who knows even if, in a tangible state, matter is not susceptible of acquiring a sort of etherealization which would give to it peculiar properties? Certain phenomena which appear authentic tend towards such a supposition as this. We do not yet possess all the beacon-lights of the invisible world; and the future has in reserve for us, without doubt, the knowledge of new laws, which will allow us to comprehend that which is still to us a mystery.

16. The action of spirits upon spiritual fluids has consequences of a direct and capital importance for incarnated beings. From the instant that these fluids are the vehicle of thought, that thought can modify the properties of them. It is evident that they must be impregnated by the good or bad qualities of the thoughts which put them in vibration, modified by the purity or impurity of the sentiments. Bad thoughts corrupt the spiritual fluids, as deleterious miasmas corrupt the air we breathe. The fluids which surround or that are projected from bad spirits are then vitiated, whilst those which receive the

^a The name *psychical* phenomena expresses the idea better than spiritual does, as these phenomena rest upon the properties and attributes of the soul, or rather on the perispiritual fluids, which are inseparable from the soul. This qualification attaches them more intimately to the order of natural facts, regulated by laws. One can then admit them as psychical effects without allowing them the title of miracles.

influence of good spirits are as pure as the degree of moral perfection to which they have attained.

17. It would be impossible to itemize or classify the good or bad fluids. Neither could we specify their respective qualities, considering that their diversity is as great as that of the thought.

Fluids do not have “*sui generis*” qualities, except those they acquire whereat they are elaborated; they are modified by the effluvioms of the ambient, just as the air is modified by exhalations, and the water by the layers of salt it crosses. Depending on the circumstances, their qualities are, like those of the air and the water, either temporary or permanent, which makes them more suitable for the production of certain specific effects. Neither do the fluids have special denominations. As with odors, they are designated by their properties, their effects and their original type. On a moral point of view, they bring the impressions of the sentiments of hatred, envy, jealousy, pride, selfishness, violence, hypocrisy, kindness, benevolence, love, charity, sweetness, etc. On a physical point of view, they are excitants, sedating, piercing, coercing, irritant, soothing, soporific, narcotics, toxics, replenishing, and expellants. They also become a means of transmission, propulsion, etc. The overall picture of the fluids would then be that of all passions, virtues and vices of humanity; and that of the properties of matter, corresponding to the effects they produce.

CONCLUSIONS:

The study will be accomplished if the class can satisfactorily conclude that:

1. All elements of the material world are but transformation of a single basic element.
2. Moreover, transformations of this basic element give rise also to all the material objects in the spiritual world.
3. All spirits, incarnated and discarnate, act over the material elements in direct proportion with the intensity and constancy of their thoughts.

REFERENCES:

1. Kardec, Allan, “Genesis” chapter XIV, items 2, 5, 6, 16 and 17, Spiritist Alliance for Books, 2003.

OBJECTIVES:

- Explain how fluids act upon the perispirit and the physical body;
- Explain how to cleanse an environment which is saturated with bad fluids;
- Clarify the magnetic action of healings.

METHODS:

1. Brainstorm on the following question: “Do spiritual healings exist?”
2. Divide participants in two groups and ask them to read the following texts and address their questions:

Group I**Perispirit and Fluids**

Read carefully the following text⁽¹⁾ and answer (as complete as possible) the proposed question. Feel free to discuss topics addressed by the text with your group instructor.

- a) What is the role of the perispirit in the transmission of thoughts from a person to another?
- b) How can the fluids act upon the physical body?
- c) What is the nature of the fluids that are emitted in a meeting of several people?
- d) How is characterized an environment of bad fluids?
- e) How can we cleanse an environment that is saturated with bad fluids?

18. Men, being incarnate beings, have in part the attributes of the spiritual life; for they live in this life as well as in a corporeal one, always during sleep, and often in a conscious state. The spirit, incarnating itself, preserves its perispirit with the qualities which are proper to it, and which, as is known, is not circumscribed by the body, but envelops and radiates around it like a fluidic atmosphere.

By its intimate union with the body the perispirit plays a preponderating role with the organism. By its expansion it places the incarnated being more directly in contact with free spirits.

The thought of the incarnated mind acts upon the spiritual fluids as that of the discarnated spirit's thought acts. It is transmitted from spirit to spirit in the same way, and, according as it is good or bad, it holds a vicious or healthy relation to the surrounding fluids.

Since the fluids of an ambient are modified by the projection of the spirit's thoughts, his perispiritual body - which is a constituent part of his being, and which receives directly and in a permanent way the impressions of his thoughts - should receive even more so the impressions of his good or bad qualities. The fluids vitiated by the

effluvia of the bad spirits can be purified by their removal. The perispirit however will always be that which it is, as long as the spirit does not modify itself.

The perispirit of incarnates, being of a nature identical to that of the spiritual fluids, assimilates itself with them readily, as a sponge absorbs water. These fluids have over the perispirit an action which is the more direct because of its expansion and radiation; it confounds itself with them.

These fluids acting upon the perispirit, the latter, in its turn, reacts upon the material organism with which it is in molecular contact. If the effluvia are of a good nature, the bodies receive a salutary impression; if bad, a painful one. If the bad are permanent and energetic, they can cause physical disorders; certain maladies have no other cause.

The midsts where bad spirits abound are then impregnated with bad fluids, which are absorbed through all the perispiritual pores, as by the pores of the body pestilential miasmas are absorbed.

19. It is the same in assemblies of incarnated beings. An assembly of people is a focus whence radiate diverse thoughts. An assembly of persons is, like an orchestra, a choir of thoughts, where each one produces his note. The result is a multitude of fluidic-flowing effluvia, of which each one receives the impression of the sounds by the spiritual sense, like in a music choir each one receives the impression of the sound through the sense of hearing.

But, as there are harmonious or discordant sounds, there are also harmonious or discordant thoughts. If all is harmonious, the impression is agreeable; if otherwise, painful. There is no need for the thought to be formed into words. The fluidic-radiation exists all the same, whether it is expressed or not.

Such is the cause of the sentiment of satisfaction that is experienced in a sympathetic reunion, animated by good and benevolent thoughts. It reigns there like a salubrious moral atmosphere, which one breathes with ease. One is strengthened there, because it is impregnated with salutary fluidic effluvia; but, if some evil thoughts are mingled with it, they produce the effect of a current of icy air in a warm atmosphere or of a wrong key note played in a concert. Thus is explained also the anxiety, the indefinable uneasiness, that one feels in antipathetically surroundings, where malevolent thoughts are called forth like currents of nauseous air.

20. Thought produces, then, a substantial effect, which reacts upon our moral being. Spiritism alone can explain it. Man instinctively feels it, since he seeks homogeneous and sympathetic reunions, where he knows that he can draw new moral forces. One could say that he retrieves there the fluid losses that he makes each day by the radiation of thought, as he makes up the losses of the material body by food. Thought, indeed, is an emission which causes a real loss in the spiritual fluids, and consequently in the material fluids, also in such a way that man has need of strengthening himself by the effluvia which he receives from outside.

When a doctor is said to cure his patient by pleasant words, it is an absolute truth; for the benevolent thought carries with it healing fluids, which act physically as well as morally.

21. It is possible, without doubt, to evade men of well-known malicious intentions; but how can we be preserved from the influence of undeveloped spirits which multiply around us, and glide everywhere without being seen?

The means are very simple; for it depends upon the will of the man himself, who carries within him the necessary instrument of protecting himself. Fluids unite by reason of the similitude of their nature, dissimilar ones repel each other. There is an incompatibility between good and bad fluids, as between oil and water.

What is done when the air becomes vitiated? They purify it by destroying the center of the miasma by chasing out the unhealthy effluvium by currents of salubrious air stronger than it. We need the good fluids in order to counteract the invasion of bad fluids; and, as each one has in his own perispirit a permanent fluidic-source, the remedy is within one's self. It acts only to purify this source or spring, and to give to it such qualities as are necessary to repel bad influences, in place of being an attractive force. The perispirit is, then, a breastplate to which it is necessary to give the best possible character. Now, as the qualities of the perispirit correspond with the qualities of the soul, it is necessary to work for its own improvement; for it is the imperfections of the soul which attract bad spirits.

Flies go where centers of corruption attract them. Destroy these centers, and the flies will disappear. In the same way bad spirits go where evil attracts them. Destroy the evil, and they will flee. Spirits really good, whether incarnated or discarnated, have nothing to fear from the influence of bad spirits.

Group II **Perispirit and Magnetism**

Read carefully the following text⁽²⁾ and answer (as complete as possible) the proposed question. Feel free to discuss topics addressed by the text with your group instructor.

- a) How does a fluidic healing occur?
- b) Are the fluidic healings equal? Why?
- c) Tell the characteristics of the three types of healing magnetism mentioned by Kardec.
- d) Why not everyone is healed either physically or spiritually?

31. The universal fluid is, as has been seen, the primitive element of the carnal body and of the perispirit, which are only transformation of it. By the sameness of its nature this fluid can furnish to the body the principal reparative. Being condensed in the perispirit, the propelling power is the spirit, incarnated or discarnated, which infiltrates into a deteriorated body a part of the substance of its fluid-envelope. The cure is performed by the substitution of an unhealthy molecule for a healthy one. The curative power will then be drawn from the purity of the inoculated substance. It depends also upon the energy of the will, which provokes a more abundant fluid-emission, and gives to the fluid a greater force of penetration. In short, it is the intentions of he who desires to cure, *let him be man or spirit*. The fluids which emanate from an impure source are like defective medical substances.

32. The effects of the fluidic-action upon illnesses varied according to circumstances. Its action is sometimes slow, and requires a prolonged treatment, as in ordinary magnetism. At other times it is rapid as an electric current. There are some persons endowed with such a magnetic power, that they perform upon certain ill people instantaneous cures only by the laying-on of hands, or sometimes by the sole act of will.

Between the two extreme poles of this faculty there is an infinite variety of distinctive shades. All the cures of this kind are from the different varieties of magnetism, and differ only in the power and rapidity of their action. The principle is always the same: it is the fluid which plays the role of therapeutic agent, the effect of which is subordinated to its quality and to special circumstances.

33. Magnetic action can be produced in many ways:

1st By the fluid of the magnetizer himself; properly speaking, magnetism, or *human magnetism*, the action of which is subordinate to the power, and above all to the quality of the fluid.

2nd By fluid from the spirit acting directly and *without intermediation* upon an incarnate being, either to cure or to calm suffering, to provoke spontaneous somnambulistic sleep, or to exercise over the individual any moral or physical influence whatever. That is *spiritual magnetism*, of which the quality is determined by the quality of the spirit.^b

3rd By the fluid which the spirits shed upon the magnetizer, to which the latter serves as a conductor. This is mixed magnetism, semi-spiritual, or human-spiritual. The spiritual fluid, combined with the physical, gives to the latter the qualities which are wanting to it. The meeting of spirits for a like circumstance is sometimes spontaneous, but more often it is brought about by the call of the magnetizer.

34. The faculty to cure by the fluidic-influx is very common, and can develop itself by exercise; but that of curing instantaneously by the laying-on of hands is rare and its power can be considered as exceptional. However, it has been seen at diverse epochs, and in nearly every nation there are some individuals who possess it to an eminent degree. Lately many remarkable examples have been seen of it, the authenticity of which cannot be contested. Since these kinds of cures rest upon a principle of nature, the power of performing them is not a preference shown, or a departure from nature's laws. They can only be miraculous in appearance.^c

CONCLUSION

The study will be accomplished if the class can satisfactorily conclude that:

1. "The thought of the incarnated mind acts upon the spiritual fluids as that of the discarnated spirit's thought acts. It is transmitted from spirit to spirit in the same way, and, according as it is good or bad, it holds a vicious or healthy relation to the surrounding fluids."

2. "When a doctor is said to cure his patient by pleasant words, it is an absolute truth; for the benevolent thought carries with it healing fluids, which act physically as well as morally".

3. "The cure is performed by the substitution of an unhealthy molecule for a healthy one. The curative power will then be drawn from the purity of the inoculated substance. It depends also upon the energy of the will, which provokes a more abundant fluid-

^b Examples: "*Revue Spirite*," Feb., 1863, p. 64; April, 1865, p. 133; Sept., 1865, p. 264.

^c Examples of instantaneous cures reported in the "*Revue Spirite*": The Prince of Hohenlohe, Dec., 1866, p. 368; Jacob, Oct. and Nov., 1866, pp. 312 and 345; Oct. and Nov., 1867, pp. 306 and 339; Simonet, Aug., 1867, p. 232; Caid Hassan, Oct., 1867, p. 303; The Curate Gassner, Nov., 1867, p. 331.

emission, and gives to the fluid a greater force of penetration. In short, it is the intentions of he who desires to cure, *let him be man or spirit*. The fluids which emanate from an impure source are like defective medical substances.”

REFERENCES:

1. Kardec, Allan, “Genesis” chapter XIV, items 18-21, Spiritist Alliance for Books, 2003.
2. Idem, chapter XIV, items 31–34.

OBJECTIVES:

- To define ideoplasty.
- To give examples of fluidic creations

METHODS:

1. The coordinator shall begin with the following warm up: ask the group to think of an object, i.e., an apple, a building, etc. Then, ask the attendees what idea was formed after the thought (for example, color, form, taste, temperature, movement, situation, etc).

2. Discuss the topic in which a thought form an idea. That is called “ideoplasty”. Give participants the etymological meaning of the word ideoplasty as well as the Spiritist definition of it.

Ideoplasty = to model or shape matter through thought.

3. In a big group, read and discuss the following text⁽¹⁾, then answer the questions.
- a. According to Spiritism, what is ideoplasty?
 - b. What is the constitution of the spiritual atmosphere of Human Beings?
 - c. Which instruments are employed by Spirits to manipulate the spiritual fluids?
 - d. What is the role of will and thought over the spiritual fluids?
 - e. How can spirits create objects, clothing, etc?
 - f. Can we say that the fluidic creations are real? Why?
 - g. How can a spirit get to know of another spirit’s intentions?

13. The spiritual fluids, which constitute one of the states of the universal cosmic fluid, are then the atmosphere of spiritual beings. It is the element whence they draw the materials with which they operate, – the place where special phenomena take place, perceptible to the sight and hearing of the spirit, but which escapes the carnal senses which are impressed alone by tangible matter; the ambient wherein the light peculiar to the spiritual world is formed, this being different from the ordinary light because of its causes and effects. In short, they are the vehicle for thought, as the air is for sound.

14. Spirits act upon spiritual fluids, not by manipulating them as men manipulate gas, but by the aid of thought and will. Thought and will are to the spirit that which the hand is to man. By thought they impress these fluids into such and such directions; they agglomerate them, combine or disperse them; they form harmonious wholes of them, which have a definitive appearance, form, and color; they change the properties of them, as a chemist changes those of gas or other bodies by combining them by following certain laws.

Sometimes these transformations are the result of an intention; often they are the product of an unconscious thought. It is sufficient for the spirit only to think of a thing in

order that this thing produces itself; it suffices for one to form a melody in one's mind for it to reverberate through the atmosphere.

Thus, for example, a spirit presents himself to the view of an incarnated being endowed with spiritual sight with the same appearance he had when living at the epoch of their acquaintance, although he may have had many incarnations since that time. He presents himself with the costume, the exterior signs, infirmities, wounds, amputated members, etc., that he had then. A person who has been beheaded will present himself with no head. We do not desire to convey the impression that he has preserved these appearances; no, certainly not; for as a spirit he is neither lame, maimed, blind, nor headless: but, his thought conveying the impression when he was thus, his perispirit takes instantaneously the appearance of it, but it can at the same time leave it instantaneously. If, then, he has been both a black and a white man, he will present himself according to which of these two incarnations may be evoked whence his thought will report itself.

By a similar effect, a spirit's thought creates fluidically the objects which he often makes use of. A miser will manage his gold; a military man will have his guns and his uniform; a smoker, his pipe; a workman his plow and his cattle; and an elderly woman, her knitting utensils. These fluidic objects are as real for the spirit, who is also fluidic, as they were in the material state of the living man. However, because they are created by the thought, their existences are also as fleeting as the thought ^(d).

15. Fluids being the vehicle of the thought, the latter acts upon them, as the sound does upon the air. They bring us the thought, just as the air brings us the sound. We can, then, say with all truth that in such fluids there are waves and rays of thoughts that cross each other without ever becoming entangled, as do the waves and sonorous rays in the air.

Moreover, the thought creates fluidic images and reflects itself back on its perispiritual body, as on a mirror; the thought takes on body and somehow photographs itself on it. Let us say, for example, that a man has the idea of murdering someone; although his material body is inactive, his fluidic body is - through the thought - put into action, reproducing from this all vibrations. The act he tried to practice is executed fluidically. The thought creates the image of the victim and, similarly to a picture, the entire scene is drawn, precisely as it is in his spirit.

This is how the innermost secret movements of the soul are reverberated onto the fluidic body; and how one soul can read another, as one reads a book; and how it sees what is not perceptible by the eyes of the body. Yet, although the intention is seen and it can foresee the subsequent execution of the act, it cannot determine the moment it will take place; neither can it be exact with details, or even affirm whether it will indeed take place, as later circumstances can modify the plans and change the dispositions. The soul cannot see that which is not yet in another person's thought. What it does see is the habitual preoccupation of the person, his desires, his projects, and his good or bad intentions.

^d "Revue Spirite," July, 1859, p. 184, "The Mediums' Book," chap. 8.

CONCLUSIONS:

The study will be accomplished if the class can satisfactorily conclude that:

1. Each thought counts! It takes a single thought to connect with less evolved spirits, but also, each thought is an opportunity to begin afresh.
2. What are you most frequent thoughts? “Know Thyself”.

REFERENCES:

1. Kardec, Allan, “Genesis” chapter XIV, item 13-15, Spiritist Alliance for Books, 2003.

SPECIAL NOTE:

Coordinator should divide the class for the next lesson. Ask for (or assign) 3 participants to read the following text and bring 10 – 15 min explanations to the whole class.

PARTICIPANT 1 – Formation of the perispirit (See chapter XIV, Genesis by Allan Kardec; and questions 93-95 of The Spirits’ Book)

PARTICIPANT 2 – Properties of the perispirit (See chapter XIV, Genesis by Allan Kardec; and questions 93-95 of The Spirits’ Book)

PARTICIPANT 3 – Constitution of the perispirit and its direct correlation with the moral ranking of the Spirit (See chapter XIV, Genesis by Allan Kardec; and questions 93-95 of The Spirits’ Book)

OBJECTIVES:

- To explain how the formation of the perispirit occurs.
- To study the known properties of the perispirit.
- To tell why the constitution of the perispirit varies.

METHODS:

1. Coordinator shall warm up with an introduction of the different names that had been given to the spiritual body (perispirit) throughout the different cultures (see Here and Hereafter by Leon Denis).

2. With the help of the volunteers assigned at the end of the previous lesson, discuss with the whole class texts A and B as shown bellow.

PARTICIPANT 1 (or Group 1) – Formation of the perispirit.

PARTICIPANT 2 (or Group 2) – Properties of the perispirit.

PARTICIPANT 3 (or Group 3) – Constitution of the perispirit and its direct correlation with the moral ranking of the Spirit.

Text A: Nature and Properties of Fluids: Fluidic Elements⁽¹⁾

1. Science has furnished the key to those miracles which proceed particularly from the material element, either by explaining them, or in demonstrating the impossibility of them by the laws which rule matter. But the phenomena where the spiritual element is the preponderating force, not being explainable solely by the laws of matter, escape the investigations of scientists. That is why they have more than other facts the apparent character of marvels. It is then only in the laws which rule spiritual life one can find the key for the miracles of this category.

2. The universal cosmic fluid is, as has been demonstrated, elementary primitive matter, of which the modifications and transformations constitute the innumerable varieties of the bodies of nature (Chap. X). So far as the elementary universal principle is concerned, it offers two distinct states; that of etherealization, or imponderability, that one can consider as the primitive and normal state, and that of materialization, or ponderability, which is in some sort only consecutive. The intermediary point is that of the transformation of the fluid into tangible matter; but there still is no sudden transition, for one can consider our imponderable fluids as a boundary between the two states (chap. IV, from n° 10 on).

Each one of these two states gives place necessarily to special phenomena. To the second belong those of the visible world, and to the first those of the invisible one. Those called *material phenomena* are, properly speaking, in the domain of science. The solution of the others, designated *spiritual or psychical phenomena*, because they are allied more especially to the existence of spirits, is among the prerogatives of Spiritism. But, as spiritual and material life are in incessant contact, the phenomena of these two orders are presented often simultaneously. Man, in a state of incarnation, can have only the perception of the physical phenomena which are connected with the material life. Those which belong to the exclusive domain of spiritual life escape the eye of the material senses, and can be perceived only in the spiritual state.^e

3. In an etherealized state the cosmic fluid is not uniform. Without ceasing to be ethereal, it is submitted to modifications as varied in their kind and more numerous than in a state of tangible matter. These modifications constitute distinct fluids, which, although proceeding from the same principle, are endowed with special properties, and give rise to particular phenomena of the invisible world.

All being relative, these fluids have for the spirits, who are themselves fluidic, an appearance as material as that of the objects for the incarnates, and are for them that which the substances of the terrestrial world are for us. They elaborate and combine them, in order to produce determined effects, as men do with their materials, yet by different processes.

But there, as here, it is only given to the most enlightened spirits to comprehend the role of the constitutive elements of their world. The ignorant people of the invisible world are as incapable of explaining the phenomena of which they are witnesses, and in which they cooperate often mechanically, as the ignorant of Earth are of explaining the effects of light or of electricity, or of explaining the process of seeing and hearing.

4. The fluidic elements of the spiritual world elude our instruments of analysis, and the perception of our senses. They are things suited to tangible and not to ethereal matter. Spiritual substances belong to a midst so different from ours that we can judge of them only by comparisons as imperfect as those by which a man born blind seeks to form an idea of the theory of color.

But among these fluids a few are intimately joined to corporeal life, and belong in a measure to the terrestrial universe. In default of direct perception of cause, it is possible to observe the effects of them as one can observe the fluids of a magnet, which no one has ever seen, and acquire some knowledge of their nature with precision. This study is essential; for it is the key to a multitude of phenomena, which are inexplicable by the laws of matter alone.

5. The starting-point of the universal fluid is the degree of absolute ethereality, of which nothing can give us an idea. Its opposite point is its transformation into material substance. Between these two extremes there exist innumerable transformations, which are allied more or less to one another. The fluids which are the nearest materiality – consequently the least pure – are composed of that which might be called the *spiritual terrestrial atmosphere*. In this midst are found the widely different degrees of ethereality

^e The name *psychical* phenomena expresses the idea better than spiritual does, as these phenomena rest upon the properties and attributes of the soul, or rather on the perispiritual fluids, which are inseparable from the soul. This qualification attaches them more intimately to the order of natural facts, regulated by laws. One can then admit them as psychical effects without allowing them the title of miracles.

whence the incarnated and discarnated inhabitants of the Earth draw the necessary elements for the economy of their existence. These fluids, however subtle and impalpable they may be to us, are nevertheless of comparatively gross nature to the ethereal fluids of the superior regions.

It is the same on the surface of all worlds, saving the differences of constitution and vitality proper to each. The less material life there is there, the less the spiritual fluids have of affinity with matter.

The name "*spiritual fluid*" is not rigidly accurate as it is really always matter more or less refined. There is nothing really *spiritual*, but the soul or intelligent principle. We designate fluids thus by comparison, and chiefly by reason of their affinity with spirits. They constitute the substance of the spiritual world. That is why they are called *spiritual fluids*.

6. Who understands the intricate constitution of tangible matter? It is, perhaps, compact only in relation to our senses; and that which seems to prove this is the facility with which it is traversed by spiritual fluids, and the spirits to whom it is no more of an obstacle than are transparent bodies to light.

Tangible matter, having for a primitive element the ethereal cosmic fluid, must be able, by *becoming disintegrated*, to return to a state of etherealization, as the diamond, the hardest of bodies, can be volatilized into impalpable gas. *The solidification of matter is in reality only a transitory state of the universal fluid, which can return to its primitive state when the conditions of cohesion cease to exist.*

Who knows even if, in a tangible state, matter is not susceptible of acquiring a sort of etherealization which would give to it peculiar properties? Certain phenomena which appear authentic tend towards such a supposition as this. We do not yet possess all the beacon-lights of the invisible world; and the future has in reserve for us, without doubt, the knowledge of new laws, which will allow us to comprehend that which is still to us a mystery.

Formation and Properties of the Perispirit

7. The perispirit, or fluidic body of the spirits, is one of the most important products of the cosmic fluid: it is a condensation of this fluid around a focus of intelligence or soul. It is also seen that the fleshly body has also its origin in this same fluid transformed and condensed into tangible matter. In the perispirit the molecular transformation operates differently, for the fluid preserves its imponderability and its ethereal qualities. The perispiritual and carnal body have, then, their source in the same primitive element; both are of matter, although under two different states of it.

8. Spirits draw their perispirit from the place where they find themselves; that is to say, that this envelop is formed from the ambient fluids. The result is, that the constitutive elements of the perispirit must vary according to worlds. Jupiter, being a very advanced world, in comparison to the Earth, where corporeal life has not the materiality of ours, its perispiritual envelopes must be of a nature infinitely more ethereal than upon our Earth. Now, although we would not be able to exist in that world in our carnal bodies, our spirits would not be able to penetrate there with their terrestrial perispirit. In quitting the Earth the spirit leaves there its fluidic envelop, and is supplied with another appropriate to the world where he must go.

9. The nature of the fluidic envelope is always in accord with the degree of moral advancement of the spirit. Inferior spirits cannot change their inclination, and

consequently cannot by desire transport themselves from one world to another. It is they whose fluidic envelope, although ethereal and imponderable as regards tangible matter, is still too heavy, if one can express it thus, in relation to the spiritual world to allow them to leave their place. It is necessary to include in this category those whose perispirit is gross enough to be confounded with their carnal body, which for this reason they believe is still alive. These spirits (and their number is great) remain on the surface of the Earth like the incarnated ones, believing themselves always to be attending to their occupations. Others, a little more dematerialized, are not sufficiently so to elevate themselves above the terrestrial regions.^f

Superior spirits, on the contrary, can enter into inferior worlds, and even incarnate themselves there. They draw, from the constitutive elements of the world they enter, the materials for the fluidic and carnal envelopes appropriate to the midst where they find themselves. They, like the great lord who temporarily leaves his gilded garments to assume the peasant's garb, without being other than the titled character he is on account of the change, will not change thereby their high estate.

It is thus that spirits of the most elevated order can manifest themselves to the inhabitants of Earth, or incarnate themselves for a mission among them. These spirits carry with them, not the envelope, but the remembrance by intuition of the regions whence they came, and which they see in thought. These are people who see among the blind people.

10. The bed of spiritual fluids which surrounds the Earth can be compared to the inferior beds of the atmosphere, heavier, more compact, less pure than the superior beds. These fluids are not homogeneous, they are a mixture of molecules of diverse qualities, amongst which are necessarily found the elementary molecules which form the base, but more or less changed in different states. The effect produced by these fluids will be according to the number of pure parts which they enclose. Such is, by comparison, rectified or mixed alcohol in different proportions of water or of other substances. Its specific weight is augmented by this mixture; while, at the same time, its force and inflammability are diminished, although there may be pure alcohol in all.

The spirits called to live in this midst draw from there their perispirit; but, *according as the spirit becomes more or less purified, its perispirit is formed from the purest or grossest fluid of the world in which it is going to incarnate.* The spirit produces there, always by comparison and not by assimilation, the effect of a chemical re-agent which attracts to it the molecules assimilable to its nature.

This *capital* fact results from it: *that the inmost constitution of the perispirit is not identical with all incarnated or discarnated spirits which people the Earth or surrounding space.* It is not the same with carnal bodies, which, as has been demonstrated, have been formed of the same elements whatever the superiority or inferiority of their spirits may have been. Also with us the effects produced by bodies are the same, they have the same necessities, while they differ by all that which is inherent in the perispirit.

Another result is, that *the perispiritual envelope of the same spirit is modified with the moral progress of the latter at each incarnation, although incarnating himself in the*

^f Examples of spirits believing themselves still in this world: "Revue Spirite," Dec., 1859, p. 310; Nov., 1864, p. 339; April, 1865, p. 117.

same surroundings; that the superior spirits, incarnating themselves exceptionally by a mission into an inferior world, have a perispirit less gross than that of the natives of this world.

11. A place is always in harmony with the nature of the beings who must live there. Fish are in water; winged beings are in the air; spiritual beings are in the spiritual or ethereal fluid, even upon the Earth. *The ethereal fluid is for the needs of the spirit, as the atmosphere is for the necessities of the body.* Now, as fishes cannot live in the air, and terrestrial animals cannot live in an atmosphere too rarefied for their lungs, inferior spirits cannot support the splendor and impression of the most ethereal fluids. They would not die, because spirit cannot die; but an instinctive force keeps them at a distance, as one keeps away from a fire which is too hot, or from a light which is too strong. This is the reason why they cannot go away from the midst appropriate to their nature. In order to change it, it is necessary first to change their nature, that they be despoiled of the material instincts which retain them in material midst. As they become purified and morally transformed, they gradually become identified with purer surroundings, which become a necessity to them, like the eyes of him who has remained a long time in darkness are habituated imperceptibly to the light of day and the splendor of the sun.

12. Thus all is united, all harmonize in the universe. All is submitted to the great and harmonious law of unity, from the most compact materiality to the purest spirituality. The Earth is like a vase whence escapes a thick smoke, which clears away as it ascends, the rarefied particles of which are lost in infinite space.

Divine power shines in all parts of this great whole. Who would desire that, in order better to attest his power, God, discontented with that which he has made, should disturb this harmony? That he should lower himself to the level of a magician by performing acts worthy of a prestidigitator? And in addition to this they dare to give him as a rival in skill Satan himself! Never, in truth, was divine Majesty more undervalued, and men are astonished at the progress of incredulity!

You are right in saying “Faith is departing!” But it is faith in all that chokes reason and good sense that is departing, – a faith similar to that which formerly induced persons to exclaim, “the Gods are departing.” But faith in serious things, in God, and in immortality, is always alive in the hearts of men; and, if it has been stifled with the puerile histories with which it has been overloaded, it raises itself stronger as soon as it has been extricated, as the restrained plant rises again in the light of the sun of which it has been deprived.

All is wonderful in nature because all is admirable, and testifies of divine wisdom. These wonders are for the entire world, for all those who have eyes to see and ears to hear, and not for the profit of a few. No, there are no miracles in the sense attached to this word, because all is amenable to the eternal laws of creation.

Action of the Spirits upon the Fluids - Fluidic Creations - Photograph of the Thought

13. The spiritual fluids, which constitute one of the states of the universal cosmic fluid, are then the atmosphere of spiritual beings. It is the element whence they draw the materials with which they operate, – the place where special phenomena take place, perceptible to the sight and hearing of the spirit, but which escapes the carnal senses which are impressed alone by tangible matter; the ambient wherein the light peculiar to

the spiritual world is formed, this being different from the ordinary light because of its causes and effects. In short, they are the vehicle for thought, as the air is for sound.

14. Spirits act upon spiritual fluids, not by manipulating them as men manipulate gas, but by the aid of thought and will. Thought and will are to the spirit that which the hand is to man. By thought they impress these fluids into such and such directions; they agglomerate them, combine or disperse them; they form harmonious wholes of them, which have a definitive appearance, form, and color; they change the properties of them, as a chemist changes those of gas or other bodies by combining them by following certain laws.

Sometimes these transformations are the result of an intention; often they are the product of an unconscious thought. It is sufficient for the spirit only to think of a thing in order that this thing produces itself; it suffices for one to form a melody in one's mind for it to reverberate through the atmosphere.

Thus, for example, a spirit presents himself to the view of an incarnated being endowed with spiritual sight with the same appearance he had when living at the epoch of their acquaintance, although he may have had many incarnations since that time. He presents himself with the costume, the exterior signs, infirmities, wounds, amputated members, etc., that he had then. A person who has been beheaded will present himself with no head. We do not desire to convey the impression that he has preserved these appearances; no, certainly not; for as a spirit he is neither lame, maimed, blind, nor headless: but, his thought conveying the impression when he was thus, his perispirit takes instantaneously the appearance of it, but it can at the same time leave it instantaneously. If, then, he has been both a black and a white man, he will present himself according to which of these two incarnations may be evoked whence his thought will report itself.

By a similar effect, a spirit's thought creates fluidicly the objects which he often makes use of. A miser will manage his gold; a military man will have his guns and his uniform; a smoker, his pipe; a workman his plow and his cattle; and an elderly woman, her knitting utensils. These fluidic objects are as real for the spirit, who is also fluidic, as they were in the material state of the living man. However, because they are created by the thought, their existences are also as fleeting as the thought.[§]

15. Fluids being the vehicle of the thought, the latter acts upon them, as the sound does upon the air. They bring us the thought, just as the air brings us the sound. We can, then, say with all truth that in such fluids there are waves and rays of thoughts that cross each other without ever becoming entangled, as do the waves and sonorous rays in the air.

Moreover, the thought creates *fluidic images* and reflects itself back on its perispiritual body, as on a mirror; the thought takes on body and somehow *photographs* itself on it. Let us say, for example, that a man has the idea of murdering someone; although his material body is inactive, his fluidic body is - through the thought - put into action, reproducing from this all vibrations. The act he tried to practice is executed fluidicly. The thought creates the image of the victim and, similarly to a picture, the entire scene is drawn, precisely as it is in his spirit.

This is how the innermost secret movements of the soul are reverberated onto the fluidic body; and how one soul can read another, as one reads a book; and how it sees

[§] "Revue Spirite," July, 1859, p. 184, "The Mediums' Book," chap. 8.

what is not perceptible by the eyes of the body. Yet, although the intention is seen and it can foresee the subsequent execution of the act, it cannot determine the moment it will take place; neither can it be exact with details, or even affirm whether it will indeed take place, as later circumstances can modify the plans and change the dispositions. The soul cannot see that which is not yet in another person's thought. What it does see is the habitual preoccupation of the person, his desires, his projects, and his good or bad intentions.

Quality of the Fluids

16. The action of spirits upon spiritual fluids has consequences of a direct and capital importance for incarnated beings. From the instant that these fluids are the vehicle of thought, that thought can modify the properties of them. It is evident that they must be impregnated by the good or bad qualities of the thoughts which put them in vibration, modified by the purity or impurity of the sentiments. Bad thoughts corrupt the spiritual fluids, as deleterious miasmas corrupt the air we breathe. The fluids which surround or that project bad spirits are then vitiated, whilst those which receive the influence of good spirits are as pure as the degree of moral perfection to which they have attained.

17. It would be impossible to itemize or classify the good or bad fluids. Neither could we specify their respective qualities, considering that their diversity is as great as that of the thought.

Fluids do not have "sui generis" qualities, except those they acquire whereat they are elaborated; they are modified by the effluvia of the ambient, just as the air is modified by exhalations, and the water by the layers of salt it crosses. Depending on the circumstances, their qualities are, like those of the air and the water, either temporary or permanent, which makes them more suitable for the production of certain specific effects.

Neither do the fluids have special denominations. As with odors, they are designated by their properties, their effects and their original type. On a moral point of view, they bring the impressions of the sentiments of hatred, envy, jealousy, pride, selfishness, violence, hypocrisy, kindness, benevolence, love, charity, sweetness, etc. On a physical point of view, they are excitants, sedating, piercing, coercing, irritant, soothing, soporific, narcotics, toxics, replenishing, and expellants. They also become a means of transmission, propulsion, etc. The overall picture of the fluids would then be that of all passions, virtues and vices of humanity; and that of the properties of matter, corresponding to the effects they produce.

18. Men, being incarnate beings, have in part the attributes of the spiritual life; for they live in this life as well as in a corporeal one, always during sleep, and often in a conscious state. The spirit, incarnating itself, preserves its perispirit with the qualities which are proper to it, and which, as is known, is not circumscribed by the body, but envelops and radiates around it like a fluidic atmosphere.

By its intimate union with the body the perispirit plays a preponderating role with the organism. By its expansion it places the incarnated being more directly in contact with free spirits.

The thought of the incarnated mind acts upon the spiritual fluids as that of the discarnated spirit's thought acts. It is transmitted from spirit to spirit in the same way, and, according as it is good or bad, it holds a vicious or healthy relation to the surrounding fluids.

Since the fluids of an ambient are modified by the projection of the spirit's thoughts, his perispiritual body - which is a constituent part of his being, and which receives directly and in a permanent way the impressions of his thoughts - should receive even more so the impressions of his good or bad qualities. The fluids vitiated by the effluvia of the bad spirits can be purified by their removal. The perispirit however will always be that which it is, as long as the spirit does not modify itself.

The perispirit of incarnates, being of a nature identical to that of the spiritual fluids, assimilates itself with them readily, as a sponge absorbs water. These fluids have over the perispirit an action which is the more direct because of its expansion and radiation; it confounds itself with them.

These fluids acting upon the perispirit, the latter, in its turn, reacts upon the material organism with which it is in molecular contact. If the effluvia are of a good nature, the bodies receive a salutary impression; if bad, a painful one. If the bad are permanent and energetic, they can cause physical disorders; certain maladies have no other cause.

The midst where bad spirits abound are then impregnated with bad fluids, which are absorbed through all the perispiritual pores, as by the pores of the body pestilential miasmas are absorbed.

19. It is the same in assemblies of incarnated beings. An assembly of people is a focus whence radiate diverse thoughts. An assembly of persons is, like an orchestra, a choir of thoughts, where each one produces his note. The result is a multitude of fluidic-flowing effluvia, of which each one receives the impression of the sounds by the spiritual sense, like in a music choir each one receives the impression of the sound through the sense of hearing.

But, as there are harmonious or discordant sounds, there are also harmonious or discordant thoughts. If all is harmonious, the impression is agreeable; if otherwise, painful. There is no need for the thought to be formed into words. The fluidic-radiation exists all the same, whether it is expressed or not.

Such is the cause of the sentiment of satisfaction that is experienced in a sympathetic reunion, animated by good and benevolent thoughts. It reigns there like a salubrious moral atmosphere, which one breathes with ease. One is strengthened there, because it is impregnated with salutary fluidic effluvia; but, if some evil thoughts are mingled with it, they produce the effect of a current of icy air in a warm atmosphere or of a wrong key note played in a concert. Thus is explained also the anxiety, the indefinable uneasiness, that one feels in antipathetically surroundings, where malevolent thoughts are called forth like currents of nauseous air.

20. Thought produces, then, a substantial effect, which reacts upon our moral being. Spiritism alone can explain it. Man instinctively feels it, since he seeks homogeneous and sympathetic reunions, where he knows that he can draw new moral forces. One could say that he retrieves there the fluid losses that he makes each day by the radiation of thought, as he makes up the losses of the material body by food. Thought, indeed, is an emission which causes a real loss in the spiritual fluids, and consequently in the material fluids, also in such a way that man has need of strengthening himself by the effluvia which he receives from outside.

When a doctor is said to cure his patient by pleasant words, it is an absolute truth; for the benevolent thought carries with it healing fluids, which act physically as well as morally.

21. It is possible, without doubt, to evade men of well-known malicious intentions; but how can we be preserved from the influence of undeveloped spirits which multiply around us, and glide everywhere without being seen?

The means are very simple; for it depends upon the will of the man himself, who carries within him the necessary instrument of protecting himself. Fluids unite by reason of the similitude of their nature, dissimilar ones repel each other. There is an incompatibility between good and bad fluids, as between oil and water.

What is done when the air becomes vitiated? They purify it by destroying the center of the miasma by chasing out the unhealthy effluvium by currents of salubrious air stronger than it. We need the good fluids in order to counteract the invasion of bad fluids; and, as each one has in his own perispirit a permanent fluidic-source, the remedy is within one's self. It acts only to purify this source or spring, and to give to it such qualities as are necessary to *repel* bad influences, in place of being an attractive force. The perispirit is, then, a breastplate to which it is necessary to give the best possible character. Now, as the qualities of the perispirit correspond with the qualities of the soul, it is necessary to work for its own improvement; for it is the imperfections of the soul which attract bad spirits.

Flies go where centers of corruption attract them. Destroy these centers, and the flies will disappear. In the same way bad spirits go where evil attracts them. Destroy the evil, and they will flee. *Spirits really good, whether incarnated or discarnated, have nothing to fear from the influence of bad spirits.*

Text B. **Perispirit**⁽²⁾

93. *Is the spirit, properly so called, without a covering, or is it, as some declare, surrounded by a substance of some kind?*

"The spirit is enveloped in a substance which would appear to you as mere vapor, but which, nevertheless, appears very gross to us, though it is sufficiently vaporous to allow the spirit to float in the atmosphere, and to transport himself through space at pleasure."

(Kardec's comments) As the germ of a fruit is surrounded by the perisperm so the Spirit, properly so called, is surrounded by an envelope which, by analogy, may be designated as the perispirit.

94. *Whence does the spirit draw its semi-material envelope?*

"From the universal fluid of each globe. For this reason the perispirit is not the same in all globes. In passing from one globe to another. the spirit changes its envelope as you change a garment."

- *When spirits who inhabit worlds of a higher degree than ours come among us, are they obliged to take on a grosser order of perispirit?*

"Yes; they are obliged to clothe themselves with your matter in order to be able to enter your world."

95. *Does the semi-material envelope of the spirit assume determinate forms, and can it become perceptible for us?*

"Yes; it can assume any form that the spirit may choose to give to it. It is thus that a spirit is able sometimes to make himself visible to you, whether in dreams or in your waking state, and can take a form that may be visible, and even palpable, for your senses."

3. Once the class has debated the topics proposed above, distribute the following exercises

Fill in the blankets with T, if the affirmation is true or with F if the affirmation is false:

1. In more advanced worlds the perispiritual envelop must be of a nature infinitely more dense. ()
2. Some spiritis believe they are alive because their perispirits are dense enough to be confused with their carnal body. ()
3. The perispirit constitution is equal in every habited world. ()
4. Superior spirits cannot enter into inferior worlds because they have a etherealized perispirit. ()
5. According as the spirit becomes more or less purified, its perispirit is formed from the purest or grossest fluids on the world in which it is going to incarnate. ()
6. The perispirit is a product of the cosmic fluid. ()
7. The perispiritual envelope of the same spirit is modified with the moral progress of the latter at each incarnation. ()
8. Superior spirits, incarnating themselves exceptionally by a mission into an inferior world, have a perispirit less gross that that of the natives of this world. ()
9. Inferior spirits can stand the splendor and impression of all fluids, even the most ethereal. ()
10. The perispirit is a condensation of the cosmic fluid around a focus of intelligence soul. ()
11. All is wonderful in nature because all is admirable, and testifies of divine wisdom. ()
12. In quitting the Earth the spirit leaves there its fluidic envelope and is supplied with another appropriate to the world where he must go. ()
13. The nature of the fluidic envelope does not depend of the moral advancement of the spirit, but depend on the constitution of the specific world. ()

CONCLUSIONS

- The study will be accomplished if the class can satisfactorily conclude that:
1. Perispirit is a product of the cosmic fluid.
 2. Spirits draw their perispirit from the place where they find themselves.
 3. In more advanced worlds the perispirit envelopes must be of a nature infinitely more ethereal than upon our Earth.
 4. Some inferior spirits may believe they are alive because their perispirit is gross enough to be confounded with their carnal bodies.

5. Accordingly, as the spirit becomes more or less purified, its perispirit is formed from the purest or grossest, respectively, fluid of the world in which it is going to incarnate.

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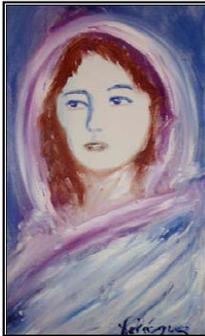
1. Kardec, Allan, "Genesis" chapter XIV, items 1 - 21, Spiritist Alliance for Books, 2003.
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OBJECTIVES:

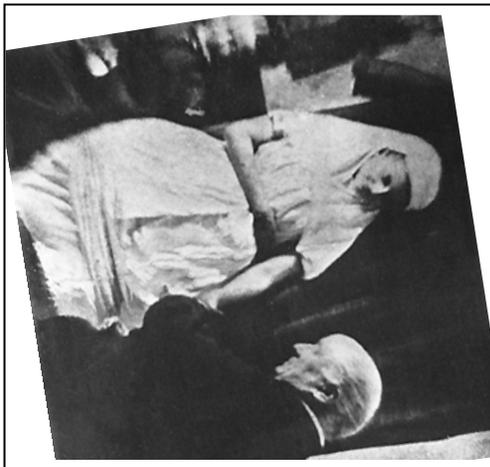
- To clarify how the spirits create their vestments.
- To explain why superior spirits have a different vestment from inferior ones.

METHODS:

1. Begin by showing some pictures from spirits as painted or materialized through mediunistic activities. Call the attention of the audience that they all have vestments.



“Sister of Light” mediunistic painting by Maria Gertrudes (painted in 5 min and 10 sec), signed by the spirit “Velasquez”. Exposed at the Spiritist Society of Baltimore, MD, USA.



This photograph was taken by the President of the Royal Society, Sir William Crookes, and shows the surgeon Dr. James M. Gully recording the pulse of Katie King. The experiments were held under strict test conditions, imposed by Crookes, who recorded physical differences in complexion, hair colouring, height, heart-beat, blisters, skin type, face and finger sizes, plus manners and ways of expression between the materialised figure Katie King and the medium Florence Cook. All physical comparisons were different, proving they were two separate entities.

(From The International Survivalist Society - <http://www.survivalafterdeath.org/>)



“Azura - The Helper”. Precipitation painting by the Campbell brothers (circa 1890) representing a guarding angel. Exposed at the Maple Wood hotel in Lily Dale, NY, USA.



Materialization of the spirit Ana on Dec/14/1953. Observe the Brazilian medium Peixotinho, in trance, laying on the bed. This medium made many experiments at the house of Francisco C. Xavier, allowing through his faculty the materialization of friends of Mr. Xavier (from www.consciesp.org.br).

2. Divide the class into 3 groups.

Group I Manipulation of the Spiritual Fluids by Spirits.

Read carefully the following text⁽¹⁾ and answer (as complete as possible) the proposed question. Feel free to discuss topics addressed by the text with your group instructor.

- a) Define “spiritual fluids”?
- b) How spirits manipulate spiritual fluids?
- c) What are the consequences for the spirit in being capable of manipulating the spiritual fluids?
- d) Why some spirits might present themselves to other spirits or to clairvoyant mediums as using clothes or objects from previous existences?

13. The spiritual fluids, which constitute one of the states of the universal cosmic fluid, are then the atmosphere of spiritual beings. It is the element whence they draw the materials with which they operate, – the place where special phenomena take place, perceptible to the sight and hearing of the spirit, but which escapes the carnal senses which are impressed alone by tangible matter; the ambient wherein the light peculiar to the spiritual world is formed, this being different from the ordinary light because of its causes and effects. In short, they are the vehicle for thought, as the air is for sound.

14. Spirits act upon spiritual fluids, not by manipulating them as men manipulate gas, but by the aid of thought and will. Thought and will are to the spirit that which the hand is to man. By thought they impress these fluids into such and such directions; they

agglomerate them, combine or disperse them; they form harmonious wholes of them, which have a definitive appearance, form, and color; they change the properties of them, as a chemist changes those of gas or other bodies by combining them by following certain laws.

Sometimes these transformations are the result of an intention; often they are the product of an unconscious thought. It is sufficient for the spirit only to think of a thing in order that this thing produces itself; it suffices for one to form a melody in one's mind for it to reverberate through the atmosphere.

Thus, for example, a spirit presents himself to the view of an incarnated being endowed with spiritual sight with the same appearance he had when living at the epoch of their acquaintance, although he may have had many incarnations since that time. He presents himself with the costume, the exterior signs, infirmities, wounds, amputated members, etc., that he had then. A person who has been beheaded will present himself with no head. We do not desire to convey the impression that he has preserved these appearances; no, certainly not; for as a spirit he is neither lame, maimed, blind, nor headless: but, his thought conveying the impression when he was thus, his perispirit takes instantaneously the appearance of it, but it can at the same time leave it instantaneously. If, then, he has been both a black and a white man, he will present himself according to which of these two incarnations may be evoked whence his thought will report itself.

By a similar effect, a spirit's thought creates fluidicly the objects which he often makes use of. A miser will manage his gold; a military man will have his guns and his uniform; a smoker, his pipe; a workman his plow and his cattle; and an elderly woman, her knitting utensils. These fluidic objects are as real for the spirit, who is also fluidic, as they were in the material state of the living man. However, because they are created by the thought, their existences are also as fleeting as the thought.

Group II **Objects formed by Spirits.**

Read carefully the following text⁽²⁾ and answer (as complete as possible) the proposed question. Feel free to discuss topics addressed by the text with your group instructor.

a) Certain spirits present themselves wearing certain clothes or accessories which disturb them, but that they cannot remove. How do you explain that?

b) Are the spirit's clothes conscious or unconscious creations? Why?

c) What kind of substance forms the clothes of spirits?

128. It was the spirit of Saint-Louis who gave us, in reference to this problem, the solution referred to, and which is embodied in the following dialogue: -

1. We have laid before you the case of an apparition of the spirit of a person in the flesh. This spirit carried a snuff-box and took snuff; did he feel the sensation which we should feel in this act?

"No."

2. This snuff-box looked exactly like the one which he habitually used; but that real snuff-box was in his house. What was the snuff-box seen in his hand?

"An appearance; it was made to occur, in order both that the circumstance might be remarked, as, in fact, was the case, and also that the apparition might not be taken for a hallucination produced by the ill-health of the seer. The spirit desired that the lady should be convinced of the reality of his presence; he therefore assumed all the appearances of reality."

3. You say it was an *appearance*; but there is nothing real in an *appearance*, which is a sort of optical illusion. What we want to know is whether this snuff-box was only an image without reality, or whether there was not something of materiality in its nature?

"Certainly there was something material in its nature; it is by the aid of this materiality that the perispirit takes on the appearance of clothes like those which the spirit wore while on earth."

Remark - It is evident that we must here understand the word "appearance" in the sense of *aspect*, or *imitation*. The snuff-box in its reality was not there; what the spirit held in his hand was only its representative; it was therefore an *appearance* as compared with the original, although formed of a sort of matter.

Experience teaches us not to take too literally every expression employed by spirits. By interpreting their expressions according to our own ideas, we run the risk of falling into serious errors; and we should therefore endeavor to ascertain *the real meaning* of their words, whenever these present the least ambiguity, as the spirits themselves constantly recommend us to do. For instance, without the explanation just given, the word *appearance*, frequently recurring in analogous cases, might give rise to false interpretations.

4. Can it be that inert matter has its "double?" Can it be that, in the invisible world, there is an *essential matter* which assumes the forms of the objects of our world? In other words, have the objects of the terrestrial world their *ethereal counterparts* in the invisible world, as spirits are the counterparts of men?

"That is not the case. A spirit exerts, over the material elements everywhere disseminated through space and in your atmosphere, a power such as you are far from suspecting. He can, by his will, concentrate those elements, and give them the apparent form required for his projects."

Remark. - The foregoing question, as will have been seen, was the translation of our own thought, that is to say, of the idea that we had formed in regard to the nature of those objects. If the answer had been, as some may surmise, the reflexion of our own thought, we should have received the confirmation of our own supposition, instead of receiving an explanation altogether contrary to the one which we had imagined.

5. We repeat our question, categorically, to avoid all ambiguity, and we again ask you: - Are the clothes, worn by spirits, something real?

"It appears to me that my previous answer replies to your question. Do you not know that the perispirit itself is something real?"

6. Your explanation seems to imply that spirits transform ethereal matter at pleasure, and that, consequently, with regard to the snuff-box, for example, the spirit did not find it ready made, but made it himself, at the moment when he wanted it, by an act of his will, and that he was able, afterwards, to unmake it. It must therefore be the same in regard to all other objects seen with spirits, whether clothes, jewels, or what not.

"Evidently so."

7. The snuff-box in question was visible for the lady, and so plainly as to make her think it real. Could the spirit have made it tangible for her?

"He could have done so."

8. Could the lady have taken the box in her hands, and, in that case, would it still have appeared to her to be a real snuff-box?

"Yes."

9. If she had opened it, she would probably have found snuff there; if she had taken a pinch, would it have made her sneeze?

"Yes."

10. A spirit, then, cannot only produce a form, but can give to that form the special properties of the object thus imitated?

"Yes, if he so wills it; it was in virtue of this principle that I gave affirmative replies to your preceding questions. You will have abundant proofs of the powerful action exercised by spirit over matter; proofs such as you little imagine at present, as I have already told you."

11. If a spirit had compounded a poisonous substance, and some human being should swallow it, would the latter be poisoned?

"Such a compound could be made; but no spirit could make it, for he would not be permitted to do so."

12. Could he fabricate a substance that would be beneficial to health, and capable of curing a malady? Has such a thing ever been done?

"Yes, very often."

13. If so, he could, no doubt, as easily fabricate all alimentary substance; suppose he made some fruit, or any other article of food, would it appease a man's hunger if he ate it?

"Yes, yes; but do not try so hard to find out what it is so easy to understand. A ray of sunlight suffices to enable your gross organs to perceive the material particles which fill the space in the midst of which you live. Do you not know that the air contains the vapor of water? Condense that vapor, and you bring it back to its normal state of water; deprive it of heat, and do! The impalpable and invisible molecules of that vapor have been changed into a solid body; and how many other substances are there, from which chemists will produce marvels even more astonishing! But spirits possess instruments more perfect than yours, viz., their will, and the Divine permission."

Remark. - This question of the appeasing of hunger by substances of the character we are considering is very important. If a substance has only temporary existence and properties, and is, so to say, only a sort of *pretence*, how can it appease the hunger of the material body? This substance, by its contact with the stomach, produces a sensation of satiety, but not the satiety which results from filling the stomach with its natural food. If such a substance can act on the bodily economy so as to modify a morbid state, it can just as well act on the stomach so as to produce the sensation resulting from the satisfaction of appetite. Nevertheless, those whose business it is to provide us with drugs and with dinners need not be jealous of spirit-power, nor imagine that the denizens of the other world are coming into competition with them.

Such cases of spirit-action are rare, exceptional, and independent of the human will; otherwise we should really be fed and cured too cheaply.

14. Could objects that have been thus formed by spirits, and rendered tangible by their will, obtain the attributes of permanence and stability, and be made use of by men?

"The thing is possible in itself, *but it is never done*; it would be an infringement of the laws of natural order in the sphere of human life."

15. Do all spirits possess the power of producing tangible objects in the same degree?

"The higher the spirit, the more easily does he obtain this effect; but it also depends upon circumstances: inferior spirits sometimes have this power."

16. Does a spirit always comprehend the way in which he makes his garments and the other objects he shows us?

"No, he often determines their formation by an instinctive act which, if he is not sufficiently enlightened, he does not understand."

17. If a spirit can draw from the universal element the materials for making all sorts of things, and if he can give to each of those things a temporary reality and peculiar properties, it is evident that he can draw from this element the matter necessary for writing; and your explanations would therefore appear to give us the key to the phenomenon of direct writing: is it so?

"Ah! You've found that out, at last, have you?"

Remark. - All our preliminary questions had been put with a view to arriving at the solution just given. The spirit's exclamation proves that he had read our thought.

18. If the matter employed by the spirit be not permanent, how is it that the traces of direct writing do not disappear?

"Do not strain at words; I did not say that spirit-formations are *never* permanent. I have been speaking of voluminous objects; but writing consists merely of signs that have been traced, and which it may be useful to preserve; and they are accordingly preserved. I meant to say that the objects thus composed by spirits could not become objects of common use, because there is, in them, no real aggregation of matter such as there is in your solid bodies".

CONCLUSIONS:

The study will be accomplished if the class can satisfactorily conclude that:

1. The air that surrounds us as well as the solid elements that compose a building, for example, are made of similar material elements, only organized in different forms. By the same token, the material elements of the spiritual realm are also form of matters, but with a different arrangement than the ones we usually experience.

2. The material elements in the spiritual realm are manipulated (formed, decomposed, rearranged) by the thoughts and will of the spirits. Therefore, spirits can form any sort of objects and present them to other spirits and/or incarnated beings. These objects are always presented with a positive and constructive intention.

REFERENCES:

1. Kardec, Allan, "Genesis" chapter XIV, items 13-15, Spiritist Alliance for Books, 2003.

2. Kardec, Allan, "The Medium's Book", chapter VIII, item 128, edited by Brazilian Spiritist Federation, translated by Anna Blackwell.

OBJECTIVES:

- To identify the occult influence of the spirit in our thoughts and acts.
- To define and exemplify the concepts of telepathy and presentiments.

METHODS:

1. Begin by introducing the definitions⁽¹⁾ of the two main topics of this lesson:
 - a) Presentiment: “a feeling that something is about to happen; premonition.”
 - b) Telepathy: “apparent communication from one mind to another by extrasensory means.”

Then, ask participants to give personal examples on telepathy and presentiments.

2. Present to the class each of the following texts and discuss their main ideas with them.

Text A⁽²⁾. Do spirits influence our thoughts and our actions?

"Their influence upon them is greater than you suppose, for it is very often they who direct both."

Text B⁽³⁾. Is a presentiment always a warning from the spirit-guardian?

"A presentiment is a counsel privately addressed to you by a spirit who wishes you well. The same may be said of the intuition which derives from the choice of his new existence by a spirit about to reincarnate himself; the voice of instinct is of the same nature. A spirit, before incarnating himself, is aware of the principal phases of his new existence—that is to say, of the kind of trials to which he is about to subject himself. When these are of a very marked character, he preserves, in his inner consciousness, a sort of impression respecting them; and this impression, which is the voice of instinct, becoming more vivid as the critical moment draws near, becomes presentiment."

Text C⁽⁴⁾. How comes it that two persons, perfectly awake, often have the same thought at the same moment?

"It is because two spirits, who are in sympathy, may communicate their thought to each other even when the body is not asleep."

(Kardec's comments). There is, between spirits, a communication of thoughts which sometimes enables two persons to see and understand one another without having any need of human speech. They may be said to speak the language of spirits.

Text D⁽⁵⁾. It is a mistake to suppose that a man must be a medium in order to attract to himself the beings of the invisible world. Space is peopled with spirits; they are always around us, always beside us; they see us and watch us; they mingle in our meetings, and follow or avoid us, according as we attract or repel them. The medianimic faculty has no influence in this respect; for that faculty is only a means of communication. After what we have said respecting the causes of sympathy and antipathy in spirits, it will be easily understood that we are surrounded by those who are in affinity with us, whether our state be one of elevation or of degradation. If we consider the moral condition of our globe, we see what must be the character of the vast majority of the wandering spirits about us; and if we take each country separately, we may judge, by the ruling characteristics of its inhabitants, by their occupations, and by their moral and humanitarian sentiments, what sort of spirits are most intimately connected with it.

Keeping this indication in view, let us imagine a party of gay, frivolous, unreasoning people, busy only with what they call "pleasure;" what kind of spirits would be most apt to keep them company? Certainly not spirits of a high order, who would be as little attracted to them as would be philosophers and men of science among ourselves. Thus, whenever men assemble together, they have around them an invisible assembly, sympathizing with their good or bad qualities, and this, as a matter of course, and without any evocation having been made or even thought of. Let us suppose, still farther, that the human beings thus assembled possess the means of conversing with the invisible beings about them through an interpreter, - that is to say, through a medium, - and that they make an evocation; what spirits would be most likely to answer to their call? Evidently those who are already present; ready, and waiting, and only too glad of an opportunity to talk with them. If, in an assembly of such a character, a superior spirit should be evoked, it is possible that he may come, and may even give a communication, in the shape of good advice; but as soon as he finds that he is not attended to, he retires, as all sensible persons would do in his place, and leaves them to give free reign to their folly.

Text E⁽⁶⁾ The kind of impression which we call presentiment is a vague intuition of future things. This faculty, more or less developed in certain mediums, is sometimes the result of a sort of second-sight, by which they obtain glimpses of the consequences of things present, and thus perceive the filiation of events to come; but it is also, in many cases, the result of occult communications. It is to persons who are thus endowed, and who constitute a variety of the inspired mediums, that we give the appellation of pre-sentient mediums.

3. Now, conclude by asking these questions:

- a) What is the nature of the occult influence of the spirits?
- b) How should we understand telepathy according with spiritism?
- c) Can we say that the telepathy between incarnate-incarnate, incarnate-discarnate and discarnate-discarnate are the same? Why?
- d) Is a presentiment always a message from a good spirit? Why?
- e) How can one neutralize a spirit's bad influence over another one?

CONCLUSIONS:

The study will be accomplished if the class can satisfactorily conclude that:

1. As nobody can live without thinking and our thoughts irradiate around us, we are continuously submersed in a constant exchange with incarnated and discarnated spirits.
2. Our thoughts will automatically attract all of those who sympathize with us and expel all of those who do not.

REFERENCES:

1. Merriam-Webster Dictionary, electronic version, 2001.
2. Kardec, Allan, "The Spirits' Book", question 459, edited by Brazilian Spiritist Federation, translated by Anna Blackwell.
3. Idem, question 522
4. Idem, question 421 and comment.
5. Kardec, Allan, "The Mediums' Book", chapter XXI, second part, item 232, edited by Brazilian Spiritist Federation, translated by Anna Blackwell.
6. Idem, chapter XV, second part, item 184.

OBJECTIVES:

- To explain why the influence of the spirits into the corporeal world has nothing of unnatural.
- To analyze the nature of such influence.

METHODS:

1. Begin by presenting and debating the following question⁽¹⁾.

525. *Do spirits exercise an influence over the events of our lives?*

"Assuredly they do; since they give you advice."

- *Do they exercise this influence in any other way than by means of the thoughts they suggest to us; that is to say, have they any direct action on the course of earthly events?*

"Yes; but their action never oversteps the laws of nature."

(Kardec's comments) We erroneously imagine that the action of spirits can only be manifested by extraordinary phenomena we would have spirits come to our aid by means of miracles, and we imagine them to be always armed 'with a sort of magic wand. Such is not the case; all that is done through their help being accomplished by natural means; their intervention usually takes place without our being aware of it. Thus, for instance, they bring about the meeting of two persons who seem to have been brought together by chance they suggest to the mind of some one the idea of going in a particular direction. They call your attention to some special point, if the action on your part thus led up to by their suggestion, unperceived by you, will bring about the result they seek to obtain. In this way, each man supposes himself to be obeying only his own impulse, and thus always preserves the freedom of his will.

2. Divide the class into 2 groups.

Group I.**Spiritual influence on our daily lives.**

Read carefully the following 2 texts (texts A and B) and answer (as complete as possible) the proposed question. Feel free to discuss topics addressed by the text with your group instructor.

- a) Analyze what are the benefits for incarnated and discarnated of the influence exerted by spirits.
- b) Explain why the influence of spirits in everyday occurrences is not supernatural.
- c) How do we distinguish between a positive and a negative spiritual influence in our lives?

Text A⁽²⁾:

530. Cannot frivolous and mocking spirits give rise to the various little difficulties that defeat our projects and upset our calculations? In a word, are they not the authors of what may be termed the petty troubles of human life?

"Such spirits take pleasure in causing vexations which serve as trials for the exercise of your patience; but they tire of this game when they see that they do not succeed in ruffling you. But it would neither be just nor correct to charge them with all your disappointments, the greater number of which are caused by your own heedlessness. When your crockery is broken, the breakage is much more likely to have been caused by your own awkwardness than by spirit action."

- Do the spirits who' bring about petty vexations act from personal animosity, or do they direct their attacks against the first person who comes handy, without any fixed aim, and simply to gratify their malice?

"They act from both these motives. In some cases, they are enemies whom you have made during your present life, or in some former one, and who pursue you accordingly; in others, they act without any fixed motive."

531. In the case of those' who have' done us harm in the earthly life is their malevolence extinguished when they return to the spirit-world?

"In many cases, they perceive the injustice of their action, and regret the wrong they have done you; but, in other cases, they continue to pursue you with their animosity, if God permits them to do so, as a continuation of your trial."

- Can we put an end to this sort of persecution, and by what means?

"You can do so, in many cases, by praying for them, because, by thus rendering them good for evil, you gradually bring them to see that they are in the wrong. And, in all cases, if you can show them, by your patience, that you are able to rise superior to their machinations, they will cease to attack you, seeing that they gain nothing by so doing."

(Kardec's comments) Experience proves that imperfect spirits follow up their vengeance from one existence to another, and that we are thus made to expiate sooner or later, the wrongs we may have done to others.

532. Are spirits able to avert misfortunes from some persons, and to bring them upon others?

"Only to a certain extent; for there are misfortunes that come upon you by the degrees of providence. But spirits can lessen your sufferings by helping you to bear them with patience and resignation.

"Know, also, that it often depends on yourselves to avert misfortunes, or, least, to attenuate them. God has given you intelligence in order that you may make use of it, and it is especially by so doing that you enable friendly spirits to aid you most effectually by suggesting useful ideas; for they only help those who help themselves: a truth implied in the words, 'Seek, and yet shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.'

"Besides, you must remember that what appears to you to be a misfortune is not always such; for the good which it is destined to work out is often greater than the seeming evil.

This fact is not always recognized by you, because you are too apt to think only of the present moment, and of your own immediate satisfaction."

Text B⁽³⁾

6. The element in which spirits act, and the means of execution being different from those employed during the incarnation, the effects are different. These effects only appear supernatural because they are produced through agents, who are not those by means of which men serve themselves; but from the instant when it is known that these agents are natural, and that the manifestations occur in obedience to laws, there is nothing supernatural or marvelous about them. Before the properties of electricity were known, the electricity phenomenon was regarded as miraculous by certain people. As soon as the cause was known, the miracle vanished. It is the same with spiritual phenomena, which arise no more from the setting aside of nature's laws than do the electrical, acoustic, luminous, and other phenomena which have given rise to a crowd of superstitions. (...)

8. The spiritual phenomena, being natural, have been produced in all ages; but because their study could not be effected by material means, with which physical science arms itself, they have remained longest in the supernatural domain whence Spiritism rescues them.

The supernatural hypothesis based upon inexplicable appearances leaves the imagination wholly free, which, wandering into the unknown gives birth to superstitious beliefs. A rational explanation founded upon natural law, leading man to a foundation in reality, gives a place of rest to imaginative flights, and destroys superstition. Far from extending the supernatural domain, Spiritism reduces it to the narrowest limits, and robs it of its last refuge. If it makes possible belief in certain facts, it prevents belief in much else, because it demonstrates in the circle of spiritual being as science in a circle of materiality, that which is possible, and that which is not. Always, however, as it makes no pretension to say the final word upon all subjects, even upon those which belong to its own realm, it does not take the position of an absolute regulator of the possible, and reserves always some knowledge for future disclosures.

9. The spiritual phenomena consist in different modes of manifestation of soul or spirit during the incarnation, or in their discarnate state. It is by its manifestations that the soul reveals its existence, its survival, and its individuality; and it is judged by its effects. The cause being natural, the effect is equally so. These effects made the special object of research in the study of Spiritism, in order to arrive at knowledge as completely as possible of the nature and of the attributes of the soul, as well as of the laws which govern the spiritual principle.

Group II.

Case Study.

Introduction: In "and life goes on" the spirit Andre Luiz describes the sufferings and joys of two characters, Evelyn Serpa and Ernest Fantini, whom return as discarnated spirits to their families left on Earth. The visit of these sprits to their relatives, after 2 years of physical death, is marked by a painful moral drama. Evelyn finds her husband - Caio Serpa - emotionally linked with Vera Celina, a young lady who was linked with Caio even before Evelyn had discarnated. Evelyn's drama is compounded by the fact that Vera is the beloved daughter of her cherished friend Ernest. In a demonstration of

profound forgiving and personal sacrifice, Evelyn suggests to her (ex)-husband, Caio, to marry Vera. The segment we are about to read is the discussion between Evelyn (in spirit) and Caio (still incarnated).

Instructions: Read carefully the following text⁽⁴⁾ and answer (as complete as possible) the proposed question. Feel free to discuss topics addressed by the text with your group instructor.

- a) By what means does Evelyn influence Caio?
- b) What is the nature of her influence (positive or negative)? Why?
- c) Does Evelyn coerce Caio's free will? (Observation: the coordinator should also mention the expected behavior from an inferior spirit).

(...) He had no idea of Evelyn's presence in spirit next to him, and her part in forcing him to awaken spiritually to these truths. -"Caio, what are you doing with your life?" She asked him gently. Physically, the question failed to register; but, thinking he was talking to himself, he heard it in the sound chamber of his soul. "Caio, what are you doing with your life? The words of his former wife echoed in the innermost temple of his conscience. Time is going by, he thought; I'm not paying enough attention to what I'm doing. For what values was he exchanging the legacy of time? In what resources was he investing his health and money? What good were his academic credentials doing him or anyone else? He had killed a friend; and as a husband, he had lacked the courage to be sincerely good to his wife even in her final illness.

His eyes fell inadvertently on Evelyn's funeral service, and he wondered what he had really represented to the woman. In fact, where she was concerned, he didn't feel very good about himself. He had always treated her impatiently, harshly, interested as he was in taking her daughter's affection away from her. In the school of life, he realized, his conscience was giving him failing grades. He looked over at Vera, trying to figure out from her expression what was going on inside her. "Caio, think of your duties. Don't you think it's time you made your relationship to Vera legal?" Evelyn whispered in his soul's ears, "After all, she gives herself to you completely."

Convinced he was talking to himself, Caio silently repeated the question, unaware that Evelyn was listening to his answers. He supposed he was only following a process of self-criticism, and so his soliloquy continued. "Legalize my relationship with Vera? Marry her? Why?" Yes, he'd promised Vera he would marry her and he still liked the idea, but he wasn't about to act on it without scrutinizing the situation more closely. He had been there before, tied down by marriage vows, and he wasn't about to get emotionally involved again, at least not with all those constraints holding him back. Besides, he was a man of the world. He had heard some not very flattering comments about Vera that hardly recommended her as a wife. A number of young men he had spoken to about her had given her a far-from-clean dossier. Why should he give his name to such a woman?

"Caio, who are you to judge?"

Evelyn's question echoed in his soul in the form of a dazzling idea that both touched and frightened him. New appeals rushed in upon him with the impact of truths hitting against the innermost temple of his being.

"Caio, who are you to judge? Aren't you, by your own admission, someone with serious debts before the Law? Why condemn a young woman who made mistakes because as a girl she had no moral guidance to lean on?"

With these admonitions in mind, he continued his self-examination. Would it be fair to leave Vera, now that she was alone in the world? If he did, where would she go? And who was he, Caio Serpa, but a man headed toward middle age who needed someone to help him keep his life on track? He had experienced all kinds of sensual pleasures in his life, but what was he left with at the end of every love affair? This was beginning to look like irresponsibility and self-abuse. What had he gotten from all his wild nights, full of loud boasts yet devoid of meaning, except exhaustion and disillusionment? Up to now, as far as he could remember, he had never helped anyone. He could be affable enough, if circumstances didn't upset him, but he had only to be contradicted in a small point, in any situation, to jump ship and not be bothered any more. Wasn't it time to start getting involved, help someone, be of use to someone? In the beginning, caught up in his game of conquest, he had showered Vera with kindness and tenderness, using all his charms to captivate her. Later, satiated, his interest died down and boredom set in—typical of a man who doesn't know how to love. He couldn't deny, though, that Vera had placed her entire trust in him, and had given herself wholly to him. In the end, she hadn't hesitated to humiliate her own mother, forcing her to follow his orders and put him in control of her financial assets.

Caio received all these arguments from the disincarnate Evelyn, all the while supposing he was their source—rather as if a light bulb (if it had thought) might suppose that it and not the power company was the source of the lamp's light. Still he put up resistance:

"Marry? Get tied down again? Why? Don't I have all the advantages of a married man, and none of the problems?"

But Evelyn's voice kept sounding in his spirit: "Caio, you're the dominant partner in this relationship while Vera Celine plays the submissive role. She will feel a lot more secure in her love for you and be a good and devoted mate if you marry her. At the same time, a real commitment will protect you against future temptations that would lead you to philandering. That has characteristically been a problem for you through your whole love life, hasn't it? Do you think you're over it yet? Wouldn't it be better to guarantee her peace and yours by bringing a little self-discipline into your life? Think about it; imagine yourself in front of your own mother when she was first married to your father. What every man looks for in a wife is the unconditional support of a mother, which he lost when he grew up. What would you think of a man who robbed a girl such as your mother of her purest heart's desires? Would it not stir up all your most protective instincts if you saw her trust betrayed? If you saw her abandoned and forgotten by the very person she had trusted with her life? So why do you talk of being stifled in marriage? These attitudes can only be hurtful and make her need your protection and understanding more and more."

From cautions, Evelyn now changed to thoughts of hope and optimism.

"Think, Caio! Vera didn't trust you with just a small sum of money to invest. You would have far more than you need to raise a family. Think of the wonderful things the future could hold. And listen, whether you believe in God and an afterlife or not, you're still carrying a painful problem around with you—one you haven't been able to get rid of

up to now-your guilt over murdering Tulio Mancini. You killed a colleague and that memory is always there. You try to lose the pain of it in pleasure, but that doesn't work. You try to block out those dark images, but they constantly break in on you. But to be a father, taking care of your darling children wouldn't that be the best compensation you could make on Earth? Marrying Vera will legally put you in possession of assets you could cultivate and add to, so that your children would be guaranteed security and comfort, happiness, a good education, and a new home. Caio! A home, where you can rest, renew yourself, forget, with children who'll mirror you as you were in your young days, and a life with Vera, who will remind you of the refuge you lost in your mother!" These evocations of peace and new enterprise, which he had never experienced before, brought Caio to tears for the first time in many years.

"Yes, Caio," Evelyn continued, "bathe your heart in tears-tears of hope, joy! Let's trust God and life! The sun that's dying today will be back tomorrow. Think about these stones, these graves in front of you. Everywhere around them there's an explosion of greenery and flowers. They're telling you that death is an illusion, that life triumphs, beautiful and eternal! From another world, the people who love you will be so pleased with your acts of understanding. Tulio will forgive you, Elyse will bless you! Have courage-courage!"

Caio, surprised but incapable of sensing Evelyn's presence, found himself suddenly happy. He felt euphoric, inspired in the secret recesses of his being by a sense of renewal and peace. Like a sick man who has found the right medicine and holds on to it, anxious for a cure, he instinctively decided not to lose the moment, to act on this positive exaltation before it disappeared.

"Let's go," insisted Evelyn. "Let Vera know right now that you'll marry and protect her!"

Then the unexpected happened. Usually obstinate and aggressive, Caio, embraced all the while by Evelyn's spirit, left his retreat, and with a good deal of humility, walked toward the group surrounding Vera. There, with his thoughts united to Evelyn's, he saw his fiancée in a new light. He began, it seemed to him, to love her in a different way. He felt compassion for her in her grief; he realized her loneliness, her genuine need for companionship. Suddenly, he recognized that he too was lonely, and that he needed her dedication and tenderness. In that unforgettable instant, he didn't know for sure whether he wanted her with the impatience of a man or the tenderness of a father.

He approached her, gently took her arm, and told her, intentionally speaking aloud so that her friends would witness his words, "Vera, don't cry any more. You're not alone! Tomorrow, we'll start getting the necessary documents together so we can get married. As soon as possible!"

Vera gave him a significant and appreciative look. As they prepared to leave, the two leaned on each other. Evelyn and Ernest, and a few spiritual friends, paid their last respects to Elyse. They prayed, thanking God especially for the transformation that had just taken place in Caio.

One more important step had been taken on the road toward a better future. With Divine help, Caio and Vera would make a home. Tubo Mancini would come back to Earth, a member of the family of the man who had taken his former life. In this way the Law of Love, which says that in the end hate and revenge will be forever banished from the Work of God, would be satisfied. Later, Elyse would join the family as a much-loved

daughter. Caio would find new comfort; become another man who, with Vera's loving care, would see his life extended in happy posterity.

Evelyn, thinking of all this, was unable to stop her cries of jubilation. She still loved Caio, but on another level now. With all her soul, she thanked God for the existence of Vera Celine; she began to admire the woman and wish her well. Vera Celine was willing to render services that she could never repay. In an ecstasy of happiness, she ran to meet the engaged couple, and before Caio could settle beside Vera in the car, she hugged him gratefully. Full of love purified by the fires of suffering-of heavenly love-she shouted to his heart for the first time, "Caio, my dear! My dear! Be happy, and God bless you!"

CONCLUSIONS

The study will be accomplished if the class can satisfactorily conclude that:

1. Spirits can participate and influence our life decisions through a thought dialogue with us.
2. Superior spirits will always respect our free-will and, although suggesting to us good ways of acting, will never force our choices.
3. Inferior spirits on the contrary are always prove to violate one free-will.

REFERENCES:

- (1) Kardec, Allan, "The Spirits' Book", question 525, edited by Brazilian Spiritist Federation, translated by Anna Blackwell.
- (2) Idem, questions 530 – 532.
- (3) Kardec, Allan, "Genesis" chapter XIII, items 6, 8 and 9, Spiritist Alliance for Books, 2003.
- (4) Xavier, F. C., "And Life goes on", dictated by the spirit Andre Luiz, pages 255 – 260 (segment), Allan Kardec Educational Society, 2000.

OBJECTIVES:

- To explain how Superior and Inferior Spirits express their affect toward incarnates.
- To understand why Protecting Spirits are more concerned about our moral illnesses other than our physical ones.

METHODS:

1. Coordinator should introduce the topic by explaining “moral illnesses” and “physical illnesses” and ask participants to brainstorm on how moral illnesses can generate physical ones and vice-versa.

2. Now, all participants shall read and debate the following text⁽¹⁾. The coordinator shall listen to everybody’s opinions and intervene to clarify doubts.

Affection of Certain Spirits for Certain Persons.

484. *Do spirits affectionately prefer certain persons?*

"Good spirits sympathize with all men who are good, or susceptible of amelioration; inferior spirits, with men who are bad, or who may become such. The attachment, in both cases, is a consequence of the similarity of sentiment."

485. *Is the affection of certain spirits for certain persons exclusively one of sentiment?*

"True affection has nothing of carnality; but, when a spirit attaches himself to a living person, it is not always through affection only; for there may also be in that attachment a reminiscence of human passions."

486. *Do spirits take an interest in our misfortunes and our prosperity? Those who wish us well, are they grieved by the ills we undergo during life?*

"Good spirits do you all the good they can, and rejoice with you in all your joys. They mourn over your afflictions when you do not bear them with resignation, because in that case affliction produces no beneficial result, for you are like the sick man who rejects the disagreeable draught that would cure him."

487. *What is the kind of ills that causes most grief to our spirit-friends? Is it our physical sufferings, or our moral imperfections?*

"What grieves them most is your selfishness and your hard heartedness, for these are the root of all your troubles. They smile at the imaginary sorrows that are born of pride and ambition; they rejoice in those which will shorten your term of trial."

(Kardec's comments) Our spirit-friends, knowing that corporeal life is only transitory, and that the tribulations by which it is accompanied are the means that will enable us to reach a happier state, are more grieved for us by the moral imperfections which keep us back, than by physical ills, which are only transitory.

Spirits attach as little importance to misfortunes which affect us only in our earthly ideas, as we do to the trilling sorrows of childhood. Seeing the afflictions of life to be the means of our advancement, they regard them only as the passing crisis which will restore the sick man to health. They are grieved by our sufferings, as we are grieved by those of a friend but, judging the events of our lives from a truer point of view, they appreciate them differently. While inferior spirits try to drive us to despair, in order to hinder our advancement, the good ones seek to inspire us with the courage that will turn our trials into a source of gain for our future.

488. Have the relatives and friends who have gone before us into the other life more sympathy for us than spirits who are strangers to us?

"Undoubtedly they have; and they often protect you as spirits, according to their power."

- Are they sensible of the affection we preserve for them?

"Very sensible; but they forget those who forget them."

CONCLUSIONS

The study will be accomplished if the class can satisfactorily conclude that:

1. Good spirits sympathize with all human beings who are good. On the contrary, inferior spirits sympathize with those who are bad. The attachment is a case of affinity, in both cases.

REFERENCES:

(1) Kardec, Allan, *The Spirits' Book*, questions 484 – 488, edited by Brazilian Spiritist Federation, translated by Anna Blackwell.

OBJECTIVES:

- To give the differences among guardian, familiar, sympathetic and perverse spirits.
- To define “angels” according to Spiritism.
- To understand under which conditions a protector spirit can remain away from his/her protégé.

METHODS:

1. Establishes a group discussion using the following text⁽¹⁾. Focus, particularly, on the meaning of angel and the means of progress for the human soul.

“(....) the soul, in the early phases of its existence, is like a child, lacking experience; it is, therefore, subject to error. God does not give the soul experience, but He gives it the means of acquiring experience; every false step taken by the soul on the road of evil, keeps it back; it undergoes the consequences of this delay, but it thus learns, at its own expense, what it must avoid. It is thus that, little by little, the soul acquires development, effects its own improvement, and advances in the spiritual hierarchy, until it has reached the state of fully purified Spirit or Angel. The angels, then, are the souls of men who have reached the highest degree of perfection attainable by created existences, and who have entered upon the full enjoyment of the felicity for which they were created. Before attaining to the supreme degree, they enjoy degrees of happiness proportioned to their degree of advancement, but their happiness is never that of idleness, it consists in the functions to which they are called by the Almighty and which they rejoice to discharge, because the occupations of spirits are, for them, a means of progressing.¹

2. Divide the class into 3 groups.

Group I: Guardian - Angels - Protecting, Familiar, and Sympathetic Spirits.

Read carefully the following text⁽²⁾ and answer (as complete as possible) the proposed question. Feel free to discuss topics addressed by the text with your group instructor.

- a) Define guardian-angel.
- b) Why does a guardian-angel chooses to watch over one particular individual rather than another?

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Vide chap. III. Heaven.

c) Is it possible for a guardian-angel to stay away from his/her protected individual? If yes, what should we do to maintain the best possible relationship with our guardian-angels?

489. Are there spirits who attach themselves to a particular individual, in order to protect and help him?

"Yes, the spirit-brother; what you call the spirit-protector, or the good genius."

490. What is to be understood by the expression, "guardian-angel"?

"A spirit-protector of high degree."

491. What is the mission of a spirit-protector?

"That of a father towards his children—to lead the object of his protection into the right road, to aid him with his counsels, to console him in his afflictions, and to sustain his courage under the trials of his earthly life."

492. Is a spirit-protector attached to an individual from his birth?

"From his birth to his death; and he often follows him after death in the spirit-life, and even in several successive corporeal existences; for these existences are but every short phases of his existence as a spirit."

493. Is the mission of a spirit-protector voluntary or obligatory?

"Your spirit-protector is obliged to watch over you, because he has accepted that task; but a spirit is allowed to choose his ward among the beings who are sympathetic to him. In some cases this office is a pleasure; in others, it is a mission or a duty."

- In attaching himself to a person, is a spirit obliged to refrain from protecting other individuals?

"No; but he does so less exclusively."

494. Is the spirit-protector indissolubly attached to the person confided to his guardianship?

"It often happens that spirits quit their position in order to fulfill various missions; but, in that case, an exchange of wards takes place."

495. Does a spirit-protector sometimes abandon his ward when the latter persists in neglecting his counsels?

"He withdraws from him when he sees that his counsels are useless, and that there is a stubborn determination to yield to the influence of inferior spirits; but he does not abandon him entirely, and continues to make himself heard. It is not the spirit who quits the man, but the man who closes his ears against the spirit. As soon as the man calls him back, the spirit returns to him."

"If there be a doctrine that should win over the most incredulous by its charm and its beauty, it is that of the existence of spirit-protectors, or guardian-angels. To think that you have always near you beings who are superior to you, and who are always beside you to counsel you, to sustain you, to aid you in climbing the steep ascent of self-

improvement, whose friendship is truer and more devoted than the most intimate union that you can contract upon the earth-is not such an idea most consoling? Those beings are near you by the command of God. It is He who has placed them beside you. They are there for love of Him, and they fulfill towards you a noble but laborious mission. They are with you wherever you may be; in the dungeon, in solitude, in the lazar-house, even in the haunts of debauchery. Nothing ever separates you from the friend whom you cannot see, but whose gentle impulsions are felt, and whose wise monitions are heard, in the innermost recesses of your heart.

"Would that you were more fully impressed with this truth! How often would it aid you in your moments of need! How often would it save you from the snares of evil spirits! But, at the great day of account, how often will your guardian-angel have to say to you, 'Did I not urge you, and yet you would not follow my leading? Did I not show you the abyss, and yet you persisted in throwing yourself into it? Did I not cause your conscience to hear the voice of truth, and have you not followed lying counsels?' Question your guardian-angels; establish between yourselves and them the affectionate intimacy which exists between tried and loving friends. Do not think to hide anything from them, for they are the eye of God, and you cannot deceive them. Think of the future; seek to advance on the upward road: your trials will be shorter, your existences happier. Men, take courage! Cast far from you all prejudices and mental reservations; enter resolutely upon the new road that opens before you! You have guides; follow them. Your goal cannot fail you, for that goal is God Himself.

"To those who may think it impossible that spirits of high degree should bind themselves to a task so laborious and demanding so much patience on their part, we reply, that we influence your souls while at many millions of leagues from you. To us, space is nothing; and, while living in another world, our spirits preserve their connection with yours. We possess qualities of which you can form no idea; but be sure that God has not imposed upon us a task above our strength, and that He has not abandoned you upon the earth without friends and without support. Every guardian-angel has his ward, over whom he watches as a father watches over his child: he rejoices when he sees him following the right road; he mourns when his counsels are neglected.

"Do not fear to weary us with your questions. Remain, on the contrary, always in connection with us: you will thus be stronger and happier. It is this communication between each man and his familiar spirit that will eventually make all men mediums, and drive out incredulity from your world. You who have received instruction, instruct in your turn: you who are possessed of talents, raise your brethren. You know not how great a work you accomplish by so doing; it is the work of Christ, the work imposed on you by God. Why has God given you intelligence and knowledge, if not to share them with your brethren, to aid them to advance on the road that leads to eternal felicity?"

(Kardec's comments): The doctrine of guardian-angels watching over their wards, notwithstanding the distance which separates different worlds, has in it nothing that should excite our surprise it is as natural as it is grand and sublime. Do we not see a father, upon the earth, watch over his child even though at a distance from him, and aid him by the wise counsels of his letters? Why, then, should it be deemed surprising that spirits should guide, from one world to another, those whom take under their protection, since, to them, the distance which separates worlds is less than that which, on earth,

separates continents? Besides, have they not the universal fluid which binds together all the worlds of the universe, and makes them part and parcel of each other-the universal vehicle of the transmission of through, as the air is, for us, the vehicle of the transmission of sound?

Group II: Guardian - Angels - Protecting, Familiar, and Sympathetic Spirits.

Read carefully the following text⁽³⁾ and answer (as complete as possible) the proposed question. Feel free to discuss topics addressed by the text with your group instructor.

- a) What is the role played by guardian-angels? Discuss how the influence of guardian-angels is limited by the free will of the supervised soul.
- b) Why don't we ostensible see the influence of guardian-angles in our life?
- c) Is it important to know the name or the previous lifetime of our guardian-angels?
- d) How can we invoke our guardian-angel? How can we be more susceptible to their influence?

496. If a spirit abandons his ward, and no longer does him good, can he do him harm?

"Good spirits never do harm to any one. They leave that to those who take their place; and you then accuse fate of the misfortunes which overwhelm you, while these are, in reality, the result of your own wrong-doing."

497. Can a spirit-protector leave his ward at the mercy of a spirit who should desire to do him harm?

"Evil spirits unite together to neutralize the action of the good ones; but the will of the ward suffices to give back all his power to the spirit-protector. The latter may find elsewhere another person whose goodwill renders it easy to help him; in such a case, he takes advantage of the opportunity of doing good, while awaiting the return of his ward."

498. When the spirit-protector allows his ward to wander into wrong paths, is it because he is unable to cope with tile malevolent spirits who mislead him?

"It is not because he is unable, but because he does not choose to do so; he knows that his ward will become wiser and better through the trials he will have brought upon himself. The spirit-protector assists his ward through the sage counsels he suggests to his mind, hut which unhappily are not always heeded. It is only the weakness, carelessness, or pride of men that gives strength to bad spirits; their power over you comes solely from your not opposing sufficient resistance to their action."

499. Is the spirit-protector constantly with his ward? Are there no circumstances under which, without abandoning him, he may lose sight of him?

"There are circumstances under which the presence of the spirit-protector is not necessary to the ward."

500. Does a time arrive when tile spirit no longer needs a guardian-angel?

"Yes; when he has reached the degree of advancement which enables him to guide himself, as a time arrives when the scholar has no longer need of a master. But this does not take place upon your earth."

501. Why is the action of spirits upon our existence occult? And why, when they are protecting us, do they not do so ostensibly?

"If you counted on their support, you would not act of yourselves, and your spirit would not progress. In order to advance, each man needs to acquire experience, and often at his own expense. He needs to exercise his powers; otherwise he would be like a child, who is not allowed to walk alone. The action of the spirits who desire your welfare is always regulated in such a way as to leave you your free-will; for, if you had no responsibility, you would not advance on the road that is to lead you to God. Man, not seeing his supporter, puts forth his own strength; his guide, however, watches over him, and calls to him from time to time. To bid him beware of danger."

502. When the spirit-Protector succeeds in leading his ward on the right road, does he thereby gain any benefit for himself?

"It is a meritorious work, which will be counted to him either for his advancement or for his happiness. He rejoices when he sees his care crowned by success, and triumphs as a teacher triumphs in the success of his pupil."

-Is he responsible if he does not succeed?

"No, since he has done everything that depended on him."

503. Does the spirit-protector feel sorrow on seeing a ward taking the wrong road? and does not such sight disturb his own felicity?

"He is grieved at his errors, and pities him; but this affliction has none of the anguish of terrestrial paternity, because he knows that there is a remedy for the evil, and that what is not done to-day will be done to-morrow."

504. Can we always know the name of our guardian-angel?

"How is it possible for you to know names which have no existence for you? Do you suppose there are no spirits but those whom you know of?"

-But how can we invoke him if we do not know who he is?

"Give him any name you please—that of any superior spirit for whom you feel sympathy or veneration. Your spirit-guardian will answer this appeal; for all good spirits are brothers, and assist each other."

505. Are the spirit-guardians who take well-known names always the persons who bore those names?

"No; but they are spirits who are in sympathy with them, and who, in many cases, come by their order. You require names; they therefore take a name that will inspire you with confidence. When you are unable to execute a commission in person, you send some one in your place, who acts in your name."

506. *When we are in the spirit-life, shall we recognize our spirit-guardian?*

"Yes; for it is often a spirit whom you knew before being incarnated."

507. *Do all spirit-guardians belong to the higher classes of spirits? Are they sometimes found among those of average advancement? Can a father, for example, become the spirit-guardian of his child?*

"He may do so; but such guardianship presupposes a certain degree of elevation, and, in addition, a power or virtue granted by God. A father who watches over his child may himself be assisted by a spirit of more elevated degree."

508. *Can all spirits who have quitted the earth under favorable conditions become the protectors of those whom they love among their survivors?*

"Their power is more or less narrowed by their position, which does not always leave them full liberty of action."

509. *Have savages, and men who are very low as regards their moral state, their spirit-guardians? And if so, are these spirits of as high an order as those of men who are more advanced?*

"Every man has a spirit who watches over him; but missions are always proportional to their object. You do not give a professor of philosophy to a child who is only learning to read. The advancement of the familiar spirit is always proportioned to that of the spirit he protects. While you yourself have a spirit of higher degree who watches over you, you may, in your turn, become the protector of a spirit who is lower than you; and the progress you help him to make will contribute to your own advancement. God does not demand of any spirit more than is consistent with his nature, and with the degree at which he has arrived."

510. *When a father who watches over his child is reincarnated, does he still continue to watch over him?*

"His task, in that case, becomes more difficult; but, in a moment of freedom, he asks some sympathetic spirit to assist him in accomplishing it. But spirits do not undertake missions which they cannot carry on to the end."

"A spirit, when incarnated, especially in worlds in which existence is grossly material, is too much fettered by his body to be able to devote himself entirely to another—that is to say, to give him personally all the help he needs. For this reason, those who are not sufficiently elevated to suffice for the work of guardianship are themselves assisted by spirits of higher degree, so that if, from any cause, the help of one spirit should fail, his place is supplied by another."

Group III: Guardian - Angels - Protecting, Familiar, and Sympathetic Spirits.

Read carefully the following text⁽⁴⁾ and answer (as complete as possible) the proposed question. Feel free to discuss topics addressed by the text with your group instructor.

a) As a guardian-angel is attached to each individual, is it correct to suppose that an evil-spirit is also attached to each one of us?

- b) Can a relative who is discarnated be our guardian-angel?
- c) Is it possible for a guardian-angel to incarnate in order to follow more closely his/her protégé?
- d) Are there spirits dedicated to the protection of single families, cities, nations or dedicated to common interests, like churches or voluntary work organizations?

511. Is there, besides the spirit-guardian, an evil spirit attached to each individual for the purpose of exciting him to evil, thus of furnishing him with the opportunity of struggling between good and evil?

"It would not be correct to say 'attached.' It is very true that bad spirits endeavor to draw you out of the right road when they find an opportunity of doing so; but when one of them attaches himself to an individual, he does so of his own accord, because he hopes to be listened to. In such a case, there is a struggle between the good and the evil spirit, and the victory remains with the one to whose influence the man has voluntarily subjected himself."

512. May we have several protecting spirits?

"Every man has always about him a number of sympathetic spirits of more or less elevation, who interest themselves in him from affection, as he also has others who help him to do evil."

513. Do spirits who are sympathetic to an individual act upon him in virtue of a mission to that effect?

"In some cases they may have a temporary mission; but, in general, they are only drawn to an individual by similarity of sentiments in good or in evil."

- It would seem, then, that sympathetic spirits may be either good or bad?

"Yes; a man is always surrounded by spirits who are in sympathy with him, whatever may be his character."

514. Are "familiar spirits" the same as "sympathetic spirits" and "spirit-guardians"?

"There are very many shades in guardianship and in sympathy; you may give to these whatever names you please. But the 'familiar spirit' is rather the general friend of the family."

(Kardec's comments): From the above explanation, and from observation of the nature of spirits who attach themselves to men, we draw the following inferences:

- The spirit-protector, good genius or guardian-angel, is the one whose mission it is to follow each man through the course of his life, and to aid him to progress. His degree of advancement is always superior to that of his ward.

- Familiar Spirits attach themselves to certain persons, for a longer or shorter period, in order to be useful to them within the limits (often somewhat narrow) of their possibilities. They are generally well intentioned, but sometimes rather backward and even frivolous. They busy themselves with the everyday details of human life and only act by order or with the permission, of the spirit-guardians.

- Sympathetic spirits are those who are drawn to us by personal affections, and by a similarity of tastes in good or in evil. The duration of their relationship with us is almost always dependent on circumstances.

- An evil genius is an imperfect or wicked spirit who attaches himself to a man for the purpose of perverting him but he acts of his own motion and not in virtue of a mission. His tenacity is proportionate to the more or less easy access accorded to him. A man is always free to listen to the suggestions of an evil genius, or to repel them.

515. What is to be thought of those persons who seem to attach themselves to certain individuals in order to urge them on to their injury, or to guide them on the right road?

"Some persons do, in fact, exercise over others a species of fascination which seems irresistible. When this influence is used for evil, it is to be attributed to evil spirits, who make use of evil men in order the more effectually to subjugate their victim. God may permit this in order to try you."

516. Could our good or our evil genius incarnate himself in order to accompany us more closely in our earthly life?

"That sometimes occurs; but they more frequently entrust this mission to incarnated spirits who are in sympathy with them."

517. Are there spirits who attach themselves to all the members of a family in order to watch over and aid them?

"Some spirits attach themselves to the members of a family who live together, and who are united by affection; but do not attribute pride of race to spirit-guardians."

518. Spirits being attracted to individuals by their sympathies, are they similarly attracted to companies of persons united in view of special ends?

"Spirits go by preference to the places where they meet their equals; they are more at ease among such, and more sure of being listened to. Every one attracts spirits to himself according to his tendencies, whether as an individual or as an element of a collective whole, such as a society, a city, or a nation. Societies, towns, and nations are therefore assisted by spirits of more or less elevated degree, according to the character and passions which predominate in them. Imperfect spirits withdraw from those who repel them; from which it follows that the moral excellence of collective wholes, like that of individuals, tends to keep away bad spirits and to attract good ones, who rouse and keep alive the sense of rectitude in the masses, as others may sow among them the worst passions."

519. Have agglomerations of individuals-such as societies, cities, nations-their special spirit guardians?

"Yes, for those assemblages constitute collective individualities, who are pursuing a common end, and who have need of a higher direction."

520. Are the spirit-guardians of masses of men of a higher degree of advancement than those who are attached to individuals?

"Their advancement is always in proportion with the degree of advancement of masses as of individuals."

521. Can certain spirits advance the progress of the arts by protecting those who cultivate them?

"There are special spirit-protectors who assist those by whom they are invoked when they judge them to be worthy of their help; but what could they do with those who fancy themselves to be what they are not? They cannot make the blind to see, or the deaf to hear."

(Kardec's comments): The ancients converted these spirit-guardians into special deities. The Muses were nothing else than the allegoric personification of the spirit-protectors of arts and sciences, just as the spirit-protectors of the family-circle designated by the name of lares or of penates. Among the moderns, the arts, the various industries, cities, countries, have also their protecting patrons, who are no other than spirit-guardians of a higher order, but under different names.

Each man having his sympathetic spirit, it follows that, in every collective whole, the generality of sympathetic spirits corresponds to the generality of individuals that stranger-spirits are attracted to it by identity of thoughts: in a word, that these assemblages, as well as individuals, are more or less favorably surrounded, influenced, assisted, according to the predominant character of the thoughts of those who compose them.

Among nations, the conditions which exercise an attractive action upon spines are the habits, manners, dominant characteristics, of their people, and, above all, their legislation, because the character of a nation is reflected in its laws. Those who uphold the reign of righteousness, among themselves combat the influence of evil spirits. Wherever the laws consecrate injustice, inhumanity, good spirits are in the minority and the mass of bad ones who flock in, attracted by that state of things, keep the people in their false ideas, and paralyze the good influences which, being only partial are lost in the crowd, like a solitary wheat-ear in the midst of tares. It is therefore easy, by studying the characteristics of nations, or of any assemblage of men, to form to oneself an idea of the invisible population which is mixed up with them in their thoughts and in their actions.

CONCLUSIONS:

The study will be accomplished if the class can satisfactorily conclude that:

1. "The spirit-protector, good genius or guardian-angel, is the one whose mission it is to follow each man through the course of his life, and to aid him to progress. His degree of advancement is always superior to that of his ward.

2. Familiar Spirits attach themselves to certain persons, for a longer or shorter period, in order to be useful to them within the limits (often somewhat narrow) of their possibilities. They are generally well intentioned, but sometimes rather backward and even frivolous. They busy themselves with the everyday details of human life and only act by order or with the permission, of the spirit-guardians.

3. Sympathetic spirits are those who are drawn to us by personal affections, and by a similarity of tastes in good or in evil. The duration of their relationship with us is almost always dependent on circumstances.

4. An evil genius is an imperfect or wicked spirit who attaches himself to a man for the purpose of perverting him but he acts of his own motion and not in virtue of a mission. His tenacity is proportionate to the more or less easy access accorded to him. A man is always free to listen to the suggestions of an evil genius, or to repel them.”

APPENDIX:

Suggestion for final prayer⁽⁵⁾

Finish the meeting by using one of these prayers to our guardian angels.

Option 1: Wise and benevolent Spirits, messengers of God, whose mission is to help Man and conduct him towards goodness, uphold me in life's tests; give me the strength to suffer without complaining; turn away from me all evil thoughts, and do not allow me to give access to any bad Spirits who may try to induce me to evil. Clarify my conscience with respect to my defects, and take away the veil of pride from my eyes which can prevent my seeing them and admitting them to myself. Particularly to X. . . , my Guardian Angel, who watches over me specially; and all the rest of you protecting Spirits who take an interest in me, I beg you to help me to become worthy of your protection. You know my needs; may they be attended to according to the Will of God.

Option 2: Dear God, allow the good Spirits who accompany me to help me when I am in difficulty and uphold me when I falter. Lord, may they inspire me with faith, hope and charity; may they be a point of support, an inspiration and a testimony of Your mercy. In short, may I always encounter in them the strength that I lack for the tests of life, the strength to resist all evil suggestions, the faith that saves and the love that consoles.

Option 3: Beloved Spirits and Guardian Angels, who God in His infinite mercy has permitted to assist mankind, be our protectors during all life's tests! Give us the necessary strength, courage and resignation; inspire us towards all that is good, and restrain us from the downward incline to evil; may your sweet influences fill our souls; make us feel that a devoted friend is by our side, who can see our suffering and who participates in all our joys. And you, my Good Angel, never abandon me because I need all of your protection to be able to support with faith and love the tests that God has sent me.

REFERENCES:

1. Kardec, Allan, “Heaven and Hell”, part I, chapter VIII, item 13, translated by Anna Blackwell, revised by Spiritist Alliance for Books, 2003.

2. Kardec, Allan, “The Spirits’ Book”, questions 489-495, edited by Brazilian Spiritist Federation, translated by Anna Blackwell.

3. Idem, questions 496 - 510.

4. Idem, questions 511 - 521.

5. Kardec, Allan “The Gospel According to Spiritism”, chapter XXVIII, item 11, translated by J. A. Duncan, edited by Alan Kardec Study Group.

OBJECTIVES:

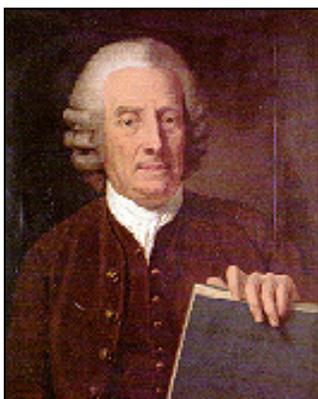
- To name the forerunner mediuns and to know their brief biography.
- To ascertain the importance of these mediuns to the Spiritist Doctrine.

METHODS:

1. Begin the class by presenting the definition of a “forerunner” or a “pioneer”. You can give examples like John the Baptist who was one of the forerunners of Jesus, the pioneers who came to the United States or others.

2. Divide the class into 3 groups. Instruct each group to read the assigned text and to fill up the following table.

Name:
Date and birthplace:
Summary of biographical information:
Summary of work and accomplishments:
Importance of these works to Spiritism:
Reason (s) for being considered a precursor:
Other comments:



Group I. **EMMANUEL SWEDENBORG**

Read the text⁽¹⁾ and discuss it with your group. After that, fill up the form on the previous page and prepare an objective and brief presentation on what you read.

Emmanuel Swedenborg was primarily a great mining engineer and, authority on metallurgy. He was a military engineer who helped to turn the fortunes of one of the many campaigns of Charles XII of Sweden. He was born in 1688 in Sweden. He was a great authority upon astronomy and physics, the author of learned works upon the tides and the determination of latitude. He was a zoologist and an anatomist. He was a financier and political economist who anticipated the conclusions of Adam Smith. Finally, he was a profound Biblical student who had sucked in theology with his mother's milk, and lived in the stem Evangelical atmosphere of a Lutheran pastor during the most impressionable years of his life. His psychic development, which occurred when he was fifty-five, did not in any way interfere with his mental activity. Several of his scientific pamphlets were published after that date.

Even as a lad, young Swedenborg had visionary moments, but the extremely practical and energetic manhood which followed submerged that more delicate side of his nature. It came occasionally to the surface, however, through his life, and several instances have been put on record, which show that he possessed those powers which are usually called "travelling clairvoyance," where the soul appears to leave the body, to acquire information at a distance and to return with news of what is occurring elsewhere. It is a not uncommon attribute of mediums; it can be matched by a thousand examples among Spiritualistic sensitives, but it is rare in people of intellect and rare also when accompanied by an apparently normal state of the body while the phenomenon is proceeding. Thus, in the often-quoted example of Gothenburg, where the seer observed and reported on a fire in Stockholm, 300 miles away, with perfect accuracy, he was at a dinner party with sixteen guests, -who made valuable witnesses. The story was investigated by no less a person than the philosopher Kant, who was a contemporary.

Swedenborg was normal during his visions, though he naturally preferred to be secluded at such times. He seems to have been privileged to examine the other world through several of its spheres, and though his theological habit of mind may have tintured his descriptions, on the other hand the vast range of his material knowledge gave him unusual powers of observation and comparison. Let us see what the main facts were which he brought back from his numerous journeys, and how far they coincide with those which have been obtained since his day by psychic methods.

He found, then, that the other world, to which we all go after death; consisted of a number of different spheres representing various shades of luminosity and happiness, each of us going to that for which our spiritual condition, has fitted us.



Group II.

EDWARD IRVING

Read the following text⁽²⁾ and discuss it with your group. After that, fill up the form found in the beginning of this lesson and prepare a brief presentation on what you.

Edward Irving was born in 1792 in Scotland. He became pastor at the Church of Scotland (Presbyterian) church at Regent Square (London, England). Irving was already a well-known preacher, and had become even better-known among those who shared an extreme interest in end-times ideology. Regent Square was not a poor-man's church at all; it had among its regular attendees members of Parliament, authors, insurers, bankers and such. Leading religious figures in the United Kingdom would visit there when they were in London. It was also a factious bunch, with more than the usual share of wars between cliques. Irving did nothing much to resolve the churches' problems; indeed, his emphasis on spiritual warfare and Christ's return threw fuel on the fires. Irving was not very forceful, except on the pulpit, where he was a force to be reckoned with.

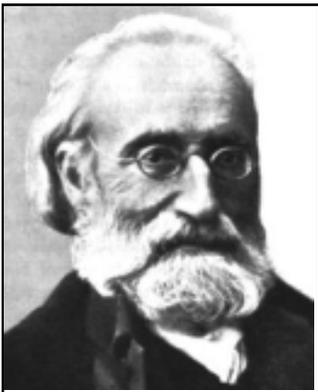
Irving decided to teach classes regarding the power of evil in the world. It appears that, as part of the course, he taught these parishioners to seek the Holy Spirit, and that if they did, the Spirit would become manifest in them, and the signs and miraculous gifts, such as speaking in tongues and prophecy, would be restored to the Church through them. (He had actually met people who had gone through this, as far back as 1830 where several people in Port Glasgow, Scotland, including one Mary Campbell, had spoken prophecies in tongues. Irving considered her a prophet.) Soon, his students began speaking in known tongues and giving words of knowledge. It didn't take long before this started to show itself on Sunday, with an escalating series of happenings that we today would think of as being typically 'Pentecostal'. For the first few months, he tried to get those going through the experiences to go outside before letting loose, so as not to disturb worship (and get him fired). This, despite the fact that this behavior was the direct result of his teachings. Irving tried to be uncharacteristically tough, even telling one parishioner not to return until she could control herself.

In October of 1831, Mary Campbell cut loose during one of the services, with ecstatic tongues. Soon after that, he decided to stop fighting it and allow these manifestations to show themselves in the Sunday worship services. Predictably, this got him thrown out post-haste. He and a bit over half his flock left and formed their own congregation and denomination, the Catholic Apostolic Church. Irving did not become the new church's leader, however; that role was given to John Cardale. Irving stuck to preaching and teaching, while certain members (including several notable politicians, and prominent banker Henry Drummond) held all the power and severely limited Irving's role in decision-making. He died at the end of 1834 from pneumonia, while on a preaching tour of his native Scotland that seemed to many (probably even to Irving himself) as if it were an exile. So far as anyone knows, Irving himself didn't speak in tongues, faint 'in the Spirit', heal people by touch, or prophesy. He simply believed others could and did. His supposed followers, however, would soon claim prophetic abilities.

Some writers have treated him as a bit of a flake, but actually he was an excellent preacher and a meek man who left a strong personal impression on most people who

knew him. On most matters, he was thoughtful and caring. Yet woe be to the fool who would provoke him on the subjects of spiritual warfare or the end-times. Irving could (and occasionally did) spend all day talking about them. This may have led to the split with his powerful allies, who were also quite intense about the end-times. Theologically, he was dualistic, with a very strong dividing line between good ('holy') and evil ('fleshly'). He was tried by the Church of Scotland on this, based on the mistaken belief that Irving preached that Jesus' human nature was evil. Irving actually taught that human nature was desperately evil, but that Jesus took it on at conception and, by way of His divine power (confirmed by His holy life), He made His own human nature holy. His view was much like that of many other 19th-century preachers who also emphasized the vileness of human nature and the human body, often with vigorous dramatic flourishes. This kind of dualism is poor theology and is a misreading of the New Testament evidence, but it is common throughout Christian history.

Irving's belief in the imminent coming of Christ also led to personal medical foolishness. Although he did not command his parishioners to be this way, he himself rejected medical help, and would not have doctors treat him or his children. Three of his children died from serious health problems. In two of those cases, the medicine of his day would have been no help at all, but one of them might have benefited from treatment. Most clear is the case of his own death, where proper care might have given him the physical strength to fight it off.



Group III: **ANDREW JACKSON DAVIS**

Read the text⁽³⁾ and discuss it with your group. After that, fill up the form found on the previous page and prepare a brief and objective presentation on what you read.

ANDREW JACKSON DAVIS was one of the most remarkable men of whom we have any exact record. Born in 1826 on the banks of the Hudson, his mother was an uneducated woman, with a visionary turn which was allied to vulgar superstition, while his father was a drunken worker in leather. He, has written the details of his own childhood in a curious book, "The Magic Staff," which brings home to us the primitive and yet forceful life of the American provinces in the first half of last century. The people were rude and uneducated, but their spiritual side was very much alive, and they seem to have been reaching out continually for some new thing. It was in these country districts of New York in the space of a few years that both Mormonism and modern Spiritualism were evolved.

In his later boyhood, Davis's latent psychic powers began to develop. Like Joan, he heard voices in the fields - gentle voices which gave him good advice and comfort. Clairvoyance followed this clairaudience. At the time of his mother's death, he had a striking vision of a lovely home in a land of brightness which he conjectured to be the place to which his mother had gone. His full capacity was tapped, however, by the chance that a traveling showman who exhibited the wonders of mesmerism came to the village and experimented upon Davis, as well as on many other young rustics who desired to

experience the sensation. It was soon found that Davis had very remarkable clairvoyant powers.

Davis had developed the power, common among psychics, of seeing without the eyes, including things which could not be seen in any case by human vision. What is of importance to us is the part played by Davis at the commencement of the spiritual revelation. He began to prepare the ground before that revelation occurred. He was clearly destined to be closely associated with it, for he was aware of the material demonstration at Hydesville upon the very day when it occurred. From *his* notes there is quoted the sentence, under the vital date of March 31, 1848: "About daylight this morning a warm breathing passed over my face and I heard a voice, tender and strong, saying, 'Brother, the good work *has* begun – behold. A living demonstration is born.' I was left wondering what could be meant by such a message." It was the beginning of the mighty movement in which he was to act as prophet.

CONCLUSIONS:

The study will be accomplished if the class can satisfactorily conclude that:

1. The idea of communication with spirits and the mediumistic phenomena in general precede the Spiritist movement. Several individuals, before the codification of Spiritism by Kardec and followers of several different religious doctrines, had well documented mediumistic abilities. Although lacking a coherent doctrinal understanding of their abilities, these individuals, nevertheless, exerted the mediumistic phenomena and can be seen in retrospect as precursors to Kardec's work.

REFERENCES:

1. Doyle, Arthur C. "The Story of Swedenborg" in *The History of Spiritualism*. Ed. Arno Press. New York, NY, 1975. pp.11.
2. From www.spirithome.com (Dec/2005)
3. Doyle, Arthur C. "The Prophet of the New Revelation" in *The History of Spiritualism*. Ed. Arno Press. New York, NY, 1975. pp. 58.

OBJECTIVES:

- To analyze the main difficulty experienced in spiritist communications.
- To cite and study the most important technical conditions for a good mediumistic work.
- To explain the role of affinity and attunement in mediumship.

METHODS:

1. The coordinator shall conduct a brainstorm on the words *affinity* and *attunement*. Ask participants to explain their concepts in regard to mediumship.

2. Divide the class into 2 groups, as they are going to read their respective texts and address its questions. Each group shall present their study to the other group.

Group I. **Attunement and Affinity**

Read carefully the following text⁽¹⁾ and answer (as complete as possible) the proposed question. Feel free to discuss topics addressed by the text with your group instructor.

- a) Summarize the general idea of the text to the whole audience.
- b) Why is the mind at the base of all mediumistic phenomena?
- c) What is the concept of attunement and affinity in the text?
- d) How do human beings influence one another?
- e) Why do all mediums interfere in the mediumistic communication?

Introduction: Andre Luiz is a spirit who lives in the spiritual colony of “Nosso Lar” (Our Home). He and a friend (Hilario) are interested in taking a course in mediumship. To accomplish this, they ask for the help of Aulus, another spirit in Nosso Lar, who has studied mediumship for over a century. The segment we will read is a lecture about this theme that Aulus took Andre Luiz and Hilario to attend.

"We are familiar with some aspects of spiritual interchange." - I told Aulus. - "Our desire, however, is to further our knowledge of this complex subject. Previously, we made cursory studies of psychography^(a), trance communication and materialization. In spite of this, our knowledge is still insignificant compared to the many facets of mediumship.

The mentor, kindly, assented to elucidating us. He cooperated in several departments and would give us which he humbly considered "simple notations".

To begin, Aulus invited us to listen to a friend speak about mediumship to a small group of students - incarnates and disincarnates - and whose precise words he considered opportune and valuable. We immediately accepted and, having no time to waste, we quickly followed him.

In the vast section of the Ministry of Communications we were introduced to the instructor, Alberio, who was about to commence his dissertation. We sat down among dozens of companions, in attentive and silent expectation. As with many other mentors that I knew, Alberio went up to the lectern unceremoniously, as if he were simply a brother who was going to converse with us fraternally.

"My friends," he said with assurance, "as we continue our studies, let us consider that the mind is the basis of all mediumistic phenomena.

"We recognize that the universe, which extends itself into the infinite with millions of suns, is the externalization of divine thought whose essence we receive as eternal wisdom, inasmuch as our spiritual evolvment allows. From the superstructure of the heavenly bodies to the sub-atomic infrastructure, everything is contained in the mind of God, just as fish and aquatic plants are contained in the immense ocean.

"We are children of the Creator and from Him we inherit the faculty of creating, developing, nurturing and transforming. The conceptual dimensions in which we find ourselves circumscribe our lives, and we recognize our insignificance compared to the glory of the Spirits that have already reached an angelic state. Yet we all radiate the active energy of our own thoughts, establishing the psychic ambient correlating to our individuality.

"Each world possesses a field of electromagnetic tension within a gravitational force that maintains its equilibrium. Similarly, each soul finds its place with life forces that have affinity with its mental halo; that is to say in the sphere of the individuals it needs to make adjustments or for spiritual advancement.

"Each planet makes its revolutions in the orbit to which it is assigned by the laws of equilibrium without exceeding them, just as each conscience evolves within the spiritual group that influences its actions. We are a vast group of intelligences, synchronized in one vibratory grade of perception, integrating billions of souls that are mankind on Earth. Each world harbors a family of the universal humanity and we are but one of these families.

"Up to now, we perceived only the expressions of the life that touches us, limited by our understanding. Depending on our brothers in our trajectory toward evolvment, like the worlds that move in space influenced by the stars surrounding them, we act and react upon each other through the mental energy with which we become renovated. We are constantly creating, feeding and destroying forms and situations, landscapes and things in the structuring of our own destinies.

"Our mind is, in this manner, a nucleus of intelligent forces generating a subtle plasma that, upon exteriorizing incessantly away from us, offers objective resources to the images of our own imagination under the command of our personal designs. The idea is an entity organized by our spirit, to which our thoughts give form or shape and our will imprints movement and direction. From the conjunction of our ideas our own personal existence results."

The orator made a small pause that no one dared to interrupt, and later proceeded:

"All living beings breathe in the psychic wavelength that is unique to them, within the dimensions that are characteristic to them, or in the frequency that is particular to them. That psyche does not depend on the central nervous system once it is flowing from the mind. It is, then, the one that conditions all the phenomenon of organic life within itself."

"Upon examining animic values as a faculty of communication between the Spirits, in whichever sphere they find themselves, we cannot lose sight of the mental world of the agent and of the receiver. The receiver's intelligence is colored by the thoughts in which it lives. The sender's intelligence submits to the limits and to the interpretations of the thoughts that it is capable of producing.

"The Spirit of a backward native can offer only trivial subjects to a wise person, since he is still attached to the physical body and the world of his primitive experiences. Conversely, the Spirit of a wise man entering into a relationship with a backward native attached to his African habitat will not succeed in giving his immediate cooperation. Of course, he could assist him with a herd of bovine or cure an illness of the material body. Yet, an ignorant person would not feel happy in the company of the wise man; likewise, the wise man would not be detained by the other for lack of that nourishment, almost imponderable, which we could classify as vibrational compensations.

"It is a law that our greatest happiness is received from those with whom we can exchange mental values similar to our own. This is comparable to a tree that produces better when situated among the same species with which it can germinate.

"In mediumship, we cannot overlook the phenomenon of synchronization. We attract Spirits that have affinity with us and to which we, too, are attracted. If it is true that each gives according to what he has, then it is unquestionable that each receives according to what he gives.

"The mind is the basis of all mediumistic manifestations in whatever manner they are expressed. Therefore, it is indispensable that we use moral and cultural treasures to expand our thinking. The values expressed in them make it possible to fixate the light that descends toward us from the highest realms, through the genius of wisdom and love that oversees our experiences.

"Those that compared our mental world to a mirror were right: we reflect the images around us, and we direct toward others the images that we create. And since we cannot escape the imperative of attraction, we shall only present clarity and beauty if they exist in the mirror of our interior life.

"Mental reflections either favor our procrastination or compel us to go forward. Each human being lives in the heaven or hell that he builds for himself in the innermost recesses of his heart and mind, which is independent of the physical body. Observing life in its glorious eternity, death is solely a transition between two types of a similar experience, in the indestructible today.

"We encounter mediumship wherever human beings develop. Sanctifying missions and battles of destruction, noble tasks and evil obsessions, all have their origin in the reflections of the individual or in the collective mind, combined with the sublime or degrading forces of the thoughts that nurture them. Therefore, let us learn to cultivate our desire for education and perfect ourselves each day. We are all mediums, no matter what we do.

"Psychic strength is natural to all individuals, but mediumistic perfection without the refinement or purification of the individual is not possible. It is counterproductive to

intensify the movement of energy without disciplining our impulses and it is dangerous to possess this ability without knowledge of its proper use.

"The mirror buried in the mud does not reflect the splendor of the Sun. An agitated lake does not reflect the image of the star that exists in the infinite. Let us elevate our level of knowledge with appropriate study and let us purify our emotions through the constant exercise of superior virtues. We need to do this if we wish to receive the message of the great souls.

"Mediumship in itself is not enough. It is essential to know what type of mental wavelength we are assimilating to, so that we can recognize the quality of our work and evaluate the direction taken."

Allberio continued to make valuable comments and later responded to complicated questions asked by several apprentices. As for my part, I received plenty on which to meditate. With a few words of appreciation, Hilario and I said goodbye to our instructors. Aulus promised to meet with us on the following day.

Group II: **Mediumship and Charity**

Read carefully the following 3 texts⁽²⁾ and answer (as complete as possible) the proposed question. Feel free to discuss topics addressed by the text with your group instructor.

- a) What is necessary to receive communications from Good Spirits?
- b) Why do we have to combine the practice of charity with the mediumistic practice?
- c) What are the reasons for a medium's failure?
- d) What are the essential qualities of a medium? Explain them.
- e) Correlate the first paragraph of the Spirit of Truth's message with the last paragraph of Pascal's dissertation.

Text A. "If you would receive communications from superior spirits, you must prepare yourselves for this favor by concentration of thought, purity of intention, and sincere desire to help forward the cause of progress; for selfishness is a barrier between you and them. Remember that, if God permits you to receive the inspiration of those of His children who have earned the happiness of comprehending His infinite goodness, it is in order that you may advance, and aid others to advance, on the appointed path of progress. Therefore, O mediums! it is incumbent on you to make only a good use of the faculty that has been given you. Confiding in, and emulating, our Master's kindness, let your charity, your tolerance for all about you, be inexhaustible. By scrupulously regulating your action according to your conscience, you will increase a hundred-fold your own happiness in your quickly-fleeting earthly life, and you will have prepared for yourselves a thousand-fold greater happiness in the life to come.

"Let every medium, who does not feel in himself the moral strength that will enable him to consecrate his faculty to the noblest use, withdraw altogether from the work of mediumship; for he who, being favored with special light, allows himself to enter upon a wrong path, incurs the heavier retribution reserved for those who have gone willfully astray." "PASCAL"

Text B. "Bear with me while I call your attention to the disinterestedness which, with modesty, should be the characteristic accompaniment of medianimity. God has given to mediums the faculty which enables them to be the intermediary between spirits and men, in order that they may employ that faculty in spreading the truth, but not that they make it a matter of traffic. And, in saying this, I refer, not merely to those who turn their medianimity to pecuniary account as they would any ordinary talent, and who set up as *mediums* just as others set up as *dancers* or *singers*, but to *all who use their medianimic faculty for the furtherance of personal ends*. Is it reasonable to suppose that spirits of high degree, who condemn cupidity in the ratio of their elevation, would consent to be shown off as a spectacle, putting themselves, like so many play-actors, into the hands of a contractor for spirit-phenomena? And is it in any respect more reasonable to suppose that such spirits would favor the views of vanity and ambition? God permits spirits to communicate with men in order that they may help men to raise themselves out of the mire of materiality, but not that they may serve as the instruments of mundane passions and those mediums who pervert the faculty bestowed upon them by God will be punished for such a desecration with a severity proportioned to the heinousness of their offence." "DELPHINE DE GIRARDIN."

Text C. "All mediums are called to serve the cause of spiritism in the measure of their faculty; but so few of them escape the wiles of self-love that, out of a hundred mediums, hardly one is to be found, no matter how slight his medianimic gift, who does not, especially in the early days of his mediumship, believe himself to be destined to the accomplishment of some great mission. Those who fall into the snare of this vainglorious belief-and they are many-become the prey of obsessing spirits, who subjugate them by flattering their pride; and, the greater has been their ambition, the more pitiable is their fall.

"Great missions are only confided to picked men, who are placed, not by any seeking of their own, but by the leadings of Providence, in the position in which their action will be most efficacious. Inexperienced mediums cannot be too distrustful of what may be said to them, by flattering spirits, as to the importance of the part they are called to play; for, if they take all this flattery seriously, they will reap disappointment, both in this world and in the next. Let mediums remember that they can do good service, even in the most obscure and modest sphere, by helping to convince the incredulous, or by giving consolation to the afflicted. If it be their mission to go beyond this narrower range of medianimic action, they will be guided onwards, into a wider sphere of activity, by an invisible hand that will open their way before them and bring them forward, so to say, in spite of themselves. Let all mediums bear in mind these words: '*He that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.*' "

"THE SPIRIT OF TRUTH."

CONCLUSIONS:

The study will be accomplished if the class can satisfactorily conclude that:

1. As nobody can live without thinking and our thoughts irradiate around us, we are attract all of those who sympathize with us and expel all of those who do not.

2. By having a life oriented in charity, we can gradually receive the help and sympathy of enlightened spirits and dismiss the presence of ignorant ones.

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1. In the Domains of Mediumship, psychographed by Francisco Xavier and Waldo Vieira, dictated by the spirit Andre Luiz,, chapter 1 (segment), pages 19-25, translated by Jussara Korngold, Spiritist Alliance for Books, 2006.

2. Kardec, Allan, “The Mediums’ Book”, chapter XXXI, second part, items 13-15, edited by Brazilian Spiritist Federation, translated by Anna Blackwell.

SPECIAL NOTE

(a) Psychography: Involuntary or unconscious writing, as by a medium. From: Funk and Wagnalls, New Comprehensive International Dictionary of the English Language, Encyclopedia Edition.

OBJECTIVES:

- To characterize the mediunistic communications accordingly with their nature.
- To clarify why not all serious communication is also true.
- To cite how to evaluate the moral and intellectual level of the spirits who dictate instructive communications.

METHODS:

1. Begin the class by showing different types of communications and classifying them. For example, in the book “Heaven and Hell”, there are several examples. Also fell free to use communications from any other source you judge appropriate. The coordinator can also use communications from everyday sources, for example, comparing the style and the relevance of the information obtained in a comic book, versus a political/scientific discourse.

2. Divide the class into 2 groups. Instruct each group to read the assigned text and to answer the required questions.

3. After the questions have been answer, conduct the exercise at the end of the lesson.

Group I **Coarse and Frivolous Communications.**

Read carefully the following text⁽¹⁾ and answer (as complete as possible) the proposed question. Feel free to discuss topics addressed by the text with your group instructor.

a) Explain and give the difference between a coarse and a frivolous communication.

133. We have shown that every effect, implying, as its cause, an act of free will, however insignificant, proves thereby the action of an intelligent cause; and that, therefore, the mere movement of a table, if it answers our thoughts, or gives proof of intention, must be regarded as an intelligent manifestation. If all manifestations were confined within such limits, the subject would have but little interest for us; because, although it would still be something to be assured that the phenomena in question are not merely physical, they would be of little practical value. But it is quite otherwise when the manifestation of intelligence acquires a development which permits of a regular and consecutive exchange of thoughts; for in such cases, the phenomena elicited can no

longer be regarded merely as *intelligent manifestations*, but assumes the far more important character of *communications*. The means now at our disposal permit of our obtaining, from spirits, communications as extensive, explicit, and rapid, as those which we can obtain from men.

If we bear in mind the infinite variety that exists among spirits, under the double aspect of intelligence and of morality (See *The Spirits' Book*, No. 100), we perceive that a corresponding diversity must exist in their communications, which necessarily reflect the elevation or the backwardness of the spirits by whom they are made ; and that the quality of their ideas, their degree of knowledge or of ignorance, their virtues and their vices, will be evidenced by the communications which emanate from them, and which will no more resemble each other than do, among men, those of the savage and the most enlightened European. But all the shades presented by spirit-Communications may be grouped into four principal categories; according to their most salient characteristics, they may be designated as *coarse, frivolous, serious, and instructive*.

134. *Coarse communications* are those which shock propriety. They can only proceed from spirits at a very low stage of development, still soiled with the impurities of materiality. They are in no way different from the utterances of coarse and vicious men, and are revolting to every one who has the least delicacy of sentiment; being trivial, obscene, insolent, arrogant, malevolent, or even impious, according to the character of the spirits who make them.

135. *Frivolous communications* emanate from spirits who are frivolous, mischievous, and tricky, rather than wicked, and who attach no importance to what they say. As there is nothing unseemly in their communications, they amuse persons who take pleasure in futile talk. Such spirits, however, sometimes come down upon their interlocutors with clever, biting sallies throwing on, in the midst of commonplace jokes, hard truths which often hit the mark. These frivolous spirits are around us in swarms, and take every opportunity of mixing themselves up with the communications of other spirits. Having no respect for veracity, they take a mischievous pleasure in hoaxing those who have the weakness or presumption to believe them. Those who amuse themselves with such communications naturally give access to foolish and deceptive spirits; while, at the same time, they repel serious ones, who, like serious men, avoid the society of the unreasoning and the giddy.

Group II. **Serious and Instructive Communications.**

Read carefully the following text⁽²⁾ and answer (as complete as possible) the proposed question. Feel free to discuss topics addressed by the text with your group instructor.

a) Explain and give the difference between a serious and an instructive communication.

b) Are all serious communications true? Why.

136. *Serious communications* are distinguished by the gravity of the subjects of which they treat, and by the seriousness of their tone. Every communication exempt from coarseness and frivolity, and having in view a useful object, even though it be one of merely private interest, may be classed as "serious", but, nevertheless, it may not be

exempt from error. Serious spirits are not all equally enlightened; there are many things of which they are ignorant, and concerning which they may be mistaken. For this reason, spirits who are really superior constantly advise us to submit all communications to the test of examination and of reason.

It is therefore imperatively necessary to distinguish between communications that are *seriously true* and communications that are *seriously false*. But this is not always easy; for it is often under the guise of seriousness that presumptuous and superficial spirits seek to foist upon us their erroneous ideas and absurd theories, unscrupulously assuming the most honored and even the most venerated names, in order the more effectually to impose upon us; a method of deception which constitutes one of the most dangerous stumbling-blocks of practical spiritism. We shall return to this subject, of which we shall treat, farther on, with all the minuteness that its importance demands; we shall then point out the means of guarding ourselves against false communications.

137. *Instructive communications* are those which are not only serious, but also convey the teachings of superior spirits on points of science, morality, philosophy, etc. They are more or less profound, in proportion to the elevation and dematerialization of the communicating spirit. In order to reap benefit from such communications, they must be followed up with regularity and perseverance. Serious spirits attach themselves to those who desire instruction, and assist them; but those who only see in these manifestations a source of passing amusement are left by them to the companionship of spirits as frivolous as themselves. It is only by the regularity and frequency of such communications that we can appreciate the moral and intellectual worth of the spirits with whom we thus hold converse, and the degree of confidence which they deserve. If experience is necessary in order to form a true estimate of men, it is, if possible, still more necessary in forming a true estimate of spirits. \

In applying to these communications the qualification of *instructive*, we imply that they are true; for what is not true can never be *instructive*, though expressed in the most imposing language. We therefore do not include in this category certain teachings which have nothing serious about them but their high-flown and pretentious style, by which spirits possessed of more presumption than philosophy endeavor to mislead. But such spirits, being unable to disguise their shallowness, are incapable of keeping up their false assumptions for any length of time; they soon betray their weak side, if we continue to converse with them, and ply them with questions which compel them to show their incompetence.

3. Present the following communications⁽³⁾ to the whole class and ask for their classification as Imperfects, Serious or Instructive communications. In this exercise, coarse and a frivolous communications were looped together as imperfects.

Text A "My friends let me give you a piece of advice, for you are on new ground. You have been told with truth that the aim of spiritism is to give a new sanction to morality, and that it must not overstep the limits of a philosophical system, under pain of becoming a mere matter of curiosity. Leave aside questions in relation to scientific subjects; our mission is not to answer such inquiries, thereby sparing you the trouble of research, but *to aid you to become better*, for *that* is the way in which you will really

advance." "SAINT LOUIS".

Text B "Union is strength; be united, in order that you may be strong. If you would render yourselves invulnerable to the poisoned arrows of calumny and to the attacks of the dark phalanx of ignorant, selfish, and hypocritical spirits, you must let the flame of a sincere and noble friendship unite, enlighten, and warm your hearts, and you will then be able to withstand the assaults of evil, as the rock withstands the fury of the waves." "SAINT VINCENT DE PAUL."

Text C "(...) Oh! With what joy do I feel inundated by the sight of you, you, the continuers of my doctrine! No, nothing approaches the testimony of your good thoughts! You see it, my children, the regenerating idea cast by me long since into the world, persecuted, stayed, for a moment, by the oppression of tyrants, is going on now without obstacles, lighting the ways of humanity so long plunged in darkness. (...)" "JESUS."

CONCLUSIONS:

The study will be accomplished if the class can satisfactorily conclude that:
1. "Dear friends, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world". (1 John, 4:1)

REFERENCES

1. Kardec, Allan, "The Medium's Book", part second, chapter X, items 133 – 135, edited by Brazilian Spiritist Federation, translated by Anna Blackwell.
2. Idem, items 136 - 137.
3. Idem, chapter XXXI, Dissertations by Spirits.

EXERCICE KEY

Text A: Instructive
Text B: Serious
Text C: Imperfect

OBJECTIVES:

- To explain why we should or should not ask questions to Spirits.
- To explain the importance of the form and content of the questions addressed to Spirits.
- To exemplify types of questions that may be pleasant or unpleasant to the serious Spirits.

METHODS:

1. Brainstorm on the following:

- What is the meaning of the word “question”?
- Why is it so important to learn how to make questions?

Coordinator shall give examples of questions and to whom address a specific question.

2. Then, divide the class into 3 groups and work on the following texts.

Group I.

How to prepare questions to the spirits.

Read carefully the following text⁽¹⁾ and answer (as complete as possible) the proposed question. Feel free to discuss topics addressed by the text with your group instructor.

a) Why is it important to prepare in advance the questions to be raised to the spirits?

b) What is better: to wait until a spirit spontaneously addresses a question or to interrogate him/her about the topic? Explain.

286. Too much importance cannot be attached to the manner of addressing questions to spirits, and to the *nature* of the questions addressed to them. In regard to the questions we address to Spirits, two things are to be considered, viz., their *form* and their *purport*. As regards their *form*, they should be conveyed with method, clearness, and precision; complexity should always be avoided. But there is another point not less important, viz., the order in which our questions should be arranged. When a subject requires a series of questions, it is essential that these should be made to follow one another in regular sequence, so that they may grow naturally out of one another; spirits answer questions, when put in this way, much more easily and clearly than when they are asked at random, jumping abruptly from one subject to another. For this reason, it is always well to prepare our questions beforehand, and only to intercalate, during the

sitting, such new ones as may be suggested by the circumstances of the moment. Not only are our questions likely to be better stated by being drawn up when our mind is in a state of repose, but this preparatory labor, as previously remarked, is a sort of *anticipatory evocation*, at which the spirit may himself have been present, and which will have disposed him to respond to our call. Those who adopt this plan will find that the spirit evoked, frequently answers a question as though he had foreseen it; thus proving that he had been aware of it beforehand. The purport of a question requires even more careful attention than its *form*; for it is often the nature of the question that determines the truth or falsehood of the reply. There are questions to which spirits, for reasons unknown to us, are unable, or are not permitted, to reply; and, in such cases, it is useless to insist, as the answer, if given, can only be from lower and unscrupulous spirits.

287. As previously remarked, some persons think it better not to put any questions to spirits, but to await their spontaneous communications. To the considerations we have already opposed to this view of the matter, we add, that spirits do, undoubtedly, make spontaneous communications which are often of great interest and value, and which it would be wrong to neglect; but there are explanations for which we should have to wait a long time, if we did not elicit them by our inquiries. *The Spirits' Book*, and *The Mediums' Book*, for instance, would be still to be written, or, at least, would be far less complete, had we not addressed to spirits the questions which, with the answers given to them, we offer in these works to the attention of our readers; and the weighty problems involved in them would be still awaiting the solutions that have been thus obtained in response to our inquiries. The questioning of spirits, carefully, thoughtfully, and respectfully, with a view to obtaining such information as they are able and permitted to give us, is of very great utility. And it is, moreover, by questioning them closely, that we are able to unmask the deceptive spirits who are so apt to present themselves spontaneously under assumed names, and with pretensions to superior knowledge of which the falsity is thus made apparent. If what has been already said in the present work has been correctly understood by the reader, some idea of the limits within which questions to spirits should be confined will already have been formed by him ; nevertheless, for greater certainty, we now give the statements of various enlightened spirits in reference to the points on which they are usually questioned by beginners.

288. *Questions that spirits sympathize with and those with which they do not sympathize.*

3. *What sort of questions is particularly displeasing to good spirits?*

"All that are useless or prompted by mere curiosity; they do not answer such questions, but are repelled by them."

- *Are there any questions which are especially disagreeable to imperfect spirits?*

"None but such as would show up their ignorance and cunning, when they wish to deceive you; in other cases, they answer any and every question, without regard to truth."
(...)

11. *Why do serious spirits, when they predict an event, so rarely fix its date; is it because they cannot, or because they will not, do so?*

"It may be for either reason. Spirits feel the approach of an event, and may sometimes give you warning of it; but as to predicting exactly the time when it will take place, they are sometimes not permitted to do so, and sometimes they cannot do so,

because they do not know it themselves. A spirit may foresee that an event will happen; but the precise moment of its happening may depend upon conditions not yet accomplished, and which are only foreseen by the Almighty. Frivolous spirits, who have no scruple in deceiving you, specify days and hours without troubling themselves about the fulfillment of their predictions. For this reason, *circumstantial* predictions are usually to be distrusted.

"We cannot too often remind you that *our mission is to aid your moral progress*, and thus to help you forward on your road to perfection. He who seeks only wisdom from his commerce with spirits will never be deceived. But you must not suppose that we waste our time in listening to your foolishness, telling your fortunes, and assisting you to waste your time; we leave all that to the tricky spirits who amuse themselves with doing so, like mischievous children.

"Providence has placed a limit to the revelations that may be made to men. Serious spirits keep silence concerning everything that they are forbidden to reveal by insisting on receiving answers to questions which it may not be lawful for us to reply to, you expose yourselves to imposition on the part of inferior spirits, ever ready to seize on any pretext for playing with your credulity."

Remark. - Spirits may *foresee* certain future events as a consequence of other events which they see occurring, or of which they may have a *presentiment*. They infer the happening of the events thus foreseen, but within a period of time which they do not measure as we do; and, in order to fix the epoch at which those events will occur, they would have to identify themselves with our manner of calculating the duration of time. As spirits are often unwilling to do this, apparent errors are of frequent occurrence in the predictions made by them.

Group II. **Type of questions to be asked**

Read carefully the following text⁽²⁾ and answer (as complete as possible) the proposed question. Feel free to discuss topics addressed by the text with your group instructor.

a) Can some people or spirits tell us about our future? And how about our death?

b) In which case(s) good spirits are allowed to tell us about our past lives?

Explain.

12. Are not some persons endowed with a special faculty, by which they are enabled to foresee future events?

"Yes; those whose souls have the power of disengaging themselves from matters are able; when thus disengaged, to *see*; and, when such revelations will be useful, they are permitted to reveal certain things. But, of those who make predictions, the majority are impostors and charlatans. The prophetic faculty, however, will be more common hereafter."

13. What is to be thought of spirits who take pleasure in predicting the death of certain persons at some stated time?

"Such spirits are malicious jesters, having no other aim than that of enjoying the

alarm they create. You should pay no heed to such absurdities."

14. *How is it that some persons are warned by a true presentiment of the time of their death?*

"It is usually because their own spirit, in its moments of liberty, has learned its approaching release; and the intuition of this release is retained by them on waking. Persons thus prepared for such an intuition are neither frightened nor troubled by it. They see, in the separation of body and soul, only a change of condition; or, to employ a commonplace metaphor, they look upon it as the exchanging of a coarse and cumbrous garment for a silken robe. The fear of death will diminish in proportion to the spread of spiritist belief."

15. *Can spirits tell us of our past existences?*

"God sometimes, for a special object, permits those existences to be revealed to you. When such knowledge will conduce to your instruction and edification, the revelation is permitted; but, in such cases, it always comes to you spontaneously, and in some unforeseen manner. *It is never permitted for the satisfaction of mere curiosity.*"

- *Why is it that some spirits never refuse to deal in this kind of revelation?*

"Because they are mocking spirits who are amusing themselves at your expense." In general, *every revelation of this kind which has not an eminently serious and useful end may be set down as false.* Mocking spirits like to flatter your self-love by pretending that you have been rich or powerful in former existences; and there are mediums and believers who accept as gospel everything that is told them on this head, and who cannot see that their present advancement in no way justifies the exalted positions which-through a petty vanity that causes as much amusement to spirits as to men-they fancy themselves to have formerly occupied. It would be more reasonable, more in conformity with the progressive march of beings, and also more honorable to themselves, to suppose that they have *ascended* rather than *descended*. No revelations of this kind are entitled to credence, unless they have come *spontaneously*, and *through several mediums, all strangers to each other, and ignorant of what may have been previously revealed on the subject*; when these conditions exist, there is good reason for believing the statements thus made.

"- *If we may not know our anterior individuality, is it the same in regard to the kind of existence we have had, and the good and bad qualities which have been our predominant characteristics in our former lives?*"

No; such knowledge is often permitted, because it may tend to your improvement; but, by studying what you now are, you may yourself infer what you have been" (See *The Spirits' Book*, 392, *Forgetfulness of the Past*).

Group III.

Revelation of future and past events

Read carefully the following text⁽³⁾ and answer (as complete as possible) the proposed question. Feel free to discuss topics addressed by the text with your group instructor.

- a) Can good spirits foresee future events? Explain.
- b) What kind of spirit (enlightened, mocking or evil spirit) should be expected to

attend a meeting of “fortune telling”? How about if the answer to a question posed in a fortune telling meeting is later proved to be true: does this mean that the meeting was attended by enlightened spirits?

16. Can anything be revealed to us about our future existences?

"No; whatever spirits may tell you on this subject is all nonsense, as you may easily see; for your future existence cannot be fixed beforehand, because it will be what you will have made it for yourselves, both by your conduct during your present life on earth, and also by the choice which you will make, in regard to that new existence, when you have re-entered the spirit-world. The less you have to expiate, the more happy will that existence be; but to foreknow the *where* and the *how* of that phase of your career is an impossibility, excepting in the special case (a very rare one) of spirits who are only on your earth for the accomplishment of an important mission, and for whom the road is, so to say, *traced out beforehand*, and may therefore be foreseen."

(...)

Remark. - Our protecting spirits often show us the road we had better take, but without keeping us in leading-strings; if they did more than simply counsel us, leaving us free to do or not to do, we should lose our power of initiative and should not dare to take a step without them, which would be prejudicial to our advancement. In order to progress, we need to acquire experience, and often at our own expense ; our spirit friends, therefore, even while giving us counsel, leave us to our own resources, as does a skilful teacher in dealing with his scholars. In the ordinary affairs of life, they counsel us by inspiration, and thus leave to us all the merit of our action, when we go right, and all the responsibility of our error, when we go wrong.

To ask advice of our familiar spirits, at every moment and in regard to the common affairs of daily life, as is done by some persons, is to impose on their kindness, and to mistake the nature of their mission. There are mediums who incessantly appeal to them for a decision in regard to the most trifling things. Such an abuse of medianimity denotes pettiness of ideas on the part of the medium; and it is; more-over, presumptuous to suppose that we have a good spirit always at our command, as a servant, and with nothing better to do than to be perpetually looking after the trumpery interests of our earthly lives. On the other hand, such an annihilation of our own judgment, such a reducing of ourselves to a state of passivity, renders our present life profitless, and is therefore prejudicial to our future. If it be puerile to question spirits about futile things, it is no less puerile on the part of spirits to busy themselves about the petty details of our daily life; such spirits may be well-intentioned, but they must evidently be very little above the earthly level.

CONCLUSIONS

The study will be accomplished if the class can satisfactorily conclude that:

1. It is acceptable to inquire spirits about a certain subject, as long as the questions are posed in a clear, concise and logical order. Superior spirits will address any subject as long as it serves a collective useful purpose.
2. Always analyze the answers obtained with logical and critical reason, because inferior spirits will try to infiltrate and deceive those seeking the truth in any subject.

REFERENCES

1. Kardec, Allan, “The Medium’s Book”, chapter 26, items 286, 287 and 288 (segment), edited by Brazilian Spiritist Federation, translated by Anna Blackwell.

2. Kardec, Allan, “The Medium’s Book”, chapter 26, item 288 (segment), edited by Brazilian Spiritist Federation, translated by Anna Blackwell.

3. (idem)

OBJECTIVES:

- To define what is medium according to Spiritism as codified by Allan Kardec.
- To review the classification of mediums and mediumship studied on Program II, lesson 8.
- To analyze the dissertation about mediums in chapter 31 of The Mediums' Book.

METHODS:

1. The coordinator shall ask participants to individually write down on a sheet of paper what their concept of medium and mediumship is.

2. Next step, participants read out loud what they wrote.

3. The coordinator will discuss their concepts and construct the definition of medium and mediumship (including its classification) according to Spiritism as codified by Allan Kardec.

Types of Mediums (remember lesson 8, workbook II): Physical Mediums, Hearing Mediums, Speaking Mediums, Seeing Mediums, Somnambulant Mediums, Healing Mediums, Pneumatographic (direct writing) Mediums.

4. Divide the class in 6 pairs and assign one of the texts⁽¹⁾ to each pair.

5. After that, they shall be back in the big group and address together the following questions:

- a) What is the Spiritist definition of medium?
- b) Classify mediumship.
- c) How should mediumship be used, according to Spiritism?
- d) When can mediumship be an instrument of spiritual growth?
- e) Did mediumship appear with Spiritism?
- f) What are the setbacks in the mediumistic practice?
- g) What are the main requisites for a good mediumistic practice?
- h) Is it important to know about mediumship even if I don't participate in a mediumistic meeting? Why? Explain.

Text A: "All men are mediums; all have a spirit-guide who, if they listen to him, directs them in the right way. It matters little that some men communicate directly with their spirit-guide by means of their own medianimity, while others only receive the counsels of their guide through his occult action on their heart or on their mind; in either case, it is their familiar spirit who gives them counsel. Call it as you will - your familiar

spirit, inspiration, reason, intelligence -it is always a voice that answers the inner voice of your soul, and addresses to you wise counsel, though you do not always profit thereby.

All men are not yet able to follow the suggestions of reason; I refer, not to the reason that grovels and crawls in its devotion to worldly things, and that loses itself in the care of gross material interests, but to the reason which raises a man above himself; the reason which transports him to unknown regions, the sacred flame which inspires the artist and the poet, the divine thought which elevates the mind of the philosopher, the vital impulsion which carries forward not only individuals but peoples, the reason which the vulgar cannot comprehend, but which lifts man ever nearer and nearer to God, the reason which leads him on from the known to the unknown, and enables him to achieve the sublimest results. Listen to the monitions which come to you incessantly, and your perceptions will gradually be opened to the voice of your guardian-angel, who holds out to you a helping hand from the celestial heights. The inner voice which speaks to the heart of every man is the voice of the good spirits around him; and, from this point of view, it may be truly said that *all men are mediums.*"

"CHANNING."

Text B: "The medianimic faculty is as old as the world. The prophets were mediums; the mysteries of Eleusis^(A) were founded on medianimity; the Chaldeans, Assyrians, Egyptians, and all the peoples of antiquity, had their mediums Socrates was directed by a spirit whose voice he heard, and who inspired him with the admirable principles of his philosophy; the inspirations of Joan of Arc were the voices of the beneficent spirits who guided her. This faculty, which is now becoming generalized, was comparatively rare in the Middle Ages; but it has never ceased to exist. Swedenborg has had many successors.

"The France of the last few centuries - irreverent, carried away by philosophical systems which, aiming at the destruction of the abuses of religious intolerance, stifled under ridicule all aspiration after the ideal - could not but repel spiritism, which, nevertheless, did not cease to maintain itself in the North. This struggle of Positivism against Spiritualism was permitted by Providence, because Spiritualism had become fanatical; but now that the progress of industry and science has developed the arts of life to such a point that material tendencies have become predominant, God wills that interest in the soul should be re-awakened in the minds of the spirits incarnated upon the earth, and that *the perfecting of the moral being* should become, as it ought to be, *the recognized end and object of human life*. The human spirit follows a foreordained and necessary line of march, image of the gradations undergone by all the beings that people the visible and invisible universe.

Each new step of progress is accomplished at the appointed time; the epoch fixed for the moral elevation of the human race has now come; and, although this elevation will not be fully accomplished in your present life-time, you may be thankful that you are permitted to witness the dawn of the glorious new day."

"PIERRE JOUTY." (The Medium's Father.)

Text C: "Sent by the Highest with a message to those who are favored with the gift of medianimity, I come to remind them that the greater the favors which have been granted them by His Providence, the greater is the danger they will incur by any misuse

of their gift. The faculties possessed by mediums attract to them the admiration, adulation, and felicitations of men; therein lies their danger. Let all mediums remember their primitive incapacity, and let them never attribute to their own personal merit what they owe to God alone. When mediums lose sight of this truth, they are abandoned by good spirits, and, having no longer a guide to direct them, they become the sport of evil ones. Those who attribute to themselves a value which is not theirs, are punished by the withdrawal of a faculty which could only be fatal to them.

"I cannot too strongly urge upon all mediums the *necessity* of maintaining a constant communication with their guardian-angel, that he may be able to help them to keep clear of the pride which is their worst enemy. Bear constantly in mind, O you who have the happiness of being the interpreters between spirits and men, that, without the support of our Divine Master, you are in danger of laying up for yourselves punishment that will be severe in proportion to the greatness of the medianimic faculty that has been confided to you. May this communication have the effect of inducing all mediums to avoid the rock of offence on which they are in danger of making shipwreck - *pride*."

"JEANNE D'ARC."

Text D: "If you would receive communications from superior spirits, you must prepare yourselves for this favor by concentration of thought, purity of intention, and sincere desire to help forward the cause of progress; for selfishness is a barrier between you and them. Remember that, if God permits you to receive the inspiration of those of His children who have earned the happiness of comprehending His infinite goodness, it is in order that you may advance, and aid others to advance, on the appointed path of progress.

Therefore, O mediums! It is incumbent on you to make only a good use of the faculty that has been given you. Confiding in, and emulating, our Master's kindness, let your charity, your tolerance for all about you, be inexhaustible. By scrupulously regulating your action according to your conscience, you will increase a hundred-fold your own happiness in your quickly-fleeting earthly life, and you will have prepared for yourselves a thousand-fold greater happiness in the life to come.

"Let every medium, who does not feel in himself the moral strength that will enable him to consecrate his faculty to the noblest use, withdraw altogether from the work of mediumship; for he who, being favored with special light, allows himself to enter upon a wrong path, incurs the heavier retribution reserved for those who have gone willfully astray."

"PASCAL"

Text E: "Bear with me while I call your attention to the disinterestedness which, with modesty, should be the characteristic accompaniment of medianimity. God has given to mediums the faculty which enables them to be the intermediary between spirits and men, in order that they may employ that faculty in spreading the truth, but not that they make it a matter of traffic. And, in saying this, I refer, not merely to those who turn their medianimity to pecuniary account as they would any ordinary talent, and who set up as *mediums* just as others set up as *dancers* or *singers*, but to *all who use their medianimic faculty for the furtherance of personal ends*. Is it reasonable to suppose that spirits of high degree, who condemn cupidity in the ratio of their elevation, would

consent to be shown off as a spectacle, putting themselves, like so many play-actors, into the hands of a contractor for spirit-phenomena? And is it in any respect more reasonable to suppose that such spirits would favor the views of vanity and ambition? God permits spirits to communicate with men in order that they may help men to raise themselves out of the mire of materiality, but not that they may serve as the instruments of mundane passions and those mediums who pervert the faculty bestowed upon them by God will be punished for such a desecration with a severity proportioned to the heinousness of their offence."

"DELPHINE DE GIRARDIN."

Text F: "All mediums are called to serve the cause of spiritism in the measure of their faculty; but so few of them escape the wiles of self-love that, out of a hundred mediums, hardly one is to be found, no matter how slight his medianimic gift, who does not, especially in the early days of his mediumship, believe himself to be destined to the accomplishment of some great mission. Those who fall into the snare of this vainglorious belief-and they are many-become the prey of obsessing spirits, who subjugate them by flattering their pride; and, the greater has been their ambition, the more pitiable is their fall.

"Great missions are only confided to picked men, who are placed, not by any seeking of their own, but by the leadings of Providence, in the position in which their action will be most efficacious. Inexperienced mediums cannot be too distrustful of what may be said to them, by flattering spirits, as to the importance of the part they are called to play; for, if they take all this flattery seriously, they will reap disappointment, both in this world and in the next. Let mediums remember that they can do good service, even in the most obscure and modest sphere, by helping to convince the incredulous, or by giving consolation to the afflicted. If it be their mission to go beyond this narrower range of medianimic action, they will be guided onwards, into a wider sphere of activity, by an invisible hand that will open their way before them and bring them forward, so to say, in spite of themselves. Let all mediums bear in mind these words: '*He that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.*' "

"THE SPIRIT OF TRUTH."

CONCLUSIONS:

The lesson will have been accomplished if the whole class can satisfactorily conclude that:

1. All human beings are medium because all suffer in a higher or lower degree the influence of spirits.
2. Mediumship, when practice appropriately, is a form of spiritual progress.
3. Even if I don't participate in a mediumistic section, it is important to understand about mediumship because I am a medium (see conclusion #1).

APPENDIX:

(A) From Winkipedia (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eleusinian_Mysteries). Accessed Feb/2006.

The Eleusinian Mysteries were annual initiation ceremonies for the cult of Demeter and Persephone based at Eleusis in ancient Greece. Of all the mysteries celebrated in ancient times these were held to be the ones of greatest importance. These myths and mysteries later spread to Rome. The rites and cultic worships and beliefs were kept secret, and initiation rites united the worshipper with god including promises of divine power and rewards in life after death.

Eleusis (modern-day Elefsina) was a small town located about 30 km NW of Athens. It was an agricultural town, producing wheat and barley.

The Mysteries were based on a legend revolving around Demeter. Her daughter, Persephone, was kidnapped by Hades, the god of death and the underworld. Demeter was the goddess of life, agriculture and fertility. She neglected her duties while searching for her daughter; causing a dry season (summer in Greece) in which people starved— today, we associate this with the first winter.

During this time Demeter taught the secrets of agriculture to Triptolemus. Finally Demeter was reunited with her daughter and the earth came back to life— the first spring. Persephone was unfortunately unable to stay permanently in the land of the living, because she had eaten six seeds of a pomegranate that Hades had given her. Those that eat the food of the dead may not return. A compromise was worked out and Persephone stayed with Hades for one third of the year (winter, as the Greeks only recognized three seasons, skipping autumn) and with her mother the remaining eight months.

The Eleusinian Mysteries celebrated Persephone's return, for it was also the return of plants and of life to the earth. She had eaten the six pomegranate seeds (symbols of lives) while in the underworld (underground, like seeds in the winter) and her rebirth is therefore symbolic of the rebirth of all plant life during the spring and, by extension, all life on earth.

In the Homeric Hymn to Demeter, Celeus was one of the original priests of Demeter, one of the first people to learn the secret rites and mysteries of her cult. Diocles, Eumolpos, Triptolemus and Polyxeinus were the others of the first priests. Celeus was a king whose son, Triptolemus, learned the art of agriculture from Demeter and taught it to the rest of Greece.

There were two Eleusinian Mysteries: the Greater and the Lesser.

Thomas Taylor has written that "the Lesser Mysteries signified the miseries of the soul while in subjection to the body. The Greater Mysteries obscurely intimated by mystic and splendid visions, the felicity of the soul both here and hereafter when purified from the defilements of a material nature and constantly elevated to the realities intellectual [spiritual] vision." (...)

REFERENCES:

1. Kardec, Allan, "The Medium's Book", chapter 31, items 10 - 15, edited by Brazilian Spiritist Federation, translated by Anna Blackwell.

OBJECTIVES:

- To explain what is a special medium according to Spiritism.
- To understand and describe Categories of Special Mediums for Physical and Intellectual Manifestations

METHODS:

1. The coordinator shall ask participants the following question:

What is (are) the difference(s) between physical and intellectual mediums?

PHYSICAL MEDIUMS	INTELLECTUAL MEDIUMS

2. Now, ask participants to read and discuss together the following text⁽¹⁾

185. Besides the varieties of medianimity already described, there is an infinite variety of shades, which may be considered as *personal* being determined by the *particular aptitudes of the medium himself* without reference to the qualities and enlightenment of the manifesting spirit.

The nature of a communication is always in keeping with the nature of the spirit by whom it is made, and bears the stamp of his elevation or inferiority, of his knowledge or ignorance; but, among spirits of equal advancement from the hierarchical point of view, there is an evident tendency in each spirit to occupy himself specially with one thing rather than with another. Rapping spirits, for example, rarely go beyond physical manifestations; and, among spirits who give intelligent communications, we find that some are poets, while others show themselves as musicians, draughts men, moralists, scientific searchers, physicians, &c. We are now speaking of the great mass of ordinary spirits; for, when spirits have reached a certain degree of elevation, their aptitudes are blended in the unity of perfection. But, besides the special aptitude of each spirit, there is that of the medium, who is, for the spirit, an instrument more or less responsive to his desire, more or less flexible, and in whom the spirit perceives peculiar qualities that are not always perceptible by us.

To employ an illustration - A skilful musician possesses several violins, all of which appear, to ordinary observers, to be good instruments, but which, for the artist himself, are very different, presenting varieties of tone, &c., that lead him to choose one in preference to another; varieties of quality that he distinguishes rather through a sort of intuition than by any definite rule. Thus it is with mediums among those who appear to us to be equal in point of medianimic power. A spirit will prefer one or other, according to the kind of communication which he desires to make. Thus, for instance, we find persons who, as mediums, write admirable poetry, although, in their ordinary state, they may never have made a couplet in their lives; and, on the contrary, we find poets, who, as mediums, can write nothing but prose, much as they desire to do otherwise. It is the same, in regard to painting, drawing, music, &c. There are some who, though possessing, when left to themselves, no scientific knowledge, have a peculiar aptitude for receiving scientific communications; others have a similar aptitude for historical studies; others do best as interpreters of spirit-moralists. In a word, whatever the medium's flexibility to the will of the spirits who communicate through him, he generally receives, most easily, communications of some particular character. Some mediums keep to a special circle of ideas, beyond which they receive only brief, imperfect, or erroneous communications. And besides the question of medianimic aptitudes, there is that of the sympathies of the spirits themselves, which lead them to communicate more or less willingly with such and such a medium; so that, other things being equal, the same spirit will be much more explicit and successful with some mediums than with others, solely because they suit him better.

187. Mediums may be divided into two principal orders:

Physical mediums; those who have the power of obtaining physical manifestations.

Intellectual mediums; those who are more especially apt for receiving and transmitting intelligent communications.

All the other varieties belong to one or other of these two categories; some belong to both. If we analyze the different manifestations obtained through medianimic influence, we shall see that there is, in all of them, a *physical effect*, and that, with the physical effect, there is usually combined an *intelligent effect*. It is sometimes difficult to establish a line of demarcation between the two; but this is of no practical consequence. We include, under the denomination of *intellectual mediums*, those who are specially able to serve as intermediaries for the transmission of regular and continuous communications.

3. Invite participants for a special study session in two groups.

Group I. **Physical Mediums**

Read carefully the following text⁽²⁾ and prepare a brief explanation about physical mediums to the whole class. Feel free to discuss topics addressed by the text with your group instructor.

189. *Special varieties of Physical Mediums.*

Rapping mediums; those by whose influence noises and raps are produced. A very common variety of medianimity, whether voluntary or involuntary.

Motor mediums; those who produce the movement of inert bodies. These, also, are very common.

Mediums for displacements and suspensions; those who obtain the displacement of inert bodies, and their suspension in the air without any visible prop. There are some who are thus raised themselves, but these are very rare.

Mediums for musical effects; these obtain the playing of certain instruments without human contact. Also very rare.

Mediums for apparitions; those who obtain apparitions, whether fluidic or tangible, which are visible to lookers on. Very exceptional.

Mediums for the transport of objects; those who are employed by spirits as auxiliaries in bringing objects to a circle. Exceptional.

Nocturnal mediums; those who only obtain certain physical effects in the dark.

Here is the answer of a spirit to our inquiry as to whether such mediums should be considered as forming a separate variety: -

"This form of medianimity may certainly be spoken of as a specialty, although the necessity of darkness has to do rather with surrounding conditions than with the nature of the medium, or with that of the manifesting spirits; for, in fact, some of these mediums get over this peculiar necessity, and the greater number of those who are mediums only in the dark could, by exercise, obtain the same manifestations in the light. There are but few of this variety of mediums; and we feel bound to point out that this peculiar form of medianimity offers a wide field for trickery, ventriloquism, acoustic tubes, &c., enabling charlatans to play upon credulity, and to pocket money. But jugglers in rooms, like jugglers in public halls, will be unmasked in the long run, and spirits will show them that it is not prudent for pretenders to intermeddle with their work. There are charlatans who will by and by get such raps on their knuckles as will disgust them with playing at medianimity; it is only a question of time. "ERASTES."

Pneumatographic mediums; those who obtain direct writing. This is a very rare phenomenon, and one easily imitated.

Remark. - Our spirit-guides have insisted, contrary to our opinion, in placing direct writing in the order of physical phenomena, because, according to them, "*Intelligent effects are those for the production of which the spirit makes use of the medium's brain, which is not done in the production of direct writing ; the action of the medium, in this case, being altogether physical, while, in the case of the writing, though the action may be merely mechanical, the medium's brain always takes an active part in it.*"

Healing mediums; those who have the power of curing disease or relieving pain, by the imposition of hands or by prayer. "This faculty is not essentially medianimic; it appertains to all true believers, whether mediums or not; it is often only a super-excitement of the mesmeric power, strengthened, in case of need, by the co-operation of benevolent spirits" .

Developing mediums; persons who, by their influence, have the power of developing the faculties of medianimity in others. "This is rather an effect of animal magnetism than a fact of medianimity properly so called, for there is in it nothing that proves the intervention of a spirit. At all events it may be classed under the head of physical effects." (See Part Second, Chap. XVI I. *Formation of Mediums*).

Group II. Intellectual Mediums.

Read carefully the following text⁽³⁾ and prepare a brief explanation about intellectual mediums to the whole class. Feel free to discuss topics addressed by the text with your group instructor.

190. Mediums for intellectual effects. - Different aptitudes.

Hearing mediums; those who hear spirits. Very common. "There are many who fancy they hear what is only in their imagination."

Speaking mediums; those who speak under the influence of spirits. These are very common.

Seeing mediums; those who see spirits when awake. An accidental and fortuitous sight of a spirit under some peculiar circumstances is very frequent; but the habitual view of spirits at will, and without distinction, is exceptional. "This is an aptitude to which the normal state of the human organism is opposed; for this reason it is prudent not to accord a too ready belief to those who say that they see spirits."

Inspirational mediums; those to whom thoughts are suggested by spirits, most frequently without their being aware of it; whether in regard to the things of their everyday life, or to their intellectual labors.

Presentient mediums; persons, who, under certain circumstances, have a vague intuition of future events in the domain of ordinary life.

Prophetic mediums; these are a variety of the *inspired mediums*, or of *presentient mediums*; they receive, by God's permission, and with more precision than do the presentient mediums, the pre-announcement of future things of general interest, which they are charged to predict for the enlightenment of mankind. "Though there are true prophets, there are many more false ones, who mistake the dreams of their imagination for revelations, when they are not pretenders passing themselves off from ambition, for what they are not" (See *The Spirit's Book*, No. 624,

Characteristics of the true Prophet).

Somnambulist mediums; those who, when in a somnambulant state, are assisted by spirits.

Trance mediums; those who receive revelations from spirits when in a state of trance. "Many ecstatic are the sport of their own imaginations, and of deceitful spirits, who take advantage of their state of mental excitement. Ecstatic worthy of entire confidence are extremely rare."

Painting and Drawing mediums; those who paint and draw under the influence of spirits. We are speaking of those whose medianimically-produced works are worthy of attention, for we cannot apply this designation to mediums who, under the influence of mocking spirits, obtain absurd productions that would disgrace the merest schoolboy. Frivolous spirits are often imitators; when some very remarkable drawings of scenes in

Jupiter(*) first appeared, there arose a vast number of pretended drawing mediums, through whom mocking spirits produced the most ridiculous things. One of them, desirous of eclipsing the drawings referred to, in dimensions, if not in quality, made a medium draw a picture filling so vast a number of sheets of paper as to attain the height of two storeys of a house. A number of other mediums were made to draw what claimed to be portraits, but which were mere caricatures (* *Revue Spirite*, August, 1858).

Musical mediums; those who execute, compose, or write music, under the influence of spirits. They are mechanical, semi-mechanical, intuitive, and inspired; as are the mediums for literary communications (See *Mediums for musical effects*).

CONCLUSION:

The lesson will have been accomplished if the whole class can satisfactorily conclude that:

1. God wanted everyone of us to see the light and for the voices of the Spirits to be heard everywhere so that every individual could obtain his or her own proof of immortality. It is for this reason that the Spirits make their presence felt in all parts of the globe, and that the gift of (mediumship) is given to people of all ages and all conditions—men and women, young and old.

2. Mediums are interpreters (channel) capable of transmitting to us the teachings of the Spirits. Thus Mediums fulfill a sacred mission, that of opening up the horizons of eternal life. (The Gospel Explained by the Spiritist Doctrine, Allan Kardec)

REFERENCES:

1. Kardec, Allan, “The Medium’s Book”, chapter XVI, item 185 and 187, edited by Brazilian Spiritist Federation, translated by Anna Blackwell.

2. Idem, item 189.

3. Idem, item 190.

OBJECTIVES:

- To define the common features to all mediums;
- To study each of the defined features.

METHODS:

1. The coordinator shall give a brief introduction on the topic Mediums with the aid of the material in previous lessons and spiritist books.

2. Divide the class in three groups to study the following texts. After that, they shall be back in the big group and address together the questions assigned to each group.

Group I: Sensitive or Impressionable Mediums

Read carefully the following text⁽¹⁾. Then, answer the proposed questions as complete as possible.

- a) Define a sensitive medium.
- b) Are all mediums necessarily impressionable? Please, explain.
- c) How can the faculty of perceiving the presence of spirits be developed? Please, explain.
- d) Is there any difference between the impressions produced by the spirits? Please, explain.

188. *Varieties common to all species of medianimity.*

Sensitive mediums: persons who feel the presence of spirits by a peculiar impression, general or local, vague or decided. Most of these distinguish good or evil spirits by the nature of the impression caused by them.

"Mediums who are very sensitive and delicate should abstain from communicating with violent spirits, or with those who cause painful impressions, on account of the fatigue which results from such communication."

164. We give this designation (sensitive mediums) to persons who are able to recognize the presence of spirits by a vague impression, a sort of shuddering sensation, running through their whole body, and for which they cannot account. This variety of medianimity has no very decided characteristic. All mediums being necessarily impressionable, this quality maybe regarded as being general rather than special; but it is an indispensable condition of all other forms of medianimity. It is different from purely physical and nervous impressionability, with which it must not be confounded; for there are persons whose nerves are by no means delicate, and who are nevertheless affected by the presence of spirits, while others, whose nerves are very irritable, have no perception of their presence.

The faculty of perceiving the presence of spirits is developed by habit, and may become so subtle as to enable one who is endowed with it to recognize, by impression, not only the good or evil nature of the spirit at his side, but even his individuality; just as a blind man, by an indefinable faculty of perception, recognizes the approach of such and such a person, so a medium of the kind we are considering recognizes the presence of certain spirits. A good spirit always produces an agreeable impression; an evil spirit, on the contrary, produces an impression that is painful and disagreeable and causes a feeling of anxiety; it seems to bring with it, so to say, an odor of impurity.

Group II. Natural or Involuntary Mediums

Read carefully the following text⁽²⁾. Then, answer the proposed questions as complete as possible.

- a) Define a natural or involuntary medium.
- b) Is the involuntary medianimity manifestation related to any organic debility? Please, explain.
- c) Is there any inconvenience in involuntary phenomena? Please, explain.

188. *Varieties common to all species of medianimity.*

Natural or unconscious mediums: those who call forth the phenomena spontaneously, without any action of their will, and for the most part unconsciously.

161. *Natural or Involuntary mediums* are those who are influenced without their knowing it. They have no idea of their power, and the abnormal occurrences which take place around them not appear to them at all extraordinary. Their peculiar faculty seems to them to be a part of themselves, as is the case with persons who are endowed with second-sight, and who have no suspicion that such is the case. Mediums of this description are well worthy of observation; and we should not neglect to collect and study all the facts that may come to our knowledge in regard to them. They are of all ages; young children often possessing this faculty in a high degree.

The faculty we are about to treat of is not, in itself, an indication of a diseased state of body, for it is not incompatible with the soundest health. A person so constituted may be sickly, but, in that case, his ill-health is due to some other cause, and medical treatment is therefore power-less to prevent the manifestation of his medianimity. This faculty may undoubtedly co-exist with some forms of organic debility, but it is never produced by them. There is no reason for dreading this faculty on the score of health; because medianimity only becomes a cause of bodily weakness when the medium uses his power too continuously, and thus makes a too lavish emission of his vital fluid, which is always injurious to his bodily health.

162. (...) Whenever *involuntary medianimity* develops itself spontaneously in an individual, it should be allowed to follow its natural course. Nature is wiser than man and Providence, forecasting its ends, may use the humblest of us as an instrument for the accomplishment of the greatest designs. It must, however, be admitted that this phenomenon sometimes attains proportions which render it annoying and fatiguing to all who are in contact with a medium of the character in question; and in all such cases, as we have already remarked, we should endeavor to enter into communication with the

disturbing spirit, so as to find out what he wants. The invisible beings who reveal their presence by troublesome manifestations are generally spirits of an inferior order, and such as may be controlled by moral ascendancy; and this ascendancy we must both seek and acquire if we would influence such uncomfortable visitants. In order to do this, we must begin by modifying the medianimity of the individual through whose fluid the phenomena occur, so as to change his state from that of a *natural* (or involuntary) *medium* to that of a *voluntary medium*.

Group III. **Voluntary Mediums**

Read carefully the following text⁽³⁾. Then, answer the proposed questions as complete as possible.

- a) Define a voluntary medium.
- b) How is the will of the voluntary medium related to the phenomena? Please, explain.
- c) Is there any advantage in modifying the medianimity from an involuntary state to a voluntary one? Please, explain.

188. *Varieties common to all species of medianimity.*

Voluntary mediums: those who have the power of calling forth the phenomena by an act of their will.

"However strong may be their will, they can, however, do nothing if the spirits refuse to co-operate with them; which proves that the phenomena are the result of the intervention of a power exterior to the medium."

160. (...) Voluntary mediums are those who exert their power consciously, and obtain spirit-phenomena by an act of their will. This faculty, although inherent, as we have already said, in the human species, far from exists in all men in the same degree; but, though there are few persons in whom the medianimic faculty is absolutely null.

162. (...) We must begin by modifying the medianimity of the individual through whose fluid the phenomena occur, so as to change his state from that of a *natural* (or involuntary) *medium* to that of a *voluntary medium*. (...) Instead of attempting to prevent the production of the *involuntary* phenomena (which can rarely be done, and cannot be attempted without danger), the medium must be urged to produce the same phenomena voluntarily, thus making the spirit work by an exertion of his will. In this way, he acquires a mastery over the spirit, and often succeeds in converting him into a docile servant, instead of the tyrant he was before.

CONCLUSIONS:

The lesson will have been accomplished if the whole class can satisfactorily conclude that:

1. "Every one who is in any degree influenced by spirits is, by that very fact, a medium. This faculty is inherent in man, and is therefore no exclusive privilege; in fact, there are few persons in whom some rudiments of medianimity are not found." (The Mediums' Book, chapter 14, item 159).

2. “Each medium has generally a special aptitude for some special order of phenomena. The principal varieties of mediums are as follows: *Physical mediums*; *Sensitive* or *Impressionable mediums*; *Hearing mediums*; *Speaking mediums*; *Seeing mediums*; *Somnambulists*; *Healing mediums*; *Pneumatographers*; *Writing mediums*, or *Psychographers*.” (The Mediums’ Book, chapter 14, item 159).

3. Based on the common features to all types of mediumship, the mediums can be classified as sensitive, involuntary or voluntary.

REFERENCES:

1. Kardec, Allan, “The Medium’s Book”, chapter 14, item 164 and chapter 16, item 188, edited by Brazilian Spiritist Federation, translated by Anna Blackwell.
2. Idem, chapter 14, items 161 and 162 (segment), and chapter 16, item 188.
3. Idem, chapter 14, items 160 and 162 (segment), and chapter 16, item 188.

OBJECTIVES:

- To understand why it should not be stimulated or suggested the development of mediumship in children.
- To explain why spontaneous mediumship in children is not deleterious to their normal development.
- To analyze what is the best age to initiate the practice of mediumship.

METHODS:

1. The coordinator should begin by remembering the role played by childhood in the spirit's reincarnation. Consult "The Spirit's book" chapter 11, questions 379 - 385.

2. Then, divide the class into 2 groups.

Group I: **Mediumship in Children**

Read carefully the following text⁽¹⁾ and answer the proposed question. Feel free to discuss topics addressed by the text with your group instructor. After the discussion, answer the questions as complete as possible.

- a) Should children have their mediumship stimulated? Why?
- b) Is there any pre-established age to begin mediumship development?
- c) Why is it not recommended developing the mediumship of a child?
- d) What should be done if a child spontaneously begins to show signs of mediumship?

6. Is it imprudent to develop the medianimic faculty in children?

"It is not only imprudent, but very dangerous to do so: for the frail and delicate organisation of childhood would be too much shaken, and the youthful imagination too much excited, by such attempts; parents should therefore keep these ideas from their children, or, at least, should only speak of them in reference to their moral aspect."

7. Yet there are children who are mediums by nature, not only for physical manifestations, but also for writing and for visions; is there danger for such as these?

"No; where a child's faculty is spontaneous, it belongs to his temperament, and his constitution is prepared for its exercise; it is a very different thing when you attempt to develop medianimity artificially, and thus subject the child's nervous system to overexcitement.

It is also to be remarked that a child who is naturally subject to visions is generally but little impressed by them; they appear so natural to such a child, that he pays but little heed to them and easily forgets them; and in after-years, if these visions recur to his memory, he is not apt to be painfully affected by the remembrance of them."

8. At what age may we attempt to develop the faculty of medianimity without danger?

"There is no rule in regard to age; it depends partly on the physical, and still more on the moral, development of the individual; there are children of; say, a dozen years of age, who would be less affected by the attempt than many grown persons. I am now speaking of medianimity in general; but physical medianimity is that which is most likely to cause fatigue to the organism. Writing, however, in the case of a child, has another danger, owing to his inexperience, viz., the mischief which might result to his health, if he took to writing when alone, and should thus make an amusement of it."

222. Practical Spiritism, as we shall see more clearly the more we know of it, demands our utmost tact and discretion to avoid being taken in by deceitful spirits ; if grown people are in danger of being deceived by these, children and young persons are evidently, on account of their inexperience, still more exposed to this danger. We know, too, that concentration of thought and feeling is absolutely necessary for obtaining the concentration of serious and benevolent spirits. An evocation made rightly and jokingly is a profanation which gives easy access to mocking and maleficent spirits; and as we cannot expect a child to possess the seriousness necessary for such an act, it is to be feared that he would make a mere amusement of it if left to himself. Even under the most favorable conditions, it is highly desirable that a child who is endowed with the medianimic faculty should only exercise it under the eyes of experienced persons, who may inspire him, by their example, with the sentiment of respect that should always preside at the evocation of souls who have quitted the earthly life. The question of age, as I have said, is subordinate to conditions of temperament as well as of character; and you should not only avoid forcing the development of this faculty in children, where it is not spontaneous, but its exercise, in every case, should be conducted with very great circumspection, and should neither be excited nor encouraged even on the part of grown persons, if they are weak in body or in mind. Those who show the slightest symptoms of mental eccentricity or weakness should be dissuaded from its exercise by every possible means; for there is, in such persons, an evident predisposition to insanity, which any and every species of excitement would tend to develop. Spiritist ideas are not more likely to produce cerebral excitement than any others; but madness brought on by spiritist ideas would take its character from them, just as it would assume the character of religious mania, if it had been brought on by the excitement attendant on an excess of devotional practices, and spiritism, in such cases, would naturally, though unjustly, be held responsible for that result. The best thing to be done, with every one who shows a tendency to fall under the influence of a fixed idea, is to direct his attention to something altogether different from that idea, so as to give rest to the organs which are the seat of the excitement (See *Introduction to The Spirits' Book*, Par. 12.)

Group II: Adolescent Mediums

Read carefully the following text⁽²⁾ and answer the proposed question. Feel free to discuss topics addressed by the text with your group instructor. After the discussion, answer the questions as complete as possible.

a) Why is mediumship in adolescent often temporary? Explain some objectives of the sudden appearance of mediumship in adolescence.

b) What should it be done if an adolescent with mediunistic signs comes to a Spirit Center?

c) What is the role of the family when an adolescent shows mediunistic signs?

There is no set age to work with mediumship as it can manifest itself at any time. Quite often mediumship manifests itself in adolescence. That is why we, in this chapter, will deal with this, giving guidelines on what we consider to be most relevant. Usually, when mediumship manifests itself in adolescents between twelve and seventeen years old, without discrimination of sex, its symptoms, in the majority of the cases, are temporary. That is to say, the adolescents, as their psychic power begins to reveal itself, are more susceptible to the influence of spirits who live amongst Mankind on Earth.

The fact that an adolescent experiences signs of mediumship does not mean he should attend mediumship meetings or develop it. Although there is no age limit for the manifestation of mediumship, it is advisable that the adolescent does not start to develop it without the necessary requirements of responsibility. Because mediumship manifests itself in this or that adolescent it doesn't mean that he is a chosen one. Very often, it happens that the family which is distant from the true faith in God can go forward towards the spiritual enlightenment that, at the present moment, they do not have. The manifestation of mediumship on an adolescent seems to have the specific meaning of awakening those who live with him. When the spirits who are interested in this happening reach their objective, then they depart once the task of lighting a light, among those whom they love, is concluded.

After the awakening of the relatives of the adolescent with regard to his psychic power, it tends to be in a state of serenity, leaving perhaps, until later on its development. In this paragraph we would like to warn those responsible for a spiritist group. As the adolescent and his family arrive in the spiritist group, in general terms, after a long visitations in various surgeries being seen by doctors, the person responsible for giving advice should take this opportunity to suggest some books on the spiritist principles. Such literature is possibly unknown to them. For this reason, it is always interesting to have one or two spiritist books at hand to donate, or lend, for it is not without reason that the spirits manifest themselves in these situations.

Those responsible for the spiritist group should not invite the adolescent and his family to a mediumistic meeting. On the contrary, they should invite them for a study meeting, or charity aid work, and remind them of the importance of the Gospel in the Home. By attending the meetings in the group, participating in the readings, having healing, by praying, changing his mental position, talking constructively, working in the service of goodness, and being more aware about everything, the adolescent will get a mediumistic balance. Thus, he will have peace in order to continue his studies and normal life. Later on, when his life settles down and, if he was born with a specific task in the field of mediumship, then the moment of working with it will arrive upon him.

Persevering in his spiritist belief, after the initial moments of enthusiasm, the adolescent having completed specific training, can begin to give healing. This measure will be extremely beneficial, to him as it will put him in contact with other people's sufferings. It will develop in him, simultaneously, his mediumship and the real feeling of love for his neighbors. There are spiritist mediums who are far away from those who are suffering, mediums without evangelical practice. The mediums who begin in this way will rarely get close to the needy ones. They deal rather with the spirits in need than with poor people...

The adolescent mediums deserve special attention from the spiritists who are in charge of the mediumistic task in the spiritist groups. May they be aware that for that family the time has come in which they should awake to the realities of the spirit.

CONCLUSIONS:

The lesson will have been accomplished if the whole class can satisfactorily conclude that:

1. It is not prudent to develop the medianimic faculty in children.
2. If the mediumship is spontaneous in a child, then it belongs to his temperament.
3. There is no set of age to work with mediumship.
4. The fact that an adolescent experiences signs of mediumship does not mean that he should attend mediumship meetings or develop it. The manifestation of mediumship on an adolescent seems to have the specific meaning of awakening those who live with him.
5. The most important is to give opportunity to the adolescent and his family to learn about mediumship and the spiritist doctrine, understanding the importance of charity.

REFERENCES:

1. Kardec, Allan, "The Medium's Book", chapter 18, items 221 (sub-items 7 and 8) and 222, edited by Brazilian Spiritist Federation, translated by Anna Blackwell.
2. Baccelli, Carlos A., "We are all mediums", dictated by the spirit Odilon Fernandes, translated by Púbio L.V. Coelho, Spiritist Group for Irradiation (Brighton - UK), 2001.

OBJECTIVES:

- To explain the essential qualities of a medium.
- To outline the medium's imperfections that repels Good Spirits.
- To analyze the moral influence of the mediums in the spirit communications

METHODS:**1. Propose to the audience the following exercise:**

In the spiritual world you are asked to develop the project for a new Spiritist center on Earth. You must recruit spirits who will reincarnate and, in the future, as they meet in the physical plane, they will initiate their spiritual work. It is in the plan that this future Spiritist center will have a mediumistic group. Thus, you must recruit spirits willing and needing to take this experience. These recruiters must present the appropriate behavior and characteristics to practice good mediumship. What are the characteristics and attributes that the right candidate must present in order for you to endorse his/her candidacy to this mediumistic work?

Ask the audience to write down their answers to the question. After that, comment on their answer.

Group I: The Influence of Mediums

Read and discuss the following text⁽¹⁾. Then, prepare an explanation of the following sentence.

- a) Although a medium, as such, is only an instrument, he nevertheless exercises a very considerable influence on the communications from the spirit-world.
- b) The communicating spirit is obliged, in order to communicate, to identify himself with the spirit of the medium.
- c) The soul of the medium attracts or repels disincarnate spirits, according to the degree of their similitude or dissimilitude.
- d) Good mediums attract good spirits, and bad mediums attract evil spirits.

227. Although a medium, as such, is only an instrument, he nevertheless exercises a very considerable influence on the communications from the spirit-world. The communicating spirit is obliged, in order to communicate, to identify himself with the spirit of the medium; and as this identification can only take place in proportion to the sympathy, the "affinity," to borrow the expression of Erastes, existing between them, it follows that the soul of the medium attracts or repels disincarnate spirits, according to the degree of their similitude or dissimilitude. Thus good mediums attract good spirits, and bad mediums attract evil spirits; because the moral qualities of the medium necessarily determine the *kind* of spirits who communicate through his medianimity. If a medium is

vicious, inferior spirits come around him in crowds, taking the place of the good spirits who may have been evoked. The qualities that attract good spirits are kindness, goodwill, single-mindedness, love of the neighbor, and detachment from earthly things; the defects that repel them are pride, vanity, selfishness, envy, jealousy, hatred, greed, sensuality, and all the passions by which man attaches himself to matter.

Group II: Moral Imperfections

Read and discuss the following text⁽²⁾. Then, address these topics:

- a) What is the most serious obstacle to the accomplishment of a successful mediumship? Why?
- b) What are some of the signs that indicate the presence of pride in a mediumistic activity?
- c) What is the best way for someone not directly involved in a mediumistic activity to help a medium: constant complements or sincere support? Why?

228. All moral imperfections are so many open doors, giving access to evil spirits; but what brings us most often under their influence is pride, because it is the defect which of all others we are least apt to recognize in ourselves. Pride has been the ruin of numbers of mediums endowed with the highest faculties, and who, but for that defect, might have become equally remarkable and useful; instead of which, their pride having subjected them to the domination of deceptive spirits, their medianimic faculties have been first perverted, then annihilated, and, in more than one instance, such mediums have brought upon themselves the most humiliating retribution.

Pride shows itself in mediums by unequivocal signs, to which it is all the more necessary to draw attention, because it is the defect which, more than any other is fatal to the veracity of their communications. Pride puffs them up with a blind confidence in the superiority of the communications obtained by them and in the infallibility of the spirit from whom they emanate; and leads them to disdain whatever does not come through their own medianimity, and to look upon themselves as having a monopoly of truth. Dazzled by the great names unscrupulously assumed by the spirits who communicate through them, their self-love prevents them from seeing that they are deceived, and causes them to repel all advice, and to keep away from every one who might open their eyes to the reality of their position. Even should they condescend to listen to advice, they pay no attention to it, and resent as a profanation the suggestion of a doubt as to the excellence of their familiar spirit. They are offended by contradiction or criticism, detest those who warn them of their delusion, and gradually withdraw into an isolation in which they become the sport of obsessing spirits, who make them accept the most glaring absurdities as something sublime. Thus - a blind confidence in the communications made through their agency, contempt for those that are made through other mediums, an overweening confidence in great names, repudiation of advice, angry rejection of all criticism, estrangement from those who would give them disinterested counsel, belief in their own infallibility, - such are the distinguishing signs of pride in mediums.

It must be admitted however, that pride is often excited in a medium by the injudicious flattery of the persons about him. If possessed of faculties at all remarkable, he is sought out, cried up, and courted, until he comes to look upon himself as

indispensable, and affects an air of self-sufficiency and superciliousness when condescending to lend himself to his work. We have more than once had cause to regret the praise we had given to certain mediums, for the purpose of encouraging them.

CONCLUSIONS:

The lesson will have been accomplished if the whole class can satisfactorily conclude that:

1. The characteristics of the good medium are the same as the characteristic of a good person: “do unto others as you wish others to do unto you”.

2. The most serious obstacle to the practice of good mediumship are the moral shortcomings of the medium himself, notably, pride and selfishness. External obstacles, like prosecution, calumny and slander, play secondary roles to the success of the mediumistic work.

REFERENCES:

1. Kardec, Allan, “The Medium’s Book”, chapter XX, item 227, edited by Brazilian Spiritist Federation, translated by Anna Blackwell.
2. Idem, item 228.

OBJECTIVES:

- To analyze the existing difficulties when identifying a communicating spirit.
- To study the contents in items 262 – 268 of chapter 24, *The Mediums' Book* by Allan Kardec.

METHODS:

1. The coordinator shall start by giving a 20-minute talk and class discussion on the contents of chapter 24 of *The Mediums' Book* (Identity of the Spirits).

2. Divide the class into at least 2 groups. All groups will read the same text and answer the same questions. Once the task is completed, re-unite the class and discuss the questions.

Common Questions to all Groups:

- a) Why is it not always so easy to identify a communicating spirit?
- b) What is the importance of the language in the identification of the Spirits?
- c) Why is it important to get to know how to distinguish the good and the bad spirits?
- d) How does one know that a mediumistic communication comes from a Superior Spirit?
- e) What are the signs of a communication that comes from an Inferior Spirit?
- f) What is the best criterion to identify Spirits?
- g) What is the importance of this knowledge if I do not participate in a mediumistic session?

262. If the identity of a spirit is, in many cases, only a secondary question of no great importance the distinction between good and evil spirits can never be unimportant; for, although their *individuality* may, under certain circumstances, be indifferent to us, such can never be the case in regard to their *quality*, because it is their quality alone that can give us the measure of the confidence we should accord to them, whatever may be the name they assume. (...)

264. Kindness and benevolence are also essential attributes of purified spirits; they have no hatred, either for men or for other spirits; they pity the weaknesses of those who are below them, and, though they criticize their errors, they always do so with moderation, and without bitterness or animosity. If we admit that really good spirits can only desire the good of others, and can only give utterance to kind and noble sentiments, we must necessarily conclude that language, evidencing a want of kindness or nobility cannot emanate from a good spirit. (...)

266. By submitting all spirit-communications to a scrupulous examination, and by scrutinizing and analyzing the ideas and expressions of spirits as we do in judging the

literary work of men, by rejecting everything that runs counter to reason and common sense, everything in contradiction with the character of the spirit who claims to be manifesting, we discourage deceptive spirits, who take themselves off when they find that they cannot deceive us. We repeat it; this method is the only one by which we can distinguish between the Communications of good and of inferior spirits, but it is infallible; for no communication from the latter can stand the test of rigorous examination. Good spirits are never offended by such examination; on the contrary, they advise it, because they have nothing to fear from scrutiny. It is only bad spirits who take scrutiny amiss, and who try to dissuade us from making it, because they are sure to be losers by it; their dissuasion, therefore, proves their inferiority. (...)

268. By what signs can we distinguish the superiority or inferiority of spirits?
"By their language; just as you distinguish a hair-brained man from a sensible one. We have already said that superior spirits never contradict themselves, and only say what is good; they have no other desire than good; it is the aim of all their thoughts and actions. Inferior spirits are still under the influence of earthly ideas; their discourse betrays their ignorance and imperfection. Superiority of knowledge, and calmness of judgment, are the exclusive apanage of superior spirits."

CONCLUSION:

The lesson will have been accomplished if the whole class can satisfactorily conclude that:

1. Spirits few times bring proofs of their identities. Many take others' names; some even disguise their feelings, and others alter their way of introducing themselves. Furthermore, as Spirits evolve, they change the distinctive characters of their personalities.
2. Language reveals the style, the ideas the degree of moral and intellectual elevation of the Spirit.
3. It important to distinguish good and bad spirits so we are not deceived by the bad spirits and also to understand the advices of the good spirits.
4. The language of Superior spirits is not trivial; instead it is dignified, noble and elevated. They express themselves with simplicity and humbleness. Goodness and kindness are essential attributes of Superior Spirits.
5. The language of the Inferior spirits is inconsequent, trivial and rude. The bad spirits express themselves without any concern to the truth. The frivolous spirits like to foresee the future; they also use a much elaborated, pretentious, ridiculous and sometimes obscure language.

REFERENCES:

1. Kardec, Allan, "The Mediums' Book", chapter 24, segment of items 262, 264, 266 and 268, edited by Brazilian Spiritist Federation, translated by Anna Blackwell.

SPECIAL NOTE

Coordinator: remember to assign the groups for next week activity.

OBJECTIVES

- To analyze the sources of contradictions about the Spiritist teachings
- To study on the three categories of adversaries of Spiritism according to Kardec

METHODS:

1. One week prior to this lesson, the coordinator shall ask three pairs of participants to prepare a presentation on the following references:

- a. The Spirits' Book – item VII
- b. The Mediums' Book – chapter IV
- c. The Mediums' Book – chapter XXVII, items 297-302

The coordinator should manage the presentation and direct it towards the topics of contradictions, mystifications and animic communications in Spiritism.

2. Divide the class in two groups and proceed with the recommended activities.

Group I: Antagonist of Spiritism

Read and discuss the following text⁽¹⁾. Then, address these topics:

- a) How can the adherents of Spiritism be divided? Explain.
- b) The adversaries of Spiritism can be divided in three groups. Explain:
 - b1) First group
 - b2) Second group
 - b3) Third group.

Spiritism presents three different aspects, viz., the facts of spirit-manifestation, the philosophic and moral principles deducible from those facts, and the practical applications of which those principles are susceptible; hence three classes into which its adherents are naturally divided, or rather, three degrees of advancement by which they are distinguished:

1st, Those who believe in the reality and genuineness of the spirit-manifestations, but confine themselves to the attestation of these, and for whom Spiritism is merely an experimental science;

2d, Those who comprehend its moral bearings;

3d, Those who put in practice, or, at least, endeavor to put in practice, the system of morality which it is the mission of Spiritism to establish.

Whatever the point of view experimental, scientific, or moral, from which these strange phenomena are considered, every one perceives that they are ushering in an entirely novel order of ideas, which must necessarily produce a profound modification of

the state of the human race; and every one who understands the subject also perceives that this modification can only be for good.

As for our adversaries, they may also be grouped into three categories:

1st, Those who systematically deny whatever is new, or does not proceed from themselves, and who speak without knowing what they are talking about. To this class belong all those who admit nothing beyond the testimony of their senses they have not seen anything, do not wish to see anything, and are still more unwilling to go deeply into anything; they would, in fact, be unwilling to see too clearly. For fear of being obliged to confess that they have been mistaken; they declare that Spiritism is chimerical insane, utopian and has no real existence, as the easiest way of settling the matter; they are the willfully incredulous. With them may be classed those who have condescended to glance at the subject, in order to be able to say, "I have tried to see something of it, but I have not been able to succeed in doing so;" and who do not seem to be aware that half an hour's attention is not enough to make them acquainted with a new field of study;

2d, Those who, although perfectly aware of the genuineness of the phenomena, oppose the matter from interested motives. They know that Spiritism is true; but being afraid of consequences, they attack it as an enemy.

3d, Those who dread the moral rules of Spiritism as constituting too severe a censure of their acts and tendencies. A serious admission of the truth of Spiritism would be in their way; they neither reject nor accept it, but prefer to close their eyes in regard to it.

The first class is swayed by pride and presumption; the second by ambition; the third by selfishness. We should seek in vain for a fourth class of antagonists, viz., that of opponents who, basing their opposition on a careful and conscientious study of Spiritism, should bring forward positive and irrefutable evidence of its falsity.

It would be hoping too much of human nature to imagine that it could be suddenly transformed by spiritist ideas. The action of these undoubtedly is not the same, nor is it equally powerful, in the case of all those by whom they are professed; but their result, however slight it may be, is always beneficial, if only by proving the existence of an extracorporeal world, and thus disproving the doctrines of materialism. This result follows from a mere observation of the phenomena of Spiritism; but, among those who, comprehending its philosophy, see in it something else than phenomena more or less curious, it produces other effects.

Group II: **Consequences of Spiritist Ideas**

Read and discuss the following text⁽²⁾. Then, address these topics:

- a) Explain the first consequence of Spiritism aspects.
- b) Explain the second consequence of Spiritism aspects.
- c) Explain the third consequence of Spiritism aspects.

The first and most general of these (Spiritism aspects) is the development of the religious sentiment, even in those who, without being materialists, are indifferent to spiritual things; and this sentiment leads to contempt of death—we do not say to a desire for death, for the spiritist would defend his life like anyone else, but to an indifference which causes him to accept death, when inevitable, without murmuring and without

regret, as something to be welcomed rather than feared, owing to his certainty in regard to the state which follows it.

The second effect of spiritist convictions is resignation under the vicissitudes of life. Spiritism lead us to consider everything from so elevated a point of view that the importance of terrestrial life is proportionally diminished, and we are less painfully affected by its tribulations; we have consequently more courage under affliction, more moderation in our desires, and also a more rooted repugnance to the idea of shortening our days, Spiritism showing us that suicide always causes the loss of what it was intended to obtain. The certainty of a future which it depends on ourselves to render happy, the possibility of establishing relations with those who are dear to us in the other life, offer the highest of all consolations to the spiritist; and his field of view is widened to infinity by his constant beholding of the life beyond the grave, and his growing acquaintance with conditions of existence hitherto veiled in mystery.

The third effect of spiritist ideas is to induce indulgence for the defects of others; but it must be admitted that, selfishness being the most tenacious of human sentiments, it is also the one which it is most difficult to extirpate. We are willing to make sacrifices provided they cost us nothing, and provided especially that they impose on us no privations; but money still exercises an irresistible attraction over the greater number of mankind, and very few understand the word "superfluity" in connection with their own personality. The abnegation of our personality is, therefore, the most eminent sign of progress.

CONCLUSIONS:

The lesson will have been accomplished if the whole class can satisfactorily conclude that:

1. It is useless and lack of love and charity to try to force those that do not feel motivated by the Spiritist Ideas to embrace them. Some truly do not understand their implications while others, who would have their terrestrial interest affected, prefer to deny any transformation.
2. Rather than to focus in the transformation of others, a true spiritist should focus on his/her own inner transformation.

REFERENCES:

1. Kardec, Allan, "The Spirits' Book", conclusion, item VII (segment), edited by Brazilian Spiritist Federation, translated by Anna Blackwell.
2. Idem, conclusion, item VII (segment)

OBJECTIVES:

- To understand what is considered abuses, danger and inconvenience in mediumship.
- To explain the reasons why the mediumship is not one cause of craziness.

METHODS:

1. Propose and conduct with the whole class a discussion in the following theme:
“In your opinion, what are the inconveniences and dangerous of mediumship?”
2. Read with the whole class the following text⁽¹⁾. Integrate the ideas that were proposed by the class with the ones discussed in the text.
 1. Is the medianimic faculty an indication of a morbid state of health, or is it simply abnormal?
"It is sometimes abnormal, but not morbid. Some mediums are very robust; those who are weakly are so from other causes."
 2. Does the exercise of the medianimic faculty cause fatigue?
"A too prolonged exercise of any faculty causes fatigue it is the same with medianimity, especially when employed for the obtaining of physical manifestations, which necessarily occasions fatigue, because it is a loss of fluid that is only to be restored by rest."
 3. Is the proper exercise of medianimity (we do not speak of its abuse), injurious to health?
"There are cases in which the physical or moral state of a medium may render it prudent, or even necessary, to abstain from exercising it, or, at least, to exercise it with great moderation. A medium is generally warned, when this is the case, by his own feeling; and he should always abstain from using his medianimity when he is Conscious of fatigue in so doing."
 4. Is the exercise of medianimity more likely to be injurious to some persons than to others?"
"I have already said that this depends upon the physical and moral state of the medium. There are persons whose temperament renders it necessary to avoid all causes of over-excitement; and mediumship may be of the number."
 5. Can the exercise of medianimity produce madness?

"No more than anything else may produce it, when there is a predisposition to brain-disease. Mediumship will not produce madness, where the germ of madness does not exist; but, where that germ exists (which is easily known), commonsense should suffice to show you the necessity of avoiding every kind of mental excitement."

6. Is it imprudent to develop the medianimic faculty in children?

"It is not only imprudent, but very dangerous to do so: for the frail and delicate organization of childhood would be too much shaken, and the youthful imagination too much excited, by such attempts; parents should therefore keep these ideas from their children, or, at least, should only speak of them in reference to their moral aspect."

7. Yet there are children who are mediums by nature, not only for physical manifestations, but also for writing and for visions; is there danger for such as these?

"No; where a child's faculty is spontaneous, it belongs to his temperament, and his constitution is prepared for its exercise; it is a very different thing when you attempt to develop medianimity artificially, and thus subject the child's nervous system to overexcitement.

It is also to be remarked that a child who is naturally subject to visions is generally but little impressed by them; they appear so natural to such a child, that he pays but little heed to them and easily forgets them; and in after-years, if these visions recur to his memory, he is not apt to be painfully affected by the remembrance of them."

8. At what age may we attempt to develop the faculty of medianimity without danger?

"There is no rule in regard to age; it depends partly on the physical, and still more on the moral, development of the individual; there are children of, say, a dozen years of age, who would be less affected by the attempt than many grown persons. I am now speaking of medianimity in general; but physical medianimity is that which is most likely to cause fatigue to the organism. Writing, however, in the case of a child, has another danger, owing to his inexperience, viz., the mischief which might result to his health, if he took to writing when alone, and should thus make an amusement of it."

222. Practical spiritism, as we shall see more clearly the more we know of it, demands our utmost tact and discretion to avoid being taken in by deceitful spirits; if grown people are in danger of being deceived by these, children and young persons are evidently, on account of their inexperience, still more exposed to this danger. We know, too, that concentration of thought and feeling is absolutely necessary for obtaining the concentration of serious and benevolent spirits. An evocation made rightly and jokingly is a profanation which gives easy access to mocking and maleficent spirits; and as we cannot expect a child to possess the seriousness necessary for such an act, it is to be feared that he would make a mere amusement of it if left to himself.

Even under the most favorable conditions, it is highly desirable that a child who is endowed with the medianimic faculty should only exercise it under the eyes of experienced persons, who may inspire him, by their example, with the sentiment of respect that should always preside at the evocation of souls who have quitted the earthly life. The question of age, as I have said, is subordinate to conditions of temperament as well as of character; and you should not only avoid forcing the development of this

faculty in children, where it is not spontaneous, but its exercise, in every case, should be conducted with very great circumspection, and should neither be excited nor encouraged even on the part of grown persons, if they are weak in body or in mind.

Those who show the slightest symptoms of mental eccentricity or weakness should be dissuaded from its exercise by every possible means; for there is, in such persons, an evident predisposition to insanity, which any and every species of excitement would tend to develop. Spiritist ideas are not more likely to produce cerebral excitement than any others; but madness brought on by spiritist ideas would take its character from them, just as it would assume the character of religious mania, if it had been brought on by the excitement attendant on an excess of devotional practices, and Spiritism, in such cases, would naturally, though unjustly, be held responsible for that result. The best thing to be done, with every one who shows a tendency to fall under the influence of a fixed idea, is to direct his attention to something altogether different from that idea, so as to give rest to the organs which are the seat of the excitement (See *Introduction to The Spirits' Book*, Par. 12.)

CONCLUSIONS:

The lesson will have been accomplished if the whole class can satisfactorily conclude that:

1. Mediumship is not a sign or a cause of madness or any other mental condition, either positive or negative.
2. The main dangers to a useful mediunistic activity are the medium's moral shortcomings.

REFERENCES:

1. Kardec, Allan, "The Medium's Book", chapter XVIII, items 221 and 222, edited by Brazilian Spiritist Federation, translated by Anna Blackwell.

OBJECTIVES:

- To review the main aspect of the Spiritist Ideas studies in this workbook.
- To integrate the Spiritist knowledge of this workbook with previous ones.

METHODS:

1. Ask for volunteers and assign one or more topics from the list below to each. Instruct them to prepare a 10 - 15 minutes presentation. They may use any kind of audio-visual resource that they consider necessary; examples: overhead transparencies, presentations of part of a movie, slide show, readings of extracts from a book, etc. During their presentation they should cover the objectives of each topic and use the references cited. Their presentation should attain the objectives of each topic as shown, highlighting the underlying logic reasons and moral consequences of the spirit doctrine.

Topic I:

Fluids and Perispirit: Modifications of Fluids and Magnetism (Lesson 2)

Topic II:

Influence of Spirits in the Events of Human Life (Lesson 7).

Topic III:

The Phenomenon of Mediumistic Communication: Technical Conditions, Affinity and Attunement (Lesson 11).

Topic IV:

Mediums: Definition and Classification (Lesson 14).

Topic V:

The Mediumistic Mandate: Essential Qualities of a Medium (Lesson 18).