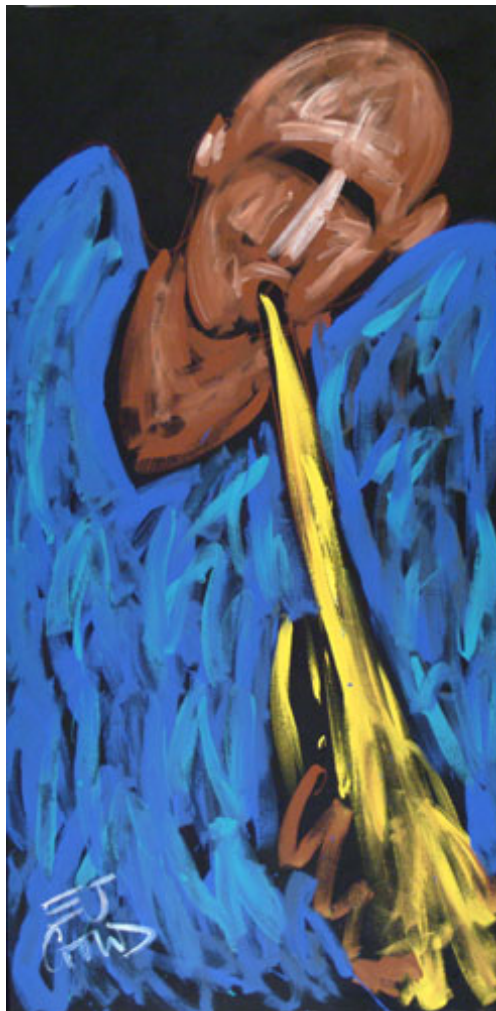


“Talk of the Month” Spiritual White Papers  
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## On Alchemy

E.J. GOLD



### **Golden Notes**

E.J. Gold, JazzArt® “monumental” painting, 36” x 72” canvas ©HEI.

## **EDITOR'S NOTE**

Dear Reader:

When I first read about Gurdjieff explaining “man is a machine” in a paperback copy of *In Search of the Miraculous*, it made me so angry I wanted to throw the book across the room. It was a knee-jerk reaction, typical of me, resulting in me avoiding this idea for years. This is an example of what E.J. Gold might describe as “the defense mechanism of the human biological machine against the threat of the waking state.”

What I did not understand is that work ideas are meant for use, not for mental masturbation. That they are given as tools, meant for each of us to use in our own work. That like other tools, their use must be practiced and mastered one degree at a time.

To my knowledge, the material in these white papers has never before appeared in printed form. The text is taken from the incredible series of talks published by IDHHB on their talkofthemonth.com website. These talks were given by E.J. Gold and others starting in the late 1960s. They cover “topics including personal transformation, spiritual life, the Fourth Way, Alchemy, Angels, Attention, Death & Dying, Bardo Training, the Great Work, Healing, Invocation, Metaphysics, the Man on the Cross, Reincarnation, Shamanism, Practical Work on Self, Work Traditions, Gaming and others.”

I hope you will find a way to use these ideas with wonderful results for your own work. And may your efforts be used for the benefit of all beings everywhere.



For further information, exercises, and guidance related to the ideas discussed in this white paper, please visit the Institute for the Development of the Harmonious Human Being at <https://www.idhhb.com>.

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*“We will see that [the human biological machine] can operate as an alchemical laboratory and, in fact, ancient alchemy always referred to the inner workings of the human biological machine, not to some external chemical glassware, kilns and the production of so-called ‘precious metals.’”*

— E.J. GOLD, *ALCHEMICAL SEX*

#### **ABSTRACT**

Alchemy, distinct from conventional chemistry, explores transformative processes within the human biological machine. It does not rely on external tools but instead engages psychological and emotional methods to catalyze changes in the body through the stimulation of the brain and nervous system. However, alchemy is not a means of producing change but a reflection of deeper internal transformations. The traditional "alchemical notebook" serves as a logbook of changes driven by shifts in being, not as a causal manual. True alchemical evolution occurs in a spiraling feedback system, where changes in the machine and being reciprocally influence each other. This process, which begins with a subtle awakening, advances only when the machine is alert, ceasing progression but not regressing during periods of inactivity. Alchemy, as a journey of reflection and mutual transformation, emphasizes that real suffering leads to joy, affirming the inevitability of one's existential trajectory within the constraints of self and environment.

## 1 Chemistry vs. Alchemy

With university methods, you can learn chemistry, which is a very simple subject because you can pour one reagent or one chemical substance from one beaker to another. It's easy to do.

In the process of alchemy, however, you're dealing with the chemical factory in the machine, the body, so you can't just pour from one beaker to another. You must stimulate, by very exact means, various portions of the brain and nervous system, which in turn stimulate chemical interactions. They release chemicals in the body or cause substantive changes in the body through the use of heat and electricity.

You're not dealing with beakers and test tubes, but with very minute chemical changes which are governed by the glandular system and by the brain and nervous system. If you know exactly how to stimulate the brain and nervous system, it will in turn stimulate the glandular system, muscular system, vascular system, and so forth. In other words, it will stimulate and retard chemical changes.

Because we are stimulating the brain and nervous system, we are forced to use psychological and emotional means. We use psychological and emotional methods to stimulate the brain and nervous system, which in turn stimulate, hopefully, the glandular system — not in just any old way, but in an exact way, producing an exact change or exact changes which we wish to produce, supposing that we know exactly what it is we want to do. Supposing we know, in other words, a method for change.

The ordinary way of producing these changes, alchemical changes in the body, would be by direct means. That is to say, if we are ordinary in our approach, we would follow some cookbook or other, and psychologically stimulate, and emotionally stimulate and retard chemical processes and electrical processes in the machine.

Such cookbooks are called "alchemical notebooks," and also "ceremonial magic," or what are called "grimoires."

## 2 The Fallacy of Alchemy

Suppose that some direct method of altering the machine will in turn produce its corresponding in the not-machine. We are supposing in this case that the deeper

internal transmutation is a product of the machine's reverberation reflecting the change, when in fact, the machine's changes reflect a deeper inner change, and they don't necessarily follow. If A produces B, B does not necessarily produce A. And that is the fallacy of alchemy.

So alchemy is not a way of producing change. It's a way of notating change as it occurs. If one were to follow the alchemical notations and try to produce the alchemical results without the deeper internal change which produces them, one would not see real results.

A thermometer won't change your temperature. Just changing the temperature of the thermometer does not change the temperature of the body. So just following the alchemical notations and producing those results in your body does not produce that which produces the change, that of which the change is only a reflection. It's not a cause, but an effect.

Alchemical change is an effect of a change in being, a reflection of a change in being. A change in being is not and cannot be a reflection of a change in the body.

If you like, an alchemical notebook is a traveller's record; a logbook; a map if you wish. Notating the change which has been brought about by a deeper internal mutation. The body is a biofeedback device indicating real change. You don't change the biofeedback readings. That doesn't produce any results.

If you change the clock, the time is still the same, I'm sorry. You can change the hands on the clock all you want.

Really an alchemical notebook is simply a way of corresponding the changes which have taken place through a known roadmap; it's a roadmap which notates change.

### **3 Spiralling Feedback**

All of the alchemical changes will take place from one simple thing. All the apparent complexity of alchemy disappears when you realize that all of the alchemical notations are results, not causes, which occur in a cumulative sequence, so the alchemical sequence which is notated in alchemical notebooks is a road, a path, a map of the evolution of the being.

When such-and-such an alchemical event occurs, you can be sure that this change in being has occurred to produce that — unless you have acted directly upon the

machine to produce that change externally and artificially.

It is possible to produce what are alchemical changes in the machine, without the cause, which is called the “first cause,” or the “first water.” The first cause is the deep change.

The machine is the catalyst, which produces change in the being which is then reflected in the machine, which is then further capable of an advanced change, which is reflected by the being, changing the machine. The machine then becomes a different machine, producing a different change in being, which is reflected in the machine, which produces a change in the machine, and because it's a different machine, produces a different transformational effect, and so forth.

The machine is constantly changing because it reflects the change in the being, becomes a different machine, producing a different change which is reflected in the machine, producing a different change which is reflected in the machine. It's a spiralling, mutually reciprocating feedback system. Once it begins, there's no stopping it.

## **4 Real Suffering is Joyous**

There can be no change unless the machine is awake. Even an altered machine — say, five or six processes down the line — will not function transformationally.

Awake is a little thing, so subtle that it can be missed. You can be awake and not know it, but you'll never fail to recognize it, once you know what it is to be awake. It's a subtle change in how you exist, in your relationship.

You can be asleep to your awakening. That's true, you can be asleep to your awakening. It's a subtle thing.

Once the process has begun, there's no stopping it. But if the machine falls asleep, it doesn't stop, it simply ceases to continue. There is a difference between ceasing to continue and stopping. The process doesn't stop; it simply comes to a halt for the moment.

For the moment, when the machine falls asleep, the alchemical process stops. But it isn't stopping; it's just ceasing to continue. It doesn't go backward. It's cumulative. It doesn't regress, but it may not continue for 100,000 years.

At each complete alchemical process, the process is stabilized. There's no reversal, so once begun, you must finish. Otherwise you live in pain.

There is no pain in real suffering. Real suffering can be joyous, and is joyous.

## **5 Where the Car Goes Is What the Car Is**

At some time before the alchemical process begins in earnest, you'll have a very good idea where the car is going, and if you don't want to go there, don't go.

And if you find a way not to go, I would love to know how. I've never met anyone who knew how not to go there, where the car is going. I'd be curious to know if anybody has found an answer to that.

The alchemical process may cease to proceed. It doesn't stop, it just doesn't continue.

That's where Buddhism says, "You can be a Buddha as long as you can be a Buddha."

And that is a cessation of the process, to be Buddha. If you want to be a Buddha you can be a Buddha, and that ceases the process's continuation, but it's not an end, and it's not a stop, and it's not an escape.

There is no escape. You're not a stranger here. You didn't come here from a different planet. You're not a stranger here. You are here. This is your world. Where are you going to run to?

Where is the car going? Do you know where the car can go? You see, the car only goes where the car is. It's surroundings are irrelevant.

Where the car goes is what the car is. Where the car is is the car. The car is where it is. It is where it is because it is what it is. So what the car is, is what the car is itself.

The car may shake. It may shiver. It may shimmy. It may wobble. It may bump up and down. But the car is always the car. It is what it is, and it is where it is.

Where it is is the car. Where can the car go if you're not a stranger here?

You're here. Now, if I ask you that 100 years from now, you'll still say, "here." And you'll be right both times, and you'll be referring to the same "here" both times, no matter where you seem to be.

## References

- [1] IDHHB Talk of the Month #117, *Awakening the Machine*.  
<https://www.talkofthemonth.com/talkcds/digital/cdt117.html>