

5 PATHS

In Life's great Quests—for Identity, for Understanding, for Meaning, for Relationship and for Completeness, we elect one of five paths according to our image of the nature of the object of our search: The Other. The Other may be symbolized for us by Eldorado, Little Green Men, the Transcendent Self, the Holy Grail, or God, according to our backgrounds. We may quest either actively or passively, according to our natures. The five paths may be characterized as follows:

- There is no Other and we need no Other. Even if an Other should exist, it is so different from us as to be unknowable, and any communication between us is forever impossible. It is futile to search, it is fatuous to wait.
- There is no Other, but we need an Other so we will create it. Since we are entirely on our own, let our dream be the Other. Let us go forth to build a colony at L-5, then go on to the stars and to the uttermost corners of the galaxy—and even beyond. Even though alone, we shall prevail.
- The Other is in the heavens. “Let us build a tower whose top may reach unto heaven and let us make us a name.” Let us build a vast array of radio telescopes that we may listen to the Other and capture his great wisdom and bring to Earth his fire so that we may put our world in order. The Other is in our own image, and we shall know him because he too is a radio engineer and builds vast arrays, sending and receiving signals across space.
- The Other is in the heavens, but it is vain to seek him, he will come to us in his good time. We need only wait. When he comes, he will save us with his great wisdom. He has been here before. There are traces of his handiwork in the caves, on the rocks and in the ancient temples. Even today he visits us briefly in his flying wheels. When we shall prove ourselves worthy, we shall win his favor, then shall he land and bring us great gifts.
- The Other is already here—has always been here. We need not search, we need only listen. But unless we have ears to hear, we shall hear nothing. Nor until we have faces can we meet face to face.

We have found a strange footprint on the shores of the unknown. We have devised profound theories, one after another, to account for its origin. At last we have succeeded in reconstructing the creature that made the footprint. And Lo! It is our own.

Arthur Stanley Eddington