

INTRODUCTION TO AUTUMN WORK 1961

I take last Sunday's climax as a unanimous re-assertion that we wish to continue to be a School – 'an organisation for giving to prepared people Knowledge emanating from Higher Mind'. We wish to enlighten our understanding of the System with the help of the meditation, and in view of the critical state of the world we want to bring the meditation to as many people as we can in the quickest possible time. But we want to do it in accordance with the principles of the System.

Let's be clear what that means. The aim of the System was often defined, but perhaps never so clearly as in this formulation in October 1937 – twenty-four years ago:

The aim of the System is to bring man to *Conscience*. Conscience is a certain quality that is in every normal man. It is really a different expression of the same quality as Consciousness. Only consciousness works more on the intellectual side and conscience more on the moral side; it helps to realise first what is good and what is bad in one's own conduct. How does Conscience work? By uniting emotions through the destruction of buffers which are produced by identification and imagination.

A man must start with a certain moral sense, a sense of right and wrong in order to get more. If he has not – nothing can be done. He must understand first the relativity of ordinary morality; and second, he must realise the necessity of objective permanent right and wrong. When he realises the necessity of objective permanent right and wrong, then he will look at things from the point of view of the System. The System begins with the possibility of Objective state of Consciousness, and therefore of Objective Truth. There is morality No. 1, No. 2, No. 3, and so on. Christ should be Man No. 8. He did not preach Inquisition. But if his teaching was distorted by Man 1, 2 and 3 for criminal purposes, this must not be laid at Christ's door.

[FOR GROUP TAKERS ONLY. NOT TO BE READ

The essence of Mr. Ouspensky's teaching between October 1937 and his death in October 1947 lay in repeatedly awakening the conscience of those who were with him, because Conscience helps people to see the difference between those human actions which lead to the building of a School, and those actions which would lead to destruction of the possibilities of a School (he called those 'criminal activities'). He said that only if we could see this difference at all important moments, could we continue his work.

And so it has proved in these fourteen years since his death. The events of the last eighteen months have proved a big test of this capacity to see. Most of you have this capacity which is a measure of an awakened Conscience. There are still one or two people with us who do not, and quite frankly they are a nuisance – because if they *can't see*, nothing can be done.

Again, I'm sometimes told that this or that person on the list of 'those who are no longer with us' can't see why they are excluded. Clearly until they begin to be able to see why, there can't be a hope of having them back. If they show signs of seeing or even make efforts to see why, then this hope exists. What on earth is the good of having people pretend to belong to a School when they can't see what is School work and what is its opposite?

Since writing the above, a striking example has appeared in a letter written by one man who heard the above last Monday:

Experiencing often now the transcendental, I begin to know that it can enable a person to think and act from the right place within, and because of this I feel that I must now give my energy to the spreading of the meditation in any way that I can, and will therefore not have time for the present to keep with the Ideas of the System.

This shows how easy it is to experience these early stages of Self-realization and come to wrong conclusions so that one may think and act in ways that one may afterwards regret.]

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There are many steps on the way to full realization of Truth. The first big step is called by the System the First Conscious Shock and consists of experience of very vivid impressions coupled with a rather familiar sensation 'I am here now'. If work on the System and/or meditation for two half-hours a day is successfully established, one will get an increasing number of these experiences and they will last longer, but this is still only on the superficial (intellectual) level of the mind. With the idea of a School, these realizations will go deeper and conscience will awake more often. The awakening of Conscience is an essential preliminary to the Second Conscious Shock – the experience of Positive Emotion – love, joy, faith, which cannot turn negative. These are the signs of entry into the Fourth Room, consciousness in the Higher Emotional Centre or Samadhi. Conscience is an essential preliminary because of its unifying and very positive effect – one feels washed clean and 'at one with Oneself'.

Moreover, it is part of the process which begins at this stage, which is called by our present guide in matters of the meditation, His Holiness the Shankaracharya, 'Sacrifice of the ego at the altar of Wisdom'.

In a reply received from him last week to my letter asking him about these further steps he wrote as follows:

'Sacrifice of ego' means that the individual ego, the feeling of 'I', should be merged into universal ego, ... One should continuously strive to acquire the experience that as a spirit, I prevail in every living organism and that my spirit and all other spirits are one and the same like the thread in a rosary holding numerous individual beads... In this way, the expansion of the individual ego, and experience of the universe in one's own self and self reflecting the universe is the *sacrifice of ego at the altar of wisdom*.

Your question No. 3 is how to further the discipline even after the meditation? When one goes inward by repeating the mantra during meditation, and enjoys the Celestial bliss, this serves as spiritual food for him. After being nurtured by this food, when he comes out into the sensory world, then the power of the mantra or the bliss of the meditation moves with him like his shadow. Wherever he goes or works, he is always and all over surrounded by substance created by the meditation. This substance protects him from impurities by forcing them out or obstructing their invasion. This is felt more and more as he progresses. Just as when an Emperor launches upon some project with resolution, feeling and action, then everybody supports and contributes to the work; so the cultivation of love for Atman brings about everything that is in accordance with the aim and removes everything that is impure.

Many of us are ready to begin to take these further steps and for them help is being arranged. The one essential is to take the help Conscience can give in a positive and not in a negative way.

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