

27 June 1966

## READING 7

## MEETING OF THURSDAY, 23 JUNE

## PART 1

The plan was that you should bring your friends to a discussion of current topics and that those who knew something of the Meditation could hear more about it.

From my point of view, the setting and arrangements were all just right. Here was the perfect audience of exactly the right size, the atmosphere and the questions were good. Yet we got just our usual result; at the first count 30% of people made appointments, 25 in all, of whom 9 were men. There was a little movement generated, but no momentum. Mr. Whiting said that, although the climate seemed warm, no new idea came out that could really help the public meetings of the School of Meditation. We're not a bit disappointed; it's just that our approach has to be at least ten times more compelling!

The start seemed all right. Mr. Allan began by saying that since we shaped our lives by what we went for, whether we lived satisfying lives or not depended on our aim. He wondered if this were a clue as to why we in the West, living in affluence hitherto undreamed of, were yet dissatisfied and unsure. What were people's aims? For him, the aim had crystallised into 'happiness', and he suggested that if people could truly observe their motives, they might find this same desire underlying many of their actions. Happiness was not to be found in the things of affluence – wealth – material success – power. It lay in experiences such as being in love, feeling at One with the Universe, being moved by great Art. Such experiences had two characteristics: 1) Loss of concern for the usual personal self, accompanied by an awakening of an Inner Self. 2) They came by chance. So the solution to a satisfying life for him lay in the discovery of a way which could not fail to lead him to that Inner Self.

Then I was to go on and say that my angle was rather different, my happiness consists in *knowing*; I'm unhappy whenever I am brought up against my ignorance. Perhaps this was due to my scientific training at University and hospitals; in the course of teaching physiology and medicine, and in trying to help patients in consultant practice, I had been more and more convinced of the truth of Voltaire's wisecrack: 'The art of medicine consists in pouring drugs, of which one knows little, into patients of whom one knows less'.

So here were two different approaches perhaps representative of the differences between people in general: the people who are emotionally thirsty, and the people who want to know all the answers. But we want to focus the discussion not on *us*, but on what *you* want...

There was a pause, so we went on: We've brought you here because we have a solution of those problems to put before you. It is a strange thing that while all adventurous spirits today are thrilled with the idea of '*exploration of outer space*'; while governments spend millions on it, and an enormous amount of effort and time go into it; yet even more thrilling and lasting discoveries can come from the '*exploration of Inner space*', which attracts no interest whatever but requires no money at all! For each one of us is a replica in miniature of the Universe, and each of us possesses a hidden treasure, a fountain of happiness and of Knowledge which remains unknown.

An interesting-looking man in the audience then said:

There are two things I would like to say; the first is really a comment: I am amazed by the large number of people who despite all evidence to the contrary, continue to plunge wildly after more and more of the same motor-cars and promotion in the hope that something in the end is going to produce this breakthrough.

The second is a question: You spoke just now of the individual being a miniature of the Universe; I cannot quote your phrase. This is something which I have heard expressed elsewhere; nevertheless for me, it is an extremely difficult concept to digest.

Up to this point we'd had the ball at our feet. This proved to be a turning-point. It was here that our message could have been cogently delivered. I wanted to speak, but distrusted my ability to say what was needed in a few words only. I've since been told also that we underrated our audience – rather like talking to University graduates as one would talk to children or teenagers. We were rather unsophisticated, naive. These, after all, were picked people.

So I ask *you*, what should have been said? What is the message that could give the whole thing momentum?

[**Discussion:** Perhaps this should be in three stages:

1. What idea from the True Knowledge would you use *among ourselves* to amplify the statement that 'the individual is a replica of the Universe in miniature'?
2. Knowing that we are not allowed to quote isolated pieces of the System to strangers, what could be said to such a meeting from your own experience of that idea? Or,
3. Is it a question not of knowledge but of up-to-dateness of language, confidence, or openness of approach?]

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## PART 2

The meeting went on quite adequately; we avoided the old pitfalls, and said, I think, only what it was necessary to say.

First, the System of Meditation was introduced, and this seemed quite a good way of doing it:

This voyage of Self-discovery all turns on what I call 'myself'. I know I'm not just a body; well then, I am also a mind. That each of us consists of body and mind, all would surely agree. But it's the fact that I consist of something more than body and mind together that makes such research worthwhile. One of the earliest descriptions of the 'whole man' is to be found in the Upanishads. Man is like a chariot (his body) with five horses (his chief psycho-physical functions, thinking, feeling, sensory and motor, sex). But there is also a charioteer or driver, who is inattentive or asleep; and an Owner, of whose existence he is unaware. This and many other lasting contributions were made by the authors of the Upanishads and similar early writings of some four millennia ago by means of the very same System of Meditation that we want to interest you in this evening.

This simile proved valuable at various points in the subsequent discussion and enabled us to speak of the unbroken Tradition and quote His Holiness's words describing the experimental work which led to the recent adaptation of the method for modern Western Life.

One feels that if we had been able to show earlier that we have a valuable System of

Knowledge shedding Light on much of current scientific knowledge, as well as a deeply-rooted System of Meditation, something would really have got started. But from talking with your friends, what do *you* think about that?

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For your information, here is a list of remarks made by members of the audience:

- Q. Would you say that it is more important to want a quiet mind than happiness? – that the happiness follows from the quietness of one's mind, which it has not seen? Is it happiness or quietness first?
- Q. Would you say that we are more concerned about palliatives for the Spirit and Soul rather than being positive in a certain way – trying to reach inner stillness of this sort?  
Is it because one is wanting to explore – to get into touch with ideas which are away from the wealth of ideas which the gentleman put in the first part of his address?
- Q. I am a little bit unhappy at the equation that you have appeared to draw between happiness and Reality. It is not obvious to me at this stage that this is a valid comparison. It may become obvious as we go on.

(Dr. R. It depends what you call reality. Told H.H's story of country cousin at cinema.)

- Q. I would certainly go along with that very much, because my own attempts at finding some sort of satisfaction and happiness have led me to the conclusion that there is no easy answer to it – that one can only dissect certain aspects of it – parts of life – and try to build up some sort of satisfactory result from that; but this is a very scrappy and unsatisfactory way of doing it.
- Q. There are two things I would like to say; the first is really a comment: I am amazed by the large number of people who despite all evidence to the contrary, continue to plunge wildly after more and more of the same motor-cars and promotion in the hope that something in the end is going to produce this break-through.  
The second is a question: You spoke just now of the individual being a miniature of the Universe; I cannot quote your phrase. This is something which I have heard expressed elsewhere; nevertheless for me, it is an extremely difficult concept to digest.

[Introduction to the System of Meditation.]

- Q. What was the effect you got?
- Q. Would you tell us what we do in meditation?
- Q. All the great Christian mystics spoke of a single-pointed mind. I would like to know what methods they used to do this? My own attempts are unsuccessful, but there are those mystics who appear to have succeeded; they have helped others and been able to pass it on.  
I was a little surprised that there should now be another method which is now spoken of as if it were unknown to the Christian mystics?
- Q. Could you help us a little about the relationship of your System to what might be called 'conventional religion'; how does it affect it?
- Q. Is the method the same for each individual person, or does it vary?
- Q. May I say that I was just very interested at this: that much is being talked about what one gets out of the meditation – the emphasis is on what we get out of it and very

little on what we put into it, is returned? Is this really what should be essential to us at this moment? Put in that way, it is rather like going after the motor-cars?

Q. (regarding length of time) Why no more? Because of emphasis?

Mrs. Field. Did you have any questions yourself when you first heard about the meditation?

(Dr. R. Yes indeed, but I was told just to get on and meditate and the questions and the answers would come later.)

Q. I gather the aim of this meditational exercise is to gain insight into your personality? Is that so?

(After Dr. R.'s reply: Into the *whole* of yourself; personality is part of yourself just as body is only part of yourself.)

Q. Would you not say the ends of that are not different from any psychological analytical approach?

(After Dr. R. had pointed out that the aim was synthesis, not disintegration; it was the problem of Humpty Dumpty.)

Q. Surely the aim of any analytical procedure is to synthesise as a whole after all this pulling apart? The aim is to produce a total being at the end?

(Dr. R. It is intended that way, but if the person who is taking the other person to bits is not himself synthesised, the result is disintegration!)

Q. The idea of psychoanalysis is surely that the person who is doing the work is first analysed and put together himself?

(Dr. R. I can only say that I, myself, would be mighty careful about who I would allow to take me to pieces and put me together again!)

Mr. MacOwan. Referred back to the question of what was got out of the meditation and what was put into it? He thought that some people felt the need to be of use, and that one should indicate that there was an opportunity of being used as well as the Meditation being of use to us.

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