

4 December 1967

## READING 7

### PART 1. ANOTHER TALK ON THE THREE GUNAS

Following on the account of the steps of the Ladder as related to the Gunas (given in Reading 6), there was a further reference later:

#### 4.11.67 (7)

A. His Holiness has talked about levels of meditation. Are these related to a person's position on the Ladder?

S. Yes. The position of a person on the Ladder is very much related to the levels of meditation. But Gunas also play an important role. The Gunas are everywhere. People have Gunas and the places have Gunas. There may always be a possibility that the influx of a certain Guna in a person or place will change the level of meditation. Men with Sattva will have better meditation, whereas men with Rajas will have thoughts visiting them, and men with Tamas usually find a nice corner to sleep. Thus the level of meditation is decided by the position on the Ladder, availability of Sattva in him, the Gunas in the place and time. All these factors interplay to make up a level of meditation.

Here in India when we see a predominantly Sattvic person he is immediately given the meditation; others with Rajas are advised to go through Scriptures, rituals, keertan, etc., and the Tamasic are asked to do physical services so that they can improve their Being and come up to a stage when they can meditate properly.

In case of collective meditation, the tamasic people should be either separated or put with the extra rajasic people. Men with controlled Rajas can easily be accommodated with Sattvic. This will keep disturbances away and will also create better result due to interplay of Gunas, and the Gunas can be thus harnessed for easy working.

#### 4.11.67 (8)

A. Are the majority of people predominantly one way or the other, or the majority of people evenly balanced with the Gunas?

S. The nature of these three Gunas is such that one of them is bound to be in predominance in every situation. The equilibrium of Gunas means dissolution of the creation or the person, which is not possible. These Gunas are not constant in their relation all the time. They keep on changing their quantity. One might be in predominance now and the other might be predominant later, due to desires, attachments or outer influences. Job of the School in guiding people is to see the predominance of Gunas and arrange the people in such a way that one is helpful to the other and not causing troubles.

#### 4.11.67 (9)

R. I want to be clear, when you say that somebody is predominantly Rajas. From the point of the three rooms of the house, he could drive fast cars, want to be active in sports, excitable in feeling or emotionally, or mentally be talkative or domineering. There are many manifestations. Does predominance refer to any room or just one room of the house?

S. The talkative intellectuals, excitable temperamentals, sentimentals and those who become angry quickly are weak compared to those who can perform quick actions and are

efficient. Those who drive fast cars, like quick sports and quick actions and can perform them efficiently, have the Rajas well aligned, so they do better meditation.

There was a Marwari (tradesman) who used to get excited very much and was in the habit of thinking without purpose, calculating his designs and so on. One of his well-wishers took him to a satsang (gathering). There, he sat behind in the last row and due to no interest he was soon fiddling with the shirt of the person sitting in front of him. Later on he was asleep, and in his dream he was selling his cloth. After discussions with the client in the dream he was asked by his client to tear a piece of cloth of few yards in length. Having heard this the fiddling fingers got busy and tore the shirt of the person sitting in front, and soon opened his eyes to see what he had done. The other man was furious. The Marwari promised to give him six yards of new cloth and begged him not to make fuss. He then also realised the futility of too much thinking and calculating.

#### COMMENT

Evidently even those who have the advantage of performing quick action efficiently suffer some disadvantage also if their minds are not in charge!

#### PART 2. TRUE OR FALSE, POSITIVE OR NEGATIVE

The System we inherited from Eastern European sources, having lost the technique of meditation which originally went with it, has made everything much more difficult than it need be, by concentrating on the *negative*. It is one of the greatest blessings we have enjoyed since going back to the original Source, that we are now able to set our sights firmly on the *positive*. This paper takes some examples of the new point of view from those things which our System used to call 'obstacles to Consciousness'. These, you remember, fell into four main groups: imagination, identification, negative emotions, and involuntary actions (including unnecessary talking).

Since the meditation puts within the capacity of everybody the possibility of uniting with the Absolute Truth (Real 'I') here and now, all the knowledge which stems from it can be placed in two categories:

1. everything connected or useful to the realization of Truth, and
2. everything not useful or unconnected.

Take *imagination*. Common speech is bedevilled by using this important word in two opposite senses. 'Use your imagination!'; we say, and almost in the same breath, 'Oh, that's only imagination'. But imagination – image formation – is a fundamental attribute of the human organism as a self-governing machine; and of course its results depend entirely on the use to which this machinery is put. What we shall henceforth call '*positive imagination*' reveals the Truth and is indispensable to all true science, art, religion and philosophy. At street level and on all the steps of the Ladder up to the Seventh, it can reveal only *relative* truth – 'this is truer than that'. But on and after the Seventh Step, 'Turiya', when the individual ego has become the Absolute, there is only Truth, the full Truth and nothing but the Truth.

In relation to *emotions*, similarly His Holiness has taught us that every feeling can be useful to the Truth or against it:

*Fear*. Though the ‘fear of the Lord is the beginning of Wisdom,’ other kinds of fear are negative.

*Anger* is designed to be directed against the false only; it must not be used against either oneself or other *people*.

*Pride* can keep us up to a standard of behaviour worthy of the eternal presence of that Observer who is ‘spying out all our ways’. It is related that Socrates, while taming Alcibiades said, ‘I have pride in my Master who is greater than your master, Pericles.’ And so with the long list of our conflicting feelings and the reverberating circuits they set up. While it is no good fighting them, reason can be used to turn them to better use, but they are so fast that first we must break the circuit by not *expressing* them.

### PART 3. NEW LIGHT ON ‘IDENTIFICATION’

In the *Philokalia*, identification is described as the source of human sin and suffering, as it was also in the Teachings of Gautama the Buddha, where sensation was said to lead to desires and desires to craving (addiction), from which there is no easy escape. We now realise that this fundamental property of the mind, ordinarily dominated by the bodily machine, can be used for Self-realization on the Way of Liberation. We must in fact identify with the True Self; it is the craving for all that is ‘not ‘I’’ which leads to error, sin and suffering.

His Holiness’s recent instruction on this subject started (as related last Monday) with a question we put to him from Bernard White of the School of Meditation: ‘What is Meditation? How does this technique of meditation relate to Meditation itself?’

#### 2.11.67 (7)

S. To meditate is to Be. To Be One. One without a second. Here is an example. In very ancient times when Dattatreya was walking along a street a marriage procession came by. He stopped at the door of a shop where arrows were being made. The shopman was busy doing his work and did not care to look at the procession. After the procession was gone, Dattatreya wanted to know why this man did not enjoy this merry procession. He called him and asked if he had seen a marriage procession. The shopkeeper said no. He also said that he did not even hear any noise because he was busy shaping the point of the arrow. In shaping the point he became one with it, and the world of senses did not exist for him at that time. The same applies to meditation. In meditation one is just One. One becomes the Self. The method of meditation is only a process by which this is made possible. Absolute meditates and becomes the Creation; we meditate and become the Absolute.

The next day Allan asked: ‘how we can acquire the attention of the arrow-maker which we heard about yesterday morning?’

#### 3.11.67 (17)

S. Dattatreya accepted the arrow-maker as one of his teachers who happened to teach him the lesson of attention. Those who can attend to the outward world can also attend within. Those who can’t manage to give attention to the physical work would not be able to give their attention in meditation. To give attention to physical work one must find a work which does interest him so that there is no opposition. For those who find

it difficult to attend inwardly should first of all practise their attention in the work they do for their living or hobby. To attend is to be one with the work, and to be one with the work one must get body, senses, Manas and Buddhi all attending simultaneously.

...In the School, people who find difficulty should be encouraged to attend to some work they would love to do and watch how they do it. When they have learned to attend there, they will find it easy to dive deep.

### 3.11.67 (18)

R. And this doesn't lead to attachment to the thing one is very fond of?

S. There are two types of attachment. One is the worldly attachment which is a binding force, and the other is attachment in discipline. This attachment under the direction of the Teacher is not a binding force. It will destroy the physical attachment and then destroy itself to let the man be free. The discipline is also an illusion, and this illusion is necessary to show us the illusion of the world. Both illusions end one after the other.

### 3.11.67 (19)

Mrs. Sundararaj (from Malaysia). Yesterday I went to see a film. During the film I tried to be aware of my body and my surroundings including the film. I was going back and forth – into the picture identifying myself with the characters and then pulling myself into myself. Is this 'thing' going back and forth Manas? Is it all right if I practise this pulling myself while watching television or a cinema?

S. 'Going back and forth' is caused by Manas and Buddhi. Manas moves fast and Buddhi tries to bring back because of discrimination. One should listen more to discrimination and try to stay with it. If one gets stillness, it is better to do nothing, or else it will be lost. Identifications are caused by our attachments to what one thinks pleasant. Buddhi can discriminate good from pleasant. She should be allowed to do so.

### 5.11.67 (8)

R. asked later: When we were first given meditation, we were told we would need periods of silence as well, weekends, etc., otherwise the meditation might get difficult. That seems to be forgotten quite a lot. In England and America we talk all the time, perhaps in India also. Has His Holiness got any instruction about this?

S. The people have forgotten the system to be silent. In silence one can perform his work better, because we can see the situations better. Since they cannot avoid necessary sleep, they do go to sleep to give rest to the physical body, but don't realise the need to give rest to their mind (subtle body). This is not only with the West but also here. There is of course some difference, and that is that the West has practically used most of the physical glory and is now looking for silence, whereas here in India people have just started indulging in the physical, scientific and artistic glory so it is not yet the time for them to be silent.

### 5.11.67 (9)

R. Our people who have these meetings every week, many meetings going on for last twenty years, they feel that they don't want so much talking. They often have silence, meditation, music and read something from Shankaracharya, which gives them stability, whereas if they talk all the time results are not so good. Would he approve?

S. This is good. Their curiosities being partly satisfied, it is good that they feel the need

for silence.

Before we can stop talking out loud, we have to stop talking to ourselves. This is the current occupational disease. Would those experimental groups please give priority to the following programme this fortnight:

1. In the half-hours be sure to observe any inner verbal conversation and quickly turn the attention back to the Mantra and the aim of stillness.
2. Agree together that at other times you will check them at sight (for they can go on whenever there is attention to spare from the job).
3. At your meetings arrange, say, five minutes' verbal silence both inner and outer.

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