

27 May 1968

READING 4

PART 1

Since last week there has been a chance to read many more 'experiences' and compare those which people had been getting all their lives with what is now happening after recently learning to meditate. The change doesn't seem to lie in a dramatic increase in 'peak experiences' but in more subtle changes. First, it was a surprise to the people who got our questionnaire to realise that other people get those things:

To tell you the truth, (writes one) I had never given it much thought. These experiences were to me a purely selfish affair. I had never consulted anyone as to whether they had them too. I just continued to enjoy them when they happened. I used to try to carry this feeling with me and was heartbroken when it was lost in ordinary doings... I could never consciously trigger it off... Now, however, I have learnt to welcome it in the sure knowledge that though it fades, it will return even if I could never predict when. On reflection, however, I do believe that I can more easily recall at will the feeling of peace and serenity that pervades these experiences – and this is something I could never do before. This gives me a great feeling of inner strength and conviction which must necessarily help in day-to-day life.

A teenager writes:

I understand now something I didn't know then; I can only describe them as moments of liberation. Sadness can be a very destructive thing, and in some of the most useless moments I have discovered great hope and truth... Since taking up the meditation (only a relatively short time ago) I am delighted to sense a longing for turning away from the noise, preferring the quiet; and to know that now the door is opening (although it is such a little chink of light that has been let in), it conveys all the possibilities one is truly searching for.

Another (aged 17):

Sometimes in my very young days when I was only just aware of the enormous differences between being alive and being dead, I would say to my mother, 'Who am I, what am I doing here in the world. Why *me?*' There was never an explanation – and only now, many years later, am I beginning to understand.

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Others who have been hearing some of the True Knowledge as well, have something more at hand to help the process of recall. Leslie G. (New Group) writes:

Strange now that I am aware of the 'watcher' who sees me, and know that he is exactly the same as the watcher from my childhood...

Pamela G. (Richmond Group):

I was walking with two friends along Oxford Street during the lunch hour. Suddenly, for no reason at all, I became tremendously aware of the street and people... (colours, details of buildings). I was nearly bursting with joy and life. I walked with a springy step and my body seemed in perfect working order. *I had great difficulty in not telling my friends how I felt.* I knew they would think I was mad.

Note: This is a great lesson that both Mr. Ouspensky and the Shankaracharya (as well as many others) have stressed: 'Don't talk – except to the right person at the right moment.'

Helen F:

Listening to the material years ago... it came on to the Unmanifest Sun. Quite suddenly I felt Eternity for a moment; the sentence that man's life was only an impression to the Sun made everything clear, and years and years of agony wondering how people ever met again those we have loved, seemed understandable. I felt part of the vast plan, and 'Unmanifest Sun' felt like the word 'home' to me...

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There is, I'm afraid, no space just now for more of these quotes. What they seem to show is that emotion alone is not enough; by its very nature it fades quickly and cannot be recalled at will. It is the restless mind (the 'younger son' in the parable of the Prodigal Son) that needs to get a grip on a succession of Truths which it can retain and recall. This is necessary before the Second step of the Ladder 'Coming to a decision' can become effective so that one acts up to one's good intentions.

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PART 2

The meaning of Mr. Ouspensky's advice to 'think long thoughts' thus becomes more apparent. By doing a bit of thinking every day about some burning question, some idea of the True Knowledge, some story of the Shankaracharya's or the Mevlevi Tradition, or some parable from the Gospels, this morsel of Truth can become connected with good impulses. Then it will, after a while, light up whenever inspiration comes, and can be used to bring a succession of peak experiences, thus bringing a new influence into one's everyday life. For example:

Martin R:

I realise with the meditation that nothing can happen unless I come down to the nothingness first.

And:

I sometimes feel that I am really a much happier person than I had imagined;

well then, he must recall these facts day in day out, till his mind learns to banish at sight any egotistical or depressing train of thought. Don't forget the prayer which the kings of Siam used to carry with them from boyhood:

Help me to remember Thy infinite greatness and my own nothingness, that all the questions of my life may be answered and my mind continually instructed on the path to Heaven: until the dualism goes and 'Thy greatness' becomes my own.

The System idea of Cosmoses is a very fruitful source of 'growing ideas' which bring with them continual instruction. Colin Lucas has recently been 'thinking long thoughts' about the correspondence between an individual cell and a planet like our earth. The earth is a cell in relation to some larger body.

Within this cell, (Lucas writes) large organic molecules such as the DNA molecule

would correspond to units – possibly species – of organic life. Somewhere hidden in organic life, therefore, one would expect to find the key, the pattern which determines the characteristics of Brahma (or if you prefer it, the ‘Mind of the Creator’ on this scale), just as the key, the pattern which determines the characteristics of an individual of a species (say a man) is hidden in the molecular structure of DNA. Obviously, (he goes on, May 23), this key or pattern is the Great Laboratory. In fact the idea of the Great Laboratory as it is described in *A New Model* is very similar, except that one never realised its fuller implications before... In the countless reincarnations of Brahma the Great Laboratory never changes – the key to the nature of Brahma is always the same... Yet the Great Laboratory itself is constantly trying out new experiments – creating new forms and patterns which determines the Soul of Brahma. For in the Soul of Brahma the possibilities are infinite – nothing is ever repeated, and everything is new. *Could this idea perhaps help to throw some light on the nature of man’s Soul?*

He has worked this out in some detail. Taking into consideration the space-time ratio between the life of a cell and the life of the earth, it is possible to trace the three Foods in a large Food diagram on something like the scale of our Solar System and in a tiny one in the interior of a cell.

But no one else’s idea or their ‘long thoughts’ about it are as awakening as one’s own! The point is just to go on learning about something that keeps exciting you, and if you find the right order of questions, your mind will be continually instructed about the Nature of the Creator who, you realise, is yourSelf.

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