

12 February 1968

READING 3

PART 1. WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

This term we have so far reviewed the present situation from the point of view both of a newer and healthier outlook for psychology (Reading 1) and of parallel developments in experimental neurology (Reading 2).

From the first of these it emerges that normal psychology is a '*Psychology of Being*' which must be based not upon disease or limitation, but upon the higher functions of the human psyche (or 'soul' in potentiality) which are only experienced by a few 'self-actualising people', and then only occasionally ('peak experiences').

From the second (the neurological angle) it emerges that indeed it is 'in the house of the square foot (the forebrain in the head) that life can be regulated'. The really practical use of the System idea of the 'house of three storeys' comes from thorough knowledge of this part in which alone everything, both within and without, is experienced by us at first-hand. The simple working model of this part is the three-tiered diagram in Reading 2 which, please, put up again. Everything, then, in our System that refers to the three-storeyed house should be surveyed in relation to this forebrain, and whatever the system or religion, the method is always self-observation in relation to the aim of spiritual awakening. This, of course, applies especially to the 'Impressions Octave' of the Food Diagram, which some groups are currently reviewing.

(Pause for discussion)

PART 2. TRUE OR PERMANENT HAPPINESS

It must be abundantly clear by now that 'though everybody in the world is running after happiness', there cannot be true or permanent happiness when separated from one's true Self – or 'Spirit'. We have had enough experience of hearing that Inner Voice and therefore of knowing how we ought to live and what we ought or ought not to do, but we must find the way to make ourselves *do* it. As an example we should perhaps quote the reply to a remark I made to the Shankaracharya on this last visit in, I fear, a state of mild exasperation due to letters received from London:

30 October 1967 (5)

R. Can one use the meditation at other times than the half-hours, for one often needs two minutes' rest when a day is filled with people's complicated questions like, 'Should one marry one wife, two wives, someone else's wife, this one or that one, or no one?' One needs to have a clear mind to deal with such things wisely.

S. All such people who have such doubts, anxieties and troubles as to whom one should get married, etc., they haven't found a proper definition of happiness. They cannot locate where their happiness resides. They need some sort of Knowledge that the source of all happiness is not in the things of the world around them, not in the beautiful or ugly forms confronting them, but it is within themselves. Once they know and have a taste of this happiness within, they would then like to refer to their own Self to decide what they should have and what they should not have. If one cannot do it by himself, he

must go to a person whom he thinks is happy and satisfied and get some direction. Those who have to guide would simply ask him to turn inward and resolve the problems for themselves.

PART 3. DECISION TO WORK

If we have by now proved to ourselves that we cannot afford to leave the pursuit of true happiness to *chance*, we must enter on a phase of systematic work or training, and this begins at the second stage of the Ladder – the formation of ‘*Decision*’. We must each day work to plan, otherwise we fall into the same traps again and again. Many of us will remember how often Mr. Ouspensky used to urge on us the same thing. The plan must vary in detail with each individual, and no one else’s plan will exactly apply to one’s day.

On one visit to the Shankaracharya I wrote down some personal questions based on this realisation; these were translated and handed in; he kept them two days before returning the answers which were translated to me as follows:

29 August 1964

Q 1. Hundreds of people have occasional good intentions. Do not I need now the second step – to make decision and carry it out, make use of all the help you give?

S. All those hundreds of people who have good impulse deserve congratulation and they must be provided with the help in regard to meditation and true knowledge so that they may proceed further.

The *second stage* is a peculiar stage and people *do* take some time. The thoughts and resolutions keep changing owing to impure Buddhi and people hang between decision and non-decision. If one has a decision then progress is not difficult. As far as you are concerned, you have gone through these stages and there shouldn’t be any difficulty in your progress.

Q 2. Isn’t it Maya, this combination of bodily repletion and comforting thoughts that lull one into false contentment?

S. Material thoughts and desires create an untrue atmosphere and that is what is Maya. Ignorance of real happiness is the cause which makes people run after the material desires and pleasures. This is certainly the world of ‘Not-True’ and the cause of all trouble and strife.

Q 3. My request to you is, ‘Don’t be kind, be rough with me. Let me never be content!’

S. It is my nature to be liberal and how can I change it now? It is neither possible nor necessary. As I can see you, it doesn’t seem possible that you will stop on the Way. If ever a situation like that comes about, then I will see that you are made to move. One gets happiness on the Way and at the destination too. The difference is that on the way one gets little, but at the top one gets to the Source of happiness, which one attains only after full maturity in discipline.

Q 4. One can misuse even the meditation to go to sleep in false contentment – it is so pleasant!

S. False contentment is certainly dangerous, but once you know that you live in false contentment then it becomes easy to move on even if it is very attractive. For example, if one knows that there is poison mixed in that appetising food, one never falls for it.

Q 5. But in *Katha Upanishad*, Death says to Nachiketas: 'The good is one thing, the pleasant is quite another...'

S. 'Good and pleasant' were fully discussed in the conversation of Nachiketas and Yama (death) in *Katha Upanishad*. The desire to get a more valuable thing itself creates detachment from lesser valuable things. After fully understanding the true value of 'good and pleasant', Nachiketas took to the 'good' and left the 'pleasant'. This is an example of a greater motivation which nullifies the smaller motivations.

I hope you will be contented. If any doubts arise please don't hesitate to raise them.

[In your discussions this week, would you please see that they lead in the direction of individual 'Decision?']

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