

## MEDITATION MEETINGS, JANUARY 1969

About 100 meditators at all stages applied so there were four meetings in the Blue Room which holds up to 25. Various attempts were made to create the right atmosphere in which the meditation could start spontaneously and people's questions find an answer.

While people were collecting, something was usually said on the meditation if there were beginners present:

Meditation fulfills a natural need – the most delicate part of the mind needs a rest which it never gets. The body gets rest every 24 hours in sleep; mind (subtle level) should have its own cycles also of activity and rest. Only when the mind is *still* does the Self – Causal level – manifest; and Self feeds on a man's silence. To hear and obey the Self is the whole aim of life.

Without some *special device* the mind never becomes still; the more you try to still it by force, the more active it becomes. There have been different devices suitable for different kinds of life – like continuous repetition of the Jesus Prayer under hermit or monastic conditions on Greek Islands.

This ancient System of Meditation specially adapted for the busy life is the most easy and universal; active life is one side of Self-realization, two half-hours of meditation the other side; there should be no conflict between the two.

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Meditation for five or ten minutes; observations, questions arising.

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From this point each meeting developed in its own way – all were different. After 3/4 of an hour something was said or read or a story told to raise the emotional level for a further five minutes of meditation. Meetings never lasted more than an hour.

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**Examples** of various ways in which the meetings continued after the first meditation:

(a) The natural evolution of the meditation depends on *Renunciation* which becomes gradually more complete. The dervish saying (quoted in Osokin) applies not, for us, to the whole life, but to each half-hour:

Through four renunciations ascend to perfection,  
Leave life without regret,  
Expect no reward in Heaven.

People asked about the four renunciations. The first three are in different order for different kinds of people, and at different times; but the final one is for all alike.

(To renounce means, not to struggle with, but, to come away from, to leave behind. For this the Mantra must first be set running, going by itself – then you withdraw the attention from everything on to the rhythm or if the rhythm has disappeared in the stillness on to the peace which it leaves behind.)

1. You give up all bodily impression and sensations.
2. You give up all thinking, turning thoughts, dreaming, plans for the future.

3. You give up all suffering, feelings, desires and memories of past, all enjoyment of the delights which happen.
4. Finally you give up the one who is meditating, the one who is about to transcend to Heaven, or who is failing; in fact, you give up the separate ego; you 'give up the one who is giving up'. When meditation, the subject, and the object are all One, that is Samadhi. (Several of His Holiness's stories and similes illustrate this):

It is like the water of the great river Ganges, and Ganges water in a bottle. Break the bottle and there is no trace of difference of that water when returned to the Ganges. As long as we have the feeling of 'I' (Ahankara) we feel separate and bottled up. Give up Ahankara and we are no longer separate.

#### Further Meditation

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(b) At another meeting, after meditating, we asked: 'Were you completely still and silent?' Cries of 'Oh, no!' 'Well then, what was going on?' Various answers: problems, thoughts, worries. 'What is the "mind" which you notice to be incessantly active as soon as you shut your eyes?' It is the surface (superficial) part of the higher control or 'Governor' of all mental (subtle) activity. It is that by which the human being chiefly differs from the sub-human; 'an animal knows, but only man can know that he knows'. It should not think; it should judge, discriminate, watch.

That whole important level of the mind is called in the Shankaracharya's System, the *Buddhi*, from the root 'Budh', which means to 'awake', so that *Buddhi*, the gerundive, means 'Coming to oneself, recovering from a swoon'; Self-realization depends more on this level of mind than anything else. The Real I, Higher Centres, the contents of the Fourth Room are already perfect and eternal; it is the *Buddhi* that requires to be purified and stilled so that it can reflect the Fourth Room through the ever-changing environment.

The *Buddhi* works with the energy of the Three *Gunas*; it is capable of recognising the particular mixture of the *Gunas* both in itself at any moment, and in anything else. In any kind of activity, *Rajas* must be present and tends to predominate; for physical sleep, *Tamas* must predominate; but for realizing the Self there must be a good predominance of *Sattva* (literally, 'Energy of Being') which always gives the feeling of a new awakening. 'False I' arises when the others predominate.

Questions asked about 'Mind clinging to things', the 'feeling of ego', etc.

A. One of the inevitable properties of the undisciplined *Buddhi*, 'my mind', is that it takes the shape and colour of whatever goes into it. There is much talk nowadays about addiction to drugs, pot, LSD, heroin, alcohol; but really there is nothing in the world to which the *Buddhi cannot* become addicted. This explains the fantastic behaviour (violence, riots, demonstrations), strange pseudo-religious cults and beliefs, pop art and all the rest. I know of an American woman scientist who has spent nearly all her working life studying the sex-cycle of a microbe which lives in the intestine of a gnat and when she isn't researching she is lecturing and writing about it! One can identify with anything and this is usually praised as 'dedication'. For Self-realization, the *Buddhi* (mind) must keep selecting what it wants to stay forever and discard the rest.

Q. What is the proper function of the purified Buddhi?

A. There is an episode in the Gospels which has been used to illustrate this by Christian mystics like Meister Eckhart – it is that of the ‘Centurion’ which comes both in St. Matthew and St. Luke: This is from Matthew 8: 5-10:

And when Jesus was entered into Capernaum, there came unto Him a centurion, beseeching Him and saying, ‘Lord, my servant lieth at home sick of the palsy, grievously tormented.’ And Jesus saith unto him, ‘I will come and heal him.’

The Centurion answered and said, ‘Lord, I am not worthy that Thou shouldest come under my roof; but speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed. *For I am a man under authority, having many soldiers under me;* And I say to this one ‘Go’, and he goeth; and to another ‘Come’, and he cometh, and to my servant ‘Do this’, and he doeth it.’

When Jesus heard, He marvelled and said to them that followed, ‘Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel.’ (The Centurion was of course a Roman) ... And Jesus said unto the Centurion, ‘Go thy Way; and as thou has believed, so be it done unto thee.’ And his servant was healed in the self-same hour.

The Buddhi should be the ‘man under authority’, he should hear and obey his Master’s voice when that is manifested, but he needs Faith (Sattva) in full measure all the rest of the time. Before he gets that he needs discipline and ‘Good Company’.

What is chiefly lacking among us these days is Faith, not in luck or our ‘ego’ but in the Eternal presence of Real I.

(Meditation)

At another meeting to which some newer people came, after meditating we spoke about ‘giving up’, and quoted the dervish saying ‘Through four renunciations...’ after some conversation about that; the following was said (avoiding any ‘System language’):

There are a number of stories which illustrate the process of giving up and what different people have to give up. The way of the Meditation is also called the way of Liberation, and, in fact, we only have to give up what holds the mind in prison. There is a book belonging to that tradition called the *Srimad Bhagavatam* (ranked by them next to the *Upanishads* and *Bhagavad-Gita*) which tells many stories of the Lord Krishna on the theme of ‘wisdom as the union of knowledge and love’. One section of this book is about a splendid young wanderer who has obtained liberation and describes to an older man how he learned from 24 ‘teachers’ like the five elements, the sun, the moon, the pigeon, the python, etc. One of his ‘teachers’ was an osprey, ‘who was attacked and followed by other and stronger birds as long as he carried a piece of flesh in his mouth. As soon as he gave up the piece of flesh he became free and was happy.’ (S.B. 11.9.2) From this observation he learnt about detachment. ‘Giving up attachment or “identification” brings endless joy’. Another was about a small insect that attacks the cockroach which is terrified of it. The cockroach ‘thinks only of its foe, and as a result is transformed... into the object of its fear’. The moral is, don’t let the mind dwell on what it doesn’t want, or, if you don’t worry it may not happen.’

Just before we meditate again, I will read you another of these stories (which the Shankaracharya has also quoted to us) about the importance of aiming for *unity* above all things.

I have learned a lesson from a Maiden. Hear this too from me.

Once upon a time a young man, accompanied by his retinue, came to the home of a maiden to seek her hand in marriage. To prepare food for the guests, the girl found it necessary, her family being absent, to do the husking of the paddy herself. Now, because of her girlish pride she did not want her lover and his followers to find out that she was engaged in so menial a task, and as she husked the paddy, the conch bracelets on her wrists made such a noise that she felt certain her occupation would be discovered. Being a clever girl she hastened to get rid of the jangling bracelets throwing them away one by one until only two were left on each arm. But as she went on husking, even these, striking together, broke the silence. She then removed one more bracelet from each arm. Now at last, from the single bracelets, there was no sound.

This I have learned from her: Where many dwell in one place, there is noise, and quarrelling; even where there are only two people, there may be harmful gossip. Better it is, therefore, that one be solitary and alone, like the bracelet on either arm of the maiden.

Seating oneself firmly, controlling the body, shaking off all lethargy, one should gather the scattered forces of the mind and practise attention [to the rhythm of the Mantra]. Steadiness in attention is attained by repeated practice and by keeping oneself free from attachment.

(*Srimad Bhagavatam*, 11.9.5–11)

(Meditation)

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