

SUMMER PROGRAMME 1971

PRIVATE

This programme is designed to remind you where to look for something you keep losing. Details as to how to use it are left to you; but contemplation of a single idea with a silent mind is the essence of success.

Happiness, for example. Do you keep losing it like your spectacles? You are looking all around for them – everywhere but where they are, on top of your own nose!

1. Start with Narada's riddle: 'Do you know the Owner of this pleasure-ground of body? Without knowing the Owner, all disciplines are fruitless.'

'Body' includes three levels: physical, subtle and causal. Within, but greater than the physical pleasure-ground, is the pleasure-ground of mind; and within that again, and greater still, is the Owner's private pleasure-ground – the Soul.

2. How to get in there and meet the Owner? 'Mind can only bring you to the gate by sign-posting the way; it can inform you of the whereabouts and qualities and some of the glory of your own Self; but you must transcend this by going through the gate. Don't stand looking at the names or the numbers on the gate. Have direct communion with the Atman.'

'To go inside and enjoy Union, a new motivating force is necessary, and this is the Nature of the individual, which is part of the Universal Nature. This 'Nature' must be made pure and ready for union.'

3. According to that early poem, the *Ramayana*, Self-realisation is a love-story between this Nature (Prakriti) and her Lord (Purush) – the masculine and feminine aspects of creation:

Nature is always trying to please her Creator and presents herself in ever new and changing forms in her own way and in her own time. But when Purush (individual in this case) tries to force her his way the trouble starts; for if the demands on Prakriti become hard and rigid she can't do what she wants to do. This makes the situation miserable whether on the individual or the Universal level.

4. The remedy and the happy ending come through true and undemanding Love on both sides, which means freedom from the identification with manifold desires. 'In love you always give, and don't demand any return. By giving you allow things to happen.' A story illustrates that, by gaining this union, you gain everything else as well:

There was once a king who arranged an exhibition and sale of goods for his people at reduced prices. While the crowds went rushing to buy anything they fancied, there was one man who went around the shops but didn't buy anything. When asked why he didn't buy, he answered, 'All in good time.' During the last days of the exhibition, prices were further cut, but still he wouldn't buy.

Just a few minutes before closing-time, he went to the king and asked to buy *him*. The king replied that he was not for sale as he was not a commodity. But

when the man persisted, offering to pay any price demanded, the king remarked: 'You could of course own me by love.' When the man agreed to love and serve him all his life, the king accepted. As soon as the contract was signed, the man gave orders to collect all the goods left in the exhibition, and took them home for service to the king.

Once you win over the Owner by love, only then do you get everything else as well; but people usually leave the pursuit of Love itself and stop for little things.

(The above quotations are based on the Record, 1971)

5. We have quoted before from the early Renaissance poet, Pico della Mirandola, who wrote of the Creator speaking to Adam:

The nature allotted to all other creatures, within laws appointed by Myself, restricts them. Thou, restrained by no such narrow bounds, shall, according to thine own free will in whose power I have placed thee, define thy nature for thyself...

Thou shalt have power to decline unto the lower or brute creatures; or power to be reborn unto the higher or divine, according to the sentence of thy Soul.

(Oration on the Dignity of Man)

6. In practice this rebirth depends each day and hour upon attention to the Good Impulse; we must acquire the skill to take it the whole distance.

This is the shortest work of all that man may imagine... It is never longer nor shorter than is an atom, which in the Science of Astronomy is the least part of time. ... For even so many willings or desirings within the principal working-power of thy soul, may be, and are, in one hour in thy will, as there are atoms in one hour. And if thou wert reformed by Grace to the first state of man's soul, as it was before sin, then thou shouldest evermore by the help of that Grace be lord of those stirrings...

(The Cloud of Unknowing, Ch.4)

7. We can conclude with Lao-tze:

By attaining the peak of meditation we gain fullness; returning to the root means rest; the return according to destiny means the Eternal; knowing the Eternal means enlightenment... By attending to the inner not the outer, all things spring up without a word spoken.

By controlling the vital energy and inducing tenderness, the wise man can become like a little child. There is a Being wondrous and complete; before heaven and earth *It* was. Therefore the wise man sits in stillness with a liberated mind.

(Tao Te Ching)

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