

3 July 1972

## READING 14

Some of us get a little impatient with our talking groups, and all of us want to set free the creative parts of our nature. We must be clear as to how complex our mechanisms are in order to grasp at any discipline we can find to overcome them. Part of the description given by Mr. Ouspensky in his *Psychological Lectures* of the 1930's, described the machinery in precise terms of which this is a précis:

### PART 1. MECHANICAL PARTS OF CENTRES

Without attention or with scattered attention, all our functions can only manifest at their most mechanical level.

1. With the mechanical part of the *instinctive centre* we are not now concerned; it is very well hidden from us, as interference with it is dangerous. It governs inborn ('simple') reflexes, all inner movements such as respiration, circulation and digestion, and all the secretions of glands.
2. It is geared to the mechanical part of the *moving centre*, which contains all 'conditioned reflexes' like learned movements which have become habitual, but which (through the faculty for *imitation*) play so big a part in our life.
3. The mechanical part of the *sex centre* provides the mechanism of physical love, and Nature's way of filling her perambulators. If the love between the sexes is confined to this, we revert to the mammalian level.
4. The mechanical part of the *emotional centre* comprises the cheapest kind of ready-made humour, love of excitement and spectacular shows; attraction to crowd emotions of all kinds, and all the half-animal emotions like aggression, selfishness, cowardice, envy, jealousy, and so on.

And now we come to the most prevalent of all, which has a special name '*the formatory apparatus*' – *the mechanical part of the intellectual centre*. This is the curse of our age, which could be called not the 'atomic', but the 'formatory era'. It is also the particular enemy of all collections of people like ourselves who attempt to pursue the spiritual path. This is taken from Mr. Ouspensky's description:

5. The mechanical part of the intellectual centre provides the mechanism of reception of impressions, memories and associations as they enter the field of consciousness. This is all it should do normally, i.e., when other parts do their work. *It should never reply to questions addressed to the whole centre, never try to solve problems, and never decide anything.* Unfortunately, in the undisciplined, it is always ready to decide, to reply to all sorts of questions in borrowed terms, and to sit in judgement on other people. You can always recognise 'formatory thinking', for the formatory apparatus can only count up to two – 'yes or no', 'good or bad', 'capitalist or socialist', etc.

Each of us, when inattentive, has his or her own repertoire of formatory manifestations, which can be very different in different people; so it is common to say 'you are being formatory', while being formatory oneself in one's own favourite way! This was shown very clearly in the

course of a discussion we had last Monday about the rules and principles which we were taught to carry out very strictly when we were first given the System. Fortunately, somebody remembered afterwards one of the first questions he ever asked Mr. Ouspensky (way back in July 1938), and looked up the record for Mr. Ouspensky's answer:

Q. How can one try to escape from using the 'formatory' apparatus for thinking about ideas of the System?

O. This is a very important question, because there is not a single idea of the System that can be understood by formatory apparatus. It dominates everything and distorts everything. And what could particularly help us not to think formatorily? Certainly it is necessary to think of big ideas like the Ray of Creation and all those, but in a new way. That is what is meant by 'thinking in a new way' – to use the whole of our equipment and not the formatory apparatus only.

The best way to begin is to think about the principles of the System and the rules of the work – School work. There are many rules; really all these rules come to one point if you understand them. You remember what rules are? First, they are conditions for joining the School – not to talk about it to people who do not come here, not to start certain kinds of conversation, not to mix socially or commercially people in the School with one's other friends, and things like that. And in this study of rules you can only understand them when you don't think formatorily. As soon as you let the formatory apparatus do your thinking, you will never understand them, or, on a bigger scale, be able to separate permanent principles – important things from less important things.

To be able to control one's thinking – 'creative thought' – start with rules, and you will find a way.

That was thirty-four years ago; how do we look at it today?

Pause for discussion

## PART 2

To 'think in a new way' about rules of conduct is to realise:

1. They must first be applied internally by each person as a means of purifying his own nature.
2. The rules are not to catch somebody else out, but to promote harmony and good relationships within the School, and
3. to protect the School and its members from harmful influences which could divert its aims.

One of the most prevalent manifestations of formatory centre in the world around today and among ourselves, is to take on the physical level only some idea of True Knowledge which belongs to the causal and subtle levels. Attention to this at our meetings and in our thoughts, is one way of making higher parts of centres work. A second way is to arouse emotional interest combined with attention and discrimination. The working of the emotional part of a centre always gives a feeling of liberation, but without watchfulness one immediately becomes identified and back in prison again. All creativity and Self-realization begin with making higher parts of centres work.

Both these ways are contained in some answers which have just come to hand, which were given by His Holiness in 1967 to someone not in our group: [Mr. MacLaren]

## 1st Question:

We have found that the subtle elements seem to manufacture in their own world all the materials that man manufactures in his world... and they all appear to be the work of ignorance, foolish ideas and desires. Would Your Holiness say something about how these can be damaging to the body?

S. Such experiences can be seen in simple parallelism. There are two states based on two bodies: the ordinary wakeful state of the physical body and the dream state of the subtle body. The walking, talking, eating, etc., of the physical body are experienced in the dream state and both seem true in their experiences. The bodies and the states are useful on their level.

Just as one wakes up to see the illusion of the dream, one sees the illusion created by the subtle elements when one really wakes up and sees everything with the eye of discrimination.

There is then the third body, called causal body, and the state related to this is the state of consciousness. In this state, the experiences of the other two bodies seem illusory.

There are cases when unfulfilled desires of the physical world are made to be satisfied in the subtle body by creating a false world. The Manas rules this and manufactures things, situations, etc., to suit these desires. The hungry dream of eating lavishly and the poor dream of wealth according to their unfulfilled needs.

## 2nd Question:

We have found that these creations in the subtle elements have very serious effects on the physical body, but we have also found that by putting them under observation, in the right way, these substances can be dissolved...

S. These creations in the subtle elements change certain substances which account for distortions and sicknesses of the body. Awareness and discrimination have a protecting quality and would be useful to a certain degree. One should supplement the recovery process by arousing the emotional side of the person. This has a recreational quality. A bad process needs replacement by a good process. The energy must be used to see that the creative process works for good use. This process through the emotion really transforms the substances for good use. Discrimination and the arousing of the emotion should be worked together.

## 3rd Question:

Could His Holiness tell me something more about arousing the emotion? How to do that?

S. The civilisation and culture one lives in has certain sacred centres which arouse emotion. Those centres should be found out and be brought to their notice in such a way that they could see the underlying divinity in the outward manifestations of the culture and civilisation. Once this gets through them, the emotional part would be aroused. Here is an example from the physical world. A flower is a piece of beauty and the attraction towards it is natural. When people are told how the divine consciousness transforms itself through different processes, seen and unseen, then it helps them to deepen the appreciation and results in arousing their emotion. The usual worldly way is to possess and use the beauty, even by destroying it. The real way is to enjoy it and preserve it, which can only be done when the emotional part of the being is functioning properly with discrimination...

Basically all human beings are pure. They all started fresh. Life is like a stream. It collects influences from different places through which it moves. If one gets good company, the influences acquired are good; and in bad company, the influences are bad. A man at any moment is a product of all such influences which have come across his life. If one falls into the state of creating substances in subtle elements which damage even his body, it is only because he has had bad company which has induced these influences.

One cannot simply put a brake on the stream of life. If the water of the stream is to be used for useful purposes, two things are necessary and must be done simultaneously. One has to build a dam to protect water from being wasted, and dig a canal to use the stored water. One of the two will never do the job properly. A canal will not draw water unless the dam stores it, and the dam will burst if the stored water is not used. Both are necessary. By discrimination, one protects the substances and waste is checked; by arousing emotion the proper and creative use of the substances becomes possible.

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