

24 July 1972

### MEDITATION MEETING, COLET HOUSE

**Dr. Roles:** We are in the middle of running 130 initiations at the rate of 24 a week, and this makes one think – in seeing the ease with which some people take to the Meditation at the beginning, and the great difficulties others experience; and the difficulties the ones that started well get into after a while when the bloom has worn off – has made one ask oneself: ‘Why is it that sometimes it is so easy, and at other times one does not get on with it at all?’ And, in general, ‘Is there not very much more to be got from it *within*, without ‘specialising’ in it and so neglecting all that we have to do – our duties in life?’

I think there is, and that part of our difficulties is due to the fact that we don’t really understand enough about the *goal* we are trying to reach. We have a preconceived idea that it is a bigger and brighter ordinary life; whereas, in reality, it is absolutely topsy-turvy – it is ‘Alice through the Looking-glass’. Getting there – to Samadhi – is not all that difficult after a time, but coming out again and leading one’s life efficiently is quite another thing! Possibly that’s why we have been very strongly advised to do it all by easy stages – go in, come out; go in a little further, come out quicker, like that.

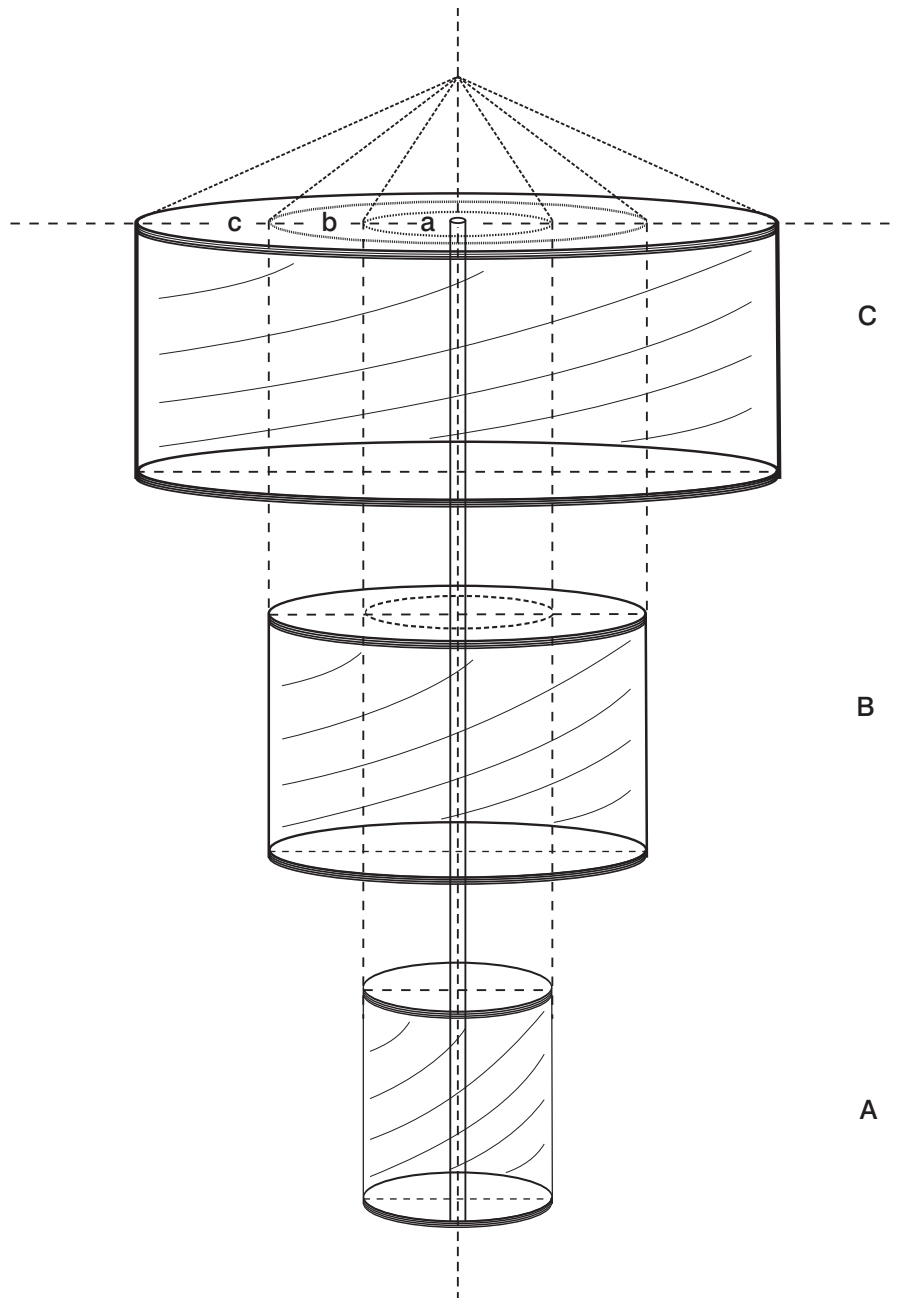
Therefore I’m afraid we must begin today with some theory – a description of our goal and what is driving us. Then I want to try some experiments for two or three minutes to see whether we can learn anything – whether some of us are doing something imperfectly.

About the theory: One has recently become acquainted with a system of psychology which is very much to the fore in France, but which is virtually unknown in this country. It is called ‘Organo-dynamic Psychology’ and its chief exponent is Professor Ey, who has been practising psychiatry on very sound lines for 40 years but whose works are only published in French. Last summer a young neurologist from the National Hospital, Queen’s Square, was sent out to stay with the Professor to get hold of his ideas, translate some of them, and introduce them over here. His system is rather a continuation from where Maslow had left off when he died.

His main idea is that the individual consciousness being all-important, any Freudian psychology based on the unconscious or any mechanistic psychology like Behaviourism cannot be right; they are contrary to common sense. There must be an anatomical sub-structure (neurology), but also a supra-structure (psychology) accounting for everything that lies in consciousness – in the ‘field of consciousness’. Neurology may be a description of organs and structures which are organised in a certain way, but psychology will only become organised when it is a dynamic thing based on a great supra-structure which has yet to be organised. Hence his name ‘Organo-dynamic’.

What appeals to me is that he bases his whole system of psychology on the work of Hughlings Jackson, the contemporary of Darwin, in the same way as I based this diagram which suddenly floated into my mind last summer. So I would like to start with this diagram again; I won’t go further into the theory.

(with diagram of three levels on screen)



Here are the three levels (A, B and C); it can be used for many purposes, but let us say that (A) is the area of the nervous system (brainstem) which is still operative to keep the organism alive in the deepest state of dreamless sleep or coma; (B) is the more evolved area higher up in the brain which operates in the state of dreaming; and (C) is that area which is added when we come into the daytime world with its external sensory impressions and their repercussions in our consciousness.

What all the scientists leave out is that there is an *absolute Consciousness* all through the universe and present from physical birth to death in every individual, which is the only pure Consciousness; everything that has been called 'consciousness' is just a *reflection* of that. Having regard to that, let us take man who (in common with the higher mammals) shares with them most of this structure (C) except one thing, and that is this top surface (*a, b, c*), here uncoloured, which Professor Ey and other people like Teilhard de Chardin call a 'reflection'. An animal may do things, but only man *knows* that he is doing them; so I am calling this top surface the 'field of

consciousness, and anything which doesn't come into our consciousness lies below that field; anything of which we are conscious lies in that field, and there are higher levels and a more universal Consciousness occasionally reached above it.

Thinking of the 'field of consciousness', the thing that is so important in meditation is that the content of lower levels continues and comes into consciousness as part of this 'field'. Then if this (A) is that area in which we live in the deepest sleep at night when we are aware of nothing, and (B) is the level of dreams, when we wake up during the day those two levels go on but are completely submerged in this outer level (C), which is governed by the external world and the evidence of our senses.

Does that appeal to you as the briefest description to begin from?

So now, in meditation we are proceeding from the outside – from our ordinary daytime state – and we try to get to the centre, to this absolute pure Consciousness, and we ask ourselves, 'What really is this passage to the centre? – What does it feel like?' We know what it means extracting ourselves from all the ordinary thoughts, feelings and impressions; we sit with our eyes shut and bypass all physical impressions; we then bypass all thoughts and feelings and psychological disturbances and dreams of the subtle world until we get to a place which the Shankaracharya describes as the equivalent of deep sleep, where we are aware of nothing whatever, but into which, in Meditation, we are letting in the light, whereas in deep sleep that area of mind is entirely in the dark.

So Self-realization doesn't consist in becoming slicker and cleverer than other people – nothing like that! – or more mobile and active; it consists in lighting up areas which ordinarily are in complete darkness. Even when you discover the Light of Consciousness, you have to set about clearing all the debris out of the way so that Light gradually extends until even the daytime state is illuminated by the Pure Consciousness, and everything that one does and says in relation to other people becomes better done and better said.

Is that clear so far? Do you want to object or to modify? (Silence) Well then, I take it, as in New York, that there is unanimous agreement! (laughter)

Anyway, let's hang on to this working hypothesis and see if we are doing this during a half-hour. The chief characteristic of this 'field of consciousness' is the question of 'I'; this is where we feel 'I'. Now the characteristic of this upper part which wakes in the daytime is that it consists of many 'I's – 'that we are from moment to moment differently conscious' (as Hughlings Jackson himself said). I will just read again the following passage from Mr. Ouspensky in relation to this:

Man is not *one*, he has not *one* 'I', he consists of hundreds of different 'I's, many of whom do not even know one another.

Every wish, every desire, every 'like', and every 'dislike', every opinion and every tendency, every belief and every disbelief is an 'I'. And each one of them has his own will and his own resistance to the will of other 'I's. These 'I's are divided into groups. Some of these groups are permanent and legitimate, i.e., they correspond to the divisions of man's natural being [those belonging to the instinctive, emotional and intellectual parts]. But other groups are artificial, invented, imaginary; ...

(We change our personality when we leave home for the office, when we have lunch in the City, when we go back to the office, and then when we come home or go to a party; we are changing our personalities with their large groups of 'I's all the time.)

Now I want to emphasise two facts [said Mr Ouspensky]: All 'I's are equal; it is better to say that they are equally weak. Each of them can occasionally conquer other 'I's, each of them can become Caliph for an hour and then be replaced by another 'I'. None of them can do much good, but almost every one of them, in one hour or even less, can do so much harm that all the other 'I's will have to pay for it all their lives.

(*1st Psychological Lectures*, p.8)

This was said in a very gloomy period before we knew of the Meditation or understood that the Param-Atman (the most powerful force in the world) is present in each one of us. Therefore we discount all those other 'I's – all this changing ego (if you like to put it that way) – and during two half-hours we try to bypass all those changeable 'I's and come to the *only Self which doesn't change*.

(pointing to the diagram): We don't feel any of (C) *in the head* – the Causal level – except our awareness of impressions from outside and our intellectual processes; the middle area (B) we feel in the heart or other great plexuses of the sympathetic division; and as regards the physical level (A), we feel that in the parts of the body which are affected; but in order to change anything, we have to work on the *causal* level. Otherwise everything *happens*, just as 'it rains' or 'it snows'.

Is that clear?

Now the question arises as to why we have certain instructions given during the meditation (this was a question from a new initiate last week):

Why does the initiator ask us to set the Mantra running? This seems to take away something of the devotional feeling one has.

There are various answers to that, but I would like to do an experiment now – to shut our eyes for two or three minutes, and those of you who want to can 'set the Mantra running'; and those of you who think they don't need it, or prefer to do it some other way, can do it their way and we will compare notes afterwards.

(after two minutes' silence)

Well, that is two minutes like the first two minutes of any half-hour. Now would those who felt that they needed to 'set the Mantra running' put their hands up; I am not saying one method is better than the other. (after a count): Though there is a clear majority, yet there are still a number of people who do something different. So now, those people who did not have to set it running, did it start at its own rhythm without any need for you to do anything? Would you put your hands up. (after another count): I'm glad to see that most of the remaining people find the Mantra starts by itself, and I am sure that is fine; when it does happen, obviously let it happen. Did it start fast at the start, or did it start more slowly – in a slower rhythm?

Mr. Reid. It started quietly, rather than slowly.

Dr. R. I was not speaking about loud or soft, but fast or slow. Was it not more slow?

Mr. R. No, just middle.

Dr. R. The constant difficulty one has with new meditators (especially those people who are in the SES and who have had various exercises in the past) is that you give them a minute and you say, 'How did it start?' They say, 'Yes, Yes!' Then you explain to them a little and you make it another minute, and you say, 'Has it changed its rhythm?'

Well, I get usually very vague answers, and when I ask, 'Show me at what rate is it going?', they are a bit doubtful and some of them do this (beat with their hand monotonously). Obviously it is just going at the speed of thoughts, so one says to them: 'Don't repeat the Mantra with the thoughts going; you will fix those thoughts for life!'

(with Dr. R. illustrating): Beat with your hand, and let the rhythm go with your hand-beat; sometimes it will go fast and disappear; at other times it will be slower, and slower still; only then will you begin to get a feeling of this peace, of the immanence, of something very familiar.

Now I ask myself, 'How often do I waste part of a half-hour lost in my thoughts but sometimes repeating?' and sometimes I have a round trip to the Riviera and back only to discover that I have not been repeating it at all! This is the thing about which we should be very honest. We cannot blame the meditation if we fail, because the whole idea is to let the Mantra find its *own* rhythm, to go from centre to centre, changing its rhythm as it does that, until it brings everything together so that one is *single-minded*; and beyond that to a place where one doesn't exist – where there is only the *Param-Atman and the Mantra*.

If we live up to that, His Holiness says that in three years we would become Mahatmas from doing two half-hours a day. Well, we look very nice people, but not much like Mahatmas!

Mrs. Henry. You have told us that our personality doesn't like the meditation, but we have to be rather kind to it and talk to personality reasonably to begin with. This has helped me very much; I usually find I begin in this way.

Dr. R. Well, there are various ways of dealing with personality. The great thing is not to make an enemy of it; it will trip you up every time for it is much cleverer than essence.

Mrs. H. This is what I did before; I got cross with it; now I try not to.

Dr. R. A lot of us do! First of all one withdraws from personality and, as His Holiness has said, it is like one's servant; the mistress of the house does what she wishes to do and the servants chatter away in the servants' quarter, but the mistress of the house must not run after the servants!

The other way is to say, 'What are you doing talking about Mr. or Mrs. So-and-So? Come and get some rest!', and one gradually gets the habit of persuading the personality to be interested in the meditation, earning its own profit in meditation; it doesn't really enjoy what it's doing and doesn't like getting so tired! After a while it comes to enjoy the meditation instead of being against it.

Mrs. White. I have found with the meditation that, rather than start the Mantra, to hold it as a kind of thought is more helpful. If I start the Mantra thoughts try to push it out.

Dr. R. Well, maybe for a time, but it has to go to a level deeper than that, and what do you do then? It has to go to a place where there are no thoughts, and from somewhere you have to draw a force of *will* which is going to continue it through the world of dreams, of childhood memories, to a place inside where there is no movement of the mind at all. But I agree, at the beginning that is one way of doing it.

Mr. Healey. When I start to meditate I hold first my thumb on the pulse and meditate at half the rate of the pulse-beat.

Dr. R. These are all gadgets for setting the Mantra running at a pace which is not based on thought; those are quite useful, but it won't take you far! Moreover you must not form any habitual connection between Mantra and pulse-rate; for the Mantra must be free.

Any other questions about this? This is a great opportunity for seeing if we are genuinely understanding the instructions and carrying them out. None of us is very good at meditating; we are all very amateurish!

Mrs. MacOwan. You mentioned childhood memories; if one finds childhood memories coming up does that mean one is on the right track?

Dr. R. It's a stage better than current thoughts, but it indicates that your attention is being lost; I mean, when the memories come up, leave them quickly. All the different things that appear on the way must be left at once; you can perhaps take them up later on during the day, but during a half-hour nothing must exist except the Param-Atman and His Name – the Mantra; still it is a sign that you are getting below the surface of the pond!

Dr. Bell. One quite frequently gets to the silence, but one cannot stay there, and one's mind flashes back to square one. How can one proceed from here?

Dr. R. Yes, this is of course what we all do from time to time. The reason for this is that you are carrying your ego with you all the way; you have not got rid of the 'one who is meditating' – the 'one who is getting through', the 'observer turned commentator'; you have been carrying him along with you all the way, and therefore any moment he can he will jerk you back to square one!

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Now I think we might do another experiment. Let us retrace our steps a little: we have sat to meditate in a position where the body doesn't intrude; we have shut our eyes and have withdrawn our attention from any sensory impressions we would otherwise be noticing; we have been reaching a realm of familiar thoughts which are turning, turning; they are connected with personality, and we withdraw from that. Then, maybe, we get to a world of dreams and some of these may be emotional, and we may begin to feel (if we have the Mantra in the heart) the presence of our True Self in our heart. This is fine; it is on the way, and it means that we are coming to the second of those circles (*b*) in the 'field of consciousness' at the top of that diagram, because we are coming into the area of the Autonomic nervous system which is responsible for our emotional life.

While there is any single train of thought going on, we remain at the ordinary external 'head' level (*c*); so to keep this emotional feeling and feeling of the True Self in the heart, we have to change from one world into another.

In this new world where it is entirely emotional and the intellectual life is dropped off, we feel a unifying influence – we no longer feel that each thought is an 'I', every system is an 'I'; that at every moment our consciousness is changing. We begin to feel unified, but we still feel our ego quite strongly. Directly we become emotional we identify; so when we begin to have this feeling

in the heart, we know very clearly that whatever we do we must *not identify*; we must not bring our personal thoughts or feelings into the meditation – keep them out when they try to get in.

If we do that we get to a very peaceful place (*a*) which we describe as the ‘ante-room to our True Self’; but there is still a feeling of ‘I am, and that other’ – ‘I am separate from this true Self for which I am searching’, and we float in and out in that stage of Dhyana or ‘transcendental meditation’ but we don’t take the plunge which is necessary to go into Samadhi, which is to leave all ‘I am meditating’ out and just have *one* Self in mind – the Self of all beings, ‘the Self that lives in the hearts of all’; and after a time we may find that *we are that Self*; but that comes rarely at the start.

Now until we realise that this is how the ordinary ego is stopping this realization of Self, we won’t make the necessary effort to give that one up; yet if we give that ego up, we give up a whole heap of habitual conceptions – we come out of time and space, and position in space; we give up all our ordinary sensory world and psychological world just by giving up this *one* thing – this *illusion of the separate I*.

We keep mocking at this illusion, for none of us realises that we can be getting more and more selfish and more personal in the name of Self-development unless we take special precautions!

One of the things that came to me just after one of these moments of Samadhi was a passage in that book of Aldous Huxley’s (*The Doors of Perception*) – not only because I knew him and he had the type of mind I admire, but because he was trying experiments with mescaline which, years ago, I tried also. Though ‘all that glitters’ in Aldous Huxley’s book ‘is not gold’, yet there is one illuminating passage. He speaks about an effect he went through some time after taking his mescaline pill where he realised that he was not the self; he was seeing things *as they are* without interposing himself, and his sensory impressions were therefore brightly enhanced (particularly from the point of view of colour). But while he became so fascinated by *things*, he found he was losing interest in *people*; and the people who were with him watching kept asking him personal things like ‘What about human relations?’ They kept dragging him back from a ‘how wonderful those flowers look’, to silly things like ‘human relations’.

(he writes):

How could one reconcile this timeless bliss of seeing as one ought to see, with the temporal duties of doing what one ought to do and feeling as one ought to feel? ‘One ought to be able,’ I said, ‘to see things as infinitely important and human beings as still more infinitely important.’ One ought – but in practice it seemed to be impossible. This participation in the manifest glory of things left no room, so to speak, for the ordinary, the necessary concerns of human existence, above all for concerns involving persons. For persons are selves, and in one respect at least, I was a Not-self, simultaneously perceiving and being the Not-self of the things around me. To this new-born Not-self, the behaviour, the appearance, the very thought of the self it had momentarily ceased to be, and of other selves, its one-time fellows, seemed not indeed distasteful (for distastefulness was not one of the categories in terms of which I was thinking), but enormously irrelevant...

At this stage of the proceedings I was handed a large coloured reproduction of the well-known self-portrait by Cézanne – the head and shoulders of a man in a large straw hat, red-cheeked, red-lipped, with rich black whiskers and a dark unfriendly eye. It is a

magnificent painting; but it was not as a painting that I now saw it. For the head promptly took on a third dimension and came to life as a small goblin-like man looking out through a window in the page before me. I started to laugh. And when they asked me why, 'What pretension!' I kept repeating. 'Who on earth does he think he is?' The question was not addressed to Cézanne in particular, but to the human species at large. Who did they all think they were?

'It's like Arnold Bennett in the Dolomites,' I said, suddenly remembering a scene, happily immortalised in a snapshot of A.B. some four or five years before his death toddling along a wintry road at Cortina d'Ampezzo. Around him lay the virgin snow; in the background was a more than gothic aspiration of red crags. And there was dear, kind, unhappy A.B. consciously overacting the role of his favourite character in fiction, himself, the Card in person. There he went, toddling slowly in the bright Alpine sunshine, his thumbs in the armholes of a yellow waistcoat which bulged, a little lower down, with the graceful curve of a Regency bow window at Brighton – his head thrown back as though to aim some stammered utterance, howitzerlike, at the blue dome of heaven. What he actually said, I have forgotten; but what his whole manner, air, and posture fairly shouted was, 'I'm as good as those damned mountains' ...'

(*The Doors of Perception*, Aldous Huxley, Chatto & Windus,  
Penguin edition, 1971, pp.30–32)

As we get towards this state that we all desire, the 'state of not-self', one sees a figure strutting, and the figure is oneself! – this figure that has been strutting on this stage and round about for twenty or thirty years, and one sees, shudderingly, this ego in everything one does. Quickly one turns away from this shocking thing, and *remembers only the Param-Atman*, for the Param-Atman is so much more wonderful!

So this is the sort of process which seems to go on from time to time when we are meditating. I have not done any *extra* meditation lately; but I have stepped-up the Programme; I have used that more often since the term ended, and I do find that it helps with this ego – for the moment when one is doing it, and immediately afterwards.

Any questions?

Mr. MacOwan. I have been wanting to ask for a long time: in the Programme most of it is about the Param-Atman and remembering the Param-Atman. Can you give us any tips – any ways of thinking so that we shall understand more clearly what the Param-Atman is, because it is terribly easy to find oneself saying, 'I will now remember the Param-Atman' and one doesn't know what one is remembering!

Dr. R. 'Can you give me any tips about what the Param-Atman is?' There are two ways of approach: one is simply to *think* that, just as you have a Divine Self, so throughout the universe there is a single Divinity, and this Divinity is just the same as your own Self – no more complicated than that. The other is to cultivate a *love* for that which, while being You, is not felt as Self at all – is too *big* to be felt as yourSelf.

I would recommend the emotional approach of trying to develop a love, a feeling for the Divinity in the Universe, which is the same as your own divinity; for that will avoid any dualism of God and 'I'.

Mr. MacO. I have been told that this begins to come through a feeling one gets for other people. I can only find it so far for people, particularly if they are young.



Dr. R. Could be, but, as Huxley wrote, this can hold you back if you take each one *personally*. Rather remember that in everyone is this Divine Self – not just one's friends, but everybody; and in one's dealings with people one should deal only with the *true* part and address yourself just to that.

The various intellectual tips which appear in this Programme, like 'Regard the Rider as separate from the vehicle', can be a help sometimes in restraining the wayward mind, but they too quickly degenerate into mere thinking.

And remember, you cannot have love just when you want it! That love will come as the balance of the Gunas gets right and the Sattva predominates, for the conscience and the organ of love will wake up when the Sattva predominates. So you patiently go on trying not to define, but to *feel* for this Divinity who is so much neglected everywhere; then with luck, at a moment when there is a lot of Sattva, suddenly you will feel this love. (to Mr. Allan): Perhaps as a non-formatory person, you have other things to say? (Allan: Nothing to add) But would you not agree that it is ten times more effective if you can get a moment of love for the Param-Atman through somebody else? (Mr. A. agreed)

Shall we for the last ten minutes have the idea that 'setting the Mantra running' is to get away from 'I am meditating, I am saying the Mantra'; that you set it running in any way you can, as when trying to remember a word or a tune; and when it is running then it is free to do what it wants to do – let it do what it likes, go fast or slow, and take you away from all personal considerations.

(Mr. A. to Dr. R.): You wanted to remember that the Shankaracharya when he begins to meditate says very short prayers, all of which end with the phrase:

'Peace in the causal body, peace in the subtle body, peace in the physical body.'

#### Meditation

Dr. R. As a summary of what this meeting has been about, I would just like Allan to read you the answer that His Holiness gave to a question that I once took out with me from the School of Meditation with reference to the Causal level and the Param-Atman:

Mr. Whiting. With reference to the Causal level and the Param-Atman, the tendency in the School of Meditation is to think of the Causal as remote. How to believe that it is immediately present and capable of purification and modification?

S. Causal body is not at all remote. It is immanent and present all the time with the individual and is subject to both purification or impurification. It is also said to be the body of 'non-knowing'. Just as one has an experience of body in waking state, another experience of body in dream state, so one has a third type of experience in dreamless sleep. This third is very much related to the Causal. It is like a deep darkness in which all things are present but can't be seen, and yet there is the knowledge of the Self. There is no experience beside that, which is why it is called the 'body of non-knowing'.

This is experienced in two ways: in deep sleep it is full of Tamas where everything is covered with darkness and ignorance, and remains dormant. But when the Light of Consciousness falls on this region, then one experiences the full glory of the Self in the light of Sattva. One will experience only Light and Bliss; and this will

charge the Causal body in such a way that purification will take place and could be known through the efficient, attentive, conscious, perfect work produced by the individual in any walk of life.

Because it can't be known, one should not make the mistake of taking it as remote; but it is immanent, and is subject to purification or modification through meditation and knowledge of Truth.

It is like two types of house: one built with bricks and concrete and the other made of glass. If you close the first one, you can neither see anything of the inside nor the outside, for you are in complete darkness. This would be the Tamasic Causal body. The one with the glass would always be brightly lighted whether closed or open, so you can see in and out. This is the Sattvic Causal body; within it is the Self.

(Record, 2 February 1971)

Dr. R. So through the meditation and in everything we do to help it, we try to make this house (recalling the top surface of the diagram) pure and clear as glass, so that the Light of the Param-Atman shines through it into all that we do.

I hope you have a very refreshing holiday.

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