

21 November 1972

MEDITATION MEETING

1. We were told by one of the Shankaracharya's accredited teachers (who was fluent in English as well as in classical languages like Latin and Sanskrit) that our word 'meditation' comes from the Latin word 'meditare', derived in turn from 'mederi = to heal, cure, relieve'. 'Meditatio' was only later (by Cicero) given the meaning of '*thinking* about something'. Meditation, therefore, is a 'healing', not a 'thinking'.

2. He also gave us a useful diagram – so simple that it can be easily carried in the mind (as in Figure 2, Reading 4, p.106); and he said of it:

On the psychological (subtle) level there are only two tenses – past and future, because *the present is always here*. What is it which is always present with us (though every moment is different)? It is super-Consciousness, God, the Omnipresent, the Omniscient – whatever name you give it. This super-mind is the fulcrum of the balance between past and future.

Whenever we are thinking of anything, we are in the past or the future – never in the present. Why is that? Either one is thinking of the past where one might have done something different, or one is in the future where one is always hoping 'I shall do... I shall get...' So long as our mind is engaged with either of those [useless forms of imagination], the present and the Super-Consciousness are out of the picture.

(Record, 7 October 1972)

So the technique of Self-realization begins with persuading or coaxing the mind to come away from its habit of revolving round the past and the future (as Madame Ouspensky used to say, 'like a squirrel in a cage').

3. There is a neurological basis for all this, for of the two main divisions of the CNS the outer one is concerned with all Knowledge (whether of the external or internal world), and the inner one is concerned with Being, and contains our instinctive and emotional responses.

Meditation has nothing whatever to do with knowledge or with the outer (sensory) world, being entirely concerned with making our Being become like the Divine Self: 'Be ye therefore perfect as your Father in heaven is perfect'. Now let us practise that for a few minutes.

MEDITATION

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4. This is brought out in the following question and answer (Record, Q.3) which Mr. Allan put at our first audience a month ago:

R.A. His Holiness has told us that the Mantra, the meditator and the Object of meditation should all become One. I should like further guidance on this. With me at times the meditation stops, my personal identity ceases to exist and there is only Universal Being. Is this what His Holiness refers to?

S. In meditation the meditator, the act of meditation and the mantra should all become One, should be united in One. This state of unity can only be recognised by one effect during the meditation – that there is no knowledge of any sort derived from such a deep meditation. If there is a feeling of the Universal Being that would mean that the ultimate

stage has not yet been reached because there is some knowledge. However great and universal and refined these feelings may be, the meditation is not complete. The unity is very much like the great ocean undisturbed by waves and where the bottom of the ocean and the surface are all one.

(Questions and some discussion)

One might enquire what is the usefulness of this stillness where there is no knowledge, and what do we do after we have meditated? In the unified state where there is no meditator and no act of meditation, one is directly connected with the creative force of the Absolute. It is a resting point for the Atman, and for the Atman alone, to come in direct contact not impeded particularly by the subtle body which is the instrument of knowledge. So one would see that in the unified state there is no knowledge, not even of the Universal Being. The subtle body is what recalls all these actions, but the unified state is the real state of the Atman, and one should reach that. Then, when one comes out of meditation, one would see that during all the activities of the world one does not associate oneself with mind, hand, foot, etc. One remains the Atman and gets all these servants to work for the Atman.

Take the labourer who works in the field under a supervisor. The supervisor does not work. If the supervisor works, there is no supervision and chaos would follow.

So in order to become the real supervisor, one should meditate and become the master of all the labourers, Manas, Buddhi, and Chitta.[†] These are the labourers, and we must become still to get the most out of these labourers in our body.

(Record, 3 October 1972)

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We have to banish forever the ego's idea: '*My* meditation; *I* have to succeed; *I* am failing.' It is the Divine Self which is prompting one to meditate and is ready to guide us in a half-hour.

CONCLUSION OF MEDITATION MEETING

At one of the talks we heard him give to the crowds at the great religious festival at the Ganges, he kept them amused and entertained as usual with a series of stories, each of which can be taken on three levels – one 'from below', the literal meaning; the second on the psychological (subtle) level for those who could see; and the third on the Causal level 'from above'.

Listen now to one of these stories:

A rich man had three sons, the youngest being a cripple. The father looked after the cripple well, as long as he was alive. But after his death the cripple received no attention from his brothers and passed all his days lying on the doorstep crying for food and water. One day a Realized man passed that way; the cripple told him his story and asked for advice. The wise man took him outside the village; and making him sit under a banyan tree, he asked him to remain like that for three days without eating or speaking to anybody. When people saw him sitting there motionless for three days, eating nothing and speaking to no one, they grew curious and thought that he must be a great Mahatma. As the news spread, people from far and wide came to have a look at him. So great were the offerings of fruit and sweets brought by them, that a

[†]or (in English) intellect, reproduction, instinct or movement (whether voluntary or reflex).

hundred men could live on them instead of one. The Realized man gave him neither Mantra nor Tantra [i.e. neither technique nor System of Philosophy] but more by taking shelter under him, the cripple's life changed for the better.
(Record, 1 February 1970)

On the literal level of course this story could have no meaning in our Western life – such things don't happen here; though in some countries they still do! Psychologically, i.e. applied to oneself, the 'Rich Man' is the Divine Self, the Param-Atman, who dies, i.e. goes out of sight. His three sons are the three divisions of man's nervous system – the youngest being the most recently evolved part – man's Soul, which is hopelessly neglected by the other two. A Realized man (who sees with the eye of the Divine Self) takes the poor man ('the Soul') under his wing and merely because of this, his whole life is changed for the better.

Seen *from above*, this is the history of the whole human race and the course of human progress. In a short glimpse of enlightenment after meditation any of us could see it that way. We ourselves in this small branch of the Work have gone through the same process. After I first met the spiritual Way through Mr. Ouspensky when I was a young doctor in the 1930's I spent thirty years with my friends here 'crying on the doorstep for food and water'. In 1961 through the Meditation we were taken under the wing of the head of a great Tradition – 'the fully Realized man'. Now there is enough food for thousands of people all over the world. *All we have to do* is to pass two short periods of the day *in silent union* with the Divine Self ('not eating or speaking') and listen to His words and the rest will follow inevitably!

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