

24 April 1972

During the Easter holidays some of us have been going back to the old question 'Who am I?', because of difficulties in our own and other people's meditation arising in New York and London. Our system answered this question by saying that 'I am Body, I am Personality, I am Essence, and I am Soul'. But it left out the only one that is really 'I' – the Divine Self above all those. They are not 'I', they are only my servants.

Though that division of each person answers many questions, it is better, as H.H. keeps saying, to set your sights on Unity, that is on the Real 'I' and not be diverted into analysing things. So in the half-hours or *whenever* we 'come to ourselves', we aim for Unity until the object of meditation (Param-Atman), the meditator and the rhythm of the Mantra become one. That alone really pays off. With regard to *Personality*, I find it best to adopt my own version of that light-hearted sea-shanty:

Blow the man down! Blow the man down!
Oh, give us some strength to blow the man down!

Last season we explored the Universe in terms of Cosmoses, which was intended to show only that all these worlds in which we live simultaneously are always changing, and the only permanent Reality is that Observer which never changes while it sees all those worlds as merely a passing show. Those who took it like that got some profit, while others went off into a jungle of intellectual theory. We could go back to the Cosmoses soon if anyone wants to, but for the next two weeks I feel we had better come back again to ourselves.

It is just ten years since I first met H.H., and we came under his wing – a very happy decade for me and for *all* of us. I'd like to celebrate by recalling the first description he gave us of the 'Seven Steps to Self-Realization' to see how far it has become Realized knowledge – built-in by practice. I find that it was a deep-seated realisation that Essence and Personality were fundamental to the Ladder that made me use this idea in the two meditation meetings we have just had.

Let us look at it again from this point of view (the figure on the screen shows it in circular form like a colour spectrum, parts of which one experiences day after day.)

(Figure missing)

Seven Stages in the Quest for Self-realization

First Stage is the '*Good Intention*', the *Right Impulse*, the arising of the right desire. This is the starting-point which leads to:

Second Stage *Decision*: this is the stage where rationally the man makes up his mind and can go further. He has no doubt about the Way which is in line with his intention and conviction.

Third Stage Certain particles of fine matter have formed in the organism which cause him to strive towards Sattva. He begins to be in love with the Way.

Fourth Stage Where influences from the Way pull him from the outside world of sensory impressions and pleasures, so that these begin to lose some of their power.

Fifth Stage *Insight* which denotes that the man starts looking at himself and sees things as they really are.

Sixth Stage *Abundance* which is the stage where the outward pull is nearly gone, and he is filled with abundance of divine Love and happiness.

The Last or Seventh Stage which he calls *Turiya* is the stage of the fully Realized man when he knows Himself; he knows all that can be known; he knows how to *do*, and whatever he does is just the right thing – right action, right feeling, right thought – everything combined.

(Record, 11 October 1962)

At that time he said, 'You may happily incorporate these Seven Stages with your own System. He thinks they will fit in very well, and promises to give more explanations and illustrations in due course.' He added that 'On the Way the disciple experiences trouble and difficulty up to the Fourth Stage...' But the Fifth Stage is where he helps himself to knowledge; his own experience and intuition bear upon his knowledge so that he starts understanding things by himself; and the Sixth Stage is a tremendous opening-up for a disciplined man when he can establish the full relation with ideas from Higher Mind.

Then we were told that the Fourth stage is called *Sattvapatti* – Sattva guna getting near saturation point so one would rather complete the Work than leave the Way. The Fifth stage is that in which the person ceases to consider all that is in the world as outside himself. He gets glimpses of the fact that he and the outside world are one thing. The Third stage is the one that is difficult to define. It is called by a word meaning '*lessening of outgoing mental movements*' and it depends on regular practice in experiencing unity with Self or Atman, and expressing it in one's life; so that 'the internal particles start the striving towards increase of Sattva'. When this has increased sufficiently as in the Fourth stage, the 'pull of the Way' pulls him from the outside world of sensory impressions which begin to lose their power over him. (You develop a crystal radio set within you.)

'Home!' cried she. 'O daughter of a King, home to your stone house; for the longing is come upon you now, nor can you live any more after the manner of Simple Men.'

(*The Song of the Morrow*, R.L. Stevenson)

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