

30 September 1974

## READING 1

In order to have a really firm basis for each person's practice of Self-realization in his particular frame of life during this coming year with all the external difficulties which we may have to meet, it is necessary to go back to a point we reached last June (Reading 8, 1974/18).

Our 4th audience last January began with R.'s Question (19):

To get the peace on subtle and causal levels it is clearly necessary to *give up*. Suddenly last night I woke up with His Holiness's words of personal advice ringing in my ears:

'*Giving up* can be done emotionally and intellectually at all times and in all conditions. Practise (inward) 'giving up' all the time, by considering the body, the mind and the heart as belonging to Param-Atman and so offering all these back to Him.'

Even a little of this is found to be more effective than anything else. How can I make myself do more of it?

S. This observation is in keeping with the spirit of the first Upanishad – the Ishavasya. The first two verses of this carve out the central core of what can be said to be the essence of Indian philosophy.

(To refresh your memory, here they are:)

1. Whatever lives is full of the Lord. Claim nothing, enjoy, do not covet His property.
2. Then hope for a hundred years of life doing your duty in His name. No other way will prevent contamination with the effects of your deeds – proud as you are of your human nature.)

S. contd.: The complete *Gita* which we know, is almost an explanation of these two verses from this Upanishad.

Here Krishna says, 'Whosoever sees the world in Me, and sees Me in the world, he alone knows Me, and he alone will transcend, and be relieved of the turmoil of this universe. He will be in bliss and he will have everlasting life.'

The Upanishad says that the Universe is permeated by the Absolute. Whatever one sees in creation, whatever moves – one should use it fully and enjoy this Absolute everywhere, but one should enjoy it with renunciation. One should not try to hold it or possess it. Just because the Absolute is always everywhere, one need not try to hold it; enjoy it – and give it up. So, 'giving up' is the most simple philosophy which provides complete fulfilment of the individual's life, also Liberation after having enjoyed it. This is the meaning of that first verse.

The next verse says that, if one could live like this by enjoying the Absolute and giving up, one would desire to live a hundred years and, having lived it this way, none of the Karma – none of the actions through which the individual has to go during these hundred years – will bind him at all. They are no bondage for, in fact, he is already liberated; he lives in liberation; and when the body is finished with he goes forth with Liberation. Indeed, nothing will bind him, so this observation which you have given is the central philosophy. If one could practise it all day, all the time, one would experience liberation within, and the real Liberation when liberation from the body comes.

(Record, 19 January 1974)

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We have tried to symbolise this realization (as in Figure 1), of which we sometimes get glimpses. Everybody – quite ordinary people, young children – have had such ‘intimations of immortality’, which are inherent in human nature and have been sought in myriad ways.

At this year’s big Festival (Mela) the Shankaracharya said to the crowds:

Since the dawn of civilisation, man has been striving to know the relationship between himSelf and his Creator; but a jungle of conflicting ideas makes his line of thought terribly confused, so he comes to take the right course for the wrong one and the wrong one for the right! ... Everybody wants light, except the thief and the owl which possess a perverse mentality, but even if hundreds of owls combine to decry the sun, their view would not count for anything.

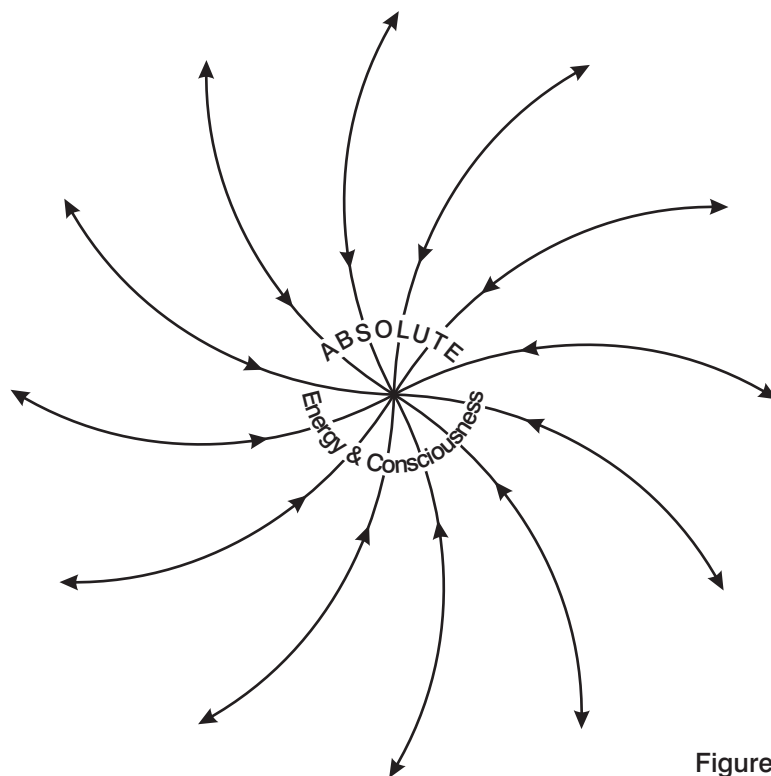


Figure 1

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## CYCLES OF TIME

But every day of our lives our body goes through a 24-hour cycle taking the active parts of our mind along with it (Figure 2). Nearly always, people think they have to ‘give up’ things on that external circle – even ‘dropping out’ of it altogether. But this only lands them in a ‘well of ignorance’ from which they have to be rescued.

In the physical world one can see that every being starts a ‘day’ or round of activity and, by the end having spent its energy, must have a good sleep on its own. Similarly, on the inner side of the human individual, there is also a need and a natural longing to have rest; and this psychological rest comes only when other desires have been given up, i.e., only after the cessation of desires.

Figure 2 also shows the quite new direction along which Meditation takes us away from the circle and towards the Centre, whereby our minds give up the burden of ‘past’ and ‘future’ and find the glorious possibilities of any moment Now.

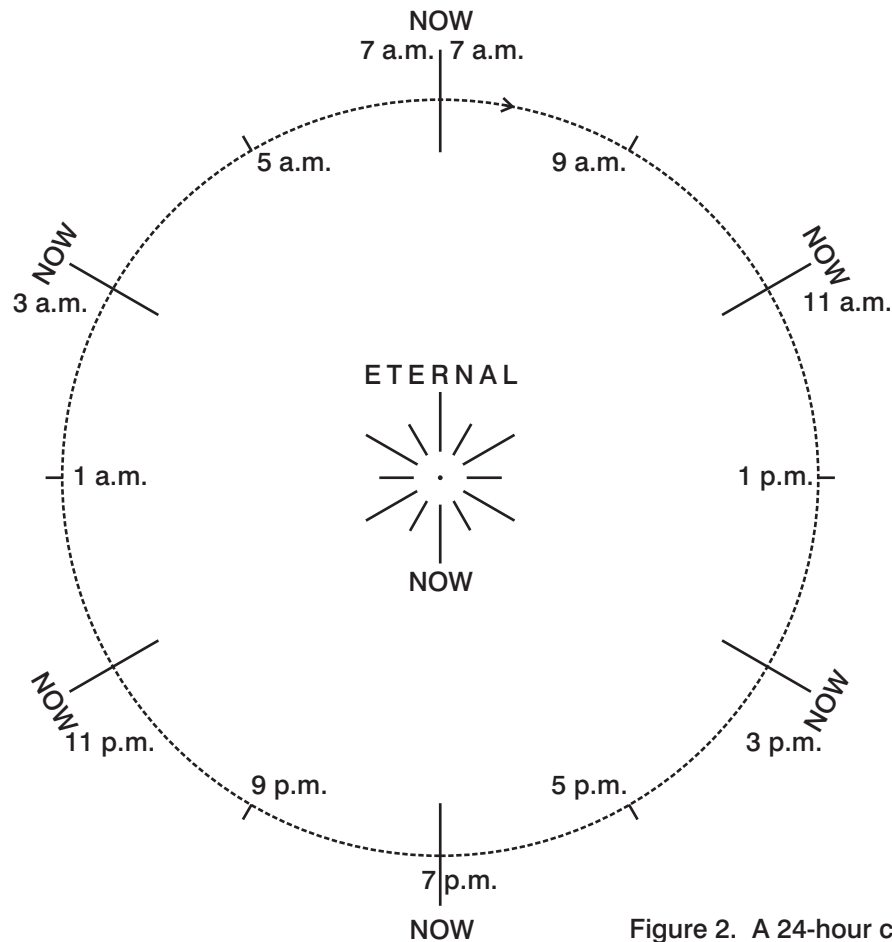


Figure 2. A 24-hour cycle

At any moment that is devoid of attention to that inner direction, we are on this circle and at the mercy of the machine.

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In a recent letter (July 1974) in reply to a further question about the meaning of 'giving up', he sent this message: '*Giving up is nothing except to understand the real meaning of giving up.*' He goes on to shed fresh light on a familiar story, so it can be given again here, but in the version he sent to the New York group in 1973:

The teacher of the Gods had a son called Kach who returned home after completing his education in all the available knowledge (the 'Scriptures'). His father noticed him sitting in a corner of his room for days together and, when asked why, Kach explained that, since the gist of all the teaching was 'to give up', he was giving up work and all activity of every sort!

'But,' said his father, 'you have not given up this house, this room, this corner.' So he went to the jungle and built a shelter of branches; yet, though he was without any material possessions, he still found no peace.

His father, on a visit, explained that this was because 'attachment to the body was still present'. So he prepared to give up his body by lighting a large fire, and was about to jump into it when his father stopped him saying; 'Even this will not do. Complete 'giving up' means giving up even the idea that you have anything of your own which you could give up.' As soon as Kach tried sincerely to do this, he passed into Samadhi, and when it ended he woke up an entirely new man.

His Holiness's July letter continues:

Ordinarily, if we give up a certain thing we immediately 'become identified' with something else. As Kach's 'giving up' was at first only a giving up of external things [see our Figure 2], he did not get what he wanted even when he gave up all of them. But once he understood the real significance of 'giving up', he found that by giving up the very 'I-ishness' (Ahankara), there followed as a natural consequence the 'giving up' of all the personal psychology based on, and connected with, his small ever-changing 'I'. Thenceforth Kach's practical life was that of an 'ideal man', namely carrying out all the duties and obligations of a practical life, deriving profit from everything that came along, without any feeling of 'I' in his mind.

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At last we have found something that really works, and this is such an important discovery that, whenever we meet together, we ought not to waste time and energy on anything else. We should just get to understand what it means – by creating opportunities to *transcend the personal*.

My wife reminds me of Mr. Ouspensky's dying words when he had us collect everyone at Lyne to sit with him, and as he looked round at us all before he passed into unconsciousness he could just be heard to murmur: 'Personal people! Yes, all personal people.' That was September 30th, 1947 – nearly thirty years ago – are we any less 'personal' today?

But now at last we, the members of this organisation, have it within our power to fulfil its objective, because understanding of the true relation between individual and universal consciousness is very close to bringing its accomplishment.

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