

12 August 1975

GENERAL MEDITATION MEETING

Dr Roles first asked Lord Allan to give the announcements.

A. There will be another of the Meditation meetings on the second Tuesday in September, i.e. on September 9th, and then of course there will be one in October on October 14th.

Dr. R. Well, we have something that none of you have heard so far from the Shankaracharya which I think will be of use to quite a lot of us. It happened a year ago that His Holiness invited two of the senior people in New Zealand to come for audiences with him, which he said would help his work which was continually being hampered by all the bickering and quarrels of groups, schools, and splinter groups in all these countries that are based on London – the countries outside India. There is, of course, a lot of bickering going on in India too, but this kind is our responsibility! So, out of these audiences I am taking just that part which is entirely devoted to Meditation. The Holy Tradition should not be bothered with any group worries or disputes; its concern is with the Meditation as a universal healer of humanity, and at these Meditation meetings we keep entirely to that.

At their first audience Mrs. Howitt (we will call her Brigit) asks about a difficulty which we quite often meet with here. She, as we knew, had had a great deal of difficulty with her meditation for a long time and we had all had attempts to get it right; and it was only this advice of the Shankaracharya to her personally which has restored it to normal completely; so that's why this should help us. She begins with this question.

B. I find great difficulty in meditation; there is constriction in the mind – tension. The efforts I make to attend to the Mantra do not meet with success – giving only further tension. Could His Holiness give some suggestion as to the approach to meditation or something that could be practised during the day to help?

S. What is the tension?

B. It appears to be discomfort and pain in the head. It is not apparently related to any particular thought pattern that I am aware of. It is there most of the time. I have had medical advice and there appears to be no physical cause.

S. How do you meditate? – sitting on a chair just as you are sitting now? (Yes)

The first thing is this – that you sit with your back erect and straight. (Dr. R. – the body not twisted). The second thing is that during meditation, of course, you recite the Mantra. While reciting the Mantra there should be absolutely no stress in any part of the mind – it should be perfectly smooth – the feeling should be like that you have when you go to meet someone whom you love dearly. On an occasion like that when you are going to meet someone you love there can be no question of tension; there is no tension at all. Simply, then, during meditation when you are going to meet your Atman who is your greatest love then it is seen that there is no tension. So, in this way, you will enter into the depths of the Atman and reach a region where everything is perfectly quiet and perfectly still, all tensions and such things being left very far behind.

Going into meditation and reciting the Mantra, which is the name of the subject

– the Atman – which everybody loves most dearly, is done in the same spirit as when you are going to meet your dearest.

(Record, 20 September 1974)

Dr. R. Now I think we should do that ourselves – try to have simply the frame of mind that for five minutes we are going to meet somebody we love dearly while we inwardly recite the Mantra, sitting symmetrically.

(Meditation – about 6 minutes)

Dr. R. This mental attitude when we are reciting the Mantra has very far-reaching effects and we should really go ahead and cultivate it without asking ‘why’ particularly. There are quite a lot of reasons which become evident when we do it.

The only thing to add really is that you will meet your love in the silence; if, at such a time, you know anything or anybody else, your love will take avoiding action at once.

Any questions now about this way of approach? (As nothing was said, Dr. R. continued.) There are some questions, I know, about this erect back. It is a very individual thing; one cannot attempt to make any universal rule about it. Personally, if I don’t have something behind my head, I am apt – as an old man – when I relax during the meditation to let my head fall forward and then I fall asleep. So I’ve been having a cushion behind my back to keep it erect and behind my head. A lot of people don’t like that, and there’s no reason why – not being old men – they should do it! If you feel in need of support, have that support – the right kind for you; there is no general rule.

Any questions?

Mlle Costaz. Would it be a good thing to apply this idea of love to someone to whom one is indifferent?

Dr. R. No, I am *only talking about meditation*, Mademoiselle, and saying that when you sit to repeat the Mantra, you must have the attitude of going to meet someone you love – namely the Atman – and not to two-legged people at all. If you don’t do that and just repeat the Mantra, you will merely fix some other thought – usually negative – so this attitude of mind is very important – going to meet someone you love.

Any other questions?

Dr. R. (then went on) At the next audience, after a general discussion, His Holiness turned to Brigit and asked her about her meditation – how she had got on since yesterday?

B. I have found when sitting to meditate that it takes a long time for the mind to begin to give up its activity. On first sitting down if I attempt to hold in mind the idea given by His Holiness, of going to meet the loved one, and repeating the Mantra at the same time, then the energies appear to conflict with the Mantra. However, when I do not try to repeat the Mantra immediately, but only hold in mind the idea of going to meet the loved one, the object of one’s greatest love, then the energies running in the mind lessen and it is easier to repeat the Mantra.

I find that the words of His Holiness bring comfort also when remembered at other times and lessen the habitual worry in the mind. This sense of comfort for the mind strengthens my faith and I don’t feel the need to strive so painfully.

S. You are quite right and do continue like that. Tomorrow, when you come here, tell me what improvement you feel by adopting this attitude within the mind while you are reciting the Mantra of going to meet something you have loved most dearly. If you do your meditation with that spirit, it is going to benefit you continually. So I will want to know what progress you have made.

(Record, 21 September 1974)

Dr. R. Has anybody had similar experience?

Mrs. Henry. I have found that it helps, if instead of sitting down and saying: 'Now I am going to try to meditate', to sit down and say, 'Now I am going to enjoy myself'. Is that a step on the way?

Dr. R. No, sit down and say, 'Now I am going to meet that which I love most dearly' – not to enjoy yourself (unless you have this special meaning about enjoying yourSelf – knowing yourSelf as the Atman). Keeping to that, H.H. allows, you see, that you can lessen the tension of the mind by having this emotional attitude before you force yourself into a mechanical repeating of the Mantra.

It will vary, of course, from time to time. Sometimes you just sit and shut your eyes and the Mantra begins of its own accord; at its own rhythm; sometimes you will need to start it running or sound it loudly to yourself. It will vary very much; but if you find that your mind is very active and that trying to repeat the Mantra right at the start gives you a headache, well cultivate this feeling that there is something marvellous within you and you are going to meet that very Being.

(to Mrs. Hubbard). Did you find any problems like this when you were checking for us? Do you think that what the Shankaracharya is now saying would cover a good deal of the problems?

Mrs. H. I think it would help a great deal.

Dr. R. How can we get this around more? The other thing is the example he shows which our checkers would do very well to follow. Here is someone he has never seen before. She asks him about a problem of meditation; he takes great care and is very patiently finding out exactly what the problem is, and then giving her some advice about her own problem. Then the next time they meet he finds out what has happened meanwhile and so on. It is really what the checker should be doing, remembering that everybody's meditation and their situation is entirely individual.

There are only two general guiding lines: sit with the body straight, and repeat the Mantra.

Mrs. Fleming. Dr Roles, would you think it helps to remember during the day your love for that special thing? If one remembers it during the day and not just at a half-hour, it helps a lot, doesn't it?

Dr. R. Oh, yes; the more you approach the half-hours and recite the Mantra with love in your heart, the more the Mantra or the feeling will come back into the mind whenever it is disengaged. It happens like that in one's ordinary life when one is in love, doesn't it?

Mrs. F. Yes, quite.

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Dr. R. contd. There is another piece of the conversation at their next audience which I would like you to hear. Nolan, the husband, at the third audience began with questions about the Meditation, to which H.H. replied.

S. Before practising the meditation, we should know what meditation is. Your questions express some inertia – some sleepiness – but that is not meditation. Meditation is a deep state of rest. You get rest during sleep also, but in that rest Tamas (sleep) predominates. Meditation is the rest of Sattva (the energy of Being, of waking up) and *the full rest is when vibrations all stop*. That is real meditation. Usually, during meditation, something external is allowed to come into your world; then the meditation can refresh you only to a certain extent, but not fully.

With full release of Sattva, by this attitude of mind, even a half-hour's meditation makes you feel completely fresh.

I must remind you that during meditation with the eyes shut, no energy from outside comes into your body. The energy is there in the body already. How then do we get rest? Because those energies, vibrations, agitations, that come (or have come in the past) from outside and are now allowed to subside, their subsidence makes you feel fresh.

Meditation is, of course, to give you energy for your actions and daily work as, for instance, if you have a bank account you get a certain interest on it. Similarly, the energy you get from meditation remains in the body, but on this energy there is also interest paid as in a bank account. You use that interest for carrying on your worldly jobs.

Then N. asked. What is the main cause of loss of energy during the day?

Dr. R. H.H. suddenly began to laugh, and he said.

S. In one word, it is excesses. (And after a moment's pause for thought) he went on: Overwork, overeating, over thinking and over-worrying.

Then everybody in the audience chamber began to laugh.

S. contd. For curing these various kinds of over-activity there are various ways: Yoga, true Knowledge, meetings (satsangs) with fellow adventurers, meditation; even medicine – you can go to a doctor. But out of all these, the one which is the most easy is most important to us – this method of meditation.

Then he turned to Brigit and asked her more about the Meditation and he elaborated his instructions. (We will have this put in the Blue Room for you to read, as there is no time now.)

Then B. asked. What is it that repeats the Mantra?

S. Mantra means the same as Atman – your own Atman – and Atman is the root of it. So when you are totally absorbed in Meditation, then it stands to reason that Mantra and Atman have become One. But this is *beyond definitions*.

Then pointing to a bowl of fruit in front of him and selecting an apple, he said: This is an apple, but what is that? Apple is just a word; you try to describe it: 'It is fruit'. But the question is not answered. Then, 'It is sweet' – still not answered. You describe the fruit, the tree, everything, but the question is still not answered. Apple is just apple.

Similarly, this Mantra is also indescribable. It is a sound – but then you ask, 'What is the Mantra?' When it pervades the heart, it is One with the Atman; when pronounced it has got fire, energy and light – things like that. But taken inside the heart it gives peace, bliss, rest, love – things like that.

Dr. R. So don't try to define it: just pronounce and follow it to meet the beloved one whose name it is.

Mr. Anholt. As a beginner, I find that if I meditate properly, the only energy I have is to go on meditating...

Dr. R. That is, as you say, as a beginner. We all just have that amount. It has to build up, because it has to penetrate a number of layers of your nature before it will manifest itself outside – on the stage, for instance. It is always much easier to feel this energy – experience it – when one is not doing anything and when one is alone, it always starts like that.

Gradually the thing builds up so that people ask you, as you asked Brian (Blessed), 'What is it you have? What do you do?' They see that you meditate or something. From then on, probably your acting gets a lift, and many other things too. So just take it from day to day; save a drop of energy and gradually you fill all the batteries.

Any other questions, because we are all beginners really! If we stop feeling that we are beginners, we get into trouble!

Julie Wood (née Guyatt). Could it be that perhaps one of the barriers to meditation is not to set your sights high enough? I feel that I use meditation, as it were, to stumble through life rather than going for higher things such as you have been talking about.

Dr. R. I agree with you very much, Julie, about this. I really do, and the essence of this going into every half-hour as if it were something quite new (with the idea of meeting that which you love best, namely the eternal and miraculous Self) is in fact setting your sights as high as they could possibly be set. Then you have to follow the directions you get to try to do what your Self – the Atman – tells you, so that, in the end, every action – even the smallest – is worthy of that Divine Self, and that is full Realization. So set your sights very high and realize that the Supreme Spirit is not away out there – somebody else – the Atman is Julie Wood in your case; we mustn't have any duality. That is why a lot of prayers in the past have led to misunderstanding. There's the prayer of the Princes of Siam. 'Help me to remember Thy infinite greatness and my own nothingness...'

It implies a dualism. You *are* the greatness, and that is the virtue of this Shankaracharya's Tradition of Advaita – of non-dualism.

Mr. Blessed. This idea of going to meet the one you love, is it related, do you think, to the promise that you made to yourself as a child?

Dr. R. Oh yes, I am sure. Children have no difficulty about this. As soon as your child can talk, it will probably tell you more about it than you now know.

But one thing I would like to say: that this feeling towards the Atman would never come without a Guru – you have to have a special relationship with the Source from which you got the meditation, that is, the Tradition – not necessarily individuals. But the place, the Tradition, from which you have been given the Meditation with a Realized man at its head – and its leaders in the past – is a sort of catalyst, and you would never get the feeling of love for the abstract Atman without a feeling of that sort for some human embodiment.

That is why it is so important not to desert the people from whom you got the meditation if you can possibly help it. That is what the Shankaracharya in all these

interviews is trying to get us to realise: if you forsake one guide for another, one school for another, you get into the habit of changing from which there is no escape.

Any questions there?

Mrs. Hubbard. Many people are afraid to give themselves completely in love, and could you say something about that?

Dr. R. Well, fear of course is simply non-realization; the more you share the love with the Atman, the more you actually experience of the love of the Atman, then your fear ends. 'Perfect love casteth out fear'. Fear is a reaction of part of the mind to something it doesn't understand. My work-a-day mind has no idea, what the word L O V E means, so is full of doubts and fears and worries. It has to learn from the heart which knows.

Does that answer your question?

Mrs. H. Yes, thank you.

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I was trying to think if there are any questions which we usually get asked on matters of detail – there are very individual things that individuals ask privately of their checker which would not be covered by this thing about going into meditation with the feeling of love when you recite the Mantra. It is not just an empty sound – an empty word – but the Name of somebody you love.

Is there anything that wouldn't be covered by that?

Joan Lawrence. I understood that you have to repeat the Mantra innocently – without expectation of anything.

Dr. R. Yes, very, very right. 'Innocently' has very many meanings – there are many tricks by which the ego avoids repeating the Mantra innocently!

These children from the School of Economic Science to whom we are giving the meditation from the age of ten onwards – one or two of them really do it innocently and beautifully – have no difficulty. One learns a lot from them. Others, of course, come just because they want to be in the running – do what the family does and so forth, but even so H.H. says that they will probably get some benefit in the long run. But in giving it to them he advises us to tell them to connect it with moments of happiness – not to sit for minutes or a half-hour, but to let the sound come into the mind at moments of happiness. Then, when they are unhappy, and they repeat the sound, it will bring them happiness.

It is the same idea as this we are talking about, of reciting the Mantra with the feeling of meeting your love, because then when you feel very deserted – loveless – and you repeat the Mantra, you will meet up with her.

Mrs. Fleming. I think one thing people often mention after they have been meditating for some time is that the marvellous feelings rather go and it becomes very much more difficult to do, say after two years, or something like that. It is very often a time of difficulty.

Dr. R. This is what you find, isn't it? (Mrs. F: Yes) We find also that the people who get most at the Initiation and feel the whole of Heaven is opening, can't get it again after, and are very miserable. (Mrs. F: Yes).

This is a bonus from that loving Being, and we must learn that it is not our business whether He gives us a bonus or not. Expecting a bonus is the best way to stop it coming!

Mrs. S. F. (A. repeating): This is rather a personal question. She and her husband were initiated just before Christmas and she thinks that perhaps he was one of the ones who was looking for a bonus at initiation. Now she recalls this word Love and she almost feels she doesn't know what it means; and she wants some help to enable her to help her husband.

Dr. R. Well, first of all, help *yourself* – get so full of love yourself that he won't just be able to get out of the way! And do that through persisting with this method and using the Mantra for that purpose.

But other details about this situation of yours should be given privately to your checker or the one who introduced you, before a full solution could be found.

Colin Lucas. It may seem silly, but it seems to me that the love comes from doing the meditation?

Dr. R. Yes, it does. If you don't mechanically repeat the Mantra – thinking of something else as so many people do.

C. L. You can't just turn it on.

Dr. R. Oh yes, you can! By persistently cultivating the thought, first of all, whenever one pronounces the Mantra – that this is the Name of what you love most; then this thought will bring the feeling much more often.

I also left it to chance for twelve years and I grew too contented – it was very nice. But, by doing this, one finds a whole new world.

Mr. Melidis. (as repeated) I don't think I quite understand: I think he said that if he starts by naming the Mantra, he finds that everything becomes rather artificial. I don't quite know what he means.

Dr. R. Well, it's a similar question to the one Brigit asked in that conversation. We need to have the feeling of coming to meet something greater than what we ordinarily call 'I'; then the Mantra starts the process.

A. He then went on to say that perhaps rhythms and perhaps sounds began to appear and that led to peace as a removal of tension.

Dr. R. Well, all these things are different for different people and for the same person at different times. So, if you have this feeling of what the meditation is all about deep inside you, then you will react rightly at any given time. Sometimes it is as you say; sometimes it isn't.

Q. Is it necessary to link the rhythm that Mr. Melidis was talking about which leads to peace and lack of tension with the name of the Mantra?

Dr. R. Oh, I see what you mean. The name of the Mantra is important. The name of the Mantra we've been given for general use has special properties, and after 6000 years we are still using it because of these special properties. It is introducing the 'Threeness in Oneness'

(the law of Three Forces) into your Nature; therefore, it is good not to forget the Name – the Mantra.

A. (to Dr. R.) You mean that if you do not repeat the Mantra – actually repeat it and allow the rhythm to come, you are in danger of going off into a dream state; and that if you really want to get through to the peace, you simply have to use the aid of the Mantra?

Dr. R. Yes, that's part of it. But you see the Mantra starts as a physical thing – with physical properties, namely 3 sounds in one; there are many physical things about it and its rhythms are physical. But it loses these physical properties gradually and becomes finer and finer *until it has no physical properties at all*, and yet you know that it is still present.

This is a question only answered by experimenting for yourself; as it is a very individual thing no general rule is laid down but the name of this Mantra is important.

Well now, it is about twenty past eight; it's very hot and people are thirsty and hungry, so shall we stop now, or shall we do two or three more minutes of *giving up everything but the feeling for the one whose Name we are pronouncing?*

MEDITATION (3 minutes)

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