

9 December 1975

GENERAL MEDITATION MEETING

Dr. Roles first asked Mr. Michael Fleming to give the announcements, and among the items mentioned were:

This House will be closed from Tuesday morning, 23rd December, until the afternoon of Monday, the 29th. The office will be closed until Monday morning, 5th January.

General Meditation meeting on Tuesday, 13th January at 7.15 p.m. here.

There will be a Poetry reading here on Thursday, 15th January at 8.30 p.m., and anyone who comes to this meeting will be welcome.

Lastly, Mr. Fleming asked for help at the Work-in on Sunday, 18th January which will be a day of work on the house-cleaning and maintenance – starting at 10 a.m. (list outside for names, and people were urged to turn up if they put their names down!).

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Dr. R. I would like to begin today with the full version of the answer and the question about Meditation by one of us at our recent talks in India. We ended the last Meditation meeting a month ago with a small extract from it. The question was:

H.H. said yesterday that each being has its role in the drama of Creation and is empowered with a certain limited force.

(Every creature in Organic Life has its own measure of force, its own structure and function accordingly. But, in addition, each man or woman, too, of the human race have their own units of energy – physical, psychological, or Conscious.)

Is it through meditation that we can learn what that role that each of us has to play is, and how to play it in the best possible way?

I will get Lord Allan to read his answer in full:

(with A. reading):

S. As has been said before, whatever the situation in which we find ourselves now – today – is itself the outcome of the energy available to us for the work on which we are engaged.

The establishment of the practice of Meditation is to escape from a situation of limited energy, (never having as much fine creative energy as we want). This method has been given to us in order that through our own small effort we may transcend these laws of Nature, of which one very general law is that all force must dissipate slowly, slowly, until it has done its job and the cycle is finished.

Dr. R. You can see that law all through the world, and in a day or a lifetime for each of us, like a battery running down.

A. He went on:

This is the natural course both of the psychological and of physical events, but this natural course can be changed, and for that our Meditation has been prescribed.

When one goes into Meditation one reaches towards the Source of Energy, and

one gathers back whatever one has spent in a day or during a year. How much energy will be regained depends only on the purity or quality of the meditation – either to replenish the lost energy or to get some extra to be able to do more and better work.

(Record, 24 September 1975)

Dr. R. Any questions about that? I think that is very straightforward and clear: Meditation is a means to an end – not an end in itself – and that one very chief end is to emerge from this situation of never having enough energy in which we find ourselves owing to this natural law.

Dr. R. (repeated): Any questions?

Mrs. Henry. Referring to the question of gathering back energy: Does it mean that once we have the right kind of energy, it is there always?

Dr. R. I don't say always, but we have stores of energy, and we usually have enough of the energy that is required for the higher side of human nature stored away, and it just has to be released. It is rather precious energy, and although the machinery of life uses up some of it, we nearly always have enough of that precious energy to begin something and make more.

Any other questions from any of the newer people?

Q. If our normal everyday lives are the result of a natural law, where does the desire come from to escape from this circle?

Dr. R. This also is natural. This is due to the fact that as well as man's human nature and all his chief functions – thinking, feeling, and so on – each person has a spark of the Divine Self – his own true Self – and it is this Divine true Self from which this impulse comes. It tells you that human nature is not enough; man can become like God Himself.

Any other questions?

Q. (a woman) She finds that it requires a lot of energy just to remain still. Is this true?

Dr. R. Until one finds the dodge! Our life is nearly all machinery – nearly all our thinking, desires and intentions, involuntary movements of the body – all this is just part of the machine which has been gradually trained since we were very small children to keep active incessantly; so to begin with it is difficult to sit still and escape from the whirr of the machine – just not listen to it. So the beginning is the most difficult part. I agree with you it seems at first to require a lot of energy; in reality that is illusion. At every moment of honest meditation you are saving energy; you don't have to fight! The dodge is to withdraw your notice from the whirr of the machine; you don't oppose it; you don't fight it; you withdraw your notice on to the rhythm of the Mantra. That is why it is such a clever method.

Mr. Hodge. What do you mean by 'withdraw your notice'?

A. Is it attention?

Dr. R. Yes, part of attention, not the whole. You can easily observe that there is a small part of your mind which is *noticing* the thoughts, feelings and the discomforts of your body; so you withdraw the part which is noticing that and get it to notice the Mantra only; then those things retire backstage.

It is all part of attention – yes; but what I refer to is quite a small part.

Q. Would you say a little more about the energy required for the Work, and the Work itself?

Dr. R. Yes, we'll come on to that, if we continue with this answer of the Shankaracharya's:

(A. reads)

S. To put this more effectively into practice, one has to see that this natural law is regulated by the three Gunas – aspects or qualities of energy, i.e., Sattva Guna, Rajas and Tamas. The last two of these – Rajas and Tamas – use up all the energy enshrined in the individual. It is only when Sattva predominates that energy can be recovered, stored up and released at need.

These three are distinguished by the following characteristics: Sattva is a very light Guna in two senses – it gives light – illumination – to a person's *mind*, and it makes his *heart* very light, always keeping him in a happy, steady, evolving and blissful state.

Rajas activates a person but as it gathers momentum, the movement becomes too fast and too hot so he does not come to any peaceful or steady state.

Tamas, like friction, resistance, coldness, or fatigue, counteracts Rajas; and while it binds everything together, in excess it gives rise to laziness, boredom and frigidity.

So, by these two forces, without enough of the third, the natural energies are being dissipated and spent.

We have been given this Meditation so that, by going deep into it, we can extract or recreate what can be used again.

It is the same with our bank account. If expenses exceed income, bankruptcy is guaranteed; but, if income exceeds expenses, then development is assured.

So, all we have to do is to practise more of this recharging with energy and the rest will follow naturally. Things will get done; we will be much happier, much steadier, much more pleasant and effective wherever we are.

Dr. R. I expect there are quite a lot of questions about that? We don't have to complicate the matter; it's a simple definition by which one can distinguish between the active force that keeps the machinery going – impels us to action; the inevitable reaction, which is fatigue, etc.; and this third kind which does not use up our energy – Sattva – but which can be released from store, can recreate more, and can keep it available. We needn't make it more complicated than that. I'm sure you can all easily distinguish those three when you start observing it – just by 'taste'.

Any questions?

(as no questions were forthcoming, Dr. R. contd:)

Has that completely stunned you? I'm so sorry!

If you are on the look-out you can derive Sattva from a great many sources in ordinary life – from people, places, works of Art, great literature, music; it's a question of becoming more and more sensitive and on the look-out for a kind of energy which is neither hot nor heavy.

But then there are special people and special places where there is quite a big concentration of Sattva; and it is a good thing to frequent those people and places rather than others not so well endowed.

Dr. R. then remarked:

You don't look stunned; you look fairly content on the whole! But do ask now if you feel that there is something important you want to know.

Q. (a woman) I've heard it has been said that all three Gunas are robbers or chains, and in fact, Sattva Guna is a golden chain, but nevertheless it is a chain.

Dr. R. Yes, because in the final unity there is only One, and all the dance of life is the dance of these three which is largely the production of our individual makeup – our own way of looking at things.

All three, as you know, must be present for any event to take place; for anything new to happen all the three Forces must be there; but their concentration varies greatly, and it is this concentration that is important.

Like driving a car, the mixture in a carburettor is what is important; you may need more choke, or more cool. But the two – Rajas and Tamas: action and reaction – use energy; and the great benefit of Sattva is that it doesn't use energy; it continually replenishes.

Mr. Weigall. The type of energy that makes more energy as you use it, and because you use this energy rightly it makes more, is this Sattva? When this process happens, is this because there is Sattva in the activity?

Dr. R. Yes, and it is a fairly safe indicator. It's like an investment which keeps giving you a good return on your money – having once invested, you get income – dividends – in plenty.

Mr. Weigall. (contd.) There is a physical example: some doctor had to deal with a patient who was very down, so he said to him: 'Start jumping.' The patient started jumping and went on jumping. (laughter) Then the doctor said: 'What do you feel like doing now?' And the patient said, 'I want to go on jumping!' (By this time Allan was laughing so much he could hardly repeat the remark.)

Dr. R. Well, that is really what Rajas is like; the more you jump, the more it makes you want to jump! But in the end I'm sure he had to stop, Weigall, because his jumping energy gave out.

Well, I'm glad you made us laugh, Al, because I was just going on to say that light-heartedness is one of the main keys to successful meditation; it mustn't be taken too seriously; the little difficulties mustn't be examined and analysed too earnestly; it should be approached in a very light-hearted way. For that, of course, there were a lot of stories, since the Shankaracharya believes in this very much.

At one time he was talking in public about the fact that human beings revert very easily to the monkey stage; and what most human beings call the 'human mind' is really just a monkey mind! It can be trained and made useful in the service of a higher part of the human mind which doesn't work in any animal, but which is a wonderfully delicate human possession – the power of discrimination, of understanding, or comprehension, which he names Buddhi.

To illustrate how the undisciplined human mind is apt to behave, he told this story:

A monkey was sitting on the roof of a railway carriage, and when a passenger put his head out of a window the monkey quietly descended, pinched his cap, and climbed back with it on to the roof.

The bystanders advised the owner to give the monkey something to eat in order to get his cap back. When he passed up a banana, the monkey held the

banana in one hand but hung on to the cap with the other. When offered a second banana, the monkey took it, but dropped the cap on to the railway line where it was irretrievably lost.

(Record, 17 April 1972)

Dr. R. went on: That is how the fickle monkey mind plays with and wastes good ideas. It must be kept out of mischief.

Thus in meditation it is often better to let the monkey have the cap right away to avoid more and worse trouble. All this monkey mind of ours wants is to attract our attention. Don't let it attract your attention during meditation – just let it have whatever it wants and withdraw your attention from it, as H.H. said when he told the story:

Our minds are all temperamentally greedy like the monkey and there are innumerable worldly temptations to attract our greed. The force of these attractions is irresistible, and we continue to fall victim to them all the time.

There is only one way out, and that is *renunciation*, in meditation renounce everything except the rhythm of the Mantra. In the rest of your waking hours practise transferring your love of those attractions to the supreme Being who is above them all.

Dr. R. repeated: Renunciation – in the sense of an *inner renunciation* selecting to what you will give your attention whenever you remember it, particularly in meditation.

So shall we now light-heartedly renounce everything, and just sit quietly attending to the rhythm of the Mantra?

MEDITATION – about 10 minutes

Dr. R. (afterwards): I must say I was very impressed when I opened my eyes to see you all sitting so *still*; because when we originally started trying to meditate we never got a large number of people to sit as still as that. I think we are getting better at it, for *sitting still* is the essence of the contract in meditation.

(to A.) Is there anything you would like to say regarding that?

A. No, I don't think so.

Dr. R. There is one thing to mention: those who are helping people with the meditation, often find that someone speaks like this:

I meet so many people about who claim to have the most marvellous experiences and to live on intimate terms with the Lord of the Universe, that I begin to feel I'm the only one that doesn't!

Now we are rather in a cleft stick here – we should aim high; there is no doubt that one has to have an aim which is above all one's ordinary changeable nature. But at the same time, we should *never make claims about it*; we should be very tactful with other people. We might put somebody off for a long time by making such claims. So within us we can aim very high, but in speaking to our friends we should speak with true humility. Remember that we are all nicer to live with if we don't make the claim: 'I am a special person.'

Any questions about that?

Mrs. White. One does quite often feel the return of energy and the lightness of the heart after meditation, but why is it that this doesn't really seem to affect one's work or anything else one has to do?

Dr. R. There are many different kinds of energy, one doesn't put this energy and light heartedness to use at other times. One is speaking now of rather an uncommon kind (Sattva) which gives one insight into a situation or a person so that one isn't living on the surface of all things all the time. Remember to put this lovely energy to use.

It also gives rise to creative impulses, because it is with this type of energy that all kinds of artistic creation – the real creation – comes from or springs from; and all new insights into the world, and so on. It is this kind of energy which enables one to come closer to one's own true Self.

Mr. Michael Fleming. Is it the Gunas that turn those experiences into a person's belongings, so to speak – something belonging to oneself? Limiting the meditation as something that seems merely nice to me, is that the Gunas? (M.F.'s question not repeated)

Dr. R. The ego keeps stealing from us, doesn't it, those results that we've worked so hard to get? We have to look out for this thief; then these experiences come to belong to one's nature.

Dr. R. then went on:

When we were meditating a little while ago, was anybody troubled with the mental machinery, the way we usually are? I found myself singularly free of it; I don't know how you felt?

Don't feel ashamed if you did have a good deal of inner noise going on!

Mrs. Moore. In the beginning there seemed to be quite a lot of inner noise, but the end seemed to be quite peaceful. But only the end! (laughter)

Dr. R. I really wanted to go on very much; it felt so good.

The great thing is if you are troubled by inner noise, one must try and coax one's attention away from it.

There was this story about a king who was riding all day through waterless country, and by the evening he and his horse got very thirsty. They came across a mechanical pump with some workmen operating it. The king had a drink and then tried to water his horse. But the horse kept starting away from the noise of the machinery and wouldn't drink.

After this had gone on for some time the foreman said to him: 'Look here, King, either you get your horse to drink, or you must take it off somewhere else, because we are going home!'

It is possible to train one's horse, so to speak, not to keep shying at shadows and not to keep jumping at noises. It's a matter of a little bit of experience and training in meditation and, later, in attending to any work one is engaged on.

Mlle. Costaz. I would like to know if the three Gunas govern meditation or does meditation eliminate the three Gunas?

Dr. R. In the final end we escape from the Gunas and all their works, and all imaginations and

movement occasioned by their play. So the object of meditation is to get to the Unity which is apart from the Gunas which are going on as it were somewhere else.

Have you experienced that? I think you have.

Mlle. Costaz. I thought we were trying to reach Sattva?

Dr. R. There are many stages on the way to perfect meditation. One cannot foresee what benefits one is going to get; but certainly in every half-hour one can get Sattva, sometimes more sometimes only a drop or two.

It's rather a rare thing, and a great blessing to escape from the Gunas altogether into complete peace. That is what the meditation is all about, because one's aim is to rise above the Gunas to Brahman – the Absolute; in the individual the Atman; in the world Param-Atman – the Consciousness of large numbers and of the Universe itself; and in the presence of this Brahman there are no three separate Gunas. There are three aspects of the Creator – Truth, Happiness, Consciousness; but all these are One, inseparable; and to somebody seeing with the eye of the Atman, everything is One – all one Universe, one Consciousness. But there are many stages, many benefits on the way and this boon only comes sometimes.

Are there any other questions?

Are there any from those who help with the Meditation – difficulties the meditators come up with?

As there was no response, Richard Dingley then asked:

I hope it's not too much off the track, but could you say a little more about the couplet: – 'Love and True Knowledge are one and the same thing', and that 'Unity is a natural property of the Self'?

Dr. R. It's rather difficult to talk about it, Richard. I think you have probably known occasions when it has happened – when you have been particularly quiet, when your soul is still, something rare comes up which you cannot define as Knowledge, and which you cannot define as Emotion, it is impossible to separate the two.

And in great writings like the Gospels, it's impossible to say whether the words of our Lord are emotional or intellectual:

'He who is without sin among you, let him cast the first stone'; or
'Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and unto God the things that are God's.'

That's profound Knowledge, but very emotional!

There's no reason why we shouldn't enter that state; it's a question of getting to the stillness.

(to A.) Is there anything you would like to say about that?

A. I don't think so.

Dr. R. I mean, you and I sometimes agree, in spite of the fact that Allan is all for feeling and intuition, and I'm all for learning something more! But there are times when we see the same thing in the same way!

Dr. R. then contd:

Well, it's after quarter past eight; we've been an hour at it. It has passed quickly for me, but it may not have passed quickly for you!

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He then added:

It's a good thing to recall either before, or just after meditation, that Meditation has now really come into the world as part of human life in very many countries. Whereas we used to have difficulty in – as it were – attracting people towards the meditation, now people who approach us are only too keen to start practising it. We are now in the middle of starting another fifty, and there is no question of having to persuade them!

So Meditation is really becoming part of human life and when I first met the Shankaracharya in India after he had stayed a fortnight with us at the Maharishi's Ashram, he said: 'Goodbye, and in Meditation we shall be meeting.'

He has often implied that each person who meditates is on the same beam as all the other meditators in the world – part of the 'stratosphere' of meditation everywhere. This realisation helps to lift one out of one's own small difficulties and problems.

Q. asked whether we can believe that meditation is going on behind the Iron Curtain as well?

Dr. R. It's a little difficult for them to get it! There are many in those countries who would want it very much. We've had one or two people who have gone behind the Iron Curtain on business, and so on, and there are plenty of signs that people all around are longing to get something to practise of this sort. We restrained the Maharishi from going behind the Iron Curtain; we didn't think he would ever have come back, but he might have done!

In any case, of course, books like *Gulag Archipelago* show one how easy it is for human beings to revert to a terrible animal existence if they don't have the right influences and some help.

But the fact that the majority of people behind the Iron Curtain in all those countries have not, even after several generations, reached that hopeless state, confirms H.H's view that they can and are being reached on the subtle level. The more people meditate, the more meditators there are in the free world the stronger is that influence. He believes that it can penetrate the Iron Curtain and all countries not yet free.

Anyway, that for us must remain superstition. We just have to enjoy our own meditation with the confident feeling that it has come to stay and that more and more people are having it.

All right; we meet again on the 13th January.

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