

16 May 1977

## READING 3

Extract from Tuesday's Meditation Meeting, by request:

There is a lot of evidence that what the Shankaracharya says is true: that we lose *a sense of direction*, every now and then, in *life* as in Meditation. It is, he says, all-important to recover our sense of direction – a general direction of where we hope the System and the Meditation will take us and what it is for – then everything goes easily.

He tells a story in relation to that:

A countryman – not greatly endowed with brains – had to go to visit his father-in-law in a neighbouring village, and it meant going to the station and catching a train. And in the flurry of the moment, in his excitement, he could not remember the name of the place where his father-in-law lived. So he said to the booking clerk:

‘A ticket to my father-in-law's place, please.’

The booking clerk said: ‘You must give me a name.’

‘I don't know the name, my father-in-law's place please! You have got to give me a ticket.’

And the booking-clerk said (as the train went out of the station): ‘You had better go away and try to find out where you want to go. Then you can have a ticket for anywhere.’

(Record, 29 April 1973)

H.H. commented: In just that way when we sit to meditate we forget where we want to go; it is as if we dialled the wrong number.

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Mrs. Newble. This is a question about loss of direction: What is the right effort involved in remembering what one has forgotten?

Dr. R. I think it is *to be silent* for a moment. In that silence one collects oneSelf – one comes to oneSelf. It seems to be the one effort that works, for a sense of direction comes from within. Then go into action with attention.

One aspect of this is to give up all problems, all thinking, all mental activity and do what you have to do as if you were under orders – simply stepping out when you are walking, unlocking a door with attention, nothing else going on at all. That is so very refreshing; one is just a servant of the Param-Atman, or an actor playing one's own role.

There followed a reading from the Shankaracharya which included this question and answer.

M.A. One has no doubt about the Meditation, but one often has doubts about one's own meditation and feels that it is only Grace which can purify it. One could not do it oneself.

S. This observation is of great importance, and great devotees have always expressed this situation all over the world. They do everything in their power to carry out the discipline of body, mind, and heart, and yet they feel insufficiency and

have this longing for the Grace of the Teacher. This, in fact, keeps the path of transformation and union open for the Grace pouring from the Teacher. The aspirant makes the effort by himself, but the Teacher's Grace joins in to enliven the stream of transformation. The feeling of insufficiency livens up the possibility of the flow of influence from the Teacher.

If, on the other hand, the aspirant feels confident of having done enough to deserve this or that, then this cuts off the stream of Grace, so that reconnection is difficult and further advance is impossible.

(Record, 17 January 1974)

Now don't waste any time debating the meaning of the expression 'grace of the teacher' – it will have different meanings for different people and for the same person at different times. At all meetings let each person try to open himself to 'the fountain of True Knowledge', like water-pots turned the right way up and ready to receive the refreshing rain.

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