

21 November 1977

READING 4

Further conversations – the first for newer people and the second for the more experienced.

PART 1

We have often been advised to regard our lives as training for the particular role a given actor can play in the big drama.

Question by Lord Allan:

A. In the Producer's directions for the drama of life, how much scope is left for individual improvisation?

S. Every actor is created as free and independent to do whatever he likes – to act the way he wants. There is no bondage or compulsion of any sort, because all individuals are given basically all the power and authority and Glory of the Absolute, to use in whatever act they are designed to perform.

What the Absolute has reserved for Himself as the producer of the play, is the right to reward the actor, to offer him extra remuneration, to praise the actor or to reprimand him and even punish him if he has not acted properly. So, although freedom is there for the individual either for improvisation or deprecation, nevertheless the result is not in the hands of the actor. That follows from the producer, in this case the Absolute.

A. When one realises that one is oneself the producer, then would you say that there is no desire to improvise?

S. One can take the illustration of a factory:

In a factory there are different levels of workers according to their capacities and talents. Some have little talent – are of the labouring class, and there are officers to look after the labourers; and then there are deputy managers, managers, and ultimately the managing director or the owner – the man who owns the factory.

Each of these levels is given a certain amount of freedom in proportion to what they have to do. Some, particularly the labourers, are required to begin at a certain time, and they have to punch their card which proves the time of their arrival. This means that compared with the officers and managers, they are not given the freedom or the responsibility to be able to come any time they like, but they will have to obey the schedule stated in their contract.

The higher officers can come at any time or sign in at their own pleasure, because they are taken to be responsible men; they have proved their responsibility and they carry out their work accordingly.

The managing director or owner of the factory doesn't sign any register at all. He is not expected to follow any of the routine work of the factory because he embodies everything and is responsible for everything that goes on in the factory. So, whatever this man does, is and must be, in the interests of the factory. If he is needed to sign bills or cheques for payments, or to deal with certain labour problems, or plans for the expansion of the factory, he is the one who will decide all these things.

The same applies to our drama in the world; some people have the role of labourers, and their scope for freedom is only within that field which they have been assigned.

If someone can come to the stage by reasoning where he sees that he is both the actor and the producer, then he would see that there is nothing to gain or to lose and, therefore, there can be no regulations for such a man, because he will always carry out the Will of the Absolute. There would be nothing for him to report or to gain, and nothing for which he could be reprimanded – he is the boss, he is the Absolute.

(Record, 31 October 1977)

COMMENT

This is a very clear description of what is known as a 'Fourth Way School'. We have heard both from Mr. Ouspensky and from the Shankaracharya about three Traditional Ways: the Way of Knowledge, the Way of Faith and obedience – that is the religious way – and the Way of Activity for men of action.

We have heard also that there is in addition a Fourth Way which surfaces at different times in the history of humanity although it always continues underground. The Shankaracharya's Tradition belongs to this Fourth Way, as does the Tradition in which we ourselves were trained in the West; and as also did the Gospel drama (where our Lord moved among the multitudes without a fixed building or ritual) before it was encrusted with what is too often known as 'religion'.

The above description can be applied very exactly in our small act both to those who are centred on Colet in London, and to all the groups in different countries who are attached to us, and therefore under the influence of the Shankaracharya.

PART 2. MOMENTS OF OPPORTUNITY

The following question which was put for all four of us – the Allans, my wife and myself – at our last audience, deals with a subject that has been touched on at the Meditation meeting a week ago and at your group meetings since:

Q. At one audience on our last visit, His Holiness said that there were two kinds of Samadhi: one is the culmination of the Eightfold System, which again has two levels; but the other type which is also sometimes called Samadhi, is little known though it is available to everybody.

It comes at points during the day when there is no desire – moments *between desires*, and he has said that quite a number of times like that occur even during a single day; yet people do not realise and tap the energy which could be made available at that moment. Some of us have been increasingly longing to be able to achieve silence at these moments in order to take advantage of them.

Would not the Realized man agree that this would give wonderful opportunities largely unexplored by the householder?

S. He remembers at a certain stage expounding this idea – that though individuals have been given machinery which keeps producing desires one after another, yet because one desire *follows* another, it means that there must be an interval in between. The mechanical law requires an interval.

The question is: How much prolongation of this interval can one win between two desires?

The Eightfold Yoga System has been taken and incorporated into Hatha Yoga by the method of Pranayama or breath control. In the ordinary life we are breathing all the time, and we notice that inhaling and exhaling keep following each other, but one must see that there is an interlude between any two breath cycles after exhaling. And it is on this point that the Hatha Yoga System was made a special System of controlling the body, and after controlling the body, of controlling the mind also.

The System has been built only according to this particular law of the mechanism by which we seem to live; and it has to be governed by experts because it can be dangerous. This law is provided for in our method of Meditation without any interference with breathing by the mind. Breathing is a natural process and should be left alone.

Apart from all this, every individual has desires, and then subsequent desires which may be related to the original one; and we are almost plagued with these desires. But there is, in fact, a time interval between desires. Most of the time *we do not allow this interval to stretch at all* before we let another desire spring up.

If people understood this and allowed themselves the luxury of a little interval – however short it might be – they would find that they would recharge themselves without doing anything but just being quiet for a moment or two.

If people could practise this and enlarge this interval – say up to five minutes at one stretch, they would find that they had great power within, and the potentiality of Realizing themselves would not be far off if they could do this – giving themselves the luxury of two minutes of interval between one desire and the rising up of the next.

R. If one uses the Mantra at such a moment of two minutes assiduously now, is there a good hope that if we are born again the first sound which we may think or utter may be our Mantra?

S. Just as in our ordinary life if one is preoccupied with a certain problem and goes to sleep with it, one finds whenever one wakes up, even after six or seven hours, that the same problem comes to one's mind.

Now this same law applies in the transmigration of souls. Whatever is predominant in the individual during one lifetime, when he is about to go into this longer sleep it will confront him when he takes another body. This means that anyone desirous of starting his next life with the Mantra ought to keep it in his mind and occupy himself with it so much that he leaves the world with the Mantra. And then, of course, he will surely get it again.

R. This should surely be a great incentive because we may have to wait some time in the next life and have considerable difficulty before we could be reinitiated!

S. His Holiness is very sure that anyone who dwells predominantly on any idea will find himself confronted with the same thing when he is about to leave the world. It is not a matter of chance, but if one has dwelt predominantly on something good that, when one is about to go, one will remember something good; because one will remember the thing one has been remembering in life, or whatever has been given most importance in one's life; and once the importance is established then you would not be without it.

So, it is part of this natural law that if you give importance to the Mantra now, only then will it be there at the last moment. If it is there at the last moment, it will also be there at the first moment of the new life.

Those who give more importance to their body and bodily relationships of the world, don't get such ideas about that time, because they are mostly struggling with all these physical relationships which they have developed in the course of their lives. Because of this, they are remembering things about their body and its relationships with people and situations and so they do not get a new body (such as the Causal body) which is prone to Spiritual growth in the next life.

So it is most essential that one should do it *now* and keep doing it now; then everything follows naturally, and in the next life most of those things will be accomplished, and one can go much further than one has done in the present life.

(Record, 2 November 1977)

COMMENT

It would be a very good thing if the senior groups of more experienced people could try between them to experiment along these lines which, as was said, opens up unexplored territory and could be a big short-cut to Self-realization. If anything promising arises as a result of your experiments, do please let us know.

* * *