

11 May 1978

FOR NEW GROUPS

Your questions and observations open up many intriguing avenues some of which we can explore, but at this stage it is best to concentrate on getting the central thing right, which is something almost nobody does. Because there are so many different conflicting descriptions of man's chief aim, each one *must* acquire the power to go in and see for himself. This is the 'pearl of great price' and in order to buy it one has to be able to sell all that one has.

So let us this week continue with that conversation we began last Thursday between the head of the School of Meditation in London and the fully Realized man – because you won't hear such things every day of the week!

Q. You have spoken of Meditation itself as Yoga, of attention in meditation as Dharana, and the repetition of God's name in the form of a Mantra as Japa. Would you say more about these? (omit Indian words if you prefer).

S. This is a journey of the individual consciousness (Vyashti) into the Universal Consciousness (Samashti) – the Absolute. By starting to repeat a Mantra, one initiates this journey at the level of Vyashti, and then this rhythm of the Mantra repeating itself is leading on to the single thread of attention which is called Dharana. This is aimed at only one thing, namely to cut out or diminish the activity involved in our daytime state.

We know now that this involves the tranquillising, or loss of dominance, of the active left hemisphere with our speech centres (which we are calling 'Personality'). This opens the way for the rhythm of the Mantra to penetrate inward by way of the quiet one [right hemisphere] to the Causal level felt in the heart. But on the way there it has to traverse the dream world of the subtle level and there is always a succession of strong temptations to explore this intriguing landscape which (like the enchantress Circe in the *Odyssey*) turns all but Odysseus himself into swine! But Odysseus (if you remember who sets out last of all to look for his friends) is a special man and on the way he meets with Hermes who tells him how to find a little white flower whose juice is an antidote to bewitchment and who gives him other instructions as well. The one who succeeds in Meditation is the one who empties himself so completely that he gets the divine guidance at each stage. We should retain at all costs the magical feeling on entering Meditation and never let it become commonplace.

S. (cont.) Slowly and gradually this march toward non-activity takes place and one reaches the realm of union (Yoga) which is felt as absolute stillness. This is the beginning of the experience of the Self as Universal. Here there is no duality and there remains no *place* to move on to, nor is there any *time* to change to; for He is the place, the time and also the substance. In that profound silence all movements stop, and there is only 'one without a second' and that One is the Atman oneSelf – the permanent Observer of 'I'.

A few happy moments like that do not mean that all conflicting desires and agitations would have disappeared from our inner universe; but just that there is during Meditation no initiation of any agitation from Personality. This particular state which we are considering does not come under any of the states of consciousness like deep sleep, dream state, daytime state or Samadhi as usually defined.

When one comes away from that state one feels joyful and free, just as if one had been to see some great man and comes away with enthusiasm in which everything seems good, beautiful and pleasant. That state of Yoga is devoid of all dispersion of the mind, identification with any desire or need, fully satisfied and complete in all respects.

(Record, 9 November 1973)

(Perhaps after some Meditation)

A story told us long ago is now seen to be connected with the relationship between the two hemispheres:

There was an intellectual [active hemisphere] who enjoyed going to Meetings three times a week and listening to lofty instructions from some wise man which he never attempted to carry out. His tame parrot [the quiet right hemisphere], a handsome and most intelligent bird, asked him one day what he did three evenings a week. He replied that he enjoyed listening to a wise man talking about 'Liberation'. The parrot said: 'Next time you go there, please ask him when *I* am going to be liberated.' The man kept forgetting, but the parrot was so persistent that one day he put the question, at which the Holy Man at once fell down in what appeared to be a dead faint. His followers were annoyed with the man for asking their leader so awkward a question and made him go away.

Returning home he told the parrot exactly what had happened and expressed sorrow at his failure to get an answer. But the parrot said: 'That's enough for me', and the next morning was found apparently dead in his cage. When his master opened the door of the cage, the parrot zoomed away to the top of the nearest tree from which he was heard to say: 'You, too, dear master, would benefit from carrying out the instructions given!'

(Record, 3 November 1967)

Observing yourself, can you discover what the parrot is, what is the 'cage' that it gets into, and what 'feigning dead' means in practice?

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