

10 October 1978

## GENERAL MEDITATION MEETING

Dr. Roles. Kedros, I have only just glanced at the typescript of the talk about Gregory Palamas, but I may quote a little bit out of it.

Lord Allan. The next Meditation Meeting will be on Tuesday, 14th November. If you know of anyone who wishes to be given the Meditation, we would like to have their names as soon as possible so that arrangements can be made.

Dr. R. About the giving of the Meditation, if we cast our minds back to the moment when we came for Initiation, we remember that there is quite an art about it. A person must really want it to begin with – we are not out to make converts. And there is endless trouble later if somebody has it at a time when they aren't really ready, don't really want it. They have it just because their sponsor thinks it would be good for them – like standing them in the corner for something! So they must want it very much. It's much more difficult to get it from the Shankaracharya than it is to get it here. He may make them work in the kitchen for 1001 nights! But here, we try and give it to people who are ready as soon as possible.

This question of preparing a person should be very spontaneous and not characterised by the formidable name of 'interview'. As it is special to each individual there is no general preparation laid down. It's a matter of what each individual needs to know about our particular form of meditation here. I don't think there is any need nowadays to refer to the need for meditation in general; it's in the air everywhere. But they will want to know what this particular form of meditation which we practise entails and demands. Therefore as it is individual, it is up to the person who introduces them to tell them what they ought to know – what they need to know at the beginning. Will you see that you are well-versed in that before tempting one of your friends over the edge? (to A. Is there anything else we should say?)

A. No, I don't think so, except perhaps to remind people that there are people here who are experienced in this and would always be ready to have an informal chat with anybody who was sent along.

Dr. R. Conversation is very difficult between the initiator and the candidate if the candidate hasn't heard *something* beforehand; but at the same time he should be very free to make his own way.

I feel it is important that the natural evolution of the meditation should be perhaps quickened up a little bit. Many of us feel that it is going slower than we would like. This is partly illusion, but why does it sometimes seem to be going so slowly? We have been promised that many steps are possible as a result of meditating regularly, so I have been asking the question: 'Why is it taking most of us so long?' And people I have talked to, it is because it hasn't become connected with what we most want, but never get – the same want in fact, that brought us to the meditation in the first place. We need to keep re-stating this want more and more clearly because as our experience grows, as the world changes, the actual expression of this want to ourselves must change too. But though our wants seem so many and so variable, yet there is one want that underlies them all and never varies, and that is the *longing for completeness*.

The Shankaracharya gave us long ago the best general formulation for people. 'In whatever form we feel our own incompleteness, whether on a given day, or again and again, or even constantly, this can be made into completeness by this System of Meditation.'

So I'm going to ask if anyone will be brave enough to say what you yourselves feel, or most often feel, is the sort of incompleteness which this meditation (the peace and quiet and entry into the Causal level) should cure. Is anybody prepared to say in what way they mostly feel themselves incomplete and get frustrated?

Q. A lack of lovingness.

Dr. R. Yes, we are lukewarm and love even turns into its opposite. One changes, one is fickle in that respect.

More formulations please, then you will all get to know what one is trying to talk about.

Miss Cullinan. A lack of richness in the individual.

Dr. R. You mean there is a richness in your nature which you aren't reaching? And also of course a richness in other people whom you meet with which you don't make contact?

There are many, many different aspects of incompleteness.

Mrs. Hall. There's a thick veil between me and my feelings.

Dr. R. Oh, I wish I had that! (laughter) I'm like an exposed nerve all the time – my feelings! We are all different. So you complain of a thick veil, that stops you feeling?

Mrs. Hall. Sometimes I wish I could feel more.

Dr. R. (to A.) You are a great man for this! (laughter)

A. I do actually understand what she is talking about!

Mr. Faires. I had hoped that meditation would allow me to hear the voice of my Father which is in Heaven and give me the strength to carry out what I heard.

Dr. R. That, Faires, I think is at the back of nearly everybody's hopes, though expressed differently. But you want to feel through conscience or other direct emotion much more strongly this inner guide that gives you a super-human idea of the past and the present in relation to a given situation – what is going to come out of it. So that you know straight away what is right or what is wrong for you to do. (Yes) That's how I put it to myself. What is often called 'conscience' but misused. Any more formulations?

Mr. Clayton. Without the meditation I always feel I am on the way somewhere, I'm going to be happy one day; but with the meditation I feel I'm there, I've got it all.

Dr. R. But in what way do you feel incomplete?

R.C. If I don't meditate, which I regret to say sometimes I don't, I gradually become more and more unhappy, feel more and more striving all the time. When I return to meditation, this drops straight away.

Dr. R. Yes, you're making the connection between meditation and completeness very vivid. Any more – for instance, there are various forms of creative work people do – painting, sculpture, composing music, playing music. Many other skills which when you try to do

them make you feel incomplete and any of those might be the way in to the source of one's special talents.

Naomi Stern. I had hoped that the meditation would make me quieter inside so that I can go spiritually deeper within myself.

Dr. R. Have you found any basis for hope in this respect? (Yes) You find that it gives you a little quiet but you would like more? (Yes)

Well, I think that's enough to explain what the Shankaracharya means by: 'In whatever form we feel our own incompleteness, this could be made into completeness by meditation'. And in talking to your friends who might want it, it's a good way to begin. We've tried it.

We are assured that there is this guiding voice in every person which is not just one of those voices, but which sees with a God-like eye, sees several extra dimensions. When Mr. Ouspensky defined conscience as a positive emotion, like love or faith, which tells you with absolute certainty what is right or wrong in *this situation now*, he was talking about the same thing which he had experienced, but the name of which has got so degraded. The reason for that is that the word 'conscience' is generally used, since the early Christian church based its teaching on the Jewish Old Testament, not for a positive but a negative emotion; by some people of course it has been understood fully, but by a lot of people it has been swamped in self-doubt and worry about one's own deficiencies. And so it ceases to perform the function for which it was implanted in human nature. One has only just lately realised that the reason for this is something very simple, very near, very easy to get rid of – not at all difficult to understand. At a recent Meditation Meeting here we heard part of a conversation with the Shankaracharya which revealed it to me when he said that there are two ways of approach to this Very Important Person, to this Deity within. One is by dwelling on one's own deficiencies as in 'confession'; and the other is a much more positive one of *giving up all thoughts of oneself*, of one's little self and one's own small world completely, and putting the whole of one's attention on the *source* of what we know to be there, learning more and more about this 'Being of Light', seeing examples of its action everywhere in ordinary life, concentrating on that. This habit can be made within quite a short time if one really goes at it. Then everything changes – the base metal changes to gold! I would recommend that whatever else you do, you immediately affect this transmutation. That perennial habit of turning oneself inside out in one's thinking, give it up and go for what you want to unite with. The mind becomes what it dwells on.

Do you understand this all-important point? Because we could hurry things up a great deal for ourselves if we did this much more often during the day. We wouldn't then have to meet with difficulties over meditating during the half-hours, if we could only do something about this the rest of the time. Let's get clear as to the meaning of this transmutation. It's not difficult to do, *it's difficult only to remember to do*. Dozens of times during the day, I forget to do it. Directly I remember to do it I find it's quite possible and immediately rewarding. So, as we have done before, shall we now put ourselves on one side and, using the Mantra, setting up the rhythm, keep our minds clear of ourselves altogether.

## MEDITATION

Dr. R. Well now, I'd like you to hear a rather remarkable conversation that one had privately with the Shankaracharya some years ago when after doing a half-hour with him and only two other people, I suddenly heard to my astonishment my voice asking a question that I never consciously thought of before. I'll ask Lord Allan to read the conversation because it started off the search within for what it had always seemed that one had to look for outside.

A. And the question which you asked was: 'How to connect ourselves with the Fountain of Knowledge?'

Dr. R. I never heard myself using those words or thinking that way at all before:

S. There are two different things here. The Fountain of Knowledge springs from within. The showers of knowledge come from outside like the natural creation or Realized man, through works of art, traditions or inspired writings. People all round are mostly embedded in the sensory world or in their own dreams and are like pots turned upside down. However heavy the showers, nothing goes into the pot. They deprive themselves by shutting themselves off, and live on the few drops of moisture which enter from the ground. Those that keep open after being turned the right way up will find plenty to fill their lives with – peace, happiness, love, knowledge. Those who are manifestly connected with the Fountain are the rare ones who have been on the Way in their previous life or died before full realization, the Yogis, in particular. It is that accumulated experience which forms the fountain in this life. They do not need much from the outside.

And later when asked if people like us who are not Yogis can also reach the fountain, he said:

S. One simply has to turn the right way up, keep open the pot and allow it to be filled. Neither race, nor colour, nor sex make any difference. The deserving will always inherit the fountain in the end, but only after Self-realization. You mention the Yogis – that is one of the three traditional Ways, the Way of Knowledge, the religious Way through emotion and ritual, and then there is the Way through action. (And physical exercise as in other disciplines.) Everyone knows about these Ways but they are for one-storeyed types and most people have some of the possibilities of each storey and want some knowledge, some emotion and some action. For them there exists a Fourth Way which is little known.

Dr. R. Then he went on to tell a story which you may have heard, but it's rather good to hear a story again to see whether one understands it a little better. I'll just refresh my memory of his actual words when we first heard them:

There was a temple of Sharada, the goddess of Wisdom, in Kashmir, 25 centuries ago, to which there were four Gates – three for the three traditional Ways which were always open and the fourth (having the title 'Moksha' or 'Liberation' written over it) which was kept closed. The first Shri Shankara came there when on his travels and passed straight through that fourth Gate. And when the learned inside the temple inquired how on earth he had managed to do that, the goddess was heard to murmur, 'Ah, He is a Self-realized man.'

(Record, 20 August 1964)

The Way that from the original Shri Shankara has been transmitted faithfully down to the present holder of that position is also called the Way of non-duality – Advaita. In my

own recent heart-searchings about completing the process of union, I found that we could understand and practise the Advaita method as I have been telling you by simply dropping as unreal all else than the True Self which is the only real thing. One must drop all duality. This is much more simple to do than all the other ways one has tried.

Mr. Sampson. Can you say something about Sat-Chit-Ananda in relation to this?

Dr. R. These are the three characteristics of the Divine Self. In talking about them, he said, 'We want to find a way of recognising the source of this voice. We want to find a way of recognising this Self. Supposing I have to meet somebody at the station whom I don't know, you would have to give me three characteristics, or at least two, by which to recognise him. You might say that he has a dark skin and he is likely to be wearing a bright blue shirt. Sat-Chit-Ananda are the three properties by which you could recognise the Divinity. Sat means that which alone exists unchangeable, the only reality. Chit is the source of consciousness, the divine end of that which we feel as reflection – Chitta. Ananda is the sort of happiness which comes out of nowhere, for no reason, no cause that we know, and which never turns sour. We may have it for a little and it may disappear, but it will never change its nature. Those are the three characteristics of this "Father of Lights with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning". Eternal, unchanging. So if something is changing it cannot be that.'

Mrs. Melville. It was lovely to be reminded again that all one has to do is keep the pot the right way up and let the happiness in.

Dr. R. Yes, because we *have* originally been turned the right way up! We're very lucky. It's very hard really for the individual to turn himself back again. Having been turned the right way up, one stays there, given half a chance, unless, Mrs. Melville, one deliberately runs away – which you are not doing! (laughter)

Mr. Melidis. Could you say exactly what 'turning the pot the right way up' means?

Dr. R. The logical mind wants a definition. No, you will have to parley with yourself, Melidis, and say to yourself without words what it means! By feeling!

Dr. Cox. I think it must be something to do with the way you started this evening – the real wants...

Dr. R. Yes, if you can find what underlies the different things you want at different times – the underlying want that is there all the time underneath, then you are getting very near. You will know periods when you are sure you are turned the right way up. You receive the shower.

Dr. C. Listening to you and following your conversation, it seems that the want that comes is the want to know my Creator.

Dr. R. I'm sure that's the underlying need (recognised or unrecognised) for everybody. This is the condition of human life on earth. We have this planted in all of us. Only very often the difficulties are so intense that this need is pushed aside and forgotten. There are periods in history when it is more forgotten than at other times. But inherently all through human history I'm sure this is the paramount need and he calls it a game of 'Hide and Seek' where 'He' is the Atman. We are very apt to introduce some middle man, you see; whereas there

should be nothing but Michael Cox doing his job with the recognition that the job, the Atman and the doer of it are all one. From somewhere near the summit comes this prayer which one has to quote once again:

Oh my Lord, my whole being is yourSelf. This Buddhi that was given me is your companion, consort. The organs of circulation which produce all these changes in the body (autonomic) – the five Pranas – are your attendants. This body is the temple in which your worship is being carried on from day to day; and even at night when it is asleep, I feel I am in Samadhi with you.

It's that state when nothing is in between. He concludes the prayer with:

You see that everything in my life is aimed at you. Therefore there is no room for duality. No room for anything that is not You to come in.

Well, there are steps towards this. If we equate on the Ladder of self-Knowledge, the first step as the Good Impulse, the first 'intimation of immortality' that one gets, the sudden rising of some desire which we have been talking about, momentary and quickly obliterated. If one goes then to the second step (about which there are many misconceptions) it means that this sudden impulse sets up an *enquiry*, an investigation in the person. They don't just leave it at that. They want to know about where it comes from. They start this search, this enquiry, which we have all started long ago here. This inevitably leads to some practical help; either some friend who told you about the meditation or introduced you to the system or something like this, some external help is given at that point. This enables one to start practice, practising some steady, regular attention because the Indian name for the third step of the Ladder is '*thread-like attention*' and these steps and the higher three steps up to Samadhi can be experienced in a split second as a result of this impulse. After all the experience we've had, one can go six steps up the Ladder, if one has enough of that Sattvic energy.

Lady Allan. Was it in this connection that you said we had to start afresh each day?

Dr. R. Yes, it was. We have to go up the Ladder every day – like washing every day. You don't have a bath to end all baths. We have to go on washing our bodies and also our *nature* day after day.

Now, how can we remind ourselves of this thing that is so difficult to remember? That all our troubles come from looking at the wrong end of the line of attention, at the changeable, fickle self, and not turning the right way and looking at the other end towards the source of all good things – the source of the impulse, the source of all the steps on the Ladder which is present, inside, in our soul. How can we keep reminding each other? This is the only point at issue.

I think it's probably time to stop now, so please remember that the inward-looking half of our nature knows all this perfectly well and provided it's checked, kept under observation, by the other, so that it doesn't make a fictitious world of its own, it will take you, so don't try and describe it or define it, Melidis, or otherwise get this active hemisphere focusing on to it. Our personality has to be quiet and just watch and check on the other; for the other will take you with the right energy straight into the heart, to the Atman.

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