

9 January 1979

## GENERAL MEDITATION MEETING

Lord Allan. The next Meditation Meeting will be on Tuesday, 13th February; and please may we have the names of those whom you would like to have the Meditation as soon as possible as there is to be another experiment. This time we want to talk to the sponsor before seeing the candidate. Because this is fairly short term, it will help if you could be fairly speedy in bringing names forward.

There will be maintenance parties working in the House on the next three Thursdays starting at 7.30 on the 11th, 18th and 25th January. No need to give in names, just turn up.

We have now got the third volume of our journal, *The Bridge*; as you will see from the Contents pages, there is an editorial on the thoughts of Mr. Ouspensky, an article by Dr. Roles, also Colin Lucas, Peter Fenwick, Helen Wright, Dame Ninette and Geoffrey Lee – very interesting contributors. £1.50 and I think there are enough copies outside for all who want them, but if not, more will be along very soon.

Dr. Roles. A Happy New Year to you all. Have you had any adventures with the Meditation? Or arising from Meditation? Any remarks you want to make or questions to ask? It has been rather a comfort in the freeze-up to some of us! You must remember that if your feet get cold when you meditate, you aren't meditating! (laughter) according to the Shankaracharya. That should warm you up all through.

I daresay you would like us to set the ball rolling and then perhaps some questions will tumble out of you. We have a programme ahead of us for approaching things in a new and refreshing way. One of the obvious factors which makes meditation difficult for some people is the enormous number of conflicting bits of knowledge. Everybody seems to have bright ideas; everybody is very clever; they all tell you what you ought to do; and one's mind is continually pulled apart. Meditation works beautifully if we can find some way of not being pulled apart and then we can use the Meditation to promote unity. Unity of all the functions which are latent in us and so use a much bigger part of our repertoire than we ordinarily do.

Now the way to try and do that is to use a symbol for collecting all these different bits of knowledge together. There has been since pre-history the Universal Symbol. There are many, many different ways of using it and many people in the past who have been outstanding in advances of knowledge have used this symbol and in many different ways. The most practical way we have found of using it after many years of trial is to use it in relation to man's structure and possibilities. (Figure 1, overleaf, on Screen) The symbol is basically a series of concentric circles about a point. This point in the centre is most important of all and it is the thing which is left out commonly. That, we represent as the Atman – 'I' – the only thing which is not subject to the circle of time and space; the only thing which is always there and always unchangeable in everybody and always available. What we want to do in order to interest people in Meditation, to give Self-realization its proper place in life is to try and magnify the 'I' or Atman and convince people that it is always present and available.

I'm glad to see our Judge here (Sir Kenneth Jupp) back from the Northern Circuit!

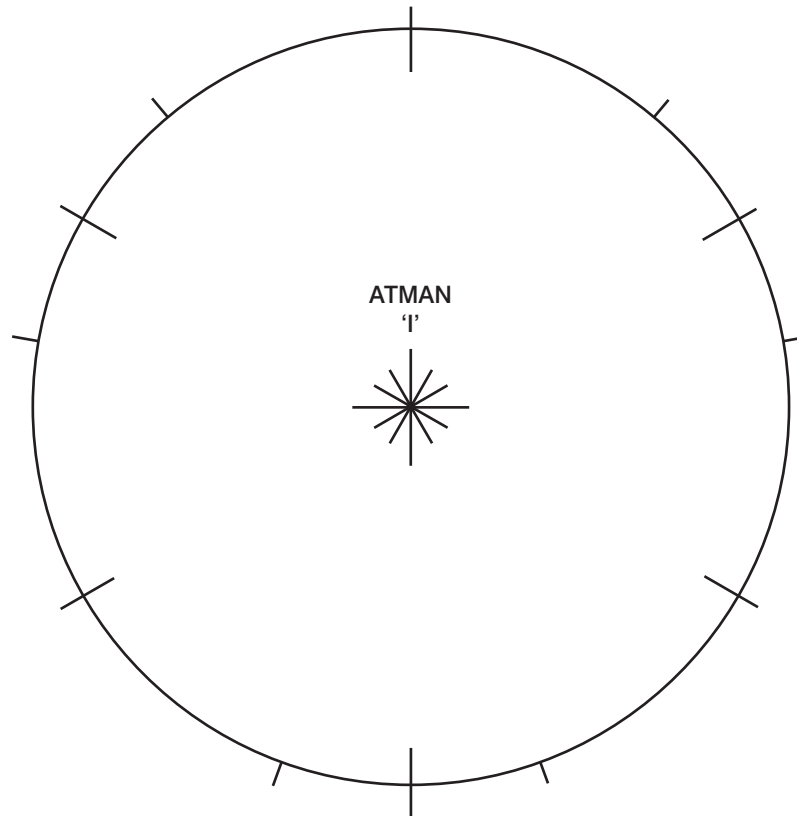


Figure1. The Centre (Eternal 'I') and the Circle of Space and Time

We want the minimum of knowledge in relation to Meditation but suffice it that if this is the circle of man's physical and psychological side, there will be circles bigger still – solar system, galaxies, all characterised by their own space-time. Similarly for man. The whole game of life is played like the game of chess for the capture of the King – at the centre. The King himself does not get involved, isn't active.

If we want to see further, we can perhaps go on with a fuller edition of this symbol (Figure 2). The structure of man on the basis of the three-storeyed house is denoted by this equilateral triangle: on the right the organs of action and sensation; on the left the system underlying our emotional life – the autonomic nervous system with the sympathetic in the middle; and at the base the organs of reason, voluntary actions, control, discrimination, intellectual function in the bigger sense than it is ordinarily used in. Through these three gates in the individual supplied with Sattva not only stream influences from the central Atman but also give us an idea of how to get into the centre which in the Fourth Way can be done by any of those routes – either through attention during action or through consciousness, being aware of what one is doing, saying and thinking; or through emotion where one's emotion is canalised into devotion for the Self. None of these three is confined to an extreme kind of person. They all can operate in any of us at any time. For some people one is easier and in others another, nevertheless they are all available. One can tell about it because this circle is the Antahkarana or Inner Organ or Soul of man and it is characterised by stillness. One can be still in the midst of activity; one can be still while performing mental work; and one can be still however much one's emotions are lit up. All these three entrances are characterised by the domination of Sattva guna – the third force which is shown or experienced by waking up. So if one sits to meditate, one divests oneself of all thoughts

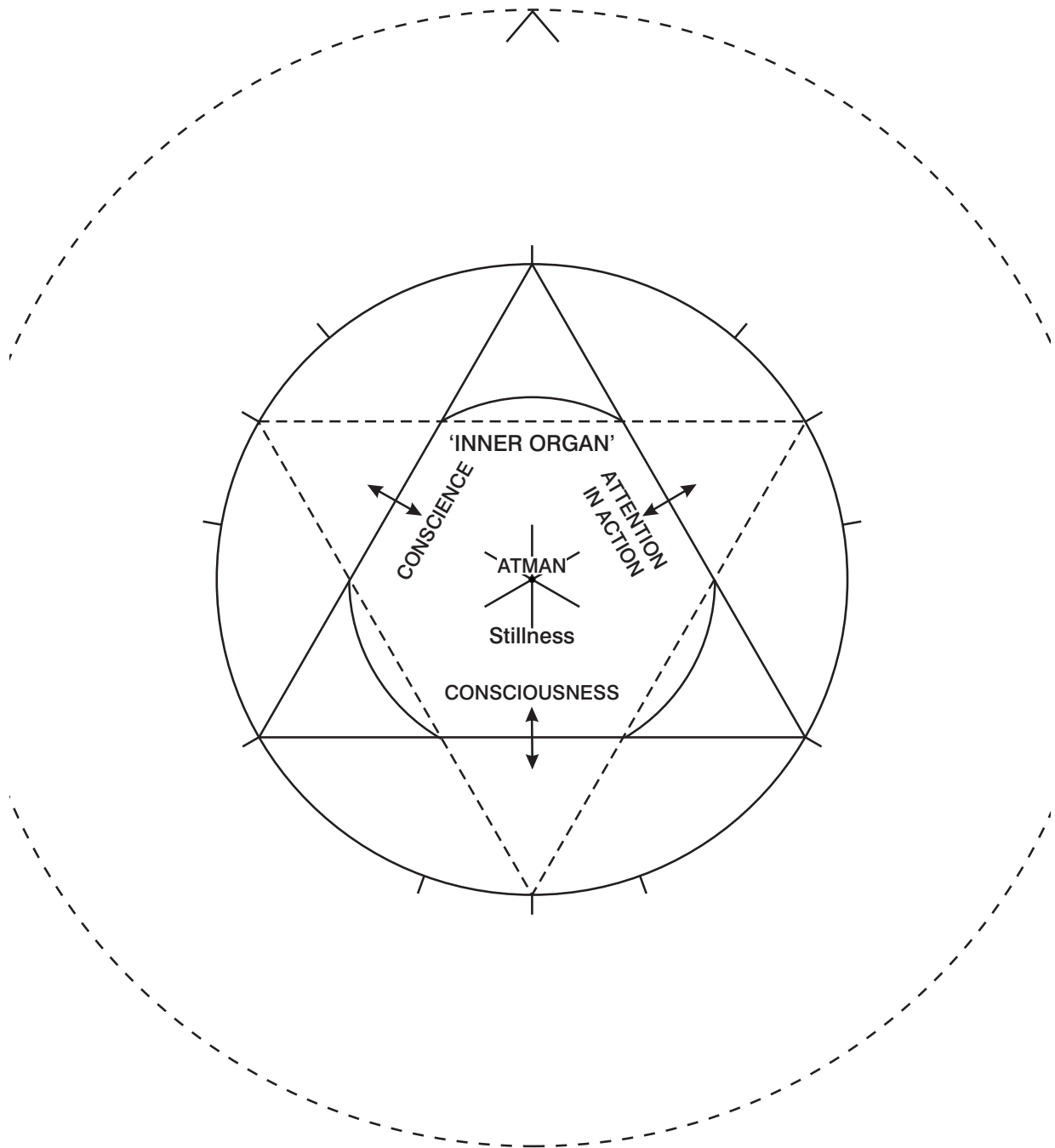


Figure 2. Superimposed on Screen

and ideas and external sensations – all the usual commentators that go on about life. One has one idea and one idea only and that is the stillness. Anything which leads to stillness is all right. Anything which is militating against it is wrong and is discarded at once. So that one's attention is fully on the Mantra but with the idea of longing for the stillness in one's heart. I think that it's a help to many people to realise that if you are on this circle which is continually changing all the time – the circle of time and change – all endeavours come to nothing. Whereas if one penetrates, enters the stillness, then new possibilities at once open up. That's a kind of simple picture of the very beginning of the use of this symbol and particularly in relation to Meditation. In Meditation, the thinking process, the intellectual process, has no function at all. It's just there to decide what is leading to stillness and what is not leading to stillness and even that disappears when you go deep and get nearer Samadhi. The physical sensory motor apparatus

again has no function at all in a half-hour's meditation. One tries to make the body as comfortable and passive as possible and pays no attention to any sensation that comes from it and one should keep the body still. To do that, one sits in a symmetrical position with a straight back. Those are the basic instructions for meditation. (to Lord Allan) Have we left out anything important? (No)

Let's see how far we've got. Is that clear to people? Is that how you could see the use of this symbol as being practical? I mentioned at the beginning that many wise men have used this symbol in the past and looked at life from this point of view. I'll just mention one – the writer of Ecclesiastes. He's using this in just the same way we are. 'To everything there is a season (Chronos – a period of time) and a time (Kairos) for every action under the heaven'. Every moment of 'Now' (time) is the idea of the moment of opportunity: 'A time to every purpose under the heaven; a time to be born and a time to die; a time to plant and a time to pluck up that which was planted'. One might say that we have all discovered that there is a time to meditate and a time when meditation is very difficult. We tend to arrange our day for ourselves to satisfy this particular time when meditation goes [well]. (Pause) Is anything going to come forth from this bunch of wise people?... All this intensive practice you've been doing over the holiday period?

Mr. Tyou. You spoke about the intellectual function and the action in relation to meditation, but you didn't mention the emotional function.

Dr. R. Wait, Tyou, because that is what the reading is going to be about. (laughter) I'm not an emotional expert myself so I have to quote from someone who knows like the Shankaracharya who has progressed by the way of Bhakti, which is the Way of emotion. One can, just as a lead-up, say that whereas this – the intellectual part – is the seat of consciousness, the seat of relative consciousness that gets us through the day, the emotional part is the seat of Conscience which is the emotional realization of Truth. That's one aspect of it. There is another aspect which is appreciating and understanding other people's needs. This is a marvellous way towards Self-realization and a proper use for meditation. It's all too easy even for people using our method of meditation to get into a sort of ivory tower and not care a rap about other people. This is what puts meditation very often in bad repute. So the same apparatus in us which sets up the idea of right and wrong in relation to oneSelf also enables us to see what is needed in regard to somebody else who comes to one for help or with whom one is in contact. This doesn't apply only to people we love and people closely related to us, but it could apply to everybody because if you love them that love you, what reward have those things? The idea is a universal compassion which we have seen in the fully Realized man because it is always operating in him. Maybe this is something which is missing in the meditation of some people who are finding it difficult because they are thinking only of themselves. Of course there are heaps of other faculties which open up if the emotional centre is full of Sattva – intuition and many desirable things. But the one that's forgotten is the compassion and understanding of other people's needs. Not a day goes by when there isn't somebody whom one could help or somebody for whom one is to some extent responsible and one forgets in a horrible way and misses the moment of opportunity. Any questions following that?

Mr. Torikian. Do you think that the troubles of today are indicative of what you have been speaking about as lacking in Society today?

Dr. R. Lacking in Society at large, and particularly lacking in small Societies like ours, whose members may be so intent on their own souls and have such esoteric status that they are quite oblivious of the needs of people around them. This Torikian, is very much what we want this Society to get clear of. So it's not only the big society around where it's lacking, but also various exclusive societies which function as closed circles. There is no need for that any longer. There is no longer any persecution – people aren't burnt at the stake very often (laughter) and meditation is for everybody. Of course one doesn't carelessly hand round knowledge which needs study and is difficult to understand; nevertheless the existence of a society to help people realize their possibilities through meditation and other methods needn't be kept a secret.

Miss Randall. One speaks of societies being closed or not listening or not hearing but shouldn't this apply to the individual who should be open and listening and hearing?

Dr. R. Yes of course. One must begin with the individual and one is speaking to individuals who will see each thing in their own way because everybody is different from everybody else and the strength of a society is to enable them to be themselves and not have to conform to some external set of beliefs or code of action. Yes, it all starts with the individual.

Well just now, having in view the idea that it's our own thoughts and noisy internal life which is the only thing that keeps us from that divine Atman within, let's shut our eyes and let fall away all personal thoughts and feelings, keeping the meditation rhythm going, and remembering the Atman – let's approach the stillness.

## MEDITATION

Dr. R. We could come back to that again perhaps. Is there anything that came to mind? Any hints which might help other people? Is it clear what moving away from this circle of repetitive thought and going towards the stillness feels like?

Q. I find it quite useful not just to think of myself and other people but to think of the world as a whole – as a unity.

Dr. R. Yes very much so. Not of course during meditation, but think at other times of what unites people instead of what divides them. And what unites you with anybody and what puts up an insuperable barrier? In general, it's always better to think of the positive side, to let your mind dwell on the glories of the unity at the centre which is in everybody and therefore unites everybody. On the Causal level everybody is one. It's only on the physical and psychological levels that they appear to be separate.

Mr. Melidis. I find it very difficult to have a feeling of love for the Mantra. What is the Mantra? I know it is one of the names of God, but it should be alive and I should feel love for something that's alive and full of light. Is it part of the Atman or is it the Atman himself?

Dr. R. Dear Melidis, just think what a silly question that is – to go fretting over! *Take your own name*; is it part of you or is it you yourself? I find a difficulty myself in developing a love for

the *name* Mr. Melidis, for I also 'should feel love for something that's alive and full of light' like your True Self, what your name stands for! Yet the name 'Mr. Melidis' is undoubtedly useful, for it represents you as a person and when it comes into our minds, it reminds us of you who have done so much for us and whom we love. If you develop that idea about the Mantra, it will quickly solve your problem.

Lady Allan. I find that the Mantra rescues me so often at moments of stress or trouble that it becomes a lifesaver. Quite apart from the Meditation, the actual Mantra becomes a friend and lifesaver. I often think that if I were stuck on a desert island, nobody could take it away from me. So it's invaluable and that creates an attitude to it.

Dr. R. So that it has arisen out of perpetual use in a certain direction. It acquires properties as a result of that. Whereas if it were cheaply used, thrown out in ordinary conversation without knowing its meaning, it wouldn't have those magical properties at all. It would lose them probably?

Lady A. Yes, I have found it a great help.

Dr. R. The more you use the Mantra rhythm for getting away from the circle of time and change and into the Inner Organ of stillness, the more power it will acquire, Melidis.

I'd like to get back to what we were discussing before – the question about the emotional side. It was part of a conversation in 1975 we had with H.H.

A. (reading). I'll read your question first – I think it helps.

R. The emotional centre seems very happy and often gives a warm glow and then the physical limitations of old flesh and old bones seem to be lessened by attending carefully to *how* one speaks, *how* one moves, within the small limits of one's personal life. Is this how one could begin to serve the Atman?

S. Atman is not bound by time, space and forces of Gunas which keep changing, so He never gets old. He never gets rusty. It is only the material world which is subject to them and the perpetually changing things that they set up. To be young or old is only relative to the body but there is no way to apply this to the Atman – the Conscious Being that inhabits the body. When one is charged with the appropriate energy then emotional centre and for that matter intellectual centre as well bring about this glow of happiness with its warmth in the heart which spreads into the whole body which gets more attuned and works better than it can in ordinary circumstances. One who is so charged and is free from dispersion of the mind – Vikshepa – or from identification – Kashaya – then becomes much more united with the Atman and the feeling of being old disappears. So he works just as a young person would do. That is the feeling of the Atman that you have described. One behaves suitably. One speaks suitably. And this is the way not only to serve the Atman but to *be* the Atman.

There was a Realized man one of whose followers lost his son so that he was full of grief and agony and he went to this Mahatma and started crying before him. The Realized man also started crying and weeping as violently as the father himself. Seeing this, the father stopped crying and asked the Mahatma why he cried. He replied that he couldn't help it as he shared the feelings of the father for his son as if his own son had died – a natural feeling

it was. The father stopped mourning and went home, feeling confident that he was not alone in his grief. Others were with him, even the Mahatma. But another man at the audience asked the teacher, after the father had left, how he could do such a thing, for a Mahatma should never show outbursts of pleasure or pain – that's what he himself kept teaching everyone. And yet he had fallen into the same worldly habit.

The Mahatma replied that if he had only tried to give the father comfort by wise words, it would not have touched his heart and the pain would have lasted longer. When he saw his teacher crying, the man found sympathy and in sympathy the pain was shared and the weight of it made lighter, so he did not feel alone in the world.

Yet (the Mahatma said) he was detached. He was not identified with the other man's suffering. His job as a teacher was very like that of a postman who delivers hundreds of letters, some of them containing merry news, some bad news; some cheerful, some sad. Does the postman laugh or cry when delivering the letters? Even if he knows what's in them, he is not identified. And although the Mahatma may be sensitive and express joy or sorrow, he is not identified with either.

This applies also to the man we were describing who is charged with Sattva. It will be evident that he acts like Atman, speaks like Atman, or if one prefers to put it that way, he serves the Atman.

(based on Record, 25 September 1975)

Dr. Roles. Well how does that strike you? I don't think you've heard that... it's not what's usually described as evidence of Self-realization – what a great teacher is supposed to do. Nevertheless I think it is what is greatly needed today. People know they need sympathy and compassion and it certainly counts far more with anybody who is suffering than words. Any comments? You needn't agree; you can say that the Mahatma is very reprehensible.

Miss Blum. (repeat) The Mahatma must have felt it – he wouldn't just have acted it.

Dr. R. No, no, it wasn't an act. He says it was quite natural – it felt that way. And meditation should be making people sensitive – more and more sensitive and able to feel with somebody. Not more and more detached from everybody. No, it was quite genuine. But sorrow expressed in that way without identification and with a feeling for the other person does not harm one as ordinary negative emotion based on identification and self-love can do. That must, of course, be tempered. That is a property of the emotional life, isn't it. And the middle part of the left side, the sympathetic nervous system, when charged with Sattva gives this increased sensibility towards other people and towards oneself. What is right or wrong for one. It has to be checked by the mind because it can degenerate into just empty sentiment or various other crudities. But with Sattva working throughout the body both the emotional centre and the mind and the body are all lit up – wakened up to some extent. Sattva penetrates to all three divisions at the same time. Mr. Ouspensky used to say that emotional centres, emotional parts of centres, all work far more in unison than mechanical centres. A discovery will suddenly bring a great emotion – love – and also knowledge and also changes in behaviour.

Mr. Tyou. If one feels emotion while trying to meditate, does that imply that one is not meditating?

Dr. R. No, no, no. But you have not to identify with it. In other words you turn your attention back to the Mantra or keep the attention on the rhythm of the Mantra and this emotion will give you an impetus towards the Atman because in a half-hour that is the objective. Afterwards you can remember the emotion and the cause of it and that may help you at times other than meditation. But these bonuses, like little injections of cortisone, so to speak, (laughter) are what help meditation to reach its objective – little rewards.

Miss Cassini. You spoke about how one can reach stillness on the physical and intellectual levels, how can one reach it on the emotional?

Dr. R: That is above all the most direct and the most potent and I don't think by any means the most difficult. What happens when you are ordinarily emotional? I've seen it every now and then! (laughter) How would you describe it?

Miss C. I find it very difficult to control.

Dr. R. Yes! It galvanises you into some sort of activity, doesn't it, both inward and outward, and always governed with thoughts of oneself. It always stimulates the ego at the same time as having a health-giving feeling on other parts of one. Now if one can eliminate that ego feeling from the emotion, it can lead to the stillness – 'Be still and know that I am God' – rather than just making you move like a puppet! (to Lord Allen) Is there any other way you would approach this question because you've also been known to have an emotion every now and then! (laughter)

A. No, I think that's right – channel it. It's how one channels one's emotions.

Dr. R. Of course it's easier for certain types of people than for others. Those types are much more rare than is ordinarily thought. Many people think, 'Oh, I'm an emotional', but the ones who can divest themselves of self by the emotional gate are rare. Other people take some time to prepare the way to Self-realization by other routes; and they do it beginning with the liberation of the mind from dispersal of thought. That's the first thing. If you can acquire control so that you can have one thing in your mind at a time, then when you are emotional you will be able to do it just as you can learn to swim in a swimming bath. But once you know how to swim you can swim in the ocean waves. So it's a process with a number of stages for most of us and one doesn't begin with the most difficult – doesn't begin at the moment when one is given the sack by the BBC! (she laughs) One begins at a quiet time, when nothing much is happening, to practise keeping one thing in mind at a time. The Realized man, the Shankaracharya, says that a Realized man has one object and he pursues this object until it has been achieved. Only then does he change to another. It's all part of the attempt *to be One* – to acquire unity. Another thing that helps is to eliminate activity for activity's sake and make one's actions purposive. This 'moving centre' is always active in some way or another. It's often active in external movement or it's active in promoting turning thoughts and the changing emotions. If you can get the moving centre to be still, if you have enough Sattva when you haven't got something to do, then when you *have* got something to do and require to move, the body will move in an economical and efficient way, saving lashings of energy in the process.



What I am hoping to prove is that all these three gates towards the stillness are available to everyone at one time or another during every day. One doesn't have to go always one way as if one were an extreme type. All three gates are available to each of us. To learn how to use them (what is appropriate in given circumstances) is the art of realizing the Self – winning the game of chess.

You notice here that the structure, as we have so often expressed it, is the three divisions of the nervous system, but the *way in* to the Stillness in which the Self is experienced is at the halfway points of each division. In other words where the Sattva (which is intermediate in density, between the two extremes) is concentrated. Today's expression of the Symbol is one of the real meanings of the Seal of Solomon which has always been a symbol of wisdom since very ancient times – well, since Solomon anyway.

Mrs. Koren. The most difficult time to keep one's mind from wandering seems to be when one has nothing to do. For instance, standing at a bus stop or waiting for someone or waiting when you have dialled a telephone number – at that moment, do you keep your mind on Atman or attention, where? You spoke of the Realized man keeping one object in mind so at moments like this, what does one do?

Dr. R. You're waiting for something, you've nothing particular to do, so why do anything? Why not just be there without impatience – there is no need to think: 'Why do *I* have to wait?' or something like that, which is identification. Just *be still* and be present without feeling you've got to do something – when there is nothing to do! Some people, if they find it very difficult, repeat the Lord's Prayer but it's not really necessary. Instead just let slip away all thoughts of past and future and let the mind rest in the present moment – and if your feet are cold, stomp up and down – but do nothing artificial or unnecessary. Probably you've been longing for a moment's peace all day. Well, there you are waiting! It's OK. (laughter) Ingrained habits are making the mind do things because it has always done them before; whereas if one takes this hint of dropping away the burden on the mind at moments when it hasn't anything particular to do, that is worth its weight in gold.

We used to repeat the Lord's Prayer at such moments in three languages simultaneously! That seems to me now to be only putting an extra burden on the mind! (laughter) I remember doing that, repeating the Lord's Prayer in three languages while driving a car and I hadn't noticed that I had pulled in behind a van which was stationary! (laughter) A newspaper boy was going by on his bicycle and shouted through the window, 'Fast asleep, governor, fast asleep!' And there was I doing spiritual exercises! (laughter) We did a lot of unnecessary things before we got the Meditation!

Well it is getting late and food is after all necessary, so let's go and eat. It's not compulsory to use this Symbol but if you find it helps you to be *one*, use it. Otherwise don't.

(Mr. Torikian's dog was hungry too and gave a shout of joy when we got up!)

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