

11 March 1980

GENERAL MEDITATION MEETING

COLET HOUSE

On the platform: Dr. Roles, Lady Allan and Mr. Roy Jacob (R.J.)

R.J. Just to test the microphones, it's really to ask you whether you have been giving up anything for Lent? Alternatively, perhaps you've got good suggestions that your children or someone *else* might give up?

Dr. R. But not me; get the *children* to give up sweets! But the conversation today will be about what 'giving up' means in relation to the meditation and I'm feeling strongly that many people in this room know more about giving up than I do. So this could be a *joint exploration of what the Shankaracharya means by 'giving up all the time.'*

Anybody got anything to say?

Mr. Hodge. (rpt) I wonder if it is just to do as we were told; just repeat the Mantra only during meditation and have no thoughts of whether it was good or bad. And after meditation just go out and do what you have to do in the world without thoughts of good or bad meditation?

Dr. R. That's fine, Hodge. What have you found from doing it that way day after day and week after week?

Mr. H. (rpt) I try to do it that way but very seldom succeed.

Dr. R. That's it. So there is a lot we have to discover about putting into practice those simple words – 'try to give up all the time.' And we are going to set out and try to get further with this today.

First of all, let me explain that Roy Jacob and his wife are just recently back from three weeks in Mexico and since his last visit there he has been empowered to give the meditation, so I wanted those of you who haven't met him to know about this. (to R.J.) Because in Mexico they hang on the words of Roy and Heather Jacob quite a lot.

R.J. Rather foolishly, yes! (laughter)

Dr. R. They are such a refreshing lot of people. Whenever we bring their questions to the Shankaracharya, he always likes their naturalness and directness. The faces of the people in the Ashram light up when you mention the word Mexico. Roy has here two photographs of the two principal centres – Mexico City; and Sra. Stulman's group up north in Torreon which impressed you particularly, didn't it?

R.J. Very much so, yes. The Torreon group is in a new town which has only been in existence for 70 years and so they seem to give everybody a very warm welcome because they are completely surrounded by the desert. They're very much on their own – I think the people in the town as well as the people in the group feel this. My wife and I named it the 'Rose in the Desert' because they were such warm and happy people to be with.

Dr. R. Perhaps there will be a linkup with the West Coast of America where our friend, Jami

Harp, is gradually collecting people together in California and is now invited to go to Colorado and initiate a dozen people there. She has done initiations in Mexico and maybe there will be a tie-up between the two. But it's not easy, is it, to go to and fro across the border? (R.J. No, the distance are so great) And Mexico is not happy at Americans coming in, are they really?

R.J. No, historically Americans and Mexico don't get on too well.

Dr. R. You'd bear that out, would you Mary (Skeaping)? (She didn't hear the question.)

Before we do any more I'd like to tell you what has been happening. Oh yes, why I mentioned the California people is that Marc Gold and his wife Zosia are Jami Harp's principal helpers and a lot of us know them. Al Weigall, do you remember Marc Gold? (Oh yes I do!) And he and his wife stayed with the Allans the last time they were here. I'll ask Maureen Allan to read this letter from two of the New York group.

Lady A. I think quite a lot of people here will remember them – a very small bright couple, absolutely sweet:

Dear Dr. Roles,

We have been asked by Mr. Rabeneck to relate to you an incident occurring in California involving our friends Marc and Zosia Gold inasmuch as it reflects upon the power and force of meditation in one's life and also your personal interest in and affection for the Golds.

On the evening of January 27th about 9 p.m. Marc was driving his small automobile down a California highway. Zosia and Alexis Jason, their infant son, were sitting in the back seat. As Zosia was nursing the baby, she wasn't wearing the safety belt. Marc, who was wearing his belt, suddenly noticed an auto coming from the wrong direction head on in their path. It was too late to take effective action and the cars struck at high speed. Police, fire and medical assistance soon arrived. They found no one involved seriously hurt, although at the time this was not altogether clear as Zosia, who was thrown along with Alexis, the baby, into the front seat and knocked unconscious, was covered with blood from her nose. She was also trapped in the crumpled car and an electric saw had to be used in an attempt to free her. Marc who received cuts on his face and broke a cap on his tooth was a conscious witness to this terrible scene of his wife trapped and bleeding and also had to overhear pessimistic medical pronouncements as somewhere his child lay in a stranger's arms crying but safe.

Zosia in turn has related to us her experience. Fitfully she would gain consciousness, lose it and regain it once again. She was not able to judge how badly she was hurt although the amount of blood covering her front suggested to her she might be seriously hurt indeed. Whereupon she began to panic, fearing the loss of her life. It is not clear to her even now whether it came entirely from Providence or was suggested to her by Marc, but she suddenly found herself repeating the Mantra over and over again. This had the immediate effect of enabling her to let go, to give up all struggle and attachment, and to become calm within herself. At one point she even commented to herself upon the beauty of the effect of the light shining through the broken windscreen.

She was hospitalized for three days, having concussion, whiplash and a bruised nose and lip. She was in a lot of pain for several days. Alexis escaped unscathed except for a small cut on his head and Marc was forced to miss a week of school and

had difficulties at his job as well, as he had full responsibility for the baby while Zosia was away.

The drunken driver that hit them was arrested. He had only a broken thumb. The policeman on the scene summed up with the words: 'It's a miracle any of you are alive.' A miracle indeed.

With best wishes for you and everyone in London.

Suzanne and Arthur Hornickel.

Dr. R. Well, for those people who may not find the meditation very rewarding day after day, week after week, do go on with it because you never know when you may need it. There are drunken drivers about, and we've got to allow for the things happening to us which are *not our* fault.

PAUSE

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We heard back last year of an impending change-over of the Shankaracharya. We were about to enter, we thought, a new phase in the history of this house and this Society.

Apparently Guru Deva appointed four successors in his will because the seat had been vacant for 160 years before they got him to come out from retirement to be Shankaracharya. The first of these four is our friend, the Shankaracharya; the second didn't qualify because he didn't take the vows of Sannyasin; and this is the third; and there is still another to come. We'd not heard anything about it from our Shankaracharya (except through Howitt of New Zealand), nor have the other people who have been out during January and February heard anything about it from him. Just this one letter in answer to one which I wrote to his faithful No.1 assistant, Sri Narayan:

Thanks very much for your very kind letter of 11.1.80 (this was written on 1st February.) I am sorry for the delay in reply but it was due to reasons more than one; the main reason being preoccupation of H.H. with the big Mela Festival. I have since read it over to H.H. and he desires to convey to you that whether he remains in office or no, the spiritual relationship once formed would be there for all time to come. He will continue, wherever he may be, physically and ethereally to do his best for all those with whom he had the opportunity to come in contact spiritually until they achieve the final goal. The new Shankaracharya, his successor, is scheduled to take over on 28th February. His Holiness hopes that, being the manifestation of the same Param-Atman, it will make little difference to the people who look for guidance here. But as far as you and your Society are concerned, they have had enough and should not stand in need of any further assistance. They should be very safe in the ship they have boarded steered by you.

Dr. R. A little laugh at us! We know nobody's 'steering a ship'. He knows that all the time; but I only remember it sometimes! And now we have been discouraged from writing more letters or from planning visits or anything of that sort until at least we have put into practice much more than we have so far the real meaning of the teaching given. Then Narayan ends up:

Kindly be assured once again that you are most welcome to use me, my time and labour, any way you like and when you like. It is a privilege for me which I am sure you will not deny me.

So we shall keep open this thread of contact. Two days before the 28th February when

the installation was to take place, interpreter Jaiswal telephoned to us, saying that he had had a direct personal call from His Holiness inviting him to this ceremony in Varanasi where he (Jaiswal) and his wife live; he was going the next day, and would come back and tell us about it. We were both very pleased to hear this and one of the things it allowed was that one could send to Jaiswal in Varanasi a greetings cable to the Shankaracharya, worded something like this: 'Grateful love and thanks to the Jagadguru from people all round the world who constantly value his example and teaching.'

Well Jaiswal went and came back and we had a talk on Saturday last. I asked him, 'Were you able to hand in the telegram?' and he said, 'Yes, I read it to them both and they both sent their love and greetings.' And I said, 'Both? What do you mean?' and he said, 'Oh, you know the new Shankaracharya very well since you and I had tea with him at our hotel in Lucknow in 1964, and he has been at many of our meetings.' In fact you (Lady A.) and Bobby had a talk with him at our last visit. We used to call him Vishnudevanand Swami.

Lady A. Yes, oh yes! I've a photograph of him! (laughter)

Dr. R. So he's a friend of long-standing. We thought he hadn't made the grade at one time, but now we see he most certainly has! The fact is that His Holiness is staying on as Shankaracharya, until this man has taken over most of the official business and is really trained for the job.

Is all that clear? So we have been thrown back on to our own resources; and we have been told, over and over again, that we haven't put this into practice enough. That's me chiefly, because I haven't been prepared to give up enough of my habits of thought – things I think I know and so on. And I have a feeling that a lot of people in this room know more about giving up than I do.

He gave an illustration of this in relation to people who for years go on and on repeating the mantra but don't get much benefit. He has described this several times, but told it again later in 1974.

S. It describes colonies of ants belonging to two separate mountains, one a sugar mountain and the other a salt mountain. One day some of the ants from the salt mountain met up with a sugar mountain ant, and she invited them to her mountain to see what her food was like. Suspecting that they mightn't get enough food, each of the ants from the salt mountain took a grain of salt in their mouths just to make sure! When they had tasted the sugar on her mountain they said to her: 'We don't think there is anything special about your food sister. It tastes very much like ours only a bit weaker.' And the sugar mountain ant said: 'Go and wash your mouths out, I suspect you've got salt in them. Go and wash your mouths and then you'll know what sugar is like!' They did that and they never wanted to leave the sugar mountain again.

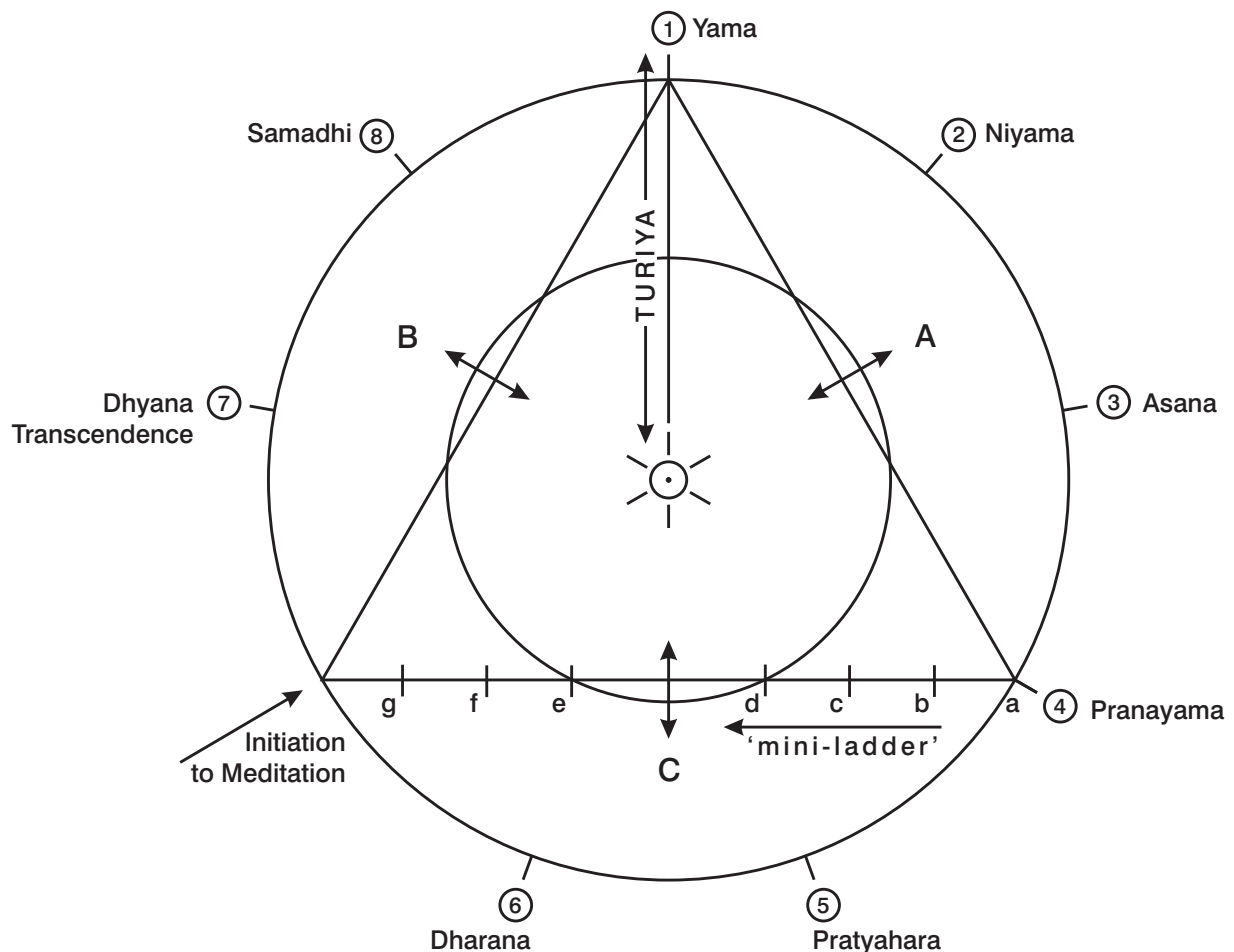
Just so, when you taste the bliss of meditation, you don't want to seek happiness outside yourself any more.

So what about the question of giving up? What does it mean? The whole difficulty lies in understanding what we have to do. Everybody has to undergo a complete transformation of his psychic nature, his psychological nature. Like a seed growing into a plant or a caterpillar into a butterfly. In the Tibetan *Book of the Dead*, the Messengers of Death are seen

weighing the hearts of people when they die and so assessing their future. And the Shankaracharya, and all true systems, say that it is the *emotional* part of man which needs to be purified and to work at its right speed and that this transformation of the emotions plays the chief part in the transformation of man.

That is illustrated here (Figure, below) in the way we are using the Symbol, which calls 'A' the organs of sensation and action in the outside world; 'C' the brain and psychological part – the subtle level of the mind. And 'B' as the instinctive and emotional which works very slightly, if at all in most people, other than at the instinctive level and in the dream world.

In our Western system which we had from Mr. Ouspensky, the left hand angle of the triangle represented the income of impressions, sensory impressions. And we were told that there were two places where conscious help is required. The 'first conscious shock' it was called, was at the entry of impressions and could be expressed as Self-remembering. The 'second conscious shock or effort' was a point further on, somewhere near the top left before



the apex where negative emotions are transformed into positive emotions – love, joy, happiness, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faith, humility... because the food of the Atman Himself is *joy; i.e. positive emotion*, when you would ordinarily be negative. Somebody hurts you, harms you, and you suddenly aren't negative; you get a feeling of positive emotion and that is food for the Atman. That is what the meditation makes possible for us in the simplest way. There are of course other ways, very arduous, but this is the simplest way for everybody.

So meditation is given at Initiation (see Figure) here between the sixth and seventh step of classical Yoga at the point where people have cultivated one-pointed attention and then it is meant, not only to transform negative into positive emotion, but also to come back here (C) and help the one pointed attention and clean up the psychology. Then it will be able to make actions (A) more simple, more repaying and voluntary, instead of all the involuntary actions we do. So this is the keynote – and is our meditation doing that? I can answer for you: not anything like what it could do and will do under pressure. So how do we apply this pressure? Now stop me gassing! (laughter)

Dr. Cox. If you watch the mind during the day, it's obvious that the mind forms very quickly, instantaneously from moment to moment some notion or some idea of some object which attracts things to itself. This idea or concept in one's personal work then becomes the governor.

Dr. R. Yes. These habits of mind that we have contracted are perhaps the main part of our prison-house.

Dr. C. If you catch this, one realizes that most of oneself normally is these concepts. It's like this lady (Mrs. Gold) in the accident who formed this concept of the threat of how seriously she was hurt, she then reacted from that. That I would say is normally like most of our lives.

Dr. R. Yes, plus the habit of always thinking about the future or regretting the past and never being at the present moment which is the only moment when we can remember ourSelves.

Dr. C. If one manages for a moment just not to do that, you get the sense of the vastness of the mind, like a church.

Dr. R. Yes, and there are these natural moments provided in human nature whenever little changes of consciousness occur during the day, which, if you recognize them, can be made use of and show you the vastness of your own mind which you are not touching. Any other remarks now after all your experience?

Mr. Faires. Dr. Roles, you have said before that there is very little that has to be done as far as we are concerned to meditate. Would you be good enough to repeat what those simple things are?

Dr. R. We're required to make a regular practice twice a day of two short periods (never more than half an hour) in which we drop everything, all customary habits of thought, feelings, movements, and external sensations. We sit with a straight back in a symmetrical position and we sit still and start repeating the Mantra. That is all we are officially required to do. It's not all that we find that we can do by any means! The mind has no part to play in meditation – the Buddhi has nothing to do. It can go on in the background, but we pay no attention to it. It shouldn't come in between you and the Mantra. So *meditation is essentially giving up*, Faires, for two short periods in the day which tend to come at certain regular times when you know, perhaps 8 o'clock or 9 comes along, you know that this is meditation time. That's not required officially; in India they do it at dawn and at dusk because a lot of people don't have electric light. Is that what you meant?

Mr. F. Yes. thank you.

Dr. R. Now, what does giving up really consist of? Before further discussion I would like Lady

Allan to read a story which you have probably heard before, but which has been repeated several times.

Lady A. It relates to *Prajapati* who is the teacher of the gods, the priest of the gods:

His son *Kach* having gone through the proper education in the Vedic and Upanishadic texts and having acquired all the knowledge that was to be acquired, came back to his father. His father asked him what he was intending to do and he said, 'The essence of all that I have learned is that renunciation is the best medium for life, so I would like to go the way of renunciation.' So he would not take up the activities of the priesthood and he would not help in the household activities either. He just stayed in the house. (Dr. R. In other words, he dropped out.) (laughter) After some time the father asked him whether he had really renounced everything? As far as the father could see, he had renounced all work, but he still keeps on moving, eating and using all the amenities of the house. So what about that? And the son said, 'All right, I will renounce the house.' So he left the house and went into the jungle and stayed there. Then after another interval the father visited him there and asked him what the situation was. And the boy said, 'I can't say I've acquired complete peace, so it seems I haven't yet renounced everything.' And the father said, 'Yes, of course it seems so – your renunciation is not complete. Otherwise peace would descend on you. So he renounced the cloth which he wore; the food he ate; and all activity. But still he could not get real peace of mind. 'Now,' he said, 'the only thing left to renounce is my body, so I must renounce the body.' So he prepared a funeral pyre intending to jump into it. His father suddenly appeared and asked him to be sure that this would be the final renunciation. And the son asked, 'But once I've given up the body, what else will remain to bind me to worldly things?' And the father replied, 'Your subtle body is not going to die with your physical body. And the activities of the subtle body which has desires will make it keep on wandering and it will not subside after the body is burnt. You'll get another body when you're dead because there will be some desire in your subtle body. So burning the body is not the final answer. You are not going to get rid of this creation.'

Dr. R. We have had a lot of corroboration of this from the relating of near-death experiences where people's subtle body, their psychology, is witnessed as going on after their body has been pronounced dead.

Lady A: (continues reading) So the son said, 'Well what should I do if I cannot renounce? What else should I do?' And the father then said, 'At last, you have asked me a question! So now it is possible for you to learn something. Give up all your yearning and the final giving up, the final renunciation, is the giving up of the very idea of renunciation. *You* are not giving up anything. Everything *is* given up. By the idea of renunciation you are holding something in preference to other things. In fact you are not renouncing; you are holding on very tightly to something lesser. The creation is such that everything is there by itself. Everything has a purpose and must fulfil its function. So it must keep on rotating and it must be used. Use everything and give up the idea that you are renouncing. But don't hold on to anything in this creation. And that can only be done by this final renunciation of giving up the idea that you have anything. In fact, you have nothing.'

Dr. R. This was said in relation to the first two verses of the first Upanishad which he says is an

epitome of all that follows including the Bhagavad Gita. 'Whatever lives is full of the Lord. Claim nothing, enjoy, do not assert that you own any of His property. That will make you want to live a hundred years of life, doing your duty in His Name.' Commenting on that, he said, 'See the Absolute in everything but be ready to give it up and do what you have to do next moment. Don't cling on to experiences. Don't recite your experiences. Be ready for the next moment.' I think that's got the gist of it. He pointed out later in answering a question from me in a letter that the giving up by Kach in this case, as in so many others, was all physical. He gave up his house, food, the clothes he wore – all physical. Whereas the *real giving up begins mentally and is entirely dependent on that – mental giving up*. A word we'd never heard was recently used at Maurice Pickering's audiences. *It is that each of us has to discover his heart's desire – Ista*. And that has to become strong enough to become his God – *Deva-Ista*. Nearly everybody has some God of their own, whether they call it God or not. I mean with some people their God is money; for some it's reputation, publicity, influence, fame, social prominence, possessing your own family or your own house and so on. Everybody has some God and he points out that if you want to realize your possibilities, you must choose the highest possible Deva-Ista or you will only be disappointed in time. And he says that the only thing *that will never disappoint you is the Self* who lives in the hearts of all – which he calls Param-Atman. So that is why we are encouraged, since 1972, to think of Param-Atman as often as possible and hold the idea in our heart all the time. Then we'll never be disappointed. That plus the meditation will make you remember yourSelf, of course, and will transform negative emotions into positive and will get rid of old habits that you were mentioning, Cox.

So let's start from here and not make any more wasteful efforts and let's pull together and do this. Let's meditate now for five minutes or so.

MEDITATION

Just before we read, is there anything that has come up into your mind to ask? We give up not the things, but the *I-ishness* – *my* wife, *my* family, *my* house, *my* money. They aren't mine at all. They belong to Param-Atman and they are part of His creation. As regards the inward things – *my* meditation, *my* thoughts, *my* feelings, *my* rights – they are not one's own either – they are all borrowed. So you offer them back to the Param-Atman and stop clinging on to them.

Lady A. Reading from 1974 text (to Mr. Whiting) the Shankaracharya said:

This is a journey of the individual consciousness inwards to the Universal Consciousness. One starts the Mantra and repeats the Mantra. One initiates this at the level of the *individual*, Vyashti, (4), like the individual sapling in the forest. And then this repetition of the Mantra is leading on to the bare thread of meditation which is the Dhyana (7). This movement is aimed at only one thing and that is to cut out or diminish the involved activity of life. Slowly and gradually this march towards non-activity takes place until one reaches the realm of union which is the stillness of unity. This is the experience of the Self as *Universal*, Samashti, (9), like the whole forest. Here there is no duality but there remains no *place* to move on to and no *time* to change to, for He is the place, the time and the being. In that

profound silence and stillness or union all movements, mental or physical, stop. Now there is only 'One without a second' and that is the Atman Himself, the Observer. This does not mean that all relationships and agitations would have disappeared from our inner universe. It only indicates that there is no initiation of any agitation from one's own Ego. This particular state, *Turiya*, is not one of the listed 5 states: unconsciousness, sleep, dreams, daytime [state] or Samadhi; for it is unique. When one comes away from that state, one feels joyful, just as when one goes to see some great man and returns with indescribable joy and enthusiasm, feeling that everything is good, beautiful and durable. That state of final union is devoid of all turning thoughts, attachment, agitation, desire, need, ignorance, loneliness, and it is profoundly still without any hankering, fully satisfied and complete in all respects.

Dr. R. He gave us a mini-Ladder, which fits along the baseline (Symbol) from right to left. This (4) is the point where the brain is aware of the voluntary movements. The *first step* of this mini-Ladder is *attentive actions*. The second step: attentive actions lead to good thoughts. A job done well. Good thoughts (b) lead to the third step which is the diminution of all the rotten thoughts that are going on all day (c). (laughter) Diminution of all the bad thoughts gives rise to Sattva Guna (d-e) which is the energy that's necessary – a build-up of this lovely transparent energy. And so on. The last step (g) being to *give up all thoughts about yourself and your own personal profit*. So that's what we are supposed to begin with.

(to R.J.) How do you think Mexico will like this? They'll get it whether they like it or not! (laughter)

R.J. I think they will enjoy this particularly well. It seems to go very close to what they are trying to do. They are very much trying to live the life they think they need – I think we all are, but it's knowing how to do it.

Dr. R. Yes, yes. Any also remarks? It's now quarter past.

Mr. Melidis. (rpt) Instinct and emotion seem beyond control. Is there any way of using this along a line of attentive actions?

Dr. R. There are three main ways. There is the presence of Sattva in an active day so that you dedicate your *actions* at moments to the Atman. There is the quiet moment for the *mind* – a change-over moment when you are aware of the Self, the eternal presence of the Self. And there is a moment when you are very *emotional*, you've forgotten yourself, rather like Zosia Gold, when again you can come very close to the source. So there is no excuse. It could happen any time irrespective of an accident or near-death experience.

Any more remarks?

Mr. Clayton. At the last Esher meditation meeting we were discussing the part of the paper (report) where people had to go through the various six steps of Yoga on the way to Initiation and how recently it was stated that it wasn't necessary to do that any more. The question which I merely pass on was: Why was it considered for so long necessary to do that and why isn't it now?

Dr. R. Because (we were told) they were prepared in the past to be celibate, to give up their

name, their life, their career, whereas nobody is prepared to do that now. That's why! But also because it wasn't necessary! (laughter and more laughter) Think what people have done to their bodies in the hopes of attaining their heart's desire. Think of the fakir on his bed of nails. And God knows what they do in Africa sticking needles through noses, ears or lips. All that is quite unnecessary. All the things you do with your mind – brainwashing and all the rest of it – unnecessary. Just understanding what to give up in your particular case.

Mrs. Beckwith. (rpt) I feel that planning to give up can be rather muddling and that trying to remember and love the Param-Atman all the time seems simpler and makes the giving up come naturally.

Dr. R. Yes, because the thing which is talking about giving up all the time is this dominant hemisphere and it's just talking about giving up and refusing actually to give anything up. It's the quiet hemisphere that has already given it up and which should be allowed to proceed through all the stages. Is that what you find?

Mrs. B. Yes; and I would also like to know whether... (rpt) Mrs. B. says that there is a slight feeling of cheating, trying to get out of something. Is it necessary to make the intellectual effort to come to a decision to do something?

Dr. R. It is, at times for certain things; but where you have to make that decision, stick to it! But for most of the time, it's a fake – not necessary – a pretence, huffing and puffing about something which is perfectly natural anyway. Don't you find that Sarah? It's like them blowing their own trumpet. (laughter) Father and son! (Father is a trumpet player and little boy imitates.)

I think it's dinner-time, don't you? Perhaps we ought to give up putting off dinner! (laughter) By the way, the next meeting is 8th April. The 1st April is April Fools' Day and the 8th is the day after Bank Holiday, but I'm sure people will turn up anyway so we had better have the meeting on the 8th! (laughter)

Lady A. For those who can.

Dr. R. For those who can, yes. Here are the photographs if you want to come up and look. Photographs of the Mexico groups and here are some of His Holiness that you might like to see. (to Lady A) Taken by you, weren't they?

Lady A. No, bought by me in Delhi.

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