

9 September 1980

**GENERAL MEDITATION MEETING****COLET HOUSE**

On the Platform: Michael Fleming (M.W.F.) and Roy Jacob (R.J.)

R.J. Firstly I'm sure you would like to know that Dr. Roles is very well and on holiday with Mrs. Roles. We hope this news will help to take some of the worried looks from your faces! (laughter) I think, as you said, no news is good news so we can assume that they are enjoying themselves.

The next Meditation Meeting will be on Tuesday, 14th October at 7.15 p.m. There will be a Work Party on Thursday evening beginning at 7.30 p.m. There is no need to put your names down, just come if you can. The week of work in the house begins on Sunday, 14th September, and will continue in the evenings of the following week and all day on Saturday and Sunday. There are lists for names on the hall table and on the tables on the landing. On Saturday and Sundays work will begin at 10.00 a.m. and in the evenings at 7.30 p.m. Although Dr. Roles is now on holiday, he has left a series of readings from the Shankaracharya for use on these occasions.

M.W.F. The good news was that there isn't any news! And the bad news is that you've got the third eleven to take his place. But anyway we may be able to help each other a little bit.

I don't know if everybody was here at Dr. Roles's last meditation meeting but he made a start on emphasizing the importance of the lines of Now in relation to a line of time. And I thought you might like to be reminded about that a little bit and perhaps you've got some observations and things you would like to say. I don't know whether anybody has found that useful practically or not? (diagram on screen) I have here a very simplified picture of the diagram which you will find much less intellectual; in fact not really intellectual at all. Perhaps I could just start off a little bit with a paragraph that Dr. Roles put in a paper that he gave to a few people.

R. I would like you to try to remember this and study it practically, not theoretically, as you go through the day. Those lines of continued Now are in fact due to the quiet hemisphere which lives in, what to us, is the line of Now (there is only one line drawn here.) It learns what it knows about clock-time only from the other one [hemisphere] during education but its natural existence is instantaneous, out of the line of Time on a line of Now. And that Now can either lead you further away from the Absolute or can lead you straight to the Absolute. It is that which will give one Self-Realization and it is that line that the Shankaracharya is talking about nearly all the time and not this line of Before, Now, After, which is the line we spend most of our time talking about and quite a lot of the time during meditation – going back and forth instead of meditating.

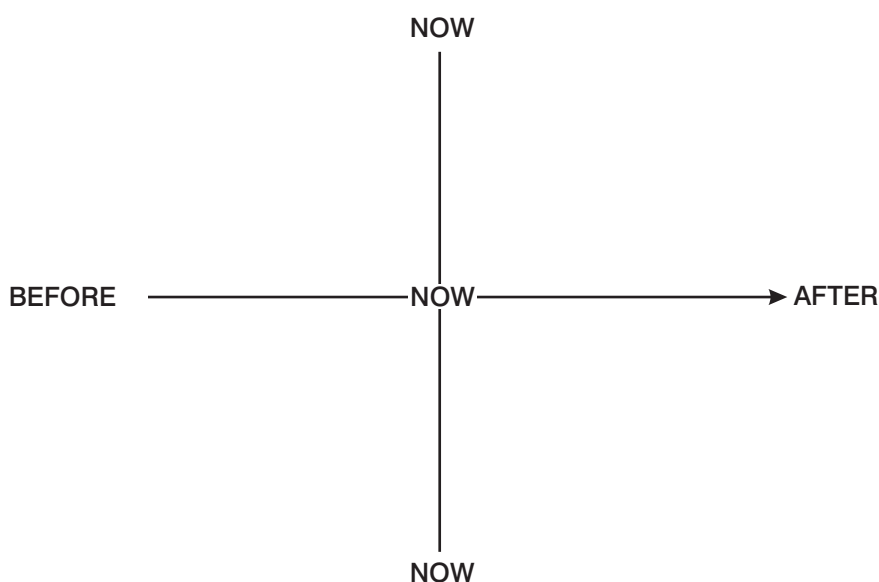
M.W.F. Does that spark off anything for anybody?

Sue Cassini. I have found that it has been tremendously helpful during meditation to come back to the idea of Now all the time. It has helped me a lot.

M.W.F. The purpose of the meditation is to bring one to the present moment Now; and so is the Mukabeleh. And the Grace of the tradition and the mantra can help to take one to the Absolute in that moment. But at other times which we have also been talking about – natural Samadhi – any moment Now could have almost any content.

R.J. Don't you think also that the important thing is that the instructions for meditation are very simple and shouldn't be confused, I don't think, with remembering diagrams or anything else. This diagram I find very useful during the day in that it gives me a reminder now and then; but for the time of meditation I think it is better not to try and think of diagrams or anything else. Did I take your meaning correctly?

S.C. Since we discussed this, I've become aware that my meditation was mainly on the line of Before, Now, After, and I wasn't really meditating. And this just reminded me. I drop it as soon as I remember; but it has been a great help.



R.J. Fine.

M.W.F. I think that's a very common situation. Most people's meditation isn't going as well as it might do and that's really the same for all of us because we're not actually sounding the mantra at the moment Now. We're wandering about on this line of Time, telling ourselves stories about it. (laughter)

In some material we're going to play to you in a minute, I think you'll get some very interesting reminders about that.

A.W-P. Isn't it rather like a pulse that goes up and down? In the day it's like that, regular pulses. And it is as if by that pulse you are connected with a different dimension. You can miss the pulse or you can be aware that it's there.

M.W.F. I think that's probably right. Each pulse would have different possibilities, not necessarily equal, but the idea is to be as much as possible in the present moment Now because in this Before, Now, After, everything is happening, isn't it? And we also have the illusion that we are doing something and doing good and having something of our own – all

the illusions which H.H. tells us about, all to do with being fixed on that line of Time and it's very important to do something about it right away, because as you go along over the years, it gets more and more habitual and more and more difficult to do something about it. The source of Goodness can't be on that line, can it?

A.W-P. I felt, in the moment, that this pulse when it comes emanated from our own self. It's a very strange way of looking at it. It's as if you get the feeling that you're oriented differently and in that moment the possibility of eternity is emanating from your own existence.

Mrs. D. Smith. Michael, we're not hearing all the comments or questions. Could you repeat them please.

R.J. What the speaker was saying was that he felt a pulse during the day that was as if it came from inside him – 'I think I could say it was like a reminder'; and it felt very much like the feeling he had during the meditation. Have I summarized that fairly accurately, would you say? Or would you like to add something?

A.W-P. The connection with Eternity was the point of the pulse which came from one's own being. I had always thought in a theoretical way that you had to get hold of something that was outside.

M.W.F. That's a very very important realisation and one which all of us would like to have and to have it very much more often. It's the idea of the Ladder isn't it – the Good Impulse. At such a moment which is at the intersection there, you begin to go up the Ladder. And of course the Good Impulse comes from the Atman which is within you – not different at all.

Bill Anderson. Would you say this is characteristic of a state of enhanced consciousness, that your perceptions of time and space are altered when you are in the moment Now and that most of our apprehensions of the world are so coloured by our delusions and obsessive thoughts that they are meaningless. But to go back to what was said just now, we really create the world for ourselves only when we are in a state of higher consciousness.

R.J. (to M.W.F.) Would you like to repeat that! (laughter)

R.J. If I remember rightly, perhaps you'll correct me as we go along, I think you were saying that at a moment of consciousness our conceptions of time and space are enhanced so if you compare it with our normal state which in my experience, when I come out of it, suddenly seems like a continuous delusion. Then one understands how it is consciousness is creating the true world in the moment Now.

M.W.F. I'm sure it's like that. So that the whole thing is to meditate better and to have that more, and not stop it happening. One of the particular things with all this preoccupation with Before, Now and After is that it inhibits emotional centre, doesn't it. You'd agree with that, Dr. Connell? So that it doesn't work at its full power. So we're not often our True Selves; and we're barely human some of the time!

Dr. C. What has been said seems to me to reinforce what the Doctor said to me in answering a question I asked him last term about how to increase the content of a moment leading to integration of functions. He threw the question out at once and said there was only one thing

to do, namely to look towards the Param-Atman and all would be done for you. That's what you've been really saying. We think we are doing things but, Param-Atman is really the Doer.

M.W.F. The only thing that can be done.

R.J. I feel so often we want to complicate things and if we have problems or imagine we have problems with our meditation it is because we complicate it and not just sit down and do it – exactly what we've been told to do. It just couldn't be more simple.

Ray Hodge. Could you tell me if what Dr. Connell said when he says 'look towards the Param-Atman' is the same as if we try to remember Param-Atman?

M.W.F. The idea is the process of Meditation collects more Sattva and brings you more often to the present moment and so gradually one becomes more and more harmonised and united with the real world. Then all these realizations begin to come more frequently, don't they, in some degree or other, perhaps not the full one. Once you begin to know where your true interest is, then you begin to put yourself in that position more often and you begin to get a taste for it.

R.H. I find that all the exercises which have been given, like the 'Stop' exercise, are very helpful. I suppose those are the things that would lead one to remember the Param-Atman.

M.W.F. Yes. That's all you're going to hear from us, or nearly all. Dr. Roles left with us a tape which some of you will remember. It was the occasion of February 14th, 1978, when Lord Allan was on the platform with Brigit Howitt. Nolan and Brigit Howitt had both been here and he had left on his way back to New Zealand via New York; but they both had come here from seeing H.H. This is a tape of that meeting or part of it. I think you may find quite a lot of it is very much connected with this picture. After that we might meditate for a little.

**Tape Begins:** (Lord Allan, A. and Mrs. Howitt, B.H.)

A. I thought it would be very nice if we could have Brigit on the platform tonight and we'll try and get from her something of the atmosphere of Allahabad which you left about three weeks ago.

B.H. The 14th January.

A. Yes. Now if I could just say one or two things. This wasn't your first visit?

B.H. No. My first visit was in '74.

A. What was your first impression of the Shankaracharya?

B.H. The very first? Very simply it was stillness and happiness, very definitely. Just that, rather than anything personal.

A. Did you see any difference this time? The first time one is always rather in awe – were you more relaxed?

B.H. Yes, I was and it made quite a difference knowing the set-up. And also knowing that after you have been there just a short while, quite naturally your own selfish concerns and worries that the type of questions you are asking might be too simple or something – that sort of thing falls away. And one is very happy indeed to be just in that situation. And of course this time I remembered that and didn't go through quite such agonies before the first audience. My own personal concerns evaporated much more easily

which was quite a relief.

- A. And that let you see the twinkle in his eye.
- B.H. Yes, wonderful! It's always there whether he is speaking quite firmly or with great laughter in his voice which is really wonderful.
- A. And you had your audiences with him in the rather smaller room?
- B.H. Yes; and in fact I myself haven't seen the larger audience chamber which is just next door. We were in that room which I think is called his own room, his private room. But it was a reasonably sized room. There were chairs and a table just like this put out for us. In fact in the first audience, the first time we went in '74, when we arrived we were a little early actually and we were told to wait for a wee while just at the door. And there is a large window at the side in this room and somebody just handed through a couple of chairs for us which was so marvellous. They were just put out in front of His Holiness and we were asked to sit on those – they readily recognise that we don't find it very comfortable sitting as they do, unfortunately.
- A. You were having a rather different interpreter from Jaiswal whom we normally had. But he was a man whom both Dr. Roles and I had met but had never heard acting as interpreter. How did you get on with him?
- B.H. Absolutely splendidly. We really couldn't have been more fortunate as it turned out. He and Nolan after a very short time struck up a tremendous affinity and a tremendous respect for each other. And of course this meant that the communication line was that much simpler. But Narayan himself is a man who is just about pure devotion, really the most magnificent example of someone who lives the idea that he 'has nothing of his own'. It is really a tremendous inspiration; and several times during the actual audiences he would turn and say, 'You must realize that I am only able to help you in this way through the grace of the guru or through grace. It has nothing to do with me.' But he would say this, just introduce it when he felt that this was something that must be said – so naturally – and it was really tremendous, most interesting.
- A. He was quite a prominent business man and lived with his brother at Lucknow where Dr. Roles and I first met him, what – about twelve years ago, fifteen years ago. Then he was already giving up everything in order to be with the Shankaracharya and I suppose he spends nearly all his time with him now, doesn't he?
- B.H. I think all the time he is in Allahabad particularly. He looks after a great deal of the Ashram business for him and he said several times to us that this particular Sadhana or his spiritual practice is to do whatever His Holiness wishes him to do. It could be organising his travel arrangements, money matters, or audiences such as with us, translation came into it; he said whatever was asked of him, he did it to the best of his capacity.
- A. And of course he does speak good English.
- B.H. His English is very idiomatic, generally speaking. There were one or two interesting slips, shall we say, one perhaps rather delightful one which had to be altered. But he was speaking of the story which His Holiness had given us about Indra and one of the demons. At one point during this battle Indra was distracted and lost his sword. And Narayan said 'And Indra became armless' (laughter) And of course we really had to

change it, but it seemed a pity! (laughter)

- A. You were saying to me earlier that one of the things you felt very much was that those of us who had been there were undoubtedly very privileged, but somehow it really wasn't necessary to go there in order to feel the benefit which he bestows on us all.
- B.H. Both my husband and I are so sure of this now. It's not an easy concept to get across probably, but having been there, I can really assure anyone that this is so, because one of the effects that I find most pronounced and I know will never lessen is the sense that one is simply reminded of something so strongly that you already know and that in fact you could be reminded of and come into touch with or recognise again wherever you are. You don't have to be with someone like the Shankaracharya. But I do think having been lucky enough to be in that situation that if there is any possibility of actually expressing that and getting it across, it's most important. I think this is really something that so many of us tend to – certainly we do at home – we tend to underestimate that in ourselves, so that we feel that not having had that tremendous opportunity, each person, then we don't have the same advantages. And it isn't like that at all.
- A. I think something you said earlier struck me – that in a way he makes you feel at home.
- B.H. Very much!
- A. At home with yourself. When we feel here at home with ourselves, we are really at one with the Shankaracharya. I myself feel that most strongly. And you were saying that Mr. Agrawal in saying that he had nothing of his own would say that everything came from the Shankaracharya. But again he says, and the Shankaracharya of course says it himself, that everything from the Shankaracharya comes from the Atman.
- B.H. In fact over the period of time that one was there, one comes to understand, and this has happened both times that I've been there and certainly the three times that Nolan has, you begin to understand that the Shankaracharya again is speaking from the viewpoint of there is nothing which is his own and he is very very much the vehicle of the Truth, of that which he is expressing in answer to questions. And this very absence of the personal in this particular sense relieves you yourself of that. Your own hang-ups don't operate, you don't need them any more. And it's really quite a relief. You can be yourself, sort of warts and all and it doesn't really matter... It's very superficial and you feel a lot more at home with yourself. And this is a tremendous feeling.
- A. Well now I thought we would go on and hear some of the things which you asked him and his replies; but before that is there anything particular that interested anybody about what Brigit has been saying? Would you like to ask a further question?
- Q. I wonder if you could elaborate a little more on the relationship with the Shankaracharya? It is a question I wrote in to Dr. Roles... about – one hears so much about people following a given guru and having a relationship with him; and I asked what was our relationship with the Shankaracharya. It's not quite like what was said this evening.
- A. This is a question about our relationship with the Shankaracharya, particularly through Dr. Roles. Well, it's close and continuing. It's always there. I can recall at least three times when I've had rather emotional discussions with the Shankaracharya, being assured that he was always there and if one thought of him, if one brought him into one's mind, one was sure of making a connection with him. And one could be equally sure in those circumstances one would receive help. And I have said, as I say at

least on three occasions, ‘now can I go back and assure people in London that they can also benefit from this help’. And he said, ‘Yes, you can assure them’. I could certainly quote, as I say, at least three times when that was said. And I think a good many people here have felt this – that if we think of the Shankaracharya and you can think of him through Dr. Roles, because we are all in one chain, you will get that help. It is ever-present. I couldn’t be more sure of this – that his love and his care is always there. But again, it isn’t personalized; but he is our avenue to the eternal power of love that is always there and is in fact centred in our hearts, did we but know it. In a way, he opens our own hearts for us.

Lady A. The questioner in the early part of the question mentioned people following different gurus and it reminded me that Dr. Roles said when he first met the Shankaracharya and subsequently went to see him that this was a man who made no demands of any sort – didn’t demand a personal following. So in one sense we have his help to be free, and not be dependent on this idea of gurus. It’s a connection with the Truth, not following a man who makes demands.

A. I’m sure you’re right; and about following other gurus. I had a friend in Bombay who was a very spiritual man and I used to talk to him a lot. He had a guru and he was very keen that I should go and meet his guru. I was reluctant to, but eventually I agreed; and it so happened that the time I was going, my wife was with me – I won’t go into the details – but we had a most fearful journey. And we got to this man, who was a very remarkable man indeed, and I was extremely impressed with him. Then we went more or less straight on to the Shankaracharya and I told him that we had seen this man he answered very simply, not in the least bit angrily but very firmly, saying that a man can’t follow more than one guru. And that one must just make the choice. If you are going in a certain way, you must go that way. You can’t go two ways at once. And he added that if in fact you changed directions, it becomes increasingly difficult for you to stick to any one course. He made this perfectly plain. He said one was absolutely free; it was up to them to do exactly as they liked, but this is what would happen in those circumstances.

Lady A. I think we have to realise what the word guru means because the translation is teacher – you can have a music guru, a dancing guru! (laughter)

A. Everybody hear that? If everybody hears all these things, I don’t know why I spend all my time repeating them! (laughter) I think the reason is that in fact the Doctor doesn’t hear, and it is very difficult to hear up here, and I think the Doctor doesn’t – also it does give him time to think of the answer! (laughter)

Well now you said to the Shankaracharya – do you mind if I just read this?

B.H. No, not at all.

B.H. Sometimes there is an unexpected and expansive warmth experienced physically in the region of the upper chest and throat, like a fire, and the related joy links immediately with something which can flip the joy into excitement and eventual tensions rather than stillness and peace of mind. I feel this dissipates rapidly the potential of the initial connection and I’m not able to keep the mind on the mantra. Could H.H. please give me guidance as to my best approach to this problem?

And the reply was:

S. Your intense desire to meditate will take you so far and you needn't worry about it. Here is an illustration. Just as when you start a car, there is a lot of noise but once it has started, the noise diminishes. Similarly when you try to meditate then the power which is flowing all the time from the head downwards starts going upwards. The normal flow is downwards. But when you start meditating, it goes upwards and that causes some sort of tension (actually it's not tension exactly – just felt as tension). This will all go towards the head and when it reaches there it will get settled and it will be calm and quiet. So you will have to continue having a little patience and it will be all right. At the beginning you will feel that, but once you get used to it, it will settle down and things will become normal.

A. And then you said:

B.H. I'm very glad to hear that! Would His Holiness say that all I need do now is to carry on as I have been doing?

And he said:

S. Yes, carry on.

A. Any comments now that you have been carrying on?

B.H. After that reply I really understood why the man who was visited by the messenger of the Absolute and was given the answer about the tamarind tree – why he danced. Because that was really marvellous. It was just all I needed. That was the assurance one needs because it seems that so many of us have difficulties and this very fact that one is concerned about it and his answer relieved that concern which was perhaps 90% of the battle. And it was really wonderful. I must say I have had a very busy, very changing, last month, and so I really don't feel I can expect too much yet. But I think, when I say expect, it's almost as though an answer like that, I felt, shut up just for a little while that part of me that wanted to look for a result and smartly.

A. He has said, more than once, what is required is simply faith in the meditation. Have faith that the meditation will work. And then just plug away at it steadily and it will work.

Mrs. Koren. (rpt) She was asking about the way in which Mr. Agrawal, the interpreter, was there just to do everything that His Holiness asked of him, that he completely sank all his own wishes and desires to the will of the Shankaracharya and the question is how much does one do of that as far as ordinary life is concerned – what is the balance?

A. I think that I will answer that by quoting what the Shankaracharya said to your husband... It was referring to the pull of worldly things and the pull of the spirit and how the conflict between the two can be resolved. The Shankaracharya said:

S. As regard this duality to which reference has been made, I must point out that he need not be afraid of the worldly pull. This is what householders do while they are engaged in their worldly affairs. They should do it all to the best of their ability. They should attend to whatever calls to the best of their ability and after having finished, they should then return to their spiritual path and at that time they should try to devote themselves entirely to that aspect. When they do this, the Rajas which is the cause of obstruction will tend to be subdued and with this, the feeling of duality lessens and in due course, it will entirely disappear.



- A. This is the obstruction caused by the pull. I don't think I should enlarge on that. This is the answer. It's the old answer of rendering unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's. And there is no need to ask about that, because we know in our hearts what belongs to Caesar and what belongs to God.

Anything else? Now here's another question of yours:

- B.H. Some years ago in a conversation with Dr. Roles, His Holiness said that we need to learn to enjoy Buddhi both in stillness and in meditation, and also in activity. Could he say any more about how to enjoy Buddhi in activity?

And the reply was.

S. The basic nature is pervading everything. And once you start experiencing it in all things, then you will be able to enjoy it in whatever your circumstances. So that Buddhi or the play of the main use of the intellect is that it should be used in seeing, observing and feeling the all-pervasiveness of that perfect nature. Just as when you see a tree, then your Buddhi should be able to convey to you that the basic nature which is in me is also in that tree. It is another matter that this basic nature is making its appearance in different forms – in a creeper it is tender; in a stone it is hard; in the leaves of a tree it is green; and in me (added the translator) it is in yet another form. The form may be different, but the basic nature is the same. So when your Buddhi sees or appreciates this fact of the all-pervasiveness of nature, then in your everyday life, your normal duties, you will be able to enjoy the circumstances in which you may be placed.

Tape ends (first side)

#### MEDITATION

- M.W.F. Well I think you'll agree that a good deal of that tape was really about the realisation of this diagram and gave us some new ideas of how to make it practical. We shall surely go on investigating this until we see Dr. Roles next and not stopping then.

A question came in that same period which Dr. Roles quoted in paper earlier this year which you might like to be reminded of, just to go away with, which Roy will read.

- R.J. (reading)

About desires of which H.H. has said are of many kinds, the important ones come from the heart – vertical line – and tend to come back and back; while those picked up from the surroundings of life tend to be quickly forgotten. These were discussed in Reading 1 this year (80/2) which concluded with an answer given to Brigit Howitt's question:

Could you say more about control of desires?

The Shankaracharya replied:

The best way to control is to have contentment, a feeling that God – Param-Atman – alone is the best judge of what is good for me. If you cultivate this kind of contentment, you will be able to control that keen desire and you will feel happy in whatever circumstances you are placed. A wise man once said that when your desires have not been fulfilled, you should feel happy that the desire of God *has* been fulfilled because nothing happens without his knowledge. And whatever has

happened must be his desire that is being fulfilled in preference to your own ignorant wish. Since you claim to be affectionately directed towards God, you could say, 'My Beloved's desire has been fulfilled instead of my petty ones.' This is the way to lead a happy life.

R.J. And Dr. Roles goes on: It is also the way to displace the false ego which is confidently in command all along that line of Time. And you will be able to fulfil the all important advice on which the non-dualistic philosophy depends to substitute the idea of Param-Atman all through your life.

M.W.F. Well, it's dinner time!

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