

29 September 1980

AUTUMN 1980

READING 1

'SELF-DISCOVERY'

(for 3 weeks)

The longing to become what 'I really am' has been steadily increasing over the last two years and certain results have recently come to cause a big change in my former point of view. We could take a look at these because they may help some of you till one of you finds a better approach.

We start then with the diagram on p.427 of *A New Model* (2nd edition) and make slight changes in the quotation to bring it nearer today's language:

If we take a solid (3-dimensional body) as a point, the line of the existence (or apparent motion) of this point will be a line of the fourth dimension of space-time. Let us take this line of 'Time' as we usually conceive it.

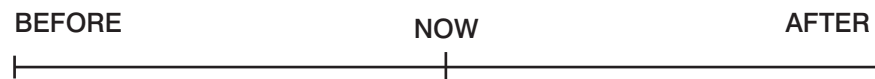


Figure 1

Everything we know, everything that we recognize as existing, lies on this line of the fourth dimension which is the 'historical time' of our section of existence. This is the only 'Time' we know.

Note. This 'Time' of course is arbitrarily imposed on us by the movements of the earth and moon. Our clocks record the movement of areas of the earth's surface in its 24-hour rotation about its own axis; and our calendars recount the seasons of the year as the earth goes round the sun. By convention the year is divided into 12 calendar months which bear some relation to the turns of the moon about the earth which take 29 days.

This is the best mankind can do to achieve a simple common time for everybody (which is, of course, highly necessary for practical life) but it opposes and almost conceals from our notice the natural clocks which govern the human mind and body. Self-discovery demands *knowing* a different and more natural approach to 'Time'.

One such insight is that Newton's Law of Gravitation applies only to solid (3-dimensional) bodies; so there's no reason why we should allow all our psychology (subtle level) to be governed by it as well! If during meditation we free it from gravity, the mind can rise lightly afterwards to embrace the whole of creation. The passage in *A New Model* continues:

Let us imagine several lines perpendicular to this line (of Before-After). These vertical lines, each of which designates *Now* for a given moment, will express the perpetual existence of past (and possibly future) moments. Each of these lines is the 'perpetual Now' for some moment, and *every moment has such a line of perpetual Now*. This is the fifth dimension which forms a surface in relation to the lines of time. But (though we have no descriptive language to convey them) we are aware of sensations of other 'Times', both parallel and perpendicular, that continually enter our consciousness. Those horizontal

'Times' are analogous to our (common) time and consist of Before-Now-After; whereas the vertical lines consist *only of 'now'*, and are as it were cross-threads, the weft in a fabric, of which the horizontal lines represent the warp.



(Figure 2 – We can start by taking just one of the vertical lines.)

Pause (if possible without comment)

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PART 1

Since we began with this passage when we set up on our own after Mr. Ouspensky's death in 1947, we have learnt so much that we now feel it necessary to proceed in an entirely new way from this point. First we now know for sure that the Divine Self (Atman) is the only entity in man's nature that 'perpetually exists' (i.e. never changes, and is always present *Now* being 'in Eternity' not 'in Time'); the vertical lines then belong only to the Atman who is the presiding deity of the individual life.

Secondly, we have been assured that there are moments naturally present every day when Samadhi or union with this Self becomes possible, but that people never notice them, so almost all these opportunities are lost. I ask myself: *'Can these moments be linked with the vertical lines of 'Now' so that we can both recognise them and know what to do when they come?'*

This is an individual matter – each of us who wants to find how to use this diagram practically should keep it as a private map for use in Self-discovery. If one thinks or talks about it in the usual language of the dominant hemisphere, the whole idea disappears. There is no established policy, no general solution. But if you decide to join me in this treasure hunt, we must each try always to be 'of one mind' – a mind with different departments like the ministries of a government but *one Mind* nevertheless. Through misapplication of the apparent duality of our physical construction, I have myself got into all sorts of trouble – 'a double-minded man is unstable in all his ways'! After all, a professional actor remains the *same man* whether he is off-stage or on-stage playing various parts, or during his private life at home; he knows this but we keep forgetting it.

PART 2

After several attempts at meetings and work parties which were all too complicated, I find that what works best for most people is to use Figure 2 while listening again to H.H.'s words and stories. So often he has been speaking from the point of view of those vertical lines of 'Now' whereas we have been using our usual dominant hemisphere rattling along on the horizontal line of Time.

Instead of repeating Mr. Ouspensky's 'historical' time-scale of 4 centuries, we can come nearer home by taking an individual life-time of 80 years:

From a public talk at the Mela in 1972:

- (a) It is a body that is born and dies; the Atman itself that inhabits the body is birthless and deathless. It is enough to understand only this much of the subject, because in trying to understand everything, we often end by understanding nothing at all.
- (b) This body (physical, subtle, causal) is the vehicle, and Atman is the rider; regard the rider as different from the vehicle. It is not easy to do so.

At the Ashram:

- (c) What is the world? What is the truth? What are you? Well, we want to find out all that. You are Sat-Chit-Ananda, that is Eternal reality full of power and joy. But how? Just think whether you have any personal knowledge as to how and when you were born. You only know the date and time of your birth as you heard it from others; you never actually experienced your birth. Then take it that you were never born; and a thing which is not born cannot die either. Thus you are unborn and deathless, and so are Sat-Chit-Ananda.

Note. This seems to be nonsense when seen along the physical line of Time; it could only refer to the Atman who is 'birthless and deathless'.

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But we are on much more solid ground if we take the diagram on the time-scale of a day of 24 hours, for then we can directly observe it:

From 1st Audience 1972:

S. It is very difficult to maintain that individuals are the doers of anything, for the whole creation is a manifestation of the Absolute who is the real doer...

Part of the show is our human nature with its capacities of memory and thinking which, if one takes the load of the 'past' and the 'future' upon oneself, makes the journey hard and treacherous; for the 'past' and the 'future' appear terribly big, and it is very difficult to walk along the Path if one carries this load. 'If such and such actions were undertaken' we think, 'then a particular result could be achieved' or 'if I hadn't acted the way I did, I could have saved myself from these effects'. One should always keep oneself light-hearted and free of that burden. In fact the load is on the mind (Buddhi); but in so far as the mind governs the physical body, that also suffers.

One of the best similes is the shadow play of puppets. There is someone holding the strings and moving them, but they appear to be moving themselves and to be the real doers.

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