

14 July 1981

GENERAL MEDITATION MEETING

On the platform: Dr. Roles, Lady Allan and Mr. M W Fleming

M.W.F. There will be Meditation Meetings on August 11 and September 8.

Would turners please note that there will be a special Mukabeleh on Saturday, 8th August, robing at 7.30 a.m. There will also be turning practices at 6.30 p.m. before the August and September Meditation Meetings. The librarian wishes to remind people that only one book is allowed out at a time and for three weeks; after which it can be renewed by entering the date of return and then re-entering it in the register. This applies to members and associates of the Society. We're sorry but those of you who come here only for meditation are not eligible to borrow books or to use the library.

Lady A. Dr. Roles asks me to point out that the Memorial Service on Friday is for people who knew Mrs. Roles. There will be plenty of people here who never met her and didn't know her, so it is just for people who knew her because the church will be very full.

Dr. R. It's a roomy church but it will be very crowded because there are a lot of neighbours as well as family connections.[†]

M.W.F. If people have fairly recent snapshots of Mrs. Roles that we could borrow from which to make a selection for other people to see, we could perhaps have copies or enlargements made for anyone who wanted one. Please let the office know.

Dr. R. I feel I didn't know my wife at all and latterly she seemed to expand so much. And I would very much like to see any snapshots people may have. There must be lots and lots about. We'll let you have them back but we may need to enlarge some.

M.W.F. There is still room for more people at the Work-In on 8th and 9th August.

Dr. R. We need to begin on a personal note but we'll end up more expansively. There is a cable here from His Holiness.

Holiness grieved. Wishes strength to bear loss. My sincere condolence. Narayan.

Of course he needs to know more. He needs to know that there is no sense of loss; in fact there is no loss and he needn't have to be grieved at all. There just isn't any cause for grief because discoveries have been made during all this time, sitting there day and night, about life and death. We were brought up by Mr. Ouspensky with the idea of eternal recurrence. The clocks at death are put back to the time of birth which is nearly always the same, of the same parents and in the same place. So my wife would now be a very small baby, a week old, in the Vale of Clwyd in north Wales. But Mr. Ouspensky reckoned without the Causal level. I think if we just read what to him was proof of recurrence from *Osokin...*

M.W.F. (reading)

What shall I try to remember? I know! That time I did not know English.

[†] The Service was recorded very successfully and if anyone wishes to have a cassette, would they please let the office know.

Dr. R. This is Osokin sent back by the magician to the age of about twelve at the Academy School.

M.W.F. (cont.):

I did not know English. I learned it later. If I know it now, it means that everything has been real, that I have been abroad and all the rest of it. How does that tale of Stevenson's begin about a King's daughter who had no power over the morrow? *The Song of the Morrow*? Yes, that's right.

The King of Duntrine had a daughter when he was old and she was the fairest daughter between two seas...

So it's all true. I do know English. I can remember how it goes on.

Her hair was like spun gold and her eyes like pools in a river; and the King gave her a castle upon the sea beach, with a terrace, and a court of hewn stone, and four towers at the four corners.

But that means that all this is a dream...

'Osokin, Osokin,' shouts his friend, Memorsky. 'Why are you sitting there like an owl? Have you fallen asleep? Don't you hear, the German is taking the names of those who are not dressed. Wake up, you devil's puppet!' Osokin seizes the pillow and throws it angrily at the laughing Memorksy, who neatly dodges it.

At that moment the German housemaster comes out from behind the archway and the pillow, flying over Memorksy's head, hits him full in the face. He staggers with the unexpectedness of the blow, then rushes furiously at Osokin.

Dr. R. And so then everything happens when we wake up as babies. People expect us to be silly little children and so we are silly little children. But really on the Causal level, we know all that happened before, only we just can't believe it; and so we forget it. In fact it's absolutely marvellous, because I'm quite certain that we are all there on the Causal level together simultaneously with the physical and subtle. And that my wife is just as much with me now and I have to watch my step just as much (laughter) as when I was holding her hand at the end. I do think that everything the Shankaracharya says about this is true. And it stood us in very good stead because my wife realised it as well, even though she was supposed to be unconscious, in coma, but you could tell she was registering what I was saying to her, particularly the Mantra. Her lips would move and she knew what was going on, although physically she was out for the count. The actual moment of death, which naturally we all dread, was very very quiet and unnoticed. She had pauses in her breathing and Ian came to me and said there is rather a long pause at the moment. I went in and there was just one little gasp, choke, and that was it. There is nothing to be afraid of at all. So it's a great reassurance that if we really do go about trying to remember the Param-Atman and trying to do the meditation, what the Shankaracharya says is true. Any questions? Any remarks? (pause)

J. Lawrence. (repeat) Joan Lawrence says that what comes to her is that the Self-realized man is beyond sorrow. Sorrow is no more to him.

Dr. R. Yes, yes. We have to do a lot of this for ourselves and we have to stop expressing negative emotions outwardly which Mr. Ouspensky claimed we have to do for quite a long time before the negative emotions within will disappear. We have therefore two things to do: to remember ourSelves and to remember Who we are, Who we really are; and to try not to add

to the negative emotions everywhere around in common life today. Any questions about that?

R. Hodge. Is it the spirit of the dead person that remains with us or the memory of them?

Dr. R. I don't know. You can treat it how you like. I mean it depends what your experience is. Is it the memory only or is it the spirit? I can't answer that for you.

Lady A. When we went to India this last time with the Guyatts and the Fenwicks, I remember that the Shankaracharya in mentioning Bobby said that he hoped he would keep along with this Work which was so important. He didn't reckon that his contact with this Work had come to an end at all.

Dr. R. So it's not just the memory! (pause) Well now, shall we start the ball rolling, read something on this subject and then meditate? One time at the Ashram, the Shankaracharya gave a talk on a text from the *Bhagavad Gita*. We'll read the full text of what he was going to talk about and then read his remarks.

Lady A. (reading)

In Chapter 8 of the *Bhagavad Gita*, Arjuna puts these questions to Shri Krishna:

What is that which men call the Supreme Spirit? Who is it who governs the spirit of renunciation in man? And at the time of death how may those who have learnt self-discipline come to True Knowledge?

Lord Krishna replies that the Supreme Spirit is the Self of all beings; its Nature is Spiritual Consciousness; and all this together is symbolised by Shri Krishna himself 'who now stands in human form before thee'.

v.5. Whosoever at the time of death thinks only of Me, and, thinking thus, leaves the body and goes forth, he assuredly will abide with Me.

v.6. On whatever sphere of being the mind may be intent at the time of death, thither will one go. Therefore keep Me always in mind...

v.10. He who leaves the body with mind serene and full of devotion, by the power of his meditation gathering between his eyebrows his whole vital energy, attains the supreme goal.

In 1972 the Shankaracharya gave an address at his Ashram on that 5th verse which was then translated:

'He who frees himself of his body remembering Param-Atman at his last moment unites with Param-Atman undoubtedly'.

S. The scriptures lay down at all times – in the beginning, in the middle, and in the end – all over the past, the present, and the future – that one should always keep the Param-Atman in mind, because we never know when the end will come.

But we cannot do this without first forming the habit. Yet it is mistaken to imagine, as some people do, that they would be able to form this habit in their old age. If we do not cultivate the habit in our younger days, it would be difficult to do so when we are old. However, (smiling) if you only manage to remember Param-Atman in old age, though not when you were young, He would be satisfied even then!

This world wants your body. Well then, serve the world with your body. But

Param-Atman wants your love only. If you come to love Param-Atman, it would be Param-Atman who would then begin to serve you...

The Buddhi is like a Mahatma who lived in the jungle, and whose hut was so small that it could accommodate only three persons. Once a storm came with heavy rain. A lone traveller stood outside exposed to the fury of the elements. The Mahatma invited him in and bade him sit down. Then a second man came and he also was called in.

But then a third man appeared who was rather bulky. Now they all had to stand up. This third man was rich and he offered to build a big room in place of the small hut, for many people to sit. The Mahatma drove them all out, saying, 'Why do you think I sought seclusion in the jungle? I do not want your bigger room which would put a crowd around me, distract me from my work, and increase my obligations.'

Dr. R. It is the same with thoughts and desires; let one in, and they all come. The 'overseer' must preserve one's peace most attentively.

S. (again) There are troubles on every path, so the path of Bhakti also has its troubles. But by bearing these troubles, the devotion is strengthened, we form the habit of constantly remembering Param-Atman, and are thus able to remember Param-Atman even in the hour of death.

A devotee of Param-Atman is desireless, peaceful; he has no enemies. His vision is uniform for he sees Param-Atman in everything.

(Record, 4 April 1972)

Dr. R. That has been amply borne out that when you lose everything, then you are close to Param-Atman and there is nothing in between your Divine Self, the Atman, and the Self of all Beings. This is the be-all and the end-all of human life. So we start with the Overseer, like the Mahatma in the jungle, being careful not to allow our stray thoughts from taking over, especially during Meditation. But in fact we can enjoy much more stillness than we think, even in activity. We can stop unnecessary stray thoughts taking our attention away. Any questions from the factual point of view or shall we just go into meditation now and see if we can stop big bulky men from coming into our small hut?

MEDITATION

Yes, she is still here, just as she was. Any questions about the meditation? Somebody asked me only last Saturday: 'Sometimes it's very rewarding and I'd never give it up; but at other times I just can't stop thoughts crowding in. I just can't get it to run by itself. I can't get it to go.' One often gets questions like that, if people are really being honest, thinking that everybody is a perfect meditator except they themselves. I think that part of this depends on how one spends the rest of the day. If one is full of petty thoughts and not putting any sort of curb on them at all, and every time one moves, thoughts move too, the mind moves, then I don't think one makes such headway. So if one can try to set up this impartial observer who decides what to allow in and what not to allow in, even when you are leading an active life, it makes meditation much much easier, I think; and you come to your half-hour already anxious to start and the Mantra ready to begin. Then also we must try everything. Try different speeds of starting; try different postures; everything needs

freshening up because we must take each half-hour as the first half-hour ever. Never think of past half-hours. It's always new and fresh. Any questions on the practical level?

S. Wood. Could I ask a question about the Causal level? When Dr. Roles said we all seemed to be together on the Causal level, this seems to imply that passing time is a phenomenon of the physical world.

Dr. R. It belongs to the subtle level too, but a very, very different time. Subtle level time is measured by the length of a breath – three seconds; and the physical level by the time of a day or longer, a month. It depends on the unit of time. Anyway on the Causal level 'there is time no longer'. Things exist in potential, but very little of our potential do we ever realize, does any individual ever realize. But I don't call that a really practical question...

S.W. (repeat) Making it practical, Stephen Wood said that what he had in mind was that the more stillness we have, the more contact we have on the Causal level, and the more we are in touch with this timelessness...

Dr. R. Now I get the point. And the Causal level is only in the present moment, only to be experienced in the present moment, because for the Atman who dictates everything at the Causal level there is no time, no change, no succession of events. It is always Now. (to Mrs. D'Angelo) How do you deal with this sort of question in New York? I suppose it is being asked quite a lot – why some half-hours are good and why so difficult at other times, and how to make it a bit better. Georgina, perhaps there isn't anything you'd like to say?

G.D'A. Carl helped me once by saying to keep it holy, keep the Word holy; try not to say it any other way.

Dr. R. Yes, that's very important. Any other questions on that before we lift our minds to something on a larger scale?

E. Mayer. (rpt) When you start the Mantra do you feel it in the head or in the heart, or where, just at the beginning? Do you feel it in the head between the eyebrows?

Dr. R. This is entirely individual and differs for different people from day to day and from half-hour to half-hour. Certainly I think most of us have to begin by something up here (in the head). We have to repeat it and this is done by mental effort; and quite soon we hope that it will go deeper and then it will find its way to the heart. When it's in the heart, there is this lovely feeling attached to it. But there are many stages, many steps in this. Some people at initiation, right at the very beginning in the first two minutes, have the strong emotion occasioned by the familiarity of the Mantra – they've said it before – and that it's in the heart, but they very often suffer because they can't get it back later. So it's different for different people and I shouldn't waste time trying to think *where* it is. Don't think of anything – just say it until it disappears from view. But it must go by itself; you can't pump it out all the time. It will find the rhythm it wants to start at and you encourage that rhythm.

Jason Smith. Dr. Roles, I wonder when the Mantra leaves the head so that you are not conscious of repeating it any more, sometimes I wonder if perhaps I'm dozing or whether it actually has gone deeper. Can you say more about this?

Dr. R. That is recognised and when the Maharishi first gave us the meditation, he said, ‘You won’t know at the beginning; and the only way you can tell is by the results and by the fact that if you’ve been dozing, your mind is muzzy when you come to yourself. But if you haven’t been dozing, if you’ve been in deep meditation (Dhyana) when you don’t know anything, then your mind is very clear and sharp when you come round.’ So it’s a question of experience; and also you can ask anybody who lives with you what effect this has had on you. Are you nicer or not so nice? (laughter)

Well really the details of meditation are for discussion in smaller groups than this. This is a big room with a lot of people coming from great distances and I think we should use the opportunity and all the energy there is here for looking at things in a bigger way. A year after that quotation from the Shankaracharya, he gave another rather beautiful talk at the Ashram at which he said.

The body is the machine of nature to produce actions so that the play will go on. YourSelf is only the witness not the doer. It is through nature that the Param-Atman is making the whole universe dance, but He himself does not dance. He makes our Manas, Buddhi, etc., dance. But none can make Him dance. He is the Reality and the Truth and there is no place where He is lacking.

(Record 15 February 1973)

Knowing more about the Param-Atman brings the love for the Param-Atman which is the most important thing. ‘The world wants your body. Well then serve the world with your body. The Param-Atman wants your love only’. And that means love for your fellow creatures. You cannot pretend to love the Param-Atman without sympathy with all His creation and love for anyone who is in contact with you.

So we in the West want to know much more about the Param-Atman before we can love something which is so very abstract and we want to join in what Professor Schaefer called the new Western paradigm, the new knowledge that’s got to dawn everywhere before human life can be any better. And it’s rather appropriate that this knowledge should have come to Europe from Asia Minor and Greece at just the time – 25 centuries ago – when the original Shri Shankara was developing it in India. Maybe somebody went across the Hindu Kush! But at any rate, among the Greek philosophers in Asia Minor a doctrine developed which is not ordinarily met with at all, but which is part of our system – The Doctrine of Cosmoses. It must have come from the Greeks because they are all Greek names, but without straining your intellect, one can give a brief resumé because it’s very much needed today everywhere and people should understand it.

Each level of matter and energy is related as zero to infinity, so that the whole becomes the unit for the next cosmos. It’s too big to conceive of that there is one small individual and the Self of the whole universe. There’s a chain separated by an exact ratio and it was from this that Mr. Ouspensky formed the main part of his own researches. Just briefly, there are seven Cosmoses described: The Protocosmos which is the Absolute permeates everything, everywhere. ‘There is no place where it is lacking’. The next Cosmos is the Ayocosmos or Holy Cosmos and that’s why it is so important in the Lord’s Prayer that we pray that His name be made holy. The Holy Cosmos has other names; it’s called the Eternal Unchanging and it has something in it of Hoyle’s ‘continuous creation’. In the globe of the universe as the different

galaxies go over the horizon, so their place is taken by fresh galaxies, as in a population, so that the universe remains unchanged although galaxies appear to be receding at great speed. The next one is the Macrocosmos which can be taken as a galaxy or spiral nebula, in our case the Milky Way. So those first three have a counterpart in the Shankaracharya's system in that the Absolute is Brahman, and the next world is Avyakta the unmanifested. As things pass from the manifest to the unmanifest, they pass from nature, Prakriti, manifested nature, into the Avyakta or unmanifest. So those first three do correspond.

But after that the Greek system, the Western system, differs very much from the way the Shankaracharya and the East describe it. The fourth Cosmos, the next Cosmos, is the Deuterocosmos which is a sun, star, or solar system, our sun, and in that is included all that is in the solar system, all that comes within the influence of the sun – comets and planets, satellites and planetesimals, and so on. The next Cosmos is the Mesocosmos, the middle cosmos, which is from one point of view a life-bearing planet, in our case Mother Earth. And the planets possibly succeed each other as they revolve, so different planets take their place as life-bearers – Earth may have followed Mars and Venus will later take the place of Earth – I don't know about that. Then the next Cosmos, zero to infinity, is the Tritocosmos, the third Cosmos, which is organic life, like a sensitive skin or Biosphere that surrounds the earth and which is so constituted that it enables vibrations to pass from the earth up and from the stars and sun down. And things are felt by the earth all over at the same time in this sensitive skin; one of the astounding things is that things happen in all parts of the earth at once. The last Cosmos is an individual representative of a species of organic life, in our case an individual man.

Now the wonderful thing is that you see this period or sequence when you look outwards and upwards in a large way at these Cosmoses going up to the galactic universe, but you see a similar period of Cosmoses looking at the worlds successively smaller than man. For the next Cosmos below Man (for whom Man is the Absolute) is the cell world; and the world below that – I'm very shaky on all this, it needs research – the world below that we might call the Organic Molecule, part of the molecular universe, the DNA double helix or whatever, which P.D.O. calculated must exist between cells and inorganic matter. He said that through the Doctrine of Cosmoses it was evident that there must be a world between the cell and the atom. He called it the 'small cell' world. But many of the things he said about it have been proved true. Then the next world, I think, might be considered not as the atom, but as the Alpha Particle, the Hydrogen nucleus, which seems to be universally present as a unit of matter. Then beyond that there are electrons, and sub-atomic particles, mesons and quarks, and all these 'ultimate particles' they are discovering. And you find 'as above, so below'. I mean the next world on either side of Man is organic life which consists of cells. The world beyond that is the planetary world, the molecular world, which consists of organic molecules and the world of stars consists of inorganic atoms, and so on. So there is a wonderful plan to the universe which needs to be known at the moment; and if you think in that way and get to thinking about the Param-Atman, you'll learn to love the Param-Atman, the author of this plan; and it takes away any small petty troubles. It takes away the sting of death and it's a great comfort to some people. We aren't all alike. Any questions about that? We might go into that later on in the next academic year. Time and space differ in different Cosmoses, you see.

Q. (Unknown lady in a red hat. Repeat) You mentioned that it was a great comfort, it takes away the sting of death, and the lady asks isn't that rather dangerous?

Dr. R. No, I don't think we need to be stung by death. There is quite enough pain and death around already!

Q. (Red Hat) I don't think by the same token that we ought to be stung, but death ought not to be a comfort either.

Dr. R. I wouldn't want to convert you or take anything away; whatever you want, you have! (laughter) But the Shankaracharya's teaching is that the Jiva, the individual, comes into the world in order to *find happiness* – and if you are devoted enough, and clever enough, everything is provided by nature so that the individual *can* find happiness – difficult to believe today. So *you* can go find the stings of death; but *I'm* going to find happiness. (laughter)

Lady A. Also what was read the other day. 'The one who takes and discards the body does not die.'

Dr. R. Yes. One of the things we're being taught is that this body is a vehicle and the Atman is the Driver or Rider; and you must separate in your mind the body from the Driver or Conscious Being that inhabits your body; and for that Conscious Being there is no death. You look rather sceptical! Don't think I want to convert you, I really don't. Any other questions?

P. Palmer. Dr. Roles, it seems to me that when someone close to you dies, it's not a loss, it's an expansion – something opens up.

Dr. R. Yes, yes. I knew you felt that in your bereavement.

P.P. (repeat) I feel my mother is not resting – we say 'Rest in Peace' – but I feel she is very active. (laughter)

Dr. R. Yes maybe, but not on the Causal level, you see. You're thinking of her physical body and perhaps her mind. But on the Causal level she is very still, I believe; I didn't know her of course.

Now, how goes the time? It's twenty past eight.

P. Scrutton. Would you say that the beauty of the Doctrine of Cosmoeses is that wherever you start, the relationship is always the same? And that gives a marvellous feeling of order?

Dr. R. Yes, and if you know all the laws relating to three adjacent Cosmoeses, then you know the laws of the whole thing. If you know individual Man, if you know Organic Life, the Tritocosmos, and if you know Mother Earth, you can develop all the laws and apply them on different scales. (to J. Reid) You ought to look awfully cheerful. It's your subject.

J. Reid. I was thinking... you realise that you can't begin to understand or even conceive of the Param-Atman when you think about the Law of Cosmoeses.

Dr. R. Oh no, don't give up! (laughter) I'm sure you could. Just take something you know something about. For instance, biology and man. You'll find you know a lot about it. So

don't let's think about all the things we don't know (laughter) because you won't be much good on the Citizens' Advice Bureau! (laughter)

(pause) Well, I'm sorry I seem to have put a damper on the meeting – I didn't mean to do that.

A. Bray. The Doctrine of Cosmoses, Dr. Roles, certainly helps one to understand that God is everywhere.

Dr. R. Yes. But I think that one mustn't reduce the word God to something small – on the level of a planet or something like that. One mustn't lower the idea of God, but realise that the Absolute and its Laws of Nature permeate everything – it's universal.

Lady A. Which would mean that all the Cosmoses are part of one great unity?

Dr. R. Yes.

T. Anholt. Dr. Roles, in terms of Cosmoses where do you put, or what is the Atman in relation to Param-Atman?

Dr. R. Well this is really a matter for research. Whatever one said, it wouldn't make a ha'porth of difference; it would just be my point of view. You'll have to try and think. In actual fact, this relation of zero to infinity is on the way to the answer. In the Shankaracharya's system, Vyashti – the individual tree – and Samashti – the whole forest, at each stage a jump from zero to infinity. So it's the relation between the unit and the whole to which it belongs. Somewhere there. I don't know.

A. Brunsdon. Dr. Roles, I think I have the same question but the other way round. Sometimes in those gaps that you talked about, you get an idea of the permanence of quite temporal things like grass. You have a feeling of the everlastingness of it. And I wondered what is it that feels this?

Dr. R. Well you must find some way of expressing that to yourself. But it is very much in relation to these moments, these gaps, that the idea of Cosmoses comes to life. That's all I can say. But each person has to find it for himself. No good getting it from hearsay. Just a broad statement that came to us from Greece which should enable us to take it further now, as it enabled Mr. Ouspensky to take it much further some sixty years ago.

Now it's time, I think – any last practical question because it's very important that when we go from here, we go with a fresh attitude to the meditation and we don't hold with any ill-success in future.

Q. (repeat). It may sound a silly question, but as you're talking scientifically would you place the viruses between the molecules and the cells?

Dr. R. Mr. Ouspensky said there was room for another Cosmos which would include (it wasn't called viruses in his time) ultra-microscopic particles which the electron microscope has revealed. Pasteur discovered bacteria but since that time another Cosmos has been discovered – as zero to infinity; virus to cell or bacterium. Anyway I think we could learn to understand a lot more about this with the material we have today – if you want to! But it's not necessary. It isn't a condition for going to heaven! (laughter)

I'm afraid that my wife wants me to stop now because I've gone rather further than she would approve of! (laughter)

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