

8 September 1981

## GENERAL MEDITATION MEETING

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

M.W.F. There are one or two announcements. First of all, just to remind you that the next of these Meetings will be on Tuesday, 13th October. By then we shall be getting into the autumn term so we should begin to think about some Initiations, possibly about the middle of November. So it's time to think about bringing slowly to the boil anyone you have had in mind for the past few months who might be interested. There is plenty of time. This is just an advance notice.

This coming weekend we are holding two more Work-Ins and would be very grateful for help with the maintenance work in the house on Saturday or on Sunday. Notices giving times are on both the landing tables and in the hall. Please put your name down if you can come. So far there are very few names and we would like to see many more.

Dr. R. Many of us have been encouraged by the fact that my wife, who was a very unpretentious person and never considered that she was in the least bit spiritual and would never have thought that she was a good meditator, had such a marvellous passage on her next journey. It shows that carrying out the instructions of the Shankaracharya is likely to be successful for everybody. We therefore had this service of thanksgiving which included some of the things which had been valuable to her. Personally I play it very often – it does me good and other people seem to be finding the same thing. We can get as many recordings of the service as we like and more orders can be taken today before we order the next batch – the firm likes doing a number at a time. So do put your names down on the list outside.

Simply by sticking at it and not missing any more half-hours than you can help, it means that the whole organism gradually gets put in order ready for this last journey which is a difficult one and needs lots of help, so I was going to start off today by quoting from the Shankaracharya in 1975 when the Allans and the two of us were out there. He said:

If someone doesn't know the reason why he does a thing, he will not get to loving to do it. It is only in relation to this that it has been explained again and again that the whole of this Meditation system is for the unity of the individual Consciousness with the Param-Atman. As far as the technique of meditation is concerned, it is the meditator, the Mantra and the act of meditation that must become one to achieve this.

(Record, 29 September 1975)

Now we are still as far away as we used to be 50 years ago in understanding this mysterious word 'Consciousness' which cannot be studied scientifically. We've had many attempts to get evidence that way. We've had our brain-waves taken and although several times people have got into higher states of consciousness – Samadhi and so on – the instrument showed absolutely nothing except electrical silence. So it can't at present be investigated scientifically. It can only be arrived at by experience and that is a further reason why we ought to understand very clearly what we're after – what the meditation is all about.

There is an idea today which can be scientifically worked out that there has always been an intelligence in charge of the whole universe which has seen to every stage of creation, not a single stage of which could have happened by chance.

People call it 'intelligence' but, as usual, one is always getting confused between the idea of intelligence, thought and so on and '*Consciousness*', which is something quite quite different. I wonder if people have tried the effect of pronouncing the Mantra long and slowly when their minds are running riot in order to steady themselves? This was a lifesaver for my wife at the end – and she needed help to do that. Have people tried? Have they had any success? Some people have. Do you agree that part of the trouble is that thought processes are tied up with breathing and it's all going on mechanically if one's mind is on something else when one is supposed to be meditating? The whole thing is a kind of vicious circle. Would you think that this is a common problem?

B. Redfern. Dr. Roles, when I've tried pronouncing the Mantra very slowly, it got much more tied up with my breathing.

Dr. R. One way to do it is to move one's hand slowly in rhythm, forget all about the breathing, and just do it to one's hand movement. But of course the trouble is that all efforts done with this active hemisphere (the left one) are against what we are really trying to do, so you have to cheat a little bit and try to catch it offbeat and do it with the other one. I don't know if it's our way of living that makes the left so dominant, but we weren't made like that. Adam and Eve weren't created like that!

Lady A. I have sometimes found it helpful, Dr. Roles, to try to say one long Mantra and to listen to it and keep listening until this has really disappeared.

Dr. R. Yes, that's what I mean and one doesn't have to say it out loud; one can listen to it internally.

Lady A. Yes, until it has all gone as far as it can go.

Dr. R. The thing is not to 'concentrate', as they call it, on this idea of the duration of the Mantra, but to think at other times of things which arouse Sattva in one because that would automatically empower the inward looking hemisphere. If it gets sufficient Sattva, it will adjust everything accordingly.

One of the bits we have chosen to read is about that:

Lady A. (reading)

The Atman, the Param-Atman and the Guru are the trinity of the same unity. In fact there is no difference between the Atman in the individual, the Param-Atman and the Guru. Because of the situation in the universe, because of the three aspects of distraction which take us away, this unity is not fully materialised. But it can certainly be evoked and brought into action by remembering. The moment one remembers the Guru or the Param-Atman or the Atman, then this unity comes into action. And because of this remembering, a force is made available to the individual. The grace becomes immanent. So His Holiness certainly agrees that before Meditation or before one takes any decision in daily activity, business or life, it is good that one should remember either of the three so that the forces are available.

Dr. R. It shouldn't be too difficult – one could remember any of those three just mentally.

Lady A. (cont.)

When the action is complete, then also one should remember in a sort of thanksgiving way.

And then Dr. Roles said:

This seems to relate to my wife's question. And Mrs. Roles asked. Many housewives like me have a day that can be filled many times over with jobs to be done. I enjoy the work and when the remembrance of the Param-Atman comes, my heart is warmed instantaneously. Why do I so often let things separate me from the real Doer and the little lion reverts to behaving like a sheep?

And the Shankaracharya answered:

The relationship between the Samashti and the Vyashti (the Param-Atman and the Atman), that relationship is always present. (Dr. R. The Universal I and the individual I.) There is never a moment when this relationship is not working. But as was said previously in relation to Lord Allan's question, we forget this relationship. This happens because we get involved with other things and we don't remember the real Doer. But the relationship is always there. We shouldn't feel that even in our ignorance or by not remembering the Atman, that the relationship would be dissolved. It comes alive only when the Consciousness comes into action which means when one consciously remembers the Param-Atman – then it gets activated.

Dr. R. Now this is the crux of the meaning of Consciousness, both in Mr. Ouspensky's time and in our own now. It comes alive – this relationship which is always there – when one consciously remembers.

Lady A. (cont.)

For example, electricity is made available through wires and connections, but the force or energy of the electricity will be made available only when the switches are turned on. So we have to turn on the switches to get united with the energy that is now made available. (Dr. R. It's just a question of remembering to switch on.) We know that we forget it and to help this forgetfulness one has somehow to convince one's mind and come to a decision, a decision which will not be altered by any other force later on.

Dr. R. Can you, Mrs. Redfern, convince your mind of this?

Lady A. (cont.)

A decision of this type that all our activities are done because of the inspiration of the Absolute and it is done only for the Absolute and it is being done by the forces made available by the Absolute. Now if one comes to this sort of decision, one will see that the remembering becomes much more frequent.

(Record, 22 September 1975)

Dr. R. Yes, that's the thing. This is Step 2 of the Ladder. All of us get good impulses – that's Step 1 and is the basis of everything. We wouldn't be here if we didn't get them. But how many of us go on to Step 2 of this Ladder and take this decision which we stick to? It's high time more of us did.

Anything you want to say?

P. Pearson. (repeat) I understand very much about this decision but I find it difficult to equate with actually sitting down to meditate innocently. How do you equate this decision with the actual act of sitting down and innocently repeating the Mantra?

Dr. R. I don't think it conflicts, really. The decision is perhaps at the start of the day, or some quiet 5 minutes, and coming back to it from time to time when one's mind is disengaged from anything special to do. But it doesn't have to be done when you sit down to meditate which one finds goes better if one just slides into the meditation without this wretched dominant hemisphere getting to know about it. So you're quite right; you sit down innocently to meditate, but that shouldn't stop you from coming to a decision at some other time!

Mrs. B. Fleming. Could it be said that coming to the realization of what you really value – the valuation – and the more you realize it...

Dr. R. And that nothing valuable can be achieved without a decision of that sort about the Param-Atman. It might happen once in a blue moon, but nothing could be done enough – realized enough to make any lasting difference.

M.W.F. This decision, Dr. Roles, is really a very emotional matter, isn't it, because it doesn't prolong... ?

Dr. R. No, we're talking about a *mental decision*, convincing the wayward mind by *firm thinking*.

T. Anholt. It also seems to tie up with what Mr. Ouspensky said. 'I can do nothing'; and Professor Schaefer's words about 'leading an impersonal life'.

Dr. R. Yes, it does. This does bring one back to the fact that when Mr. Ouspensky was speaking, giving his lectures 50 years ago, all the discoveries which now make this much more possible, quite possible in fact, hadn't been made. They weren't made until after his death. And they have absolutely transformed all our discussions of that time and the subjects of his lectures, because if you relate his lectures to the present-day knowledge, which hasn't of course progressed from 1850, not in education or anything like that. It has been established by specialists that the arousal system that alerts the consciousness is there for the asking. But it can only be proved to operate on the lowest levels of consciousness and nothing shows about the higher ones. And furthermore, that the symmetry of the two sides of the nervous system makes all the difference to the whole position. The thing is, to put it very simply, that one side of the nervous system working with a full lot of batteries, at all levels, looks after the day, discharges during the day, and charges up during the night; and the other side with its own set of batteries, which are quite different, discharges during the night, and is in command during the night, and charges up during the day. If one could only learn more about this by experiencing it oneself, one could see that it is much easier and much more possible than slogging away as we used to do in the past.

I thought that I just might read a bit from the Psychological Lecture No. 1.

What does development mean and what kind of change is possible in man and how and when does this change begin? It has already been said that the change will begin

with those powers and capacities which man ascribes to him, but which in reality he does not possess. The most important and the most misleading of these qualities is consciousness and the change in man begins with the change in his understanding of the meaning of consciousness and his power of achieving it. What is consciousness? In most cases in ordinary language the word consciousness is used as an equivalent to the word intelligence, in the sense of mind activity, or as an alternative for it.

In reality consciousness is a particular kind of awareness in man. Awareness of himself, awareness of who he is, what he feels or thinks, and where he is at the moment. Only a man himself can know whether he is conscious at a given moment or not.

(from P.D.O. *Psychological Lectures*)

Dr. R. And now look at the four different states of consciousness which he described. the *first* being sleep at night which is divided 50-50 between deep and dreamless sleep and dreaming or light sleep which also has its uses, but over which we have absolutely no control.

When we awake in the morning, we enter the second state, the state in which we are now – that is in which we work, talk, imagine ourselves conscious beings and so forth. And we ordinarily call this waking consciousness or clear consciousness. But really it should be called ‘waking sleep’ or ‘relative consciousness’.

Dr. R. And that’s because in this state, you can only know the ‘relative truth’ about anything. We spend all our life alternating between these two states of consciousness about which a great deal is known and can be proved scientifically. But what isn’t known and can’t be proved scientifically is that there are two further states of consciousness, which is when these hemispheres are both working together. In one case, being aware of everything to do with yourself, full self-consciousness, that is when presided over by the Atman; and higher than that another state – when you are aware of the universe – and that is presided over by the Param-Atman. The greater includes the lesser and that’s the thing to go for.

In the first state of consciousness, that is when we’re asleep, we cannot know anything. We know nothing of the Truth at the time. In the second state, that is in waking sleep, we can only know relative truth, and from this comes the term relative consciousness. In the *third* state of consciousness, we can know the full truth about ourselves by becoming one with the Atman. In the *fourth* state of consciousness, we are supposed to be able to know the whole truth about everything. We can study things in themselves, the world as it is.

One must try to convince oneself of the importance of this to life on this little earth.

Further, we cannot *remember* anything except in moments when we were conscious, or partially conscious. You can make a man think he is conscious at any moment by mentioning it to him, and at that moment he thinks ‘I am conscious and I always am conscious’. In reality your question brings him into momentary consciousness, wakes him up for a moment, but he quickly loses it and reverts. So this is a very big thing. And we’re going to need this a lot in the near future. (a silence)

I think I would like to try yet another experiment on you, because this is the holiday period and the time for experimentation. There is some music which we’d like to try on you. Is Senor Miquel here? (No) When last heard of, he was in Spain. There is this young Spanish composer – Juan de Arriaga – who was born in Bilbao on the fiftieth anniversary of Mozart’s birthday – Mozart dying at 35; it meant that he had been dead for 15 years before Arriaga was born. And Arriaga lived an even shorter time than Mozart, dying at 19. Both

composers wrote their first operas before the age of 13; and Arriaga was known as the Spanish Mozart with reason. I want to play this to you, not because of its historical interest or anything, but because we found this music to be very conducive to quiet and meditation. It seems to come from the place that one wants to get to. So we're going to try the Minuet and Trio from his String Quartet No 3 in E flat which he wrote when he was about 16.

### MUSIC & MEDITATION

Dr. R. Music, H.H. says, shifts the molecules very often. One can't do it with any sort of thought process or will or anything, and music will often do that. Of course it is very individual. There is a little more of Arriaga's music. I only know two Quartets. There should be much more recorded but we haven't found it yet. I don't know if you can get another part of the Quartet, can you? (I'll try) Can you bear a little more? It seems to me so much of a short cut compared with talking. Any questions meanwhile?

S. Cassini. Dr. Roles, has consciousness got a lot to do with controlling the attention?

Dr. R. I'd like to put it the other way round. Attention is the weapon which we have to use – it's the only weapon that the saints have used to achieve the consciousness which is union with the Divine Self. 'Attention is the only path the Buddhas have trod', it has been said. But of course if you are nearer to consciousness, it is easier to keep attention; and if you have a good supply of Sattva guna released in you, then attention becomes quite natural. It is all linked like that. Does that answer your question?

S.C. I was wondering – you said something about if we don't go to the 2nd step of the Ladder and make the decision, then these impulses that just come in, we can't make them last. And I was just wondering how one can make these last.

Dr. R. Well, it's first of all choosing the right moment – a break between one job and the next – where there is a natural Samadhi. It's rather important to choose your moment. That's one thing; and we learn through experience when it works and when it won't work. But also to try all sorts of different ways of giving up all activity which one calls one's own. That is substituting the idea of the universal Consciousness for one's petty tiny unit of consciousness. You have to learn to acquire the habit of doing that well in advance of your next journey.

Have you found the place yet on the tape? (Yes)

### MUSIC

Dr. R. About your question on attention, Sue Cassini, many things become possible in the third and fourth states of consciousness – artistic creation and musical composition and so on. Some of these things are the gift of Grace and in creative work which is a gift, attention is, so to speak, spontaneous. We're told that Shakespeare never altered a word. And we all know little moments when attention comes – it's a gift. We just want more of it and to do that we have to get closer to the Atman and the Param-Atman.

Well, I think it's about time now. Any last questions? No, I don't think so! (laughter) I think it's time for supper for everyone!

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