

9 March 1982

MEDITATION MEETING

On the platform: Dr Roles, Lady Allan, Professor Guyatt

Prof. G. There's just one announcement. As the second Tuesday in April falls on the day after Easter Monday it's been decided *not* to have a Meditation meeting in April. This means that the next one will be on Tuesday, 11th May.

Dr. R. Plenty of chance for country and sea air.

Prof. G. So would you please tell any Meditators you meet, who haven't heard about this, and pass on that date.

Dr. R. Now these two have a lot to tell you about their recent visit and the change in set-up since H.H. retired from official headship of the organisation that he's been in charge of. I do hope you ask them about the scene now, because it's much more lively if you can picture the set-up. So we'll begin in that way. What the change is now, with this new temple which he consecrated and which has an Ashram along with it, and a big courtyard... they can do everything from the hill looking over the whole area of the bifurcation of the two rivers. And a very nice situation to be in.

Prof G. Yes, it's a marvellous situation and when we were there, there had been this tremendous Mela just finishing, at which ten million people had been present.

Dr. R. How many people bathed...?

Prof. G. Well, there were ten million people there, I don't know how many people bathed! It was an extraordinary scene. We saw just the end of it and the Ganges looked rather like a Canaletto, didn't it? Marvellous boats out with people bathing from them and the tents went right out to infinity... It was a remarkable scene.

Dr. R. I think you've been distinctly holier since your bathe! (Lady A. That was a long time ago!) (laughter). There was actual camping for 5 million... I mentioned this I think to Mr Koren and he said 'Well, that's more than the whole of Norway on one camping holiday together!' Amazing sight and thought, quite inconceivable by our standards here.

Prof. G. The temple itself is quite small really, with an Ashram attached to it, and surprisingly one is met in the courtyard by someone who looks like a soldier and who presents arms to you with a silver double-barrelled shotgun!

Dr. R. Provided by the Government. We had his predecessor who accompanied us up to the Maharishi's new Ashram that we helped to pay for many years before.

Lady A. And the decoration of the Ashram – you could hardly call it that – I think there were only two rooms on the upper level, one of which His Holiness occupied, where we saw him, and I think a few little rooms on the ground floor around the courtyard, and that was all. But it's all whitewashed and the shutters are all powder blue and the railings and the (to Prof. G: You'll have to describe the thing on the top!) is baby pink. (laughter)

Dr. R. This courtyard would hold a very fair sized meeting?

R.G./M.A. No. Not really, barely half this meeting, I should say.

Dr. R. Not so many people come to the Ashram meeting.

Lady A. I don't think he holds the type of meetings that were held at the big Ashram now. He spoke of 'That institution from which I have now retired'.

Dr. R. But he continues as our Teacher. The word 'guru' is a relationship which is never broken; once a learner is taken on by a guru, that relationship stays for ever. So whatever subsequent generations may do with his successor, who has taken over the old Ashram, and will do all the travelling and business, although we know him very well, our business is still with *our* guide.

Lady A. We never went to the old Ashram this time.

Dr. R. Now we have really an amazing array of answers which I want you all to hear. Anybody I think is bound to profit because the questions were carefully chosen to suit our situation here at Colet, and the Society, and so I think we might begin to read:

Prof. G. What I can read now is the end of an answer he gave us very early on in the first audience. We had two audiences and the first one was really centred on questions about the meditation and this is what we will speak about tonight. He said:

Meditation is more important than food. It is itself food, spiritual food, without which the inner content of one's being cannot be strengthened. One can survive without physical food for a day or two, but without meditation one will always feel that something is missing.

Dr. R. One could survive without physical food for several weeks!

Without meditation one would always feel that something is missing – inner strength is missing. In order to substantiate that inner strength one must always carry on the Tradition twice every day. If the meditation is properly done, then as has previously been said, one reaches the inner core of one's own Self. There, all the finer energy from official work is available. The world today at large is facing difficulties as far as the spiritual field is concerned and people are looking for guidance. He believes that your Society, with all the available knowledge which you possess and the practice which you have gone through, should be able to take a leading part in the nation so that you can guide their destiny, bring them to the fold of meditation, so that their inner Being is improved. It is like a cloud which encircles the sun which is ever shining; now the world is within this cloud and this cloud has to be removed. Meditation and the knowledge which has been given to you should be able to eliminate this cloud so that the brilliance of everyone's Self is made available to each individual and for society.

(Record, 9 February 1982)

Dr. R. Now this is very important. He's feeling that we haven't really spoken out enough. That the Society has got to change its character from being a rather hidden-away clandestine kind of affair and learn to speak out. We've got to drop a lot of protective armour which is no longer necessary. Everyone is looking for some solution. This will need quite a bit of practice, quite a bit of search for a good way to give briefly an indication to somebody to

whom we are recommending meditation, a reason why it's so important and so necessary. How does that go on?

Prof. G. Of course the phrase I like, Dr Roles, and which one has to believe really, is when he says 'So that the brilliance of everyone's Self is made available' for each individual and for society.

Dr. R. Because we are all the Absolute – the Protocosmos. We've got first to realise that fact, that buried in us is this brilliance... and it isn't a question of creating the sun or the brilliance, it's a question of removing the barrier which stops us from realising – changing our attitude. Apropos of that, partly to draw the audience in, I'd like to read a letter which some of you have heard but I think all of you should. It's a letter from one of our old hands – a landowner and businessman who has been with us and is in this room at the moment:

Recently I had an experience which I feel I would like to tell you about as perhaps it could be of some use to other people at Colet. About two weeks ago while meditating, the realisation that 'I DO love the Param-Atman and indeed have always loved him', came to me in a flash and then suddenly a tremendous feeling of love spread through me. In fact it was like being in love. And although the feeling of love remained only a few hours, I do know now with the utmost certainty that the most important thing is to cultivate this love at every possible moment. Nothing else really matters.

Now this is available for everybody in this room. What then is keeping us back?

Mrs Macowan. Dr Roles, who were these ten million, I mean what were they going for, what were they attending?

Dr. R. For a long, long period of Indian tradition which we don't share. So it's not really of great import for us as to what they went for because for six thousand years, back into prehistory, they have been brought up with the Vedic tradition, with the Upanishads and so on – but we in the West are different and this Society was started by Mr. Ouspensky with the idea of our using the Western approach and not the Eastern, you see, so that's what we concentrate on. Go on do ask some more, it's interesting.

Mr Hodge. Dr Roles, you used the word 'guru' just now. Very many years ago someone used the word 'leader'. Could you explain the difference between the words 'guru' and 'leader'?

Dr. R. Well we find that the word 'guru' doesn't go down very well in the West and it's quite good to call our guide 'leader', but it must be understood that anybody who has been admitted to a great Tradition formally as we have, has a special relationship which is quite different from an ordinary teacher at school. We pass through the hands of a succession of teachers and wave goodbye to them very happily when we leave. We have quite a different relationship and if one only had more faith in it and studied it a bit more; for this reason I prepared this *Method of Self-realization* which has been printed in New Zealand, and we hope to have copies for all serious meditators to have by them for frequent reference. This is the beginning of doing something which lasts. Actually it was the year 1972 when my wife and I first really started trying to do what we were told. So, we want to get some indication of how many people would benefit by this in this country and abroad; it has some value, to which the writer of that letter testifies:

I would like to thank you for the help over the years and particularly for giving me *A Method of Self-realization*, which I have copied out into a pocket book and is my constant companion.

It really does things if you read something of that every day.

Q. Is it available now?

Dr. R. No, it's going to take a little bit of time because they've got 300 copies already printed in New Zealand, but that's not nearly enough; so when Michael and Gillian Harris come next term, they will already know and bring an extra edition of this for more of us.

Lady A. So some might be available at the May Meditation meeting, with any luck?

Dr. R. Yes. It's a record which is full of stories and Ashram talks, and the big Festival talks, and also our own audiences... it's very interesting and lively.

Ron Miles. When you read from the letter, you spoke of the 'constant companion'; constancy seems a very central idea.

Dr. R. Yes, I quite agree. How much of last week's meeting do you actually remember? Precious little. I don't think that anything really sticks long, but this has got to stick. To be effective, it's got to remain with you. Some sentences, some story or other, must remain with you for a long, long time.

Lady A. When we arrived there, the first words that Shri Narayan said to us were that we'd got to learn to chew everything much more.

Mr Torikian. What did His Holiness mean, Dr Roles, when he said that we must bring our influence to bear on the rest of the nation? Did he mean that we should make an active effort or does it mean that we should realise this aim which we are trying to attain so that that in itself would spread the light?

Dr. R. It's more like that. We have to do enough to remove the cloud which surrounds this light within each of us and then the rest will follow. And one of the things which came out is this shortest of all the Upanishads – *Mandukya*, which means frog. The sage who wrote it devised a system which says that in three jumps a frog which has been roasted in the torrid sun of the desert can get into the deep cool water, within the Self. In other words, the first jump is to realize that you are being fried alive by the heat of living in difficult circumstances; dedicate your life to doing what you have to do in the best possible way as if you were doing it for some outstanding guest; develop what creativity each of us has – because everybody has a creative power in them which mostly goes unused. All that is really the first jump. To realize your possibilities and do something about carrying it out. But every frog here in this group has to make at least two jumps – two really good jumps every 24 hours. And the second jump means that the inner Consciousness which ordinarily is in charge at night but which goes on night and day, the subtle level, becomes purified and then one gets what the writer of that letter did, a glimpse of the peace on the causal or spiritual level where this great happiness comes along. So that you cease to measure your meditation by your watch but you do it out of love for the meditation because it does such good things for you.

Now since they came back with this material which you are going to hear, this has happened to me and I'm sure it's very close for a lot of you. Indeed I'm sure a lot of you in this room already know all about it, and have experienced it. It's inexpressible, so naturally you can't talk about it. I sympathise.

Lady A. The whole of the emphasis was on this stillness, Dr Roles, wasn't it?

Prof G. There were two main points stressed. The stillness and love of the meditation – those were the two great points.

Dr. R. The question is, *how still are we*, during a half hour? We can't be still physically, completely still, unless we are still mentally. And you heard a lot of very good advice and of methods by which you could get still mentally.

Lady A. Because it was, I think, the main question from everybody and mine also when I said that I had told Dr Roles that I really only had one question and it was how to have more stillness and to work from this deep peace, and that if the best way was to sit there and say nothing for two audiences and learn how to be still, I knew that we would be forgiven in London if we took nothing more home, because you all wanted more of this stillness and deep peace.

Dr. R. Would *you* have forgiven them?! (lots of 'Yeses')

Lady A. Anyway, it did seem to please the Shankaracharya and he was very warm about it and very forthcoming and it felt all right to have said that. We pointed out that at a big gathering like this we did seem to achieve a certain physical stillness when we all meditated together which was lovely and very obvious but that we had noticed and many people said that in spite of this physical stillness they were not still within. (To Dr. R: Do you want me to read what he said? Dr. R: Do, because we've taken it the wrong way up.)

Lady A. Some people, those who come to weekly meetings, have heard a little of this, but Professor Guyatt found that we have got to go over it again and again and each time it's of more value, so some of you will be hearing a bit of this for a second time; because the Shankaracharya replied:

The achievement of physical stillness is not an ordinary thing in itself. It's a very important achievement. There are three factors which come together as far as meditation is concerned: the body, the eyes, and the mind. When the body is totally still, the next movement is found in the eyes. They will keep on flickering, however small this may be. When the eyes are still it is most probable that the mind will follow suit. Mind does move according to the movement of the body and there are other factors, but body first, eyes next, will be followed peacefully by the mind. Meditation as it has been given to you starts with the body, and the training of the body to become still is the first stage of entry into the spiritual world. His Holiness commends people that that has been achieved and he does not see much difficulty in achieving the stillness of the mind in due course.

And then he went on to mention the sage who wrote the *Mandukya Upanishad* and that Mandukya really means frog and that with these three jumps the frog who was on dry land and getting scorched and wanted to be cool and peaceful could jump into the water with

three jumps where he can enjoy the cool and peace of the deepest water. Similarly these are the three jumps we need and with these three jumps it should be possible to establish stillness of the mind. Mr Jaiswal was not satisfied and went on 'Sometimes it seems that the body is totally still, and yet the mind is moving around on different subjects. Can His Holiness say more about how to still the mind when the body is totally still?'

And the Shankaracharya replied:

The relation of mind to body is already established and strong. Nothing is independent and everything starts with the body. If the body is still, there is no reason at all why the mind should not be still. So if mind is not still, the only conclusion is that body has not yet become totally still. There must be some movement in the body which needs to be stilled. Once it is totally still, then you will find mind surrenders its movement and becomes still.

(Record, 9 February 1982)

Sue Cassini. Can I ask a question please? Would you say it's not necessarily movement – it's tension in the body?

Lady A. Dick Guyatt mentioned that too.

Prof G. Yes, it's one of the first things I discovered.

Dr. R. But it is actually a lot to do with imperceptible movements that we make and if your eyes are moving, if you have tensions, if you are shifting your position, all those things are signs that your inward nature is not at peace. That you aren't at peace with yourself. So it's necessary for checkers to watch, particularly, and see how still a person is and tell them what signs they have of not being still and then they'll watch out for it and realise that arid periods in the meditation, which we all have, are related to times when we are less still during a half hour.

Lady A. We won't get around to it tonight, but there is then a lovely sequence of material which amazingly all came in one morning, but is enough for four or five Meditation meetings.

Dr. R. We'll be hearing that during the coming weeks. Now, we would like to have – oh all right, a question.

Patricia Pearson. It seems when you talk about the mind and the body and the eyes not being still, and you are sitting meditating that the only answer which is a very difficult answer, is that really you've got to go on meditating. The only thing that will give you the stillness is surely the mantra. And there's always the sensation of worry about movement and therefore you come away from the mantra.

Dr. R. Yes. Now I'd like you to have heard the glowing accounts of the changes which have come over your weekly meetings, recently – this term as compared with last term. A number of people testified yesterday at the Administration meeting of the change which people don't seem to realise is taking place all the time in the quality of your being and in the reliability of stillness and peacefulness which is being developed without most of us realising the fact. Also that already this term there have been more new meditators than for the same time last year, and that's a testimony. They seem to think you've got something. Extraordinary! (laughter)

Now look let's try this other way of being still. Let's hear some music and then slip into Meditation at the end of it.

MUSIC

(Haydn String Quartet Op. 64 in G major, Medici Quartet)

MEDITATION

What we exist for is to experience, and enable anybody who comes to Colet to experience, three levels of peace. Peace on the sensory level, the outward looking mind and the external world. And the peace there on that sensory level is only attainable at night when we are in bed and asleep.

Next we have to get through the mental world, our psychology, and get peace on the subtle level where the mind finishes with one lot of desires, one lot of motivations, before it starts another, so that we prolong the natural periods of Samadhi which are present in everybody although they may pass unnoticed. And only when we get to the peace on the Causal, emotional or spiritual level, do we really find what we are looking for. If more people were to do that we would have an effect on our country.

(Reading:)

Since the Causal realm cannot be described, one learns about it from its effects. One can see it in the activities and dispositions of such men and women who provide themselves with spiritual rest. There are three prominent features: firstly, they show love and affection towards everything they encounter. All activities will be initiated with love and then held and nourished with love until they come to their fulfilment. All relationships with individuals, direct or indirect, will be lighted and guided only by love and affection. Secondly, their ideas, intentions or motives will be pure and simple. Purity and simplicity widen the horizon and they think and work for the whole of the human family and its intrinsic goodness. Divisions into groups, races, or nations disappear and only Natural Laws are employed. Thirdly, the physical movements of such people (Dr R: And this is where you are many steps ahead of me!) are only geared to the natural rhythm and the result is simplicity and economy of movement. They never rush into any situation, are never agitated and perform all actions in an efficient sublime and refined way. Whatever they do will emerge from stillness, be held in stillness and again submerge in the same great stillness which they experience in this great total Immobility of Creation. This would establish an ideal or a standard for the ordinary man to aspire to if he somehow awakes to the need to improve his lot.

(Record, 9 November 1973)

So that's really what this house exists for and why we come here. One had quite an experience of it just now, but there's much much more to be got. Any last questions? It's now approaching a quarter past eight. Meditation IS more important than food, the Shankaracharya said!

Miss Scrutton. Did you mention something about a change of attitude? It seems terribly important; having something to read every day keeps one's attitude turned the right way.

Dr. R. The thing that we have to change entirely is our attitude – especially to ourselves; Mr

Ouspensky used to say it took three weeks intensive attention to that one thing to change one's attitude. One's attitude can be changed, but the mind and body have been established for so long that they are very difficult to shift, but it's our attitude that has to change. That was brought out in your conversations. Well, so marvellous is the effect of this material you've brought back that I'm thinking of applying for Sabbatical leave until Easter just to carry it out, because really there's nothing else as our friend there said which is so lovely and so important, and (to R.G. and M.A.) you have a nice lot of material to be getting on with.

Lady A. What struck me is what Pen Scrutton said about attitude... I think the chief change of attitude that we arrived at was that we are far too feeble about our determination to deal with our moving mind; I think it'll come out gradually in the material, that one must have a much more robust attitude.

Prof G. Yes, I agree and it was also very clear at the audiences that the Shankaracharya himself regarded his mind as a servant, as a tool; he wasn't completely immersed in it, and this was very clear.

Dr. R. I think you'll remember Dick, that the moving centre was part of our Western teaching and that the moving centre didn't only move muscles but moved the mind as well, and this is where I think our Western System can be a help.

Well, important as it is, perhaps now we should allow ourselves to eat.

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