

11 May 1982

## GENERAL MEDITATION MEETING

On the platform: Dr. Roles, Lady Allan, Mr. Roy Jacob.

Lady A. The next of these meetings will be held on Tuesday, 8th June. We've been given the special opportunity of having a concert here of contemporary music played by Peter Wiegold's ensemble, 'Gemini'... (Dr. R. Not pop!) who are giving a public concert in London on June 23rd. The performance here would be the evening before that, on Tuesday, 22nd June. It would include a work by Peter Wiegold and a first performance of *Aubade* by Michael Maxwell. As the concert would be given by professional musicians, including soloists, the cost would be £250 which is a considerable reduction on the usual fee and the question is: would there be sufficient support from people here to raise this – obviously the more that come the cheaper the tickets. Could we please have a show of hands from those who would like to come to see how many there are – that's Tuesday, 22nd June. (There were 86 people)

Isn't that rather good and we've got another big meeting on Monday – we might pick up some more then. Could we take it at that? If there are 100 people, it will be £2.50 each. Perhaps it would be kind to ask if there are some who would not come at £2.50. (laughter) (no hands up). It's all right – we're safe! Can we take it that it will be then? (Mr. Maxwell confirmed it would be fine) Oh good, we've got Mr. Maxwell here – I hope he is encouraged by the response.

There is one more announcement – a very important one! Very many thanks to the people who came to the weekend Work-In – they worked very hard and helped the house enormously. I heard a comment that the standard of work was very high too.

Dr. R. Yes, it sounded very good! We want to tell you now about a very great friend of a lot of people here – Ron Miles. He is of course known to all the turners and to people doing the Movements and many more besides. He was assisting you (to Roy Jacob who said 'yes'), wasn't he, at your last initiations, and one of the initiates said to her mother, 'Who is that marvellous man?' He was in tremendous form, because he rang me afterwards, before his operation, with a very thrilling experience in which everything he had been told seemed to come true. Two hours after that he had a sudden stroke and lost consciousness and had to be taken into hospital where he had an operation a week ago last Monday. People have been very good about going to see him – he lives way out at Blackheath. One or two of the things that they have written to me after a visit are very moving. By the way, the surgeon told me that he had a very common thing – one or two people in this room have had the same thing and made a complete recovery. There is a tiny little dilatation of an artery outside the brain which is present at birth – congenital sub-arachnoid haemorrhage it's called. The surgeon is perfectly confident that he will get right but the effect of this and of the operation is that he loses the idea of Before-Now-After and he is all on the line of Now, and everything that has happened to him in the past seems to be Now, so when somebody mentioned that his father had died (his father died ten years ago) he was very upset. When woken by the ward orderly he was very confused. He recognises his friends from here immediately – he recognised Miss Wright before she recognised him. John Sampson asked him if he had a message for me.

This question made him very emotional and he replied, ‘Tell him I send him and Mrs. Roles,’ (whom he thinks is alive, quite rightly) ‘my fondest love’; and then quite clearly ‘tell him the way he knows is the right way.’ And, as John Sampson was going, Ron said, ‘I want you to go with a spring in your step and no one needs to feel sorry.’ So it will be nice to have him back. He has been sent home to Bristol to his family where it is thought he will find it easier than in hospital. So he is very happy. And that brings me to say that having started trying to do what the Shankaracharya has advised about preparing for my next journey, I’ve had – almost every 24 hours – something to confirm this (to Lady A. About audiences with H.H.) as you got it at your first meeting, quite near the beginning of the first of the two recent audiences with the Shankaracharya.

Lady A (reading)

Dr. Roles says ‘During the first of the two audiences given to us (Richard Guyatt and myself) this year by His Holiness, the following passage occurs:

S. The achievement of physical stillness is not an ordinary thing – it is a very important achievement. 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. His Holiness commends those who have achieved that, and he does not see much difficulty ahead of them in achieving the stillness of the mind in due course.

(Record, 9 February 1982)

Dr. R. Well now, are there any questions about the Meditation? Has it been possible, better, during the holiday period or not, better for mothers and better for fathers, or something like this? How has it been for you, Paul?

Paul Robertson. I’ve found that when I’ve been working very hard, as we have been recently, it’s easier to be mechanical rather than to be very quiet.

Dr. R. Any other remarks, observations, questions?

Mr. Tully. The Shankaracharya said that the next step after stilling the mind was to get the eyes still. Can you give any direction as to how the eyes may be stilled?

Dr. R. That reading is an account of what he said elsewhere. It seems to be very clear that you know when your eyes are not still. You can easily and simply observe and that means that you are not physically still. And so you don’t worry about movement but you just stop your thoughts. (Lady A. Yes, come back to the bottom of the pool.) Yes, come back to the mantra, and pull yourself entirely onto the mantra. It’s just a sign, Tully, that you are not physically still. It’s a very sensitive sign.

Lady A. Dr. Roles, do you feel that, the way he gave it, that perhaps it’s more a matter of observation or people checking will notice that this is so?

Dr. R. A bit of both. I’ve been trying to find out since that. I find it very easy to tell for oneself, but also checkers must pay attention. In fact the eyeballs and eyelids and everything to do with the eyes tend to be very mobile. We were very glad to see Mrs. Tully on Sunday. Any other questions? At this particular point in the first audience he went on as follows:

S. The shortest and one of the earliest of the Upanishads is the *Mandukya*. Mandukya is a word which really means 'frog' and the sage who wrote it had evolved a system which says that 'with three jumps' one can get into the deepest level of the Self (Param-Atman). Just as a frog, who happens to be on dry land and is getting scorched by the tropical sun and wants to be cool and peaceful, can reach the coolness and peace of the deepest water. Similarly there are three jumps we need to establish the stillness of the mind.

Dr. R. Now these three jumps – if you are retired, as I am, it's easy. I can devote enough time and attention every twenty-four hours if I remember. You mustn't worry though if your life is not at a stage when it's possible to do enough. I don't think you realise how each decade of one's life has its own needs and possibilities. I mean in the first decade (the first ten years) you are getting to be able to live with your family and other people, and stay at school instead of getting expelled, and various other things. Second decade – teenagers – we've found that if they have the reason for meditation explained to them very simply and carefully, they are marvellous at it; they take to it like ducks to water. Then from the twenties, thirties, forties, fifties, it's much more difficult. You are householders, building a career, raising families, doing a lot of extra work round the clock and you mustn't worry. You just do what you can and make sure you don't forget, before you come to the happy situation I'm in of retiring and then you come into your own. Now is that understood? I think we can get very hot and bothered and worry too much if we're at the career building stage and not being able to do enough to get rewards. Any questions about this? I mean it's not very easy for a Headmaster, is it George (Mellett)? But you do it somehow.

Lady A. Isn't it our great safeguard that the Shankaracharya has always encouraged us never to try or to feel that we've got to do more than the two half-hours, but to improve the quality of the two half-hours?

Dr. R. I thought you would all leap with joy and start... (laughter) How do we put a squib under them?

Alice Bolton. It isn't just individual is it? Do we not support each other?

Dr. R. I know. I'd like you to support each other in every possible way you can, and do everything you possibly can individually. Each person's life is different and it's for them to see what they can do. There's no general rule.

Mrs. Redfern. Dr. Roles, does the quality of each individual's meditation help the School as a whole?

Dr. R. I would say so. If you, for instance, did three weeks of perfect meditation, we'd all be fully Realized (laughter), and if there were more like that we'd be fully Realized quicker! Liberated!

A. W-Prosser. Dr. Roles, as you said that it's easier at the beginning and throughout the second decade, and later on, for meditation, is it not also like that in each decade – that there are periods when it is easy and... it's just a repetition of a pattern?

Dr. R. Oh yes, rather! In fact I think we have to remember that there are two different ideas of

time; it's put awfully clearly in Ecclesiastes, and you all know this passage where there are two separate words in Greek for the two aspects of time, so I'll get Roy to read this.

R.J. For everything there is a season...

Dr. R. A season – Kronos, a circle – a period of time. It may be a day, it may be a month, it may be a year, and so on.

R.J. ... and a time – Kairos – to every purpose under the heaven...

Dr. R. A time – radii rays of Now.

R.J. A time to be born and a time to die;  
 A time to plant and a time to pluck up that which is planted;  
 A time to kill and a time to heal;  
 A time to break down and a time to build up;  
 A time to weep and a time to laugh;  
 A time to mourn and a time to dance;  
 A time to cast away stones and a time to gather stones together;  
 A time to embrace and a time to refrain from embracing;  
 A time to get and a time to lose;  
 A time to keep and a time to cast away;  
 A time to rend and a time to sew;  
 A time to keep silent and a time to speak;  
 A time to love and a time to hate;  
 A time of war and a time of peace.

Dr. R. 'A time to keep silent and a time to speak'. That's specially important for us. If we speak at the time that things should be said, we wouldn't give the impression of being so cagey, which is rather off-putting. And if we refrained from speaking at a time when it was necessary to be silent, we wouldn't get into a lot of the trouble that we get into now. So I commend that to your notice. It's one of the things that Mr. Ouspensky said we ought to have long thoughts about. Think about it every day. A season and a moment. But to come back to this Upanishad – I would like you to think of this frog being parched in the tropical sun as we are in the Western world today. Not the tropical sun, but the psychological chaos in which we live. How can we get to the cool of the depths within where the Self resides in three jumps? I think that if we understood just a little better what it is necessary to do, it would be much easier. I'd like us all to meditate now for a minute, just trying to get still – not fighting, just coming back to the rhythm of the Mantra, longing for the cool of the deepest water.

#### MEDITATION

Dr. R. Well, it feels much cooler to me! I find I get helped, a lot of people get helped by doing it together in this big room; but I want to give you a very literal translation of this Upanishad. It's at least from the 7th century BC and probably much longer ago than that when it was handed down by word of mouth – and stripped of various later commentaries

and checked with the words the Shankaracharya uses in a special sense, it reads remarkably like present-day knowledge. It has only 12 verses altogether:

1. The *Word* (Mantra) is imperishable; all *this* is its manifestation. Past, present, and future – everything is the Word (Mantra) and whatever transcends these three divisions of time, that also is the Word, the Mantra.
2. Nothing but Spirit (Param-Atman) has real existence. The individual Self (Atman) is of the same nature as the universal Param-Atman. Four conditions are imposed on it.
3. First comes the *material (physical) existence*, perceived in the daytime state – common to all – perception turned outward, wherever the Atman enjoys coarse matter, ponderable matter.
4. The second is the *dreaming state*, the mental condition (or psychology as we would call it), perception turned inward – wherein the Atman enjoys the matter of the subtle world through his registering mind (Manas).
5. The third condition is *deep sleep* in which man feels no desire, creates no dream. This is the Causal condition. Because of this undivided union of the individual with the universal, the Atman is filled with joy but the man himself knows nothing of it, since he is asleep.
6. The universal Spirit (Param-Atman) is the Lord of all, inhabitant of the hearts of all, creator and dissolver of beings. There is nothing He does not know; but He himself can only be defined by what He is *not*.
7. He is *not* knowable by perception, whether turned outward or inward or by both combined. He is neither that which is known nor that which is *not* known. He cannot be seen, grasped or bargained with. He is indefinable, unthinkable, indescribable.
8. The only proof of His existence is union with Him. The ‘world’ disappears in Him. He is the peaceful, the good, the One without a second. This is the fourth condition, Turiya, Enlightenment, the most worthwhile of all.

Dr. R. Then verses 9–11, the next three verses, relate this to a mantra of three sounds in one, but this one is the ascetic’s mantra which takes a man away from other people into solitary living; and we have to be very careful never to get tangled with that one. But this description also holds good, and H.H. has told us, in relation to our Mantra of three sounds in one, which draws people together. That’s why it has been advised that we should use it as householders in ordinary life.

And then the 12th verse sums it all up:

12. Thus the Word, the Mantra, is nothing but the Self (Atman). He who understands this through his individual Atman, merges with the universal Spirit (Param-Atman) – Yes, he who understands *this*.

Now don’t you see that we look at things the wrong way up? Ordinary psychology describes the deep sleep state as being lowest of all; light sleep or dream state the next, and daytime state the tops! (laughter) You’ve got to turn upside down and then everything works. I can testify to that and so can quite a lot of other people; I see several people in this room – Simon Harbord, for instance, he has realised that – he wrote me a letter about it. (To

Simon: anything to say now?) (No) But that's a simple description. Anything you feel like asking?

Mr. H. No, but I would like to confirm what you wrote back to me – that once you've had this experience, life is never really the same.

Dr. R. And you don't worry because it's rather rare to get it again. You know it's there so you stop jumping about in the desert like a frog in the tropical sun. Does he say he does jump about?

Mr. H. Unfortunately I still jump about but deep down an awful lot of fear is gone.

Dr. R. Yes. Now what about New Zealand – do they jump about there?

Mr. Harris. A great deal!

Dr. R. But it's a lovely country and it's nicer to live there than here according to the friend who lives with me. Is there anything that occurs to you, Michael, that we should send a telegram to Nolan Howitt about?

Mr. H. Just 'Come quickly, it's spring!' (laughter)

Dr. R. It's still holidays, you see, here, and according to the weather man we are starting the English summer... it's going to be fine for three or four days! (laughter) So we can enjoy the summer. As my American mother used to quote Mark Twain as saying, 'I like your summer, but I hate the other 364 days!' (laughter)

Shall we try again now to meditate, not try, but allow ourselves to be grateful to this great Lord within, the Lord of the universe; let the direction of our minds be in terms of thanking, of gratitude, and not in terms of petition.

### MEDITATION

So, these three jumps that the frog has to make mean three levels of giving up. Meditation is not to acquire something. Meditation is to give up and the Shankaracharya said, 'practise giving up all the time'. We just have to get the idea of the great Consciousness of the universe. Substitute the thought of oneself for that, and the three jumps are: first, stilling the body and stilling the eyes; second, stilling the mind; and in particular purifying the mind of negative imagination and turning thoughts and so on. That's all you can do. Those two states of consciousness (daytime state and dream state) go on all day, though in the day one half of the brain is dominant, and at night the other. But if you do two periods of meditation a day – one looks after the daytime and the other looks after the night – and then the third, the deep sleep state comes nearer... don't you find that? And you find that when you do what you can, the fourth state of Turiya is a matter of Grace and comes when this Supreme Consciousness thinks it's right for you. So what we have to do is to try to deserve it. Just do what we can. (to Roy Jacob) Would you say that there was anything more that need be said to people who are proposing themselves for meditation or people whom you *think* might be interested?

R.J. No, I think you have summed it up very well indeed!

Dr. R. I think this sort of thing might sum it up... And that's what I would like people to be doing. Trying to think what is the simplest way they can lead somebody in their family, somebody in their village, somebody they know well, to the suggestion: 'Come and try.' 'You lose nothing by meditating, come and try.' So, if you can, think of what is the minimum that needs to be said. It will be different for different people.

Is Derek Faires here? No. He sent me a very nice story which we'll read when there's more time.

Well our term begins next Monday – after that there are two very nice surprises at least, that you are going to have, but I won't talk about that now, it's a little premature. (laughter) I just want to make sure you come next Monday. (laughing) OK. See you then perhaps.

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