

FCR 1976-82

Giving up: theory

In the System there are a number of things one has to try to give up: unhelpful habits, identification, expressing negative emotion, 'False I'. There is also the enigmatic aphorism: 'Give up your suffering and make moon in yourself'. Dr Roles gave the following explanation of this in 1979:

Give up your suffering and create moon in yourself. Give up your suffering! Suffering is a psychological affair. All embodied beings have pain; they are bound to. But suffering is unnecessary. Suffering is a mental torture - self-torture. Why does it say 'create moon'? Because the moon is what keeps everything in place, preserves the status quo. It's like the weight on a grandfather clock, Mr Ouspensky used to say - the weight on the pendulum. It not only governs the tides on the earth together with the sun and the movements of the earth of course, it's one of the three factors in the tides; but it also governs all fluids throughout organic life. If, instead of being governed by the gravity of the moon - the physical weight - you create a centre of gravity in yourself which will give you liberation from suffering, you will have a permanent centre of gravity which is a step around there for higher development. You need to have a permanent centre of gravity so that you always end up the right way up! [79/36]

One should also add the Magician's injunction to Osokin that he has to be prepared to 'sacrifice something big... not only once, but go on making sacrifices until you get what you want' (interestingly not in the original edition published in Russia before Ouspensky met Gurdjieff).

Some of these System ideas do appear in Dr Roles's papers in our period of study and were evidently accepted, but others were frowned upon. This came to the surface in a meeting in 1974, and it is worth studying the dialogue in some detail:

Dr. R. Last week there was some discussion headed by you, Mrs. Fleming, about giving up ego and I said it was impossible, and I still feel that! I have been accused since of not hearing what you said! We heard what you said, and this is part of what we got wrong in the past.

Mrs. Fleming: I wanted to ask you afterwards about the difference between ego and personality. I think I was confused in this way. One must have a personality.

Dr. R. The whole thing rests on terminology which we failed to understand years ago, and which has taken a deep root in the passing on of all the Knowledge we have had. What I am learning from the Shankaracharya is that everybody has an individuality which is his most precious possession. It is like nobody else; it is himSelf or herSelf. This individuality is subject to fluctuations and impurity. What we used to call 'false I' is impurity and is not 'I' at all. When you stop to analyse what is ego or false 'I' and what is 'I' (Bar Fleming) you get into all sorts of trouble in the way of conflict and dichotomy; it is far better to regard yourself as one person (Jiva) having a Divine spark which alone you can call 'I', which is of the same nature as the Lord of the Universe, and anything else that comes in is impurity. Let us give up calling those impurities 'false I' and throwing bricks at people and accusing them of ego!

Mrs. F. Would you say that control is the first step for one to know oneSelf?

Dr. R. Who would control Mrs. Fleming? She can't; I can't! Only Param-Atman could. [74/12a]

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The remainder of this paper is concerned with how Dr Roles's understanding of what HH meant by 'giving up' changed over the years. But it should be said in passing that in other respects the directions on 'giving up' from HH are similar to those of the System: give up attachment (Kashaya), impurity (Mala), ignorance (Avarana) and dispersion of mind (Vikshepa).

The grounds for the contention that 'the ego has to be given up' came from HH's story of Kach, which he told at audiences in 1967 and 1974. Briefly, Prajapati, the guru to the gods, had a son, Kach, who returned home after a study of the Vedas. He was convinced by his studies that he had to give up everything. Leaving out the trials and tribulations he put himself and his long-suffering father through, at the end of the story Prajapati convinces the boy that he can never give *everything* up, because there will always remain that which wants to give up. It is that, the Ahankara (the sense of 'I') he must give up.

In 1975 Dr Roles remarked [75/8]:

The Shakaracharya's Tradition consists in 'giving up' what stands in the way. We know quite well that we never get something valuable for nothing and, since these experiences [Good Impulses] turn out to be the most valuable of all as the first step on the Ladder of Self-Realization, we must expect to have to 'give up' for them more transitory mental activities. This, however, turns out to be something very gratifying rather than frightening, as these words will show if you practise them:

S. Where the Bhagavad-Gita prescribes 'giving up', it also explains how to give up. What we have to give up is the desire to derive benefit from our actions – and not actions themselves. If we give up acting but continue to indulge in desires, then we would simply be pretending to give up. Before undertaking an action, an ordinary worldly man always tries to assess what benefit would accrue to him as a result of that action. But a Realized man undertakes it as a matter of duty, with no desire for its consequential benefits. [15.4.72]

But what about giving up Ahankar? By 1976, Dr Roles was saying that it meant giving up 'I-ness'. Here is a selection of his statements (and a quotation from H) from the period 1976-81:

Every moment he [the Jiva, individual self] has to keep his eyes open to what is happening around him and what the needs of the moment are. But any spare time he has when his attention is not occupied should be spent trying to get as far as he can toward the source at the centre along this firm straight line to the Divine Self with which he shares his real identity. . . . What you have to do about it is to be 'giving up' at any moment. You will not get along this line by acquiring; it is giving up that is the secret. What you have to give up is your feeling of separate I-ness. Separate 'me' is the thing that divides the Jiva - the ordinary character, man in the street - from the Divine Self. So only if you give up something, will you get to the next Step; if you give up something more of the ego, you pass from the ordinary physical world, through the

subtle world where there are two Steps of giving up, until you come into the Causal world. [76/35]

What we have to give up is "I" – one's feeling of "I" – identification. [77/25]

Consequently, when we're asked to give up we are asked to give up the 'I' which is looking at everything and commenting on everything and substitute the eternal Divine Self that each one of us really is. [24.3.80]

HH: The first verse [of the Ishavasya] says: Whatever one sees in Creation – whatever moves – one should use it fully and enjoy this Absolute everywhere, but one should enjoy it with renunciation. One should not try to possess it. Just because the Absolute is everywhere one need not to try to hold it; enjoy it and give it up. So, 'giving up' is the most simple philosophy which promises complete fulfilment of the individual's life, and also Liberation after having enjoyed it. [19.1.74, quoted in 81/37]

We don't have to give up sugar in Lent or something like that. We have to give up our personal view of things and put instead something objective and real which can be the silent impartial observer of what goes on within you and of what goes on in the world outside, thereby uniting the two halves of the mind. [81/23]

Next week's paper will deal with the *practice* of 'giving up' and the nature of the Observer.

Ideas for the week

Try making a very succinct list of all the things that comprise 'giving up'.

How does Dr Roles's position in 1981 on 'giving up the ego' compare with what he said in 1974?

How would we now interpret the Magician's injunctions to Osokin?