

ARISE, AWAKE AND ACT

Part II

Vimala Thakar

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Introduction

I have been staying at Mt.Abu since January 2005, as a socially retired person. However as a person having spent 50 years of life in active social work on various fronts in various countries, retirement does not result in isolation. Personal contact with friends in nearly every country of the globe continues through correspondence. Spiritual enquirers come to discuss various aspects of spirituality from practically every country of the world. It is a great privilege to have genuine affection and trust by the global human community.

We had published a small booklet 'Arise Awake and Act' in the beginning of 2005. We are bringing out the 2nd part at the end of year 2005.

This is my way of sharing life with those who are interested in 'Jeevan Yoga', as well as Vimala's pathless quantum leap into the dimension of Meditation. The dimension of Meditation implies all inclusive awareness of totality and its parts simultaneously. Such awareness stimulates spontaneous response in every relationship as well as, to every challenge that life confers upon you

Vimala Thakar

Human Civilization In Transition

It seems that the whole human civilization is passing through a critical transitional era. The global human community is in a cultural crisis. Its relationship to the Earth, the oceans and rivers, vegetable kingdom and all the non-human species is going through a radical qualitative change. Man is no more the master, the monitor or the manager of planetary affairs! Perhaps not even of Human life itself !

The organic interrelatedness and interdependence is highlighted not only by the astounding advances in science and technology but also by the world wide acceptance of Ayurveda, Rajayoga and Meditation by the medical experts.

The frequency of mighty earthquakes and oceanquakes have shaken the human intelligence! Quite a thrilling period in human evolution!

Another sphere of transition is Man-Woman relationship and survival of family as a primary unit of society. Equality of Gender,

economic rights of women and so called freedom in sexual matters have shattered the family unit, hereditary rights to property and the sanctity of parenthood. Women can rent wombs ! Children can be nurtured in artificially maneuvered chemical wombs. Sex is reduced to a biological urge, severed from ethics and spirituality!

Economic globalization has deprived nations of their sovereignty! Hunting for cheap labour and vast markets for the sale of products has attained priority in the public and private sector!

The transitional period could be converted into a process of Transformation, if the teachings of the Veda-Upanishad Rishis and those of Socrates, the Buddha, Mahavira, Prophet Muhammed, Zarathustra, Jesus Christ and Mahatma Gandhi are studied for guidelines.

Transformation in the quality of Consciousness could be the master key for total social transformation.

Vimala Thakar
18th November, 2005

Education For Peace And Nonviolence

It seems to me that Peace is a byproduct of harmonious human relationships in a society. There can be such harmonious relationships inspiring people to cooperate with one another spontaneously for the collective welfare. If there is exploitation free economic structure and dictatorship free political structure then only such relationships become possible. There cannot be Peace if caste system or class system creates a sense of moral hierarchy in the minds of the population. Hence Education for Peace has to begin right from the primary school and even before that in every home for children of nursery standard. In other words with present system and structure of Educational Institutions all over the world we cannot hope for a Peaceful Global Human Society.

The whole structure of United Nations and its legal basis will have to be radically changed if we want International and Intercontinental Peace. The financial dependence of United Nations on the American government must come to an end as

early as possible. The privilege of Veto reserved for certain nations will have to be ended or extended to Asia and Africa. I wonder if the International Court of justice located at the Hague has the moral sanction of the whole world after having come into existence some 50 years back in a different Global Social context.

Nonviolence on the other hand is the quality of individual human consciousness. It is neither related to or dependent upon the socio-economic or political atmosphere. A human being cannot dedicate life to the basic Truth of Non Duality unless there is an inbuilt natural tendency for nonviolent behaviour.

Preferences and prejudices, intense likes and dislikes or deep attachment to any theories, disable a person from having a thoroughly humane instinct of nonviolence. I would even call it a spiritual quality transcending allegiance to religious organizations and institutions.

Vimala Thakar
March 26th, 2005

Vimalaji's Message To Various Conferences

Spirituality Is Love And Compassion In Action

I was born and brought up in a family that lived love and compassion in every human relationship spontaneously. People of all religions, castes, creeds and countries were received and befriended by my parents!

By the time I completed my university education, I got exposed to Sant Vinobaji, and J. Krishnamurti. Participation in Vinoba's Land Gift Movement made me travel throughout Indian Villages! One realized that land must belong to the tiller; that agro-based industrial revolution is the only way to eliminate poverty, economic injustice and exploitation of the rural population.

Later on, the opportunity to travel and work with Shri Jaiprakash Narayan enlightened me about the spiritual content and significance of Participatory Democracy.

Love and Compassion in every action
activize the Supra Mental Energy of
Meditation. There is no other way to end
Violence and War.

11th July. 2005

**S.A.F. Conference At New Delhi
from July 21-23, 2005.**

South Asia Fraternity should become a
dynamic Peoples' movement in SAARC
countries. People should come together through
their representatives and develop a new
economic order for Asian countries. An
economic order as well as a political structure
free from injustice and mutual exploitation shall
bring about Peace and inspire Friendship among
all communities. Democracy has to be redefined
and restructured thoroughly.

Love and Compassion, which are the
essence of Spirituality, shall be the foundation
as well as content of our Rediscovery of
Democracy.

12th July 2005

National Conference On The Culture Of Peace And Nonviolence At Sevagram

The miraculous advances in Science and Technology have converted the global human community into a Global human family. Members of a family share life by complementing each other's shortcomings and enhancing strong points. It is the culture of Non-Violence and reciprocity that sustains and enriches the family as a unit of society.

Global human community has to share the planet and its resources with one another as well as the non-human species inhabiting the planet. It has to educate itself in relating with love and compassion with the Earth, Oceans, plant world and the divine space which allows Life to unfold and manifest its untold wealth of creativity.

The culture of Peace and non-violence requires a research in creating SAMYA-YOGI Lokatantra or a new structure of Democracy which is not based on Capitalism, Socialism, Communism or any other 'ism', but is based on injustice-free, exploitation-free humane relationships. Culture of peace requires a radically new mindset, a qualitative transformation in the content of consciousness.

Articles By Various International Thinkers And Writers

Self Knowledge - The Cornerstone of Education

(Berkeley Seminar Talk)

By ... F.D. Wilson

Introduction

To begin these proceedings I have prepared a brief talk which I've entitled "Self Knowledge, The Cornerstone of Education". This title is appropriate for this is exactly what I would like us to do this morning - to make an exploration into ourselves by examining little known, unexplored regions of the human mind with a view toward determining if it is possible, not intellectually or theoretically but actually, for a fundamental change to take place in human development. If this is to take place it is clear that the field of education should be at the forefront and intimately involved in the guiding of such revolutionary investigations.

Because, at the moment, the vast

majority of our lives have very little meaning, other than the meaning we invent based upon our particular intellectual or moral authority - but factually, for most of us there is very little meaning in our lives. We seem to be constantly involved and busy, but to what end or purpose? If there is no compassion, friendship or love in our lives, what is the point of all this activity ?

These are very serious questions and therefore I would like to explore them with you in depth.

But before examining these matters in any detail I'd like to digress a bit and say a few words by way of introduction.

As you are aware my name is Fred Wilson and, until fairly recently, I worked as a civil engineer- or to use the more general expression, an applied scientist-on projects in various parts of the world. And although I was born in the States, for the past 31 years my wife, Elizabeth, and I have been living and working abroad-literally all over the globe. Therefore

even though I carry both US and Dutch passports I consider myself more of a 'citizen of the world' rather than an 'American' or a 'Dutchman' nor, for that matter, do I feel I belong to any other nationality, race or religion. I am simply an unlabelled human being happy to be well and active at the beginning of this the 3rd millennium - one of the more than the six billion people who now inhabit this small spinning planet in the cosmos which we call earth.

You know some years ago we were living in Pakistan near its border with Afghanistan, in a town called Peshawar, training Afghan engineers to rebuild their war torn country after years of conflict with the Russians-this was well before the Afghan Taliban tribe decided it wanted to take over the country, impose strict Islamic Fundamentalism on the population and, in the process, kill a great number of their own people and destroy many ancient, priceless artifacts and statues. And I'll never forget what one wise old, battle weary Afghan engineer said to me during one of our many casual philosophical conversations about

indoctrination and propaganda.... He said "remember those who speak well, also lie well"! But at the outset I want to make it perfectly clear that this presentation is not an attempt to hypnotize or indoctrinate you with great words and platitudes. And while I have been keenly interested in consciousness and its meaning for many years, I am not an authority on any of these matters nor am I trying to convince of anything, god forbid. I am simply someone who sees, very clearly, the urgent need to understand ourselves on a very deep level-not as an intellectual exercise but for each of us to find out, for ourselves without outside intervention, if there is a deeper meaning to our lives other than that provided by our particular political, scientific, psychological or religious authority, no matter how sacred or profound.

To do this I'll begin by putting our discussions on 'New Visions of Education in an Era of Deepening Awareness' into a broad context with the following quote from the late renowned sage J. Krishnamurti.

"The ignorant man is not the unlearned, but he who does not know himself, and the

learned man is stupid when he relies on books, on knowledge, and on authority to give him understanding. Understanding comes only through self-knowledge, which is awareness of one's total psychological process. Thus education, in the true sense, is the understanding of oneself, for it is within each one of us that the whole of existence is gathered..."

So we'll start our explorations on consciousness in general and education in particular by examining the limitations of the Educator because if the Educator does not understand himself and is not free or aware of his own blockages and distortions, on a moment to moment basis, then he will pass these distortions along to the student thus perpetuating the confusion from one generation to the next. For example if I am a teacher of mathematics and don't understand that I am not really interested in or do not love to do mathematics but am only using my mathematical knowledge as stepping stone to advance and become Head of the Department then this ambition, either consciously or

unconsciously, will be passed along and thus condition my students.

With the above in mind we will continue by taking a panoramic journey through consciousness to try to obtain an overview of this vast field. Also I am sure most of you who have read a bit or have gone into these matters will be very familiar with what I am going to say. I may use different words, I may bring in physics occasionally but the essence is not new - its been said many times, in many ways by many different people. But even though these words have been repeated so many times, we never seem to 'get it right' - we continue with our divisions, our wars and our fragmentation. And as Andre Gide has so perceptively put it "... every thing has already been said, but since no one listens it is always necessary to begin all over again." We all know how we should live - all of the religious teachers have told us that repeatedly. We have all of this knowledge intellectually - but intellectual knowledge doesn't seem to be enough. Obviously there must be something missing.

We know we shouldn't kill one another, but we do it. We know we shouldn't use or abuse one another, but we do it. We know we shouldn't hold guilt, hatred or resentments in our hearts but we do it. We know, or have been told , that differences between people are only very, very superficial - we're all a global village. But yet we continuously separate ourselves from each other, put ourselves above or below others or try to control and manipulate one another. My question is, in spite of all the books, lectures and sermons, why do we do this-Why haven't we learned? And can anything be done about it? To answer these questions we must go into them on a much deeper level, obviously - because if superficial answers were enough we would have solved these problems many years ago. But we have not solved them have we??

Now in applied science when we are confronted with a technical problem that does not work- as clearly our way of behaving in human relationships is not working - in applied science when something doesn't work we go back to the 'purer' scientific theory, find out

where the theory is at fault and, if possible, change our underlying assumptions so that they are more consistent with what is actually happening in reality. A scientific theory is a model of reality; it is not, and can never be, reality itself. The more precise the model the clearer we will be able to understand the actions of reality in a given situation. The same is true psychologically and philosophically - since our mental models are not working we must go back and examine our underlying assumptions.

One of the basic philosophical assumptions I bring into question is the assumption that we are separate from reality and therefore can examine it objectively. I will attempt to show that this prevailing fragmentary approach to understanding ourselves and others, psychologically, is limited and, because we do not understand its limitations we have used this approach inappropriately and therefore have caused much our personal confusion and the social ills we are all familiar with. We can't deny that the fragmentary approach has served us very well technologically - we can only marvel at the fact that we have made tremendous

progress scientifically, unheard of in the history of the human race.

However, in spite of our exceptional technological advancements it is becoming increasingly clear that we have reached the limits of so-called scientific objectivity as well. I will not go into any detailed explanation of the limitations of examining physical phenomena save to point out that, as a result of the work of Plank, Einstein, Bohr, Heisenberg and others in the field of quantum mechanics, the assumption that, on a quantum level, we can precisely examine material objects as a detached observer - essentially a fragmentary approach - has been discredited and, as a result, the very nature of physical reality has come into question.

The main thesis of this presentation is that fragmentation has outlived its usefulness because both scientifically and psychologically it is a limited and imprecise model of reality. On a profound scientific and psychological level the fragmentary approach no longer works. Somehow, if we humans are to survive on the

planet, this fragmentation must come to an end and a wholistic view come into being. And in spite of the fact that we are very advanced technologically, psychologically we are still very primitive human beings.

This fact is quite clear to anyone who has taken the trouble to attempt to have an objective look at what's going on world-wide, e.g. in Iraq, Africa, Northern Ireland, India, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Burma, Central and South America, Indonesia and even in the more affluent and technically advanced countries of western Europe and North America-fragmentation is endemic. We have used thought inappropriately- while it clearly is a tremendous tool for solving technical problems it is really a very shallow, unreliable and limited tool to understand life and ourselves psychologically.

We have divided ourselves - religiously, nationalistically, racially, tribally and economically. We have either intentionally or unconsciously, placed ourselves into categories and fixed ourselves with labels and, as a result

of our collective identification with these labels and categories we have made ourselves vulnerable to manipulation by greedy, power hungry people. And for this reason we have become divided/fragmented human beings. We live and die on the basis of thoughts and ideas, which is an indication that the human being has become less important and the idea has become dominant. Therefore we are ready to kill in the name of the labels we have collectively, rather carelessly and arbitrarily, adapted and identified ourselves with based, essentially, on indoctrination and propaganda. This is not said in any pessimistic or cynical way but I am simply stating the facts as I have witnessed them during my travels around the globe.

Now having seen all of this I have put the question to myself, and I'm sure many of you have also, as any sane person must do if they don't want to be caught endlessly in the same destructive pattern of behavior. Can anything be done about this? Or do we just take care of our own patch of ground and ignore the rest of the world, because the problems are simply too

great to contemplate? Looked at superficially this would seem to be one way of avoiding and therefore not contributing to the chaos. But, unfortunately, even if we wanted to do this we could not because we cannot live in isolation and eventually the world's problems will become our problems as was most recently dramatically demonstrated in New York three and one half years ago and as evidenced by the two world wars in the last century and the endless conflicts of previous centuries. So therefore its fairly clear something must be done by each of us, if we don't want to condemn ourselves and future generations to a continuous series of ever increasing fragmentation - psychologically, environmentally and physically.

I use the word fragment to indicate a part broken off, detached or incomplete and therefore fragmentation consists of a process of something falling to pieces, breaking up/ splintering as opposed to something that is whole which means healthy, unhurt, undamaged. Whole implies that nothing has been omitted, ignored or taken away; that everything is in its proper place. To quote the

late, quantum physicist and philosopher David Bohm. "It might be said that fragmentation of religions, races, political systems, conflict in the form of wars, general violence etc. are the reality and wholeness is only an ideal towards which we should perhaps strive. But this is not what's being said... what should be said is that wholeness is what is real, and fragmentation is the response of this whole to man's actions, guided by illusionary perception which is shaped by fragmentary thought.." If this is so, i.e. that psychological fragmentation is an artificial creation of man due to our distorted use of the thinking process and wholeness is the reality - and I see/feel that it is - seeing this very clearly I repeat the previously posed question-what can we as individuals do about this trap we seem to have fallen into?

Obviously something must be done, but what? And there are so many distractions - so much of life is escape and entertainment. In my view the one and only thing we can do - not collectively, because collective activity has been tried by the politicians and others for hundreds of years and has generally let to more

fragmentation - is to work on ourselves/learn about ourselves endlessly - that is be aware of our thoughts, reactions and emotions on a moment to moment basis, not according to any authority no matter how learned; for as the sage J. Krishnamurti has so perceptively put it - "...if we learn about ourselves according to Freud, we don't learn about ourselves, we learn about Freud..!"

In a general sense we are no different, psychologically, from the rest of the human race - we are absorbed in our individual distractions as is the rest of humanity. Whether it be the starving peasants in Asia and Africa or the wealthy businessman in the more affluent countries, we are all preoccupied. We have our particular hang-ups, obsessions, pleasures, satisfactions and fears and so do they. Our specific concerns may be different for each of us but the fact that we are preoccupied is the same for just about all of us. And on a deeper level, if we go into it, we'll find that in reality we are essentially all one. This insight is expressed lucidly in the following abstracts from poems by two poets from very different backgrounds.

First the American Poet, Robert Service, in his poem "You and Me".

I am part of the people I have known...
And they are part of me;
The seeds of thought that I have sown...
In other minds I see
There's something of me in the throne...
And in the gallows tree.

And next, the Vietnamese Buddhist Poet,
Thich Nhat Hanh;

I am the child in Uganda, all skin and bones
My legs as thin as bamboo sticks
And I am the arms merchant
Selling deadly weapons to Uganda

He concludes by saying:
Please call me by my true names
So I can bear all my cries and all my laughter at
once
So I can see that my joy and pain are one
So I can wake up and open the door of
compassion.

Compassion in this context meaning passion for all, which comes into being when we realize we're not isolated entities and what we are, psychologically, the world is. Therefore if even one, or a few of us is free of fragmentation, then its clear that it is possible for each of us to live an intelligent, non-fragmented life - this, to my mind, is or should be the goal of all humanity - to live a whole, unfragmented, intelligent life in our short time on the planet.

How is this to be done? Unfortunately there is no way because if there were we would have discovered this long ago. And its clear that if there were a way, a method to be free of all fragmentation and I knew it and was foolish enough to tell it to you and you then followed it, obviously you would give up your freedom - in other words you would have to give up the very thing you are attempting to find!! You would become a follower trying in a step by step way to become intelligent - the idea of an unfragmented follower is a contradiction in terms/ its an oxymoron. Also as a follower you must give up all of your creativity to attain a fixed goal. And since life cannot be fixed and is

always in flux/ changing every minute, if we try to fix it, and keep it within narrowly defined limits it becomes a dead thing, simply a mechanistic process and as such, a computer is capable of doing a much better job.

It is precisely because the goal of life , like intelligence, love and compassion, is unknown (there is no way or compass leading us to fully understand it) we must approach it with an open mind and heart with no set of conclusions psychologically - not physically, although physically things are constantly changing also but at a much slower rate- which means we learn as we live, gaining understanding as we go along, moving with the flow of life and not getting stuck in any one particular pattern or habit. And to understand life in a wholistic way we must approach it very innocently, without judgments or conclusions. Unfortunately it is also clear that just about all of us are not free in the way I've described. We do, in fact, operate from a certain fixed fragmented point of view, i.e. from a 'center'- an I, an ego. And its clear, any center must be limited, even the center of a circle.

For example if I say this point is the center of a circle then I am immediately limiting the circle, because a center must be the center of something and that something is always limited. It doesn't matter if the diameter of the circle is 12 centimeters or 12,000 kilometers, it is still limited. Its like a horse tied to a post-which, in essence, is a center - he is always limited by the length of the rope holding him to the post. And as we live now, we are, like that horse, really very restricted human beings - some of us have a longer rope and some are constrained by a shorter rope but no matter how long or short the rope the center always limits us - we are not free!

This is all we know - a limited life; and with the exception of a few very rare individuals, we don't know what it means to live an untethered, unfragmented life without the restriction of a center, an I, an ego. Now this 'I' or ego, which is essentially an arbitrary, put-together, thing that has been fixed over thousands of years - that is to say we are all programmed and conditioned entities and, with few exceptions, this conditioning pervades our

entire being - consciously, sub-consciously and unconsciously. Our minds are like the Pavlov dog, who upon being fed on a regular basis at the sound of a bell, will soon, after a number of times, salivate when a bell is sounded even though there is no food present. That is to say the Pavlovian dog has been conditioned to associate food with the sound of the bell, which is called a stimulus. Or we're like Mark Twain's cat, who having once sat on a hot stove will never sit on a hot stove again - but he'll never sit of a cold one either! We are almost exactly the same, we have a conditioned or fixed point of view responding, generally unconsciously, not to such an obvious stimulus as a bell or hot stove, perhaps, but to our particular conditioned psychological perspective.

This individual conditioning is the main source of our psychological limitations. It may start out by being very fleeting when we are young - it may come and go, our responses may have some freshness and flexibility, may vary; but soon, as we get older, the conditioning eventually hardens into a center , an

ego. This then develops into what can be called the 'I Consciousness'. This I consciousness is simply an internalized identification process that we have made real by repetition, identifying with a country, a religion, a group, a race, a class or an activity. For example - I am a Hindu, a Dutchman, an Indian, an American, A Christian, a Muslim, a Jew; I am black, white, yellow or brown, or a professor, a doctor, a lawyer, an engineer, a musician, an artist, a poor or a rich person and so on to include all the very subtle emotional identifications that one has carried and added to since childhood. But, as a matter of fact, we are none of these things, we are not 'labels'. These labels only refer to a physical characteristic, an emotional propensity, an accident of birth or work that we do, but they are not 'us'-you or I - we are human beings. How can such a complex, growing, changing human being be simplistically dismissed as a self-limited, psychologically fixed label??

Now you're probably wondering what does all of this philosophical/psychological analysis have to do with our exploration of new visions in education. In other words how is

Education and the study of our individual &/ or collective consciousness related to the I or ego structure?? I feel this is precisely where our explorations of Education should begin, for to my mind, the ego is the essential thing that keeps us from having a clear view of the world, psychologically. It is the ultimate limitation to seeing things - i.e. ourselves and others - as they are - It is the first and last barrier to clarity of perception.

This is extremely important because if we see clearly we will act clearly and this clarity of action(no matter who or where you are, e.g. in the classroom, the office or at home) will prevent us from falling into the historical trap of partial, fragmented behavior which ultimately leads to all of the confusion, chaos and social ills with which we are all too familiar.

I am not saying I am any different from the rest of the humanity - while I may not identify with some of the more patently distorted and destructive conditioning. I, like everyone else, have my limited reactions, emotional

biases, fears, lack of clarity, pride etc. And because I feel the need for clarity of perception so keenly, I see the absolute necessity of trying to understand and therefore transcend, personally, without any outside authority or guru to lead us, the limitations and biases inherent in my view of myself and in my relationship with others. It is precisely because I am deeply aware of these limitations as well as the fact that I have had glimpses of, and insights into, the wholeness underlying our limited, ego-driven, activities that I've established the Consciousness Research Foundation. As stated in my Friday night welcoming greeting it is the goal of the Foundation to foster an atmosphere where kindred spirits can come together, on a non-comparative, non judgmental, friendly basis, as equals, to explore the implications of living an intelligent, compassionate, unfragmented life.

Now I'd like to say a few words about where I think all of this will lead - what I deeply feel are the profound implications of our personally studying and researching

consciousness; why I feel this approach is so important at this juncture in the history of the human race and what it will eventually mean for humankind.

Let's start by going back and having a closer look at the conditioning process. Here is where we stand - we are conditioned, that is a fact! Which really means we are not free to face each situation as it comes but we respond to life's challenges through conditioned colored glasses, as it were. And on a collective basis this conditioning is the main source of all conflict in the world. For example I am an American and you are a Cuban, a Taliban tribesman and you a member of the Northern alliance, a Bosnian Serb, Croat and you a Muslim, a Hutu and you a Tutsi, a Northern Irish Catholic and you a Protestant, a Pakistani and you an Indian, an Israeli and you a Palestinian, a basque Separatist and you a Catalan, a Russian and you a Chechnian, a Macedonian and you an Albanian; a Sunni and you a Shite, and so on and on - I belong to one tribe and you another - I've identified myself with my

particular group and if my group is threatened I'm ready to murder to counter that threat.

On a more mundane, interpersonal level this conditioning, while not as obviously devastating as our collective identifications, is the source of much of our individual strife, discords and contradictions and therefore can be equally detrimental, tending to make our lives a continuous battlefield. For example - I'm married or have been living with someone for a number of years - we 'know' each other, we know our strengths and weaknesses - and one of us makes an insensitive, crude, thoughtless remark about the other - I, being a sensitive person, react and am hurt by the remark. And I can't help being hurt - if someone pinches you, you react. But, unfortunately, it doesn't stop there. I place the remark and the feeling it engendered, into memory, I hold on to the feeling and gradually these accumulated feelings of resentment form an image of the other person, which, in turn, becomes a part of the ego, the conditioning.

Or I have had a bad experience in some

previous relationship and like Twain's cat I've been burnt and not wanting to be burnt again I avoid/stay away from any and all intimate relationships. Or I've had a life of comfort full of pleasures and I want to hold on to those pleasures, so I think about them constantly and therefore I form an image of myself, if someone comes along and sticks a pin in the bubble I've created, he or she becomes my enemy. Or I grew up in poverty - which has conditioned me deeply - and I either spend all of my adult life trying to become wealthy or if I'm lucky enough to have a little money I'm constantly afraid I'll lose it and therefore money dominates my thinking and my life. Or I have a habit - such as smoking, drinking or overeating and I continuously either consciously or unconsciously - think about the sensation and the pleasure it gives and therefore I want to repeat that experience over and over again, in spite of the fact that I know these habits are detrimental to my health. Or as I was growing up my parents were very critical of my every action and , as a result I have very low self-esteem, which manifests itself as my either being very critical of others or my sustaining a feeling of worthlessness throughout my life.

And finally to take a more graphic example, I'm neurotic - I've been mistreated, abused, either sexually or emotionally: I've been hurt, by my parents, by my acquaintances, by so many things that have happened in my life. I'm inwardly full of rage and anger or I'm uncertain, nervous, worried, anxious - two sides of the same coin. I don't want to be hurt again so I either withdraw or become aggressive, I lash out at the slightest provocation. I can try to avoid these feelings; I can try to suppress them; I can pretend, I can analyze myself or go to an analyst, go to church, synagogue or mosque, pray, do yoga, meditate, identify with God, Buddha or Jesus or whoever but, at the end of the day I'm still neurotic. What can I do about it?? Nothing!! Not a thing! I realize 'I' as a neurotic will only strengthen the neurosis in time. I realize - I am what I am - forget about how this all came about - here I am neurotic. It is not a matter of accepting or rejecting this condition, it is so. I can't accept or reject the sun - it is there, full stop!

Now the next step - which is really very important to understand because this is where

real Education begins - I want to learn about the neurosis. Learn!! And I can't learn about anything unless I suspend judgement. Then I start to observe the neurosis in action - observing carefully - watching its development. But remember 'the observer is the observed'. The thinker and the thought are one - there is no separate entity internally! If a separate entity who watches is created we are back into dualism and confusion because 'you' are the neurosis, it cannot be separated from you - when we separate the observer from the observed (or the thinker from the thought) its like looking for the darkness with a searchlight - the very tool you're using destroys the thing you are looking for. Or its like the thief dressing himself as the policeman to catch the thief! Once we understand this we've eliminated internal dualism forever and with this realization we can learn and to learn we must not hold what we've learned - it is an active process in the present, learning, dropping so that we are ready to learn again. And while we are learning, the neurosis, or any other less debilitating conditioning, which is part of the ego structure, starts to lose its grip. This is the

first and last step to de-conditioning the mind and so the organism as a whole. For if you get this far you'll soon learn that the conditioning pervades the entire psycho-physical structure - its in the blood!

Any of us who have gone into these matters a bit, realize it is no easy task - i.e. take a pill, pray, meditate and the conditioning falls away; this is not the way it works because we've invested so much of ourselves in our ego structure. And it can be a time-consuming (i.e. physical time by the clock) job which could take an entire lifetime, or if we're sensitive and lucky enough, it is possible (theoretically at least) but admittedly rare, to have an insight into the entire ego structure and be free of it instantly, without regard to time. But for most of us it is a time-consuming task because there can be lots of resistance internally to our examination of our conditioning in the active present and while its fairly easy to confront the conditioning we're conscious of, its extremely arduous to examine, understand and transcend the feelings that are deeply hidden, unconscious and unexposed which generally only come out indirectly or

obliquely in dreams and as negative responses and emotions. For as my friend Vimala Thakar said in her book, *Life and Living*, and I quote... "The ego does not want to undertake an investigation that may prove its utter falsity, its lack of reality - much of our personal security is tied to our personal identification with the ego"

But in spite of the difficulty and the hazards we go on with the de-conditioning process because we understand it is the right thing to do - to paraphrase Mart Twain 'always do the right thing - this will antagonize our enemies, gratify our friends and astonish the rest'!! And we see/ realize that the conditioned life, as we live it through an ego is a very limited , ultimately destructive, self-serving activity. Remember if we want to change the world we must first change ourselves - because what we are the world is. And the first and perhaps the last step in this transformation is to clear the mind of all distortion, i.e. the fixed point of view, the unconscious biases and so on.

Of course if you feel the world is perfectly fine or that human nature can never change then

don't listen to this, just go on with your life and leave the world and therefore yourself, alone with all of the fragmentation that this implies, which eventually leads to war and destruction. But if you feel personally responsible, as I do, for all the confusion and want to do something about it then we must start with ourselves - not trying to transform others but transform ourselves, with the only motive in mind - not to achieve enlightenment because that cannot be achieved, it is a result not an achievement - to clear ourselves of any and all identification with our conditioning.

You know the conditioning will never go away - it will always be there but its like a tool - a hammer or a pen or pencil - you pick it up when you need it and when you don't need to use it you leave it alone - you don't identify yourself with your tools - they, as is the ego, are very useful but they are not 'you'. This confusion between tools and what we are (i.e. our identity) is where all manner of human misery begins. And because of this we have become confused on a very deep level as to what we are and what we are not and as David Bohm

has so perceptively pointed out" .. to be confused about what we are and what we are not is to be confused about everything."

A good example of this confusion when it comes to Education is provided in a quote by John Lubbock placed in the New Age Academy information literature, i.e. "Reading and writing, arithmetic and grammar do not constitute education any more than a knife, fork and spoon constitute a dinner." Both the eating utensils and school subjects mentioned are useful and necessary tools but as far as education is concerned real education begins when the student's intelligence is activated and they can discern when to use these tools and when to let them alone - that is when they understand how the tools that they learned to use fit into the whole of life. Where does or will all of this understanding lead us?

If we are sensitive and open enough it will lead to a de-conditioned/ ego less mind; a mind which is empty yet filled with Silence. And to again quote Krishnamurti 'Silence is the natural outcome of observation and of

understanding oneself and the world around one. What is the significance of having a Silent Mind? Is it a blank, dull mind, as some people might think?? Obviously not - because we have understood and therefore have systematically dropped all things that have caused our perceptions to be obscure - we have cleansed the instrument and therefore it has become quiet. And to quote the venerable mystic William Blake. "If the doors of perception were cleansed, everything would appear to man, as it is , infinite...". Further as Vimala Thakar has pointed out - based upon her direct personal experience - when responding to the question "What would we be without an ego, a self?.. Perhaps we would be Divine"! These are profound statements, which if true, have tremendous implications for the human race.

But before going further into this I want to again emphasize that there is no authority here - I am only discussing what I've personally experienced. And this is not an intellectual or emotional game - trying to describe, as many of the religions, the communists and others do, a wonderful world some time in the distant

future or in the after life- we must live here and now. This 'now' is, in fact, all we know. So anything we discuss here is to be experienced by each of us personally. Do not take my word for it - I may be wrong; I may be deluding myself. So find out for yourself if what I say is true. Always remember the word is not the thing - the word house is not the complicated structure we live in. The description is not and can never be equated to the actual thing described. Therefore the expressions 'wholeness', 'egolessness', 'timelessness', 'oneness', 'unfragmented mind', 'insight', 'love and compassion', are simply words- which are dead unless we've had some direct experience which gives them life.

So in discussing these matters we must be very, very careful not just to spin words - politicians are much better at this than we are! The meaning behind the word is far more important than the word itself. With this in mind I'll go on. I am sure each of us, at one time or another, has had, as I have, glimpses of a feeling of something beyond or greater than themselves - a feeling of lightness, joy,

compassion or oneness, some immensity, a clarity that transcends all understanding; or have accomplished a task, a sport or one of the arts or sciences with freedom and complete abandon yet with great precision and passion. And if you've had any of these experiences I don't know if you've ever wondered, as I have if they can be captured so that we can always live like this.

You know about 32 years ago in New York City, I had a private discussion with Mr. Jiddu Krishnamurti, the then well-known, world famous philosopher. I was impressed mostly by his utter lack of pretension and his extraordinary gentleness. He was at that time about 78 years old but still pulsating with tremendous energy. We discussed many things but the thing that stands out in my mind is our discussion on clarity, insight, silence and transcendence. I told him of my encounters with the transcendental and how exhilarating and enlightening these occurrences had been. In response Krishnamurti became very quiet - he took my hand, looked me in the eye and said 'Sir, leave it alone', and repeated again 'leave it alone'.

And this is what I would urge all of you who have meditated or have had these deep experiences of joy, love, oneness or wholeness to do - simply leave them alone or let them be. The transcendental, the timeless, the immeasurable, grace, enlightenment - whatever name we like to use - has its own intelligence, far greater than our petty little center or ego can ever comprehend, let alone manipulate. All we can do is to leave them alone - keep the window open and perhaps the cooling breeze will come in and perhaps it won't - its not of your or my doing, so let it be.

You know we - i.e. the human race- are wedded to space-time, which means we are wedded to measurement. That is to say the mind's function is to measure, compare, evaluate. And we have accomplished remarkable things because of our measuring ability- the ability to formulate concepts and develop these concepts in time into observable, objective reality. But we've used this ability inappropriately. We've used this ability to evaluate, judge and /or compare ourselves to others and we have even gone so far as to make

'God' a concept, a thing of the mind. So that 'God' becomes a mental construct, a guess, created out of fear.

But life is far more than measurement. Life is a timeless, spaceless whole. And the only worthwhile task in our brief sojourn on this earth, it seems to me, is to try to come into direct contact, however fleetingly, with the immeasurable – this immense timeless energy. This is the challenge for each of us at this the beginning of the 21st century- to face reality as it is, on our own, without any external authority, and find out for ourselves, without delusion or distortion, through our own hard work, if there is some objective truth to the profound words voiced throughout the ages by mystics, sages and religious teachers, alluding to some immensity beyond or hidden behind our every day world. This is our greatest challenge and our greatest imperative if we are to survive as a species. And if we, as Educators have this deep sense of love, joy and compassion it doesn't matter what subject we teach, these qualities will be passed along to the

students and learning , as life itself, becomes, as it is , a joyous experience.

I'd like to close now with a well-known passage from William Blake, that late 18th and early 19th century poet, artist and mystic. I have always been fascinated by Blake's allusion to the transcendental because we are now aware that beyond measurement, beyond space, time and mind, in the realm of silence, there is tremendous intelligence and energy and therefore all things are possible. And it is clear , based upon both spiritual insights and present day quantum reality, there is as much truth as there is poetry in these famous words, taken from Blake's "Auguries of innocence" penned about 200 years ago.

"To see a world in a grain of sand
And heaven in a wild flower
Hold infinity in the palm of your hand
And eternity in an hour"

Muslims Worst-Hit By Globalisation

KOCHI : Muslims are the worst victims of globalization in India, according to Rajindar Sachar, jurist, human-rights campaigner and head of Prime Minister's high-level committee on the conditions of Muslims.

"A large number of Muslims are artisans and craftsmen," he said in an interview. "Their products are threatened by cheap imports from abroad." The Chinese silk or imported carpets and leather products tend to throw silk weavers in Karnataka or leather goods makers in Uttar Pradesh and carpet-makers in Kashmir out of job. Also, the foreign direct investment (FDI), facilitated by globalization, helps to boost mechanization and automation, which edge human labour out and drastically cut jobs.

Since Muslim's number is very low in the service sector, particularly in Government jobs, they cannot duck the harsh blows of globalization. They face open competition. He

suggests that Muslims be helped to upgrade their skills to meet the onslaughts.

“Globalization is certainly not good for the country,” he said. It is bad for the economy, increases unemployment and hits the poor most. Public-sector companies are thrown out of existence. Globalization is against a just and equitable society; it thrives on inequities in income and opportunities.

Mr. Sachar, a former Chief Justice of Delhi High Court and former head of the People’s Union for Civil Liberties, feels that there has been a de-escalation of communal tension in the country after the UPA Government came to power. However, the human rights situation continues to be grim. The record of most States on this count is very poor. Police atrocities and custodial torture have not ebbed; slum-dwellers are kicked out of their hutments and tribal people are displaced.

He does not believe that laws could curtail human rights violations. “It’s a misconception that Governmental laws could

remove rights abuses. "Civil society organizations and societal pressure only can curtail such atrocities. "Government can only help supplement civil society efforts."

Mr. Sachar is angry that criminals find refuge in politics. In the past criminalisation of politics was a big national concern. But now the situation has changed. "It's politicization of criminals that is taking place," he said.

In the past, unscrupulous politicians made use of criminals for their ends, but now criminals themselves are turning politicians. "Criminals and murderers become MLA's, MPs and Ministers." He cited the example of how Bihar MP Shahabuddin evaded arrest. "In Bihar at least 20 percent of politicians are criminals." He pointed out that in West Bengal a Minister evaded arrest for nine long years. The police had listed him as untraceable. "If a criminal becomes an MLA or Minister, the law most often cannot bring him to book."

Mr. Sachar has lost faith in judicial activism. "Judicial activism has gone over

board," he remarked. Judges tend to get involved in trivial issues and routine administrative matters. "Its not the judge's job to make traffic arrangements or increase the number of Amarnath pilgrims," he commented.

Mr. Sachar was in Kochi to take public's views on the social, economic and educational status of Muslims in India. The committee, appointed by the Prime Minister, will present its report in June next. He hopes the committee's report will lead to positive policies and programmes for the improvement of the conditions of Muslims in the country.

**Chandrika Moots South Asian
Economic Union**
(Courtesy : The Hindu)

Dhaka:- "I dare to envisage a South Asia where the benefits of cooperation will become so compelling and tangible that the spectre of inter-state and intra-state conflict will recede into obscurity, releasing resources and human energy for wealth creation," Sri Lankan President Chandrika Kumaratunga said on Saturday.

Addressing the 13th South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) summit, Ms. Kumaratunga said: "Admittedly, this is an ambitious transformation but one that is worth striving for, not least because it has been effected in other parts of the world. I believe we have the ability to do this."

In her last appearance at a SAARC summit as Sri Lanka's President, she admitted that the grouping had yet to do enough to keep pace with a rapidly globalising world.

Pointing out that Sri Lanka had bilateral free trade agreements with India and Pakistan, she said SAARC must fast track initiatives on South Asian economic integration.

"We can draw significant benefits from such a framework given the dynamism and improved political climate we now have in the sub-region.. an energy pipeline from West Asia running through several countries of our sub-region would have been inconceivable a few years ago."

Ms. Kumaratunga said that SAARC

leaders must task their Finance Ministers to look at the modalities of a common market in the region at their next meeting. They should consolidate the existing free trade agreements and agree on a course towards a South Asian Economic Union.

Hoping for a consensus on the remaining issues to implement the South Asian Free Trade Agreement (SAFTA) from January 1st, 2006, she envisaged a region where people, investments and trade in goods and services would have unhindered mobility across national boundaries, opening up physical economic space for the well-being and prosperity of South Asians.

"Vision"

"Our vision looks beyond regional cooperation in trade under SAFTA, towards a future of eventual economic integration in the region. This will include a mutually supportive process of strengthening the physical, legal and technical infrastructure and overall connectivity in the region," she stressed.

Building upon SAFTA, Ms. Kumaratunga hoped that SAARC would become fully integrated into a future global architecture consisting of major trading blocs. An Asian economic community, which will include the SAARC region, for example, will constitute the largest consumer conglomerate in the world.

**The Causes of Violence, And
Indicative Solutions**

By... Shri Satya Paul

Dated 11.9.2005

September 11th is the birthday of Sant Vinoba and Centenary day of Satyagrah of Mahatma Gandhi in South Africa. But the modern world is remembering it the day of destruction in U.S.A. Why this sacred day has been converted into the day of destruction.

We are passing through a crisis period, a period of upheavals. The oppressed & suppressed sections of the population are trying to carve out space for them, and the occupiers are resisting, so in this struggle violence takes place.

With the spread of education and information technology, everybody wants proper and due space. There was struggle between Jagirdar/Zamindar and the cultivators and now it is in the process of settlement by abolishing Jagirdari, and by fixing land holding ceiling, and also with the efforts of Sant Vinobaji through Bhoodan Movement. But still due to some lacunas some people are keeping large holdings, so there is resistance.

The schedule castes, backward classes and tribals are also struggling to carve out space for them. In democracy, adult franchise has helped them. Remember the scenario of political power in India. Most of the states in India were ruled by upper caste Chief Ministries. Now the political power has been and is shifting to the lower caste Chief Ministers. In bureaucracy and education they are increasing their share by various acts. Some persons are criticizing, have reservations because of inefficiency of lower castes. But when the scheduled castes/ backward class/ tribes improve their efficiency by acquiring proper educational proficiency, then the criticism will be reduced.

Lala Lajpat Rai had a vision. In 1924 he gave a call that it is the sin of upper caste to keep the *Achhuts* illiterate and backward.

"The condition of the depressed classes is a standing blot on our social organization, and we must remove that blot if we are really desirous of securing the efficiency of our social organism. All the parts of a whole must be raised, not necessarily to the same level but to a level from which they can, by their individual efforts, talents and achievements, rise to the highest possible position within the reach of the members of the social organism."

"The present arrangement is a cruel and unjust arrangement. Besides, it is both economically and politically unsound. A community, which allows so much valuable human material to rot in a state of utter depression and helplessness, cannot be said to be economically wise."

After independence the government also encouraged inter-caste marriages.

When Muslims came to India with the invader Babar, Guru Nanak came at the same time. He kept two disciples - a Hindu Bala and Muslim Mardana. He went to pilgrim places of Hindus like Haridwar, Kashi and Jagannathpuri. He also went to Muslim pilgrim places like Dargah Sheikh Sharif, Sikander Shah Lodhi, Sufi Darvesh Majnu and went upto Mecca. He recited poems from Hindu scriptures as well as of Muslim saints like Farid and Kabir. Both communities respected him. We did not follow his teachings and life.

Lala Lajpat Rai also said that no doubt Muslims came to India as invaders, but gradually settled here and became Indians. Therefore, we have to live with them peacefully as brothers. Gandhi also advocated for Hindu-Muslim unity. Instead of going to temples or mosques, he started his All Religious prayer in the open. He refused to visit such temples where the entry of Non-Hindu was prohibited. But we did not listen to him and other social reformers. Therefore we are reaping the harvest of hatred in the shape of violence.

Everybody wants to learn and respect one's own mother tongue. It is natural. Whenever any government does not give due recognition to the language of any community, they resist, agitate, struggle and ultimately become violent. East Bengal, which became East Pakistan separated itself from Pakistan mainly on account of this. Tamils in Sri Lanka are mainly struggling to regain the recognition and respect for their language. Other things denied to them because of their aggressive attitude are the consequences. Gujratis, Punjabis and Manipuris had to struggle for the recognition of their language. If the governments give due recognition to the language of each viable community as medium of instruction and medium of administration, then violence can be minimized/avoided on this count.

Every community wants to celebrate the cultural and religious festivals and expect that government should declare holidays to enable them to take part in their festivals. There were struggles by certain communities, but gradually the government has declared permanent or optional holidays to enable the people to

participate in their festivals. But the trouble arises when the followers of one religion start dominating over the other religion by preaching hatred against other religions, taking processions in front of others' religious places, demonstrating the might and greatness of their religion over others. Such acts generate hatred and conflicts. In some countries there are laws/orders to curb such tendencies and acts to maintain cordiality and Peace. It is in the interest of each religion. One can increase the number of followers by love & service.

India is a vast country with diversity of religions and cultures. Therefore the list of holidays has enlarged. In the modern age of economic development it is rather felt to reduce the number of holidays. If we calculate the number of official holidays, we find more than 50% days are holidays. Just as :

Sundays	52
Saturdays	52
National Holidays	15
Casual leaves	12
Earned leaves	30
Medical leaves	15
Total	176

In addition to these there are long vacations in educational institutions and courts. We started Saturday leave by following the West where there are 3-4 national holidays and less number of other holidays.

When the unorganized and unemployed poor people see that the organized well-paid sectors enjoy so many holidays with salary and they are starving, then their mind cannot have peace.

We may consider to abolish holidays on Saturdays. We may also consider to regionalize some religious holidays. Initially there may be some resistance. If we start giving some sort of financial or other incentives, the people would start working on holidays. For instance, we have provision to pay double wages if anybody works on some holiday. Such incentives will increase working days with less resistance.

The gender discrimination in political, social, religious, wages, recruitments in certain posts is another cause of unrest. Gradually it is settling down but with less speed because of

resistance by males. Because of social stigmas like dowry, considering the female and her parents at lower social stage, some parents go to the extent of killing the girl child before birth or in childhood.

In some communities the female is punished even for the sins committed by the males on them. There are many cases now being exposed because of awakening by the victims or through social activists or media. If a male rapes a female, why the female should be punished? If any female is sexually harassed in her working place or other places, why she should be socially boycotted. If the males cannot control their passions or evil eyes, why the females are forced to wear burqa/veil in Hindus. In birth, marriages or deaths why certain expenses should be borne by the parents of the female. Why at the time of marriage we call it Kanya Dan - gift of the girl. Is she a commodity, which is being gifted? When she becomes a part of new family of the husband, adopts his family caste, brings a dowry, gives her services, earnings etc to her husband or his

parents, then why her parents are asked to bear some expenses on the birth of a child, or even on her own death. These all are questions of injustices and discrimination with females, which agitate the minds of social reformers. We have to address these issues. Some efforts are being made, some steps have been taken, some legislations have been enacted, but still we have to cover more spaces in socio-cultural, economic and political fields to give respect, dignity and satisfaction to our equal partners of life.

The land, forest, mines, water belongs to community, whichever has been living there over centuries. The British government started enacting laws to become owner of these God gifted natural resources. There was some resistance. But now when the government started evicting the natural owners, and allotting the land to others for mining, industries, developing colonies and other uses not beneficial to the occupants, the people have started resistance movements, which are growing into violent clashes. If the requirement of expanding population and the increased demands of new standards of life require

utilization of such resources, then it would have been better to educate and train the occupants to use those natural resources for their own better way of life and to make them partners of new vistas of development, but not evicting them by force for the sake of exploiters and profit mongering companies. Few years ago London University once organized a seminar "Earth is not for sale."

Economic disparity is another cause of unrest and violence. There was a dictum 'Work according to capacity, produce as per needs.' Gandhiji said that Nature has provided enough to meet the needs of everybody, but not to meet the greed of anybody. Our ideal was 'simple living and high thinking'. The saints of every religion lived very simply and had handful belongings. We have deviated from these lofty principles of life and landed ourselves in tensions and unrest. Industrial revolution led us to mass production, which required more markets for sale of their goods through competitions. The industrialists provoked political leaders to capture markets by

conquering other countries, if they do not accept their goods voluntarily. This led to arms race.

When Gandhiji went to England in September 1931, he met the representatives of cotton industry at Lancashire. He was told that his Khadi movement in India has laid off many workers in Lancashire. Gandhiji replied: "It should occupy the attention even of unemployed Lancashire. You have told us of the help Lancashire gave us during the famine of 1899-1900. What return can we render but the blessings of the poor. I have come to give you fair trade... There is no boycott of British cloth... As a nation, we are pledged to boycott all foreign cloth... You must recognize that all markets of the world are now not open to you. What you have done, all other nations are doing today. Even Indian mills would be producing more and more cloth every day. You, surely, will not want me to restrict Indian enterprise for the sake of Lancashire. - I am pained at the unemployment here. But here is no starvation or semi starvation. In India we have both - If India could revive them by

putting life and food into them in the shape of work, India would help the world – I thought of a humane method and that was to give them work with which they were familiar, which they could do in their cottages, which required no great investment in implements and of which the product could be easily sold. This is a task which is worthy of the attention even of Lancashire.

We should produce to meet our own demands, and not to capture or enter in competition in other markets. “

In another context Gandhiji said that he is not opposed to machinery. He welcomes every machine if it increases the capacity and productivity of the hand or reduces its drudgery, but he is opposed to all such machines, which replaces the hand and make the people unemployed. This is the universal message to settle economic unrest. It can be used as a balm even in Western Countries, where computerization is leading to lay off everyday. This type of capital economy is creating unemployment, creating frustration,

unrest and economic disparities, which is widening to unimaginable gaps, and consequently leading to unrest and violence.

It is also against nature & environment to over-utilize the natural resources by producing more, to add to our wealth to satisfy unending greed, to build big mansions, to own fleets of cars/helicopters/ planes for our vulgar luxuries and exhaust everything for ourselves, leaving little for next generations. When we play with nature aggressively, it creates imbalances, and nature reacts, sometimes sharply.

We must learn the mantra of Renunciation and reconciliation for Peaceful co-existence with respect and dignity to all to create a violence-free world to say Jai Jagat - Victory and Peace for all.

Evolution Towards Complementary Living

By... Dr. N.N. Panicker

Basic work is continuing with people in promoting the natural evolution towards greater

humanness. The complementary living that is natural in a family can be extended out to the universe around us with an enhancement in awareness. Daily practices like Humanistic Contemplation (Manushika Dhyanam), Friendship Worship (Mythri Sadhana) and Organic Offering (Jaiva Archana) can create experiences of Living with Mutual Joy (Paraspara Ananda Jeevanam). Once the joy and sense of security are experienced by a few and such individuals are transformed into a critical mass, chain reaction can start, ultimately enveloping the whole humanity.

There is a definite action each one of us can take. It is to build up this awareness of connectedness and practicing its behavioural expressions in our own interactions within our universe. While travelling I try it, particularly the Friendship Worship (Mythri Sadhana), with fellow passengers with surprisingly effective results. Recently, I have started experimenting the formation of expanding informal networks of such people living away from each other with follow-up through the easy communication means at our disposal now.

Another experience is the get-together of like-minded people. We had one on the 17th and the 18th of September, which we called a Family Assembly (Kutumba Mela) on the occasion of the first death anniversary of the promoter of this vision, D. Pankajaksha Kurup, at his native village. The Action Plan decided was to pursue the work by all means at all interactions.

The enthusiasm of the assembled people was contagious. The little monthly "Darsanam" in Malayalam will be continued as an inter-communication means. Tonight I am going with Sarala and four other colleagues to the Malabar area to study and evaluate the working of neighbourhood self-help groups (Kutumbasri Ayalkoottam) which were inspired originally by this vision (Darsanam), although not imbibing the vision fully. We will also visit the tribal habitats of Attappadi, medicinal plantation of Kottackal and also the Tirur Gandhian Natural Hygiene Home.

My radio talks on Salt Satyagraha etc seem to be appreciated. I hope we will have an

enlightened policy that will not repeat the perversions such as common salt ban and use of our people for trial of vaccines for AIDS, polio etc. I hope there will be greater acceptance of the Gandhian vision of living according to nature, called by different names such as Natural Living, Nature Cure, Naturopathy, Orthopathy or Natural Hygiene.

An Admirer of Human Rights

By... Shri Balraj Puri

I have been an admirer of J&K Human Rights Perspective for many years. You have kept the flame of journalism burning bright in the midst of untold hurdles. It is a privilege to share with you my humble saving whenever I can do so.

Vimala Thakar.

Vimala Thakar is an internationally renowned Gandhian thinker. She has visited Jammu and Kashmir state at very critical moments. In 1965 when Jammu witnessed worst

communal tension after independence as a reaction to similar situation in Kashmir, she addressed scores of public meetings that turned the tide against communal forces. Later after the Indo-Pak war, she toured the worst affected areas of Rajouri and Poonch. It was her work that significantly contributed to persuade the government of India to allow about 70,000 muslims who had to migrate to the other side of the LOC, during the war to return. In early nineties she visited victims of Human Rights violations in Kashmir Valley.

We appreciate her contribution of Rs. five thousand which helps us to tide over our financial difficulties. Earlier also she has helped us with similar contribution. More than the money it is her affection and moral support that we value.

J&K Human Rights ... Perspective
(SEPT - OCT, 2005)

Upholding Parliamentary Democracy

By... Shri Somnath Chatterjee

(Hon'ble Speaker, Lok Sabha)

Speaking on the theme "Upholding Parliamentary Democracy", one has to keep in mind the values and principles inherent in a parliamentary democracy and of its role for the socio-economic development of the country, in the context of our political and social realities. It is the sovereignty of the people and the concept of accountability which define and distinguish a parliamentary democratic system. The authority to govern emanates from the people, who are the ultimate masters in a democracy. That being so, the basis of governance in a parliamentary system has to be the inviolability of people's rights and their enforceability. Democracy, as the only system with a capacity for self-correction, offers the best framework for citizens to develop their creativity and potential to the full.

In a democratic polity, the people have

the power to decide programmes and policies directly or through their representatives chosen in free and fair elections. Those who come to power through the democratic process have to be accountable to the people and their representatives at all times. Accountability of the executive organ to the people, through their representatives, is the basic postulate of parliamentary democracy.

On attaining freedom, the country had to decide upon a system of governance which would best serve the interest of the nation and the people, coming out of centuries of subjugation, and evolve a structure which would ensure achievement of socio-economic and political justice for the common man, eradication of poverty and exploitation of the disadvantaged sections of society and would provide for the basic needs of the people by ensuring universal education, an effective health care system and job opportunities for all. Our

Constitution specifically enumerates the Fundamental Rights of the citizens and the Directive Principles of State Policy, providing the framework of a Welfare State, seeking to make democracy more meaningful and relevant to the common man by bringing about economic and social transformation of the society.

In our system, the constitution has delineated specified jurisdictions and responsibilities for the organs of the state, namely the Legislature, the Executive and the Judiciary. It is of the utmost importance that the separation of powers and checks and balances as envisioned in the Constitution and forming one of its basic features, as decided by the Hon'ble Supreme Court are strictly adhered to, and the organs of State work within their demarcated jurisdictions without encroaching on the powers and privileges of the others. Our Constitution does not contemplate any super-organ or essentially superior organ. For upholding our democratic set-up as our

Constitution provides, it is necessary that there should be harmonious relations between them, each respecting the dignity and the essential role of the others. If the organs of State operate according to constitutional prescriptions, the scope for conflict in the exercise of powers and privileges will be minimal and this will strengthen our democratic edifice.



" I know politics is not for saints. I am no saint myself presuming to preach a sermon to others. But politics, at least under a democracy, must know the limits which it may not cross. Otherwise, if there is dishonesty, corruption, manipulation of the masses, naked struggle for personal power and personal gain, there can be no socialism, no justice, no freedom, no national unity, in short no nation".

Jay Prakash Narayan

" Democracy involves hardship - the hardship of the unceasing responsibility of every citizen. Where the entire people do not take a continuous and considered part in public life, there can be no democracy in any meaningful sense of the term. Democracy is always a backoning goal, not a safe harbour. For freedom is an unremitting endeavour, never a final achievement. That is why no office in the land is more important than that of being a citizen".

Felix Frankfurter

VIMALAJI'S MAILBAG

22-2-2005

My dear Satyapalji,

I am extremely grateful to you for sharing with me the important statement of Human Rights Commission. After studying it I have circulated copies with my acquaintances in media as well as among social activists in different parts of India.

I am also writing to the President of Afghanistan, the Human Rights Group in Pakistan and Bangladesh and Sri Lanka. May I request you to invite respected Kuldeep Naiyar , Shri S.D. Sharma of Transparency International, Dr. Ramjee Singh and President of PUCL to Lajpat Bhavan at your earliest possible convenience. Please work out a draft of a comprehensive strategy for national and international action and share it with us.

The servants of People Society, South Asia Fraternity and All India Shanti Sena are internationally known organizations. They have

a sanction of Global approval. It is no use waiting for United Nations or its Security Council to do any thing meaningful. They are dependent upon U.S.A. government to a deplorable extent. I wonder if you have listened to President Bush's address at the Brussels's conference yesterday. The arrogance of economic and military power was stinking in every sentence that he uttered. Hence we have to exert to the best of our capacity and integrity.

In Friendship
Vimala Thakar



Fri, 18th Apr 2005

Dear Satyapaulji,

The Iraq War proclaims the era of American Imperialism. It does raise many questions about the future of third world countries in Asia and Africa! But at present I feel more concerned about the political chaos in India! Practically in every state, people are conducting anti-govt rallies and campaigns. The manner in which they are conducted, provokes

violence and bloodshed. The language they use is indecent and vulgar.

Unless we put our house - India - in order, what moral right have we to suggest any action programme to our South Asian comrades!

If political parties are going to conduct their election campaigns in the similar explosive and violent method, the country may be faced with Civil War!

With Warm Greetings
Vimala Thakar



17th September, 05

My dear ..

....Future is unknowable. The beauty of uncertainty enriches the NOW and the TODAY. Life is enjoyable because there is Death.

With deep affection,
Vimala Thakar.

5th October, 05

My dear,

....You do not need any special rituals to awaken awareness. Once you understand that Life is indivisible wholeness, Love and Compassion fill your whole being. Awareness is a bi-product of the energy of Love.

With deep affection,
Your Didi.



9th October, 05

Dear

.....Since yesterday there is deep sadness in the heart due to the indescribably terrible destruction caused by ferocious earthquake in Pakistan. As per Pakistan and Indian T.V. 30,000 persons have died and perhaps a greater number is wounded !

Considerable destruction is caused in Indian J&K area! Please convey my condolences

to our friends(S.A.F.) in Pakistan. I shall pray for all the people of Pakistan as well as those of J&K !

With deep affection
Vimala Thakar.



19th Oct, 2005

My dear ...,

....The profession that you have accepted requires high sensitivity to deal with the patients. Unless there is wealth of love for human beings, one cannot sympathize with their suffering.

On the other hand, unless one has transcended ego consciousness and got established in the dimension of Silence, transmission of energy through one's presence and physical contact does not take place.

There is no contradiction in these two requirements. Meditation as a way of life

confers the power of emotional sensitivity and non-personal compassion!

With deep love,
Vimala Thakar.



26th Oct, 2005

My dear....

....Simplicity in living and humility in relationships is the master key to peace and happiness. Start helping people nearest to you and around you, when you see them in suffering. They are the world for you. Share what you have with them in concrete tangible manner.

Ego is the shell . It breaks when love and compassion flow in your daily life.

With affectionate blessings,
Vimalaji.

9th November, 05

My dear....

....It is only scientific spirituality which will prevail and pervade in the 21st century. Logicality and mathematical precision shall test every religious theory and cultural tradition. This novel filtering process is a covetable achievement of Science and Technology.

With affectionate regards,
Vimala.



11th November, 05

My dear

....I am watching the political situation in Sri Lanka very closely. My best wishes and prayers have been and ever shall be with Shri.Chandrikaji , the fearless and compassionate leader of your land.

With deep love,
Vimala

20th November, 05

My dear ...,

....As regards crime against women, I do not think that the criminal justice system functionaries can do much to help women or even get the criminals punished. The judiciary system requires persons who have witnessed the crime. Such witnesses can be and are either intimidated by police or purchased by interested parties. The judiciary system requires substantial circumstantial evidence, which can be either maneuvered or destroyed by interested parties. Even if these two conditions are fulfilled there is the community of lawyers, who also can be purchased or threatened. I would like to add with some hesitation, that even judges are liable to be threatened or purchased in the present corrupt society

With deep affection,
Didi.



2nd Dec. 2005

Dear...

....Every human being has weaknesses; either on the physical level or psychological level. One should accept the weaknesses and the temporary imbalances caused by them without any grudge against Life or oneself. Such acceptance deprives the imbalances of their momentum, intensity and frequency.

Daily life is the only life that we can ever know of. It is the only expression of eternity for every human being. Hence transformation has to happen in whatever you do here, now and today. Postponement indicates psychological laziness. Promptness indicates the sincerity, integrity and the depth of inquiry.

With affectionate regards
Vimala Thakar



LETTER TO VIMALAJI

Sat, 05 Mar 2005

Dear Vimalaji,

An exquisite gift of vibrant beauty has arrived on our doorstep. One look at the cover of "Kena Upanishad" suggests that the book is imbued with pristine elegance. The book has come at just the time we are preparing for an education conference, "Visions of Education in a New Era of Consciousness." In essence the book speaks to the most profound kind of education in which the deepest meaning of life is explored in a friendly, compassionate relationship of teacher and student. We have the timeless wisdom of teacher and student in an ancient text that is re-envisioned by the greatest spiritual teacher of our time.

We are grateful to the European yoga teachers who with sincerity and dedication created the circumstances for the dialogue. We are thankful to the Vimal Parivar, Mumbai for publishing the talks and making them available

to friends all over the world. We are most appreciative to Vimalaji for continuing to hold the highest standards of truth, integrity and timeless wisdom in all that she shares.

May all be well with you and the friends near you,

Deep love,
Barbara



5th December, 2005

Dear Vimalaji,

The paper, "Human Civilization in Transition," has with resounding clarity announced the challenge that faces us at the beginning of the Twenty-First Century. We can no longer pretend that the planetary intelligence will put up with the immature games we have been playing for millennia. Truly as you say, the false image of man as master is being destroyed from within and will need to be replaced by reverence for the interrelated web of life.

There's a possible sea change in the people of this country who are rapidly becoming disgusted with the brutal ugliness of war and are less arrogant about the right and capacity to subjugate other sovereign nations. When we saw the ineptitude of the national government in meeting the basic needs of citizens in natural disasters, the pride of the nation went down abysmally.

As the primitive national institutions are collapsing, it's encouraging to see so many grass root projects that are dedicated to the health of the planet and progress without national support or sanction. Dedication to spiritual evolution outside of organized religions is on the rise. Many educators are reporting that in the last twenty-five years there is a significant number of "new children" who are spiritually sensitive and aware beyond their years. Many of these children are angry about the legacy that adults are leaving them: a damaged planet, tremendous debt, disregard of the true needs of children.

I have been working with a group that is attempting to define a new vision of education that is appropriate for the shifts in consciousness that educators are observing.

Many young people are no longer interested in supporting a "man as master" world view. They recognize that they will be called to collaborate and cooperate with a global family of great intricacy and complexity.

As Vimalaji so precisely states, it is transformation in the quality of consciousness that will be the master key for the necessary transitions.

In gratitude and deep respect,
Barbara Pennington



The Power of Violence



All the strength
the physical
the intellectual
the Financial
even the strength of the Governments
all have lost their teeth

Everyone seems convinced
that the power of violence
alone yields true results!
That momentary illusion
how very destructive it has been,
destroying the honour
the dignity
the very texture
of 'human-ness' of humanity!

- Vimala Thakar

Kindle the Light of Wisdom



Kindle the light of wisdom in your hearts
and may the darkness of ages be dispelled

Banish the bridge
between the Past and the Future
and thus
cleanse the soot of time
that is gathered within

Face the challenges of
the daily life
as they arise from moment to moment
and in those relationships
see yourself reflected as you actually are

And
let The Supreme Spirit
that permeates every cell of your body
burst forth into flowering
from every pore of your BEING

-Vimala Thakar

It seems that the whole human civilization is passing through a critical transitional era. The global human community is in a cultural crisis. Its relationship to the Earth, the oceans and rivers, vegetable kingdom and all the non-human species is going through a radical qualitative change. Man is no more the master, the monitor or the manager of planetary affairs! Perhaps not even of Human life itself!

The transitional period could be converted into a process of Transformation, if the teachings of the Veda-Upanishad Rishis and those of Socrates, the Buddha, Mahavira, Prophet Muhammed, Zarathustra, Jesus Christ and Mahatma Gandhi are studied for guidelines.

Transformation in the quality of Consciousness could be the master key for total social transformation.

Vimala Thakar