

Challenge to Youth



Vimala Thakar

A Challenge to Youth

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First Talk

Sunday-morning, 18th June 1972

I do hope it will be possible for all of us to spend the five days that are at our disposal in an atmosphere of intimate informality. I mention this, because the atmosphere which is generated by our conscious and subconscious attitudes goes a very long way, to make a living together fruitful or otherwise. I do not say this because of language difficulty, but because of the attitudes of people to talk about the deepest matters concerning human life, individual and collective. To talk about them seriously, passionately, without creating any distance, psychological distance between the listeners and the speaker. This dimension of friendship and of intimate informality is something we have to introduce in our relationships. A person who speaks for example about spiritual matters, I don't know why but there is a kind of psychological distance that comes between the listeners and the speaker.

I have been trying very hard the last six or seven years during my wanderings, to bring it to the notice of people, that even if a person attains liberation, lives in constant samadhi or meditation, even if a person has grown into the highest or the deepest possible dimension of consciousness, it should not create a distance. It should not isolate him from others. As you respect any person who has made a research in say physics, nuclear physics, engineering, mathematics and so on, you do respect the person. So there may be a kind of respect, may be a very deep affection where there should not be any distance vertical or horizontal between such persons. That is why I try my level best not to address big meetings, mass scale meetings, not to go on television, the wireless, otherwise it gives, it creates a different atmosphere around the person. So I do hope nothing will keep you away from me; talking freely with me if you want to do so personally or in groups, besides our formal meetings in this room. I can see very well that there is no difficulty about the language as you do speak English all of you. But if there is a slight difficulty about the language do not hesitate, I do understand a little Dutch, a little French,

so even if you speak to me in Dutch I will answer you in English.

The main concern is to utilize this opportunity of being together in such a quiet place, to utilize it to the best of our capacities, not to stand on formalities, not to feel hesitant.

Now why do I call such getting togethers a self-education camp? It is not a camp in the occidental sense of the term - you don't have your tents here, you don't cook your meals separately and so on. The word camp is really a translation of some Hindi or Sanskrit word where you live together. Live together as a family for a few days. Why do I call it self-education? Firstly, because there is no one to propagate, to expound, to dictate blue prints of how humanity is going to proceed onwards in its psychic journey, or its political, social or economic life. When there is one person, or a sect, or a dogma, or a leader, or a hero, then he gets the people together to dictate those things, to put them down into categorical assertive statements: it is so, and you have to learn it and propagate it and so on. I would like to make it a mutual exchange. There is no reciprocity when a person sits there dogmatically and looks upon others as if they have come to learn from him or her. Here we are together to educate ourselves. You may know certain things and certain aspects of life more than I do and I may know certain things more about life in certain fields of consciousness, because I might have made experiments in that. So each one of us could contribute on the footing of equality in the atmosphere of friendship. So this is a self-education camp for each one of us. If you feel that it is not a self-education camp for me then I think that you will be under some illusion. I don't like to waste my time in teaching people something without learning something. I have not up till now discovered one individual from whom I could not learn something, during all my wanderings, each individual is unique; the way he looks at life is unique; the way he uses his thoughts, ideas, feelings and creates a network of reactions around him, that is unique. So there is something to learn every day - even things and flowers and plants and animals can teach if one is receptive, open and sensitive, if he is interested in learning. My greatest interest in life is learning. You live as long as you learn, because learning is a movement. If you stop learning you don't

live, you stagnate, you don't grow and being passionately in love with life I thought in different countries: "let us get together". So we are here to learn from one another, it is up to us to waste time in superficial talks, gossiping, unnecessarily verbalizing or to utilize the time for learning. Nobody is going to compel us to sit down here from hour to hour: "don't read, don't talk, be silent".

Now what do I mean by the necessity of self-education? It seems to me that the whole world, the whole human race feels that civilization and culture developed by man through thousands of years is not adequate and does not help man to discover the wholeness of his being, to live harmoniously with himself and others.

It does not help him to find out socio-economic or political structures which will not be based on acquisitiveness, ambition, competitiveness, jealousy, greed which will not need cultivation of anger, violence, hatred, the capacity to kill people more and more. The whole human race seems to be feeling anxious that man discovers a way of living in which firstly he does not pollute his environment, does not damage the plant life, the animal life and the human life around him; then discovers how to live harmoniously with his whole being - with his body, with his mind, with the conditioned part of the mind and the unconditioned part of the mind - to live as a whole human being, not in isolation, with other human beings.

Harmony achieved at the cost of relationship is of no value to the human race. If somebody retires to a monastery, lives in a cave in the Himalayas, goes away from the daily travail of life and says he can live harmoniously, that harmony is a dead harmony. If he says he can live harmoniously with other human beings, peacefully with other human beings, that peace which is possible in a cave, in a monastery, away from daily life is of no value. So we do not want dead peace and dead harmony. That which vibrates in relationships has reality and that which cannot be reflected and does not get manifested in actual relationship with things and other human beings is only an abstraction.

We have no time, I mean the human race has no time to indulge in abstractions, theories and speculations. Man has played around with it in the east and in the west long enough. Still a new human society where the

social, economic, the political, the cultural relationships will have one foundation, one approach to values, one code of conduct, has to be created.

Let me clarify what I mean by one set of values and one code of conduct. To-day we have a variety of sets of values. When you are at home you are told to speak the truth, to live in love, to value truth and love, cooperation as a basic value of life. It is a motivation force that keeps the family together. You don't cheat one another, at least you are supposed not to. So affection, truthfulness, love, cooperation, friendship; all these are motivation forces for family life. If you are in church or a religious gathering, they talk about humility, they talk about spontaneity, abundance, love thy neighbour, about forgiveness, about love. Those are motivation forces there.

As soon as you can move to the economic aspect of life you are told that you are a member of an acquisitive society. You must be ambitious, otherwise you will be left behind, they say you have to be pushed if you have no ambition. Be more acquisitive, earn more, have more bank balance. Greed and jealousy are encouraged in a very subtle way in the present economic structure whether in the east or in the west. So acquisitiveness, competitiveness, jealousy, greed, they are very respectable economic values. Profit motive is the only incentive to productive labour. That is how they talk about it. So ownership, property, acquisitiveness, profit motive, greed, jealousy - all these are motivation forces for the present economic structure. These are the values.

So the code of conduct for economic life is absolutely different from the code of conduct for family life. And for the political life even anger and hatred are encouraged as motivation forces. Violence, whether you do it in the name of religion, do it in the name of a political ideology or you do it in the name of nation or country, is immaterial. So you have again a different code of conduct and set of values for political life. Now one human being has to pay loyalty to all these mutual contradictory sets of values and has to live up to this mutual contradictory and mutual exclusive patterns of behaviour. That is why man has gone neurotic. The more industrialized the society, the more complex the nature of relationships, the more advanced in science of psychology, the more neurotic the in-

dividual becomes. Not because there is something wrong with the individual only, but something is basically wrong with the whole way of living that man has developed. You can't expect a person to live without nervous tension and inner conflict if he has to be politically economically, culturally, religiously and in family life equally efficient. Because efficiency in these different fields of life means efficiency and skilfulness to handel contradictory values in one bag of flesh and bone, to put all this together to dump it there and drop everything out when necessary. I'm putting it in very simple words, but this is the curse of fragmentation in collective life - the fragmentation that is accepted by man. Please do not think that there is no fragmentation of life in the orient. It is as bad as it is here.

So unless the human psyche educates itself, or we mutually help one another to educate ourselves in a different approach to life, which is not fragmented, which perceives that life is one indivisible whole. If truth and love, friendship and cooperation, mutual respect are motivation forces for home life, they are as well the motivation forces for economic, social and political life. If the present structures deny the possibility of having these motivation forces as the foundation, I think the present structures will have to go. The necessity, the urgency of revolution will be felt, at least I would like to draw your attention to the urgency of this.

So one has to realize how the present structures of collective life have different foundations, different motivation forces, different patterns of behaviour. How there is a built-in contradiction in them, and that any person following them is bound to fragment himself, is bound to become a split personality. As long as you carry the split skilfully, nobody calls you a schizophrenic, and the moment the split becomes too much for you, because you are more intelligent than others, because you are more sensitive than others, because your awareness is more acute than others, then the split becomes evident and the people begin calling you a schizophrenic, a split personality. The trouble begins there, but the trouble is there built-in in this acceptance of fragmentation.

Individuals are necessary who shall not accept fragmentation of life, who will see and of course shall not

accept means, only when they see it. They will be able to see that life is one indivisible whole. There cannot be different motivation forces for different fields of activity. The manifestation of truth and value in family life will be different from the life in a factory, the life in a school or university. The expressions will be different, but basic foundation and motivation forces will have to be the same. This I call the perception of the unity and indivisibility of life. For me it is the content of religion, to perceive, to understand the unity and indivisibility of life. To be aware of it and to move in each relationship with that awareness, is to be religious. So there is a necessity of self-education, to help ourselves to find out if at all the present perspective of life is wrong or right. To find it out. So we question the present perspective of life, acceptance of fragmentation and the present way of living. All this we'll have to go through. And if we say it is wrong then we have to educate ourselves to grow into what is right; see if there is any other perspective and how to grow into it. It is not an academic game, it is not a speculative game. Education will be necessary, because perception is related not only to my intellect, not only to my brain, it is related not only to my eyes, or to the optical instrument and optical nerves, it is related to my whole being. Perception and audition are not only the capacities of the eyes and the ears. The ears may hear the sound and the eyes may see an object, but to perceive the impression of the object of perception, or to receive the sound - vibrations from the unit of audition, the whole being will need a different education. The nervous system, the glandular, the muscular, will have to be equipped with a new sensitivity with a new alertness, with a new strength. a new freshness. They have been conditioned. If we think that our present perception is related only to the brain or to the optical or auditory instrument at our disposal, I think we have not seen the whole truth. So education for a new perspective gets related to my food, to my diet, to my sleep, to my exercises, the way I handle the body, the speech, the mind and so on. That is one aspect of the need for self-education.

If we needed only new blue prints for a social or economic structure and if the blue prints could be handled by the old people, with old minds and old brains, (I am not referring to the age of the body,

worn out, tired fatigued), history can produce them if wanted. Forthcoming to recent history, the Bolshevik revolution in Russia or the Mao revolution in China or the Gandhiist revolution in India: beautiful ideas. I mean, who could put it more beautifully than Karl Marx or Lenin, who talked about a new human society, no exploitation, no injustice, no state boundaries - uniting the proletarians, the working class of the world, talking about internationalism a. s. o. So whether you talk about the French revolution profounding fraternity and equality or you refer to the American revolution and talking of democracy, you refer to Jefferson, you refer to so many ancient presidents of America, you go back to Pennsylvania, William Penn and Quakerism, if you trace human history philosophy for the last 500 years, there has not been any difficulty with beautiful schemes, plans, blue prints.

One after another man has been evolving these and yet to-day we find that the quality of human consciousness, the quality of the human mind has not changed. Whether you refer to Russia, to China, to India, to America, there is somewhere the savage, the barbarian. The instruments and weapons in his hands have changed. The instruments, the implements for agriculture, for industry have changed. Man, the animal has become very skilful in handling whether it is a computer, electronic brain or a space rocket, he has developed the weapons and the whole science of war.

But when you come back to the man the individual: the anger, the hatred, the jealousy, the greed that he has in him, the desire to own, to possess, to acquire, the capacity to hate people, the cerebral patterns of behaviour are so rigid in him, that all these beautiful new ideas and ideologies and patterns of behaviour and blue prints are reduced to ashes in a very few years.

You might have witnessed how in each country the revolutionaries are behaving after the revolution, getting the power in their hands becoming reactionaries. And then the necessity to purge. The purging that takes place: whether it is purging in the realm of Stalin in Russia or the red revolutions and purgings in China after 1958, or you see the corruption among colleagues and followers of Gandhi in India.

So education in the realm of the psyche; to find out how to handle one's body, one's brain, how to handle the

emotions, the sentiments, the feelings, the thoughts, the whole conditioning which is contained in our brains, how to handle it, how to use it in a new way, seems to be absolutely necessary. I feel the urgency of a self-education; that is to say individuals becoming aware of this, launching upon explorations and experiments and learning. That is the necessity to-day. The inner change has to take place and the inner change cannot be brought about by a ballot-box or a bullet. It has to take place through education, so that the individual understands at each step what is happening. These are all explorations, whether you do it in communes in California, you do it in Japan, you do it in Hawaii or you do it in Australia. There are groups everywhere now, wanting to explore new ways of educating the human mind, the human body. So we have to educate the nervous system to receive the impressions of the sensations in a different way. We have to educate ourselves in our habits, regarding diet, regarding sleep. I would not mention habits about sex, because if sex is converted into a habit pattern, nothing would be more monstrous than that, so relation to sex and habits about diet or exercises or sleep or clothes or houses, cities, towns, you know.

So I would like in this first introductory talk to bring to your notice that life cannot be divided into individual or collective, the outer and the inner. There is no dichotomy between the two. We will have to look upon this as a whole. First of all to eliminate the fragmentation that is accepted to-day in various fields of activity, to eliminate the contradiction that is involved in it to-day; secondly: to eliminate the imaginary dichotomy between the collective and the individual, the outer and the inner and then to find out beginning with oneself, if there can be a different way of handling the body, the speech, the mind.

Self-education though, begins with the individual, as the crisis is in the individual psyche, the human psyche, and nobody else can change if forcibly. If you change it forcibly then it is no growth. I hope I am making my point clear? If you change the psyche and the mind with force by giving some injections, it is not growth, it is only a change and the change will be abrupt, sudden. The person will not be able to know what to do with that change. You can bring about sudden glandular changes, muscular changes, they are talking about the possibility

of changing even the sex of the human body. So change brought about suddenly, abruptly, through force, through coercion, physical force, intellectual coercion or psychological coercion, that change will not indicate a total growth. What we need is a new human being, a new human race, capable of new perceptions and new responses, capable of having a new texture of relationship with one another so that there is a new foundation for economic, political and social set-ups.

So we have to begin with the individual; though we begin with the individual, the context of the exploration is the global human life. If we are not aware of the whole context then self-education has no meaning. It will be only a selfish pursuit. The context is the crisis in a global human life, the graveness of the situation.

We must be very aware, vividly aware of the nature of the crisis. That is the context, and the individual begins with himself; if he does not begin here I do not know how else the human race is going to arrive at new dimensions of consciousness. So the individual begins. The initiative is his, he does it in his life and the context is always the whole human life.

Last point for this introductory meeting is that the individual has to educate himself, because total growth can take place only in the atmosphere of freedom, not in any other atmosphere.

You know, as plants can grow when they have the freedom to grow, in the same way we have to expose the individual to the atmosphere of freedom, unconditional freedom, unlimited initiative on his part, and in an atmosphere of friendship and cooperation. If we submit the individual to some authority and say that you can grow into another dimension if you submit yourself to this authority, the authority of other individuals, of other ideologies, patterns of behaviour, then the transformation or the growth will not be a healthy one.

I am very surprised that people, specially young people living in the occidental world, living in the highly industrialized and scientifically advanced, technologically advanced countries, submit themselves to occult authorities existing in the orient.

In the name of spirituality, in the name of exploration of the new they turn away from here. They don't like the big cities, they don't like the big units of production and they think this is the whole way of living.

There is no freedom for the individual. So they go to

India, to Nepal, to Ceylon and coming from democratic countries coming from the context of love and freedom, they even turn away from their families because there is no freedom in their family. Suddenly they come across some swamis some sannyasis, some orange coloured robes, some ashrams and they say that such a person has occult powers; so they turn away from the power of money, science and technology.

They turn away from the power of political and economic dictators, businessmen and industrialists and they accept the power and authority of the occultist and the transcendentalists, be he an Indian or a Japanese, a Zen-Buddhist or a Buddhist, monk or an Indian Hindustani sannyasi or yogi.

In the name of yoga in the name of meditation, in the name of spirituality they get their mantras and they get initiated by them and they bow down to them.

All manner of acceptance of authority is gone through. It pains my heart very much.

I was with the Australian youth a couple of months ago, I said the same thing to them, I have nothing against those Indian sadhus or sannyasis. They say without a guru, without an authority you can't find what God is, what truth is, what reality is. So they are there to dish out. They have converted spirituality into a commercial thing. So they take even money, they make a sort of business out of it: if you do this, you will get these occult powers, these transcendental experiences a. s. o. There are dozens of them. And one who turns away in the name of freedom from the occidental context, immediately accepts the oriental.

Whether it is burning incense or candles, he just goes into it, he accepts the clothes, the incense, the way of living, the authority, the guru, the disciple business, the ashram. I know that the unusual about it attracts them, but I would ask and I would request those who have the facility of living in the "have"-countries, or the rich countries I would request the young people to be aware of what they are doing.

I don't say you do it or you don't do it, that's not my business. But I would like to suggest that the transformation has to take place in the atmosphere of freedom, complete freedom of the individual. There is no reason for accepting the authority of another individual, his experiences for our exploration of what is beyond, God, truth or reality or a new way of living, whatever you

want. It is not necessary to bind ourselves and accept the authority of any dogma, any sect, any individual - Indian, oriental or occidental. If we say that in the atmosphere of freedom it cannot be done we have already conditioned our inquiry.

Individuals may be great but truth is greater than all individuals and as the last word in revolution is never said and has not yet been said, the last word in spiritual life is never said, not yet said. So we will need the pliability, the tenderness, the flexibility, the humility not to accept the authority. We may study it, we may study all the parts if we like, but without accepting the authority psychologically, that is to say without limiting our exploration by the discoveries and experiences of other people. So self-education will need an atmosphere of unconditional total freedom.

The human race that is living to-day and the children who are growing for the world of to-morrow are no more occidental and oriental: we are members of a global human family. We have to question the validity of all the past-religious, spiritual, psychological, social, economic and political. Question the validity, educate oneself to break new paths. equip oneself to break new paths.

I wonder if you feel it like I do. I feel a kind of sense of responsibility. I'm not as young perhaps as some of you are and yet I feel it a responsibility of the young people to discover an alternative way of living - individual and collective both. And when the alternative ways are discovered from within and one has equipped oneself to live that way, then life universal, life cosmic, the whole life around us helps such a person to express that inner freedom and that inner discovery in his outer or collective life. Arriving at the inner freedom and equipping oneself to live that freedom, that is what we have to do, that is our task. Maybe somebody says: "yes I have arrived at it, what I do with it, how do I express, the society is not congenial, society is not helpful, society lives just the opposite way".

I'm very well aware how society lives and yet I would like to communicate to you and share with you what has happened to me. Because with every growth that was total and with every new discovery which released me from previous conditionings, life gave me an opportunity to come across people who would listen to me or come across people from whom I could learn.

An inquirer of truth, an inquirer of total revolution, an inquirer of divinity is never isolated. There seems to be a law of love operating at some level in this universe. As there is a law of gravitation and a law of causation, there seems to be a law of love working in the psychological regions, the deep levels of consciousness, that the moment you discover, even when you turn your face towards truth and reality, you are no more lonely. Life sees to it that you are brought together with other people who have the same interest, the same concern and somehow this opportunity of sharing, learning, exchanging. So it is not my responsibility to create a congenial or agreeable atmosphere to express my discoveries that seems to me to be the responsibility of the universal life. Why do I say that? I don't say that as a theory but I share it with you very frankly because that is what has happened, that is what I have seen in my life. As a person absolutely without any financial background, having no pedestal and from an ordinary lower class family in India; but the moment this urge, this inner passion, this inner exploration brought the intelligence to the understanding of new paths of new ways of living, life began conferring opportunities of meeting people, of travelling around. Can you imagine a person travelling from India to Europe every alternate year having no money? It is a very romantic adventure even meeting friends who do it for me. There are friends now in each country. Not big foundations or organizations, no paid workers, no office, no secretary, nothing. And it went on growing and spreading of its own and now there is contact with universities, contact with young people. The moment you have discovered an iota of truth, the moment you have gone through a total change in yourself, life takes over the initiative to put you across the path of those with whom you can talk, or puts you across those people from whom you can listen and learn. This is a universal law that I have seen in my life, operating not only in one individual, but in many individuals in India.

So the task is to see the context of the problem, to understand the nature of the problem, to find out ways and means of breaking new paths, equipping ourselves to live on those and to march on those paths and the rest is taken care of by life itself. This I don't say in any fatalistic way - it seems to be a fact. So that is how I look at the issue of self-education.

In our next meeting, whenever you would like to have that meeting, I would like to go into the issue of what is an individual, what are we to-day? How do we live to-day? What are our habit structures? What are these thoughts and emotions, the content of our consciousness, the content of our actual relationships, what are they and how do they bind us or limit us? What is the nature of the bondage, what is the nature of the trouble, we will go into it. Unless we understand the nature of bondage and how it limits us, there is no use talking about freedom. So in the next session one would like to take up the present way man lives, physically, mentally, verbally, the interrelationship between these.

If you would like to ask questions or enter into discussion before the second session that also is welcome to me. I'm at your disposal whenever you want to meet next. All right?

2nd Talk

Sunday-evening, 18th June 1972

As far as I can see there are no individual problems, there are challenges in each individual's life. The manifestation of challenges is different from person to person according to the socio-economic and political context in which the individual lives; the cultural and educational conditionings in which the individual has been brought up, the constitutional idiosyncrasies of the individual that get reflected in his attitude to life. Life is infinite motion, life is never static and in its infinite momentum it throws up challenges at the individual who is alive, who is sensitive, who is alert and attentive to the movement of life within himself and around himself. If a person is not alert and attentive to the movement of life, challenges may come over him; he will not even notice that there was a challenge, he will by-pass them. So challenges are the expressions of the infinite momentum of life and the individual's direct and immediate encounter with them.

There is no individual who has not got to face challenges, whether it is a challenge of pleasure or pain, sorrow or joy, flatteries, respect, prestige or indifference, humiliations, insults etc., challenge of success, challenge of failure, challenge of the impulses built-in in his biological system, challenge of thoughts, feelings and sentiments incorporated in his psychological structure; everything moves. Impulses in his body move, change, grow as the human form grows from childhood into youth, from youth into adulthood, from adulthood into old age. So the biological impulses are challenges. The psychological structure in the content thereof also constitutes a challenge and all these in relation to the movement of life outside the skin; his relationship with things, with members of his family, with his friends, with the people with whom he has to work for earning a livelihood, the society in which he lives. So the next point I would like to share with you is that challenge is the by-product of the movement in relationship. Those who live in isolation, their life stagnates and therefore there are very few challenges as relationship and movement in relationship. A human mind likes

to convert the challenge into a problem.

When I feel inadequate to face a challenge and it has to be faced, it has to be faced and fought against to-day, this moment and I feel somewhere an inhibition, maybe a kind of fear, maybe a kind of inferiority - complex, maybe a kind of hesitation, maybe the habit of postponement, lethargy, sluggishness. So a kind of inadequacy to face the challenge as and when it appears. makes me face it partially, fragmentarily and leave the rest of the challenge unmet, unfought, unfaced.

So that part of the challenge which has not been looked at squarely, which has not been directly dealt with, not adequately dealt with, gets pushed into my memory and the challenge ferments there in the hothouse of my emotions and sentiments and feelings and involuntary reflexes, the challenge goes on fermenting. It is the fermented challenge that we call a problem.

So challenges are facts of life whereas problems are creations of the human mind; mind being the product of a collective effort, mind having universal patterns of behaviour, cerebral patterns of behaviour. Surely to think is a cerebral way of behaviour, to feel is a cerebral way of behaviour. Thoughts and feelings and sentiments and emotions, they do not belong to individuals, they are the product of collective human effort fed into the human brain systematically through thousands of years, they have been organized, they have been standardized. Hindus as a race have one pattern of thinking, feeling and willing, Muslims have another pattern, Catholics have one pattern of behaviour and the Communists have another pattern of behaviour. So thoughts, feelings, sentiments, they really do not belong to the individual. They are contained in each individual brain but they are the result of collective human effort; the Protestant way of behaviour, The Presbyterian, the Methodist, the Catholic, the Buddhist, the Zen-Buddhist a. s. o. So problems have a universal content. they are related to these cerebral patterns or ways of behaviour.

We'll go into them. And therefore every problem has an impersonal universal content in it. But we like to claim problems as our own problems, we claim even pain and pleasure, sorrow and joy. We claim experiences also to be our own as we like to possess things and own them; we like to own our sorrow, our pain, our pleasure. We don't look upon the pleasure and pain as events visiting our consciousness, sorrow and joy visit-

ing us as events occurring in our life, but we try to grab them and we play with the memory of the past, the pleasure, the pain, the past joys, the sorrows, the wounds inflicted upon us, the honours conferred upon us a. s. o.

So individual life is an expression, a very eloquent expression of the total human life as if it were condensed in one human form and therefore when we begin to deal with the global problems or world problems, or universal problems we have to come back to concrete reality that is the individual - his psyche, his way of living.

Now it is very obvious that the consciousness that man has is more evolved, more developed than the consciousness existing in the animal world and plant world that surrounds him. There is a kind of simple consciousness in the animals and the plant worlds but in man it becomes complex. It receives impressions of sensations, it interprets them, it responds to them and at the same time it is aware that it is responding.

It is aware why it is responding in a certain way. Human consciousness is really one of the miracles. To me every movement of life is a miracle. Every dawn tries for me to uncover the mystery of life and every sunset tries to whisper unto me some secret of life and death. So we human beings have the human animal form, the impulses built in that form and we have what we call the brain, the mind, the consciousness. Each one of us is aware at least of these two and we, the human beings, live through these two. The physical organism has its sense-organs and they receive sensations, impressions, as soon as any physical sense-organ comes into touch with any object outside the skin. All these sense-organs seem to be related to a source of energy and that energy functions. Otherwise with a dead person the sense-organs are there, but the inner movement has come to an end, come to a stop. So there is no interconnection between the sense-organs and their capacity to sense, to feel the inner energy. There is no relationship between the two, the link has been snapped. So nothing is seen and nothing is heard. So though the mind sees, the mind has to see through the eyes, the mind has to hear through the ears. This very close relationship between the physical organism and the mind has got to be realized in the very beginning.

Now we look upon these sense-organs as our agents to

provide information about the world outside us and I wonder if you have noticed that these sense-organs have their limitations built-in in them; the eyes can perceive only in a certain frequency of light-vibrations, the ears can hear the sounds only at a certain pitch and at a certain frequency of sound-vibrations, they are tuned in to function within the frontiers of some limitations. So what we look at, that total unit of our perception or observation, may not be the thing that we come into touch with. We come into touch with that part of the unit of observation. the unit of perception, which our eyes can look at. Or my ears can hear the sound, the overtones, the undertones, the sound-vibrations only within certain limitations, not beyond them. That is to say the capacity of the sense-organs is limited. The limitations are built-in. We are not talking about the distortions, weaknesses or shortcomings of the sense-organs, but the built-in limitations. To feel that when I look at an object I see the totality of that object is the first illusion. To feel that when I listen to a tone or a note in music, I'm capable of listening to the whole of it is an illusion. We listen within certain limitations, we perceive and observe within certain limitations. One has to be aware of the limitations built-in in the physical organism. Now when the impression is received by these sense-organs a kind of electro-magnetic impulse is generated in the body and that impulse is carried over to the brain cells.

It is very interesting to watch how the physical and the mental work together. To observe it in one's own body, one's own life is extremely interesting. To watch the impulse being generated and being carried over to the brain cells, it goes on very quickly with electronic speed. It takes me so many minutes to describe it and put it into words, but man has been busy developing, sophisticating, refining, making sensitive the whole physical organism.

So there is no guarantee that these impulses are carried over to the brain cells in their totality. If the nervous system is not fresh, is not alert, is not sensitive, is not attentive, only a part of that sensation and a part of that impulse may be carried over to the brain, not the whole of it. And if we are absent-minded, if we are distracted and then we look, there are sensations, there are impressions, there are impulses created, generated, they are carried over. But only a fragment is re-

ceived and the fragment of that received datum is carried over to the brain and a fragment of that is interpreted by the brain and then it reacts. From morning till night this is the way we live! How many of us observe the actual functional way of operation, the *modus operandi*. So the nervous system and its limitations are the second factor and then comes the most important part. You will appreciate my difficulty. I cannot condense too much, I cannot elaborate too much. I have to feel and follow the middle path, you see, just hinting and pointing out. The most difficult and the most important part is the conditioning fed into the brain. So when the brain interprets those impulses the brain is not free to interpret them. The brain has got to interpret them according to the education, the conditionings which have been fed into it. So the conditionings are interpreted as a Dutchman, as an American, as an Indian, as a Hindu, as a Christian, as a man, as a woman.

So there are limitations in the process of interpretation also. Because we are not aware of all these limitations we feel so very sure of ourselves; that I have seen a fact, it is like this, and then we are in a hurry to judge it, to evaluate it. We are so very sure of the rightness or wrongness of our reactions, responses. So the first point of this evening is: we have to work within the framework of many limitations. It is not the total reality that we come into touch with and we have not got the inner freedom; we are bound, we are chained to various patterns. If this is clear, then the second point - the first and its subpoints I have tried to put very briefly - the second point is: we live through habits from morning till night. Even if you watch, to-morrow what we do is out of a habit-structure; whether I take a meal, whether I take a shower, whether I talk to people, whether I look at people, it 's all out of habit-patterns; man lives through habits.

We have dealt with the part of built-in limitations, now we are coming to the section of man-made or man-invented limitations. What do we call a habit? A mechanical activity, the skill of which has been transmitted into us as an inheritance. I inherit certain habits from my parents, inherit certain attitudes and habits from my race, from my religious community, from the country that I am born and brought up in and the whole context of my life in which I live. But we function through habits, mechanically go on repeating, and we

are quite sure that we do not have to be attentive when we go through those activities. For example when I brush my teeth, when I take a shower, when I soap my body, wear the clothes, when I go out for a walk; am I aware of the activities that I am going through? So it is great fun to observe for one week and find out how many activities in our daily life come out of habits. Even relationships become habitual and when you repeat a thing mechanically, when you do not have to be attentive and alert, then when you go through that repetitive mechanical activity you haven't lived. It is only the momentum of the habit that has been unwinding itself.

The momentum of habits contained in us begins to unwind itself and it appears thus as if we are living, but the moments spent in any repetitive activity are really not lived, there is no direct immediate contact with reality at that moment. We live by proxy as it were. So this is the second very important hurdle, that man lives through habits. I wonder if you have noticed that getting angry becomes a habit, feeling jealous becomes a habit, getting irritated, annoyed becomes a habit. Because those things have been fed into us like involuntary reflexes they come out and we say: Oh, it is human nature to get angry. Before I knew I was angry, I had acted through anger. The so-called emotional and intellectual activities have also become repetitive, have become mechanical and there is no life in repetition, there is no life in mechanistic activity. The electronic brains are doing it much better than any of us can do; receiving data, processing it, deducing conclusions from it, acting upon that. All that is done by electronic brains to-day. So this mechanistic activity of the brain has been our way of living. We have mistaken that mechanistic activity and the movement through repetition, we have mistaken that for living. That is not the essence of living.

The third point is how the individual lives to-day in the east and the west, that these habits physical and psychological are looked upon as defence-mechanism by man. Animals have the defence-mechanism built-in in their bodies; some have very sharp teeth and some have very sharp claws and some have the speed and some have the sheer physical strength like an elephant a. s. o.

Now out of this urge for security and the fear of the unknown, man must have invented this art of repeating things, forming habits, so that he feels safe. Once you cultivate one kind of habit you feel safe against the

future. That's why in childhood in families and schools children are taught, they are trained in such and such a way. Eventually you respond this way as if life is going to attack you and you have to put on your armour and fight against it. Through centuries this defence-mechanism - that is the physical and psychological habits - has been settled very deep in human life. We can understand it, we can see how it perceives, you cannot root it out and throw it out of yourself. But to understand the nature of bondage is half the way to freedom from it. To understand the containment and the nature of bondage is the beginning of freedom. To understand the falseness of the false is the beginning of perceiving what is true. So we have seen that habits are due to fear of the unknown and the urge for security, so this is a defence-mechanism in the human animal. If he has not got it in the physical he has built it in the psychological, he lives that way.

Next point is to protect this defence-mechanism, so man has invented two very powerful symbols; one is the symbol of time and the second is the symbol of the I, the me, the ego, the self, the I-consciousness and the time consciousness. These are the two very powerful symbols used by man in the east and the west. There is time by the clock. Now we say it is evening and then we say it is night. When we see the sun, we say it is dawn, sunrise. So day and night, the division into light and darkness is something understandable. But man invented time, psychological time. As you measure cloth by centimetres or inches or yards man wanted to measure this "is-ness" of life, the infinity of life, the eternity of life, and that's why he created what he calls a second, sixty seconds constituting a minute, sixty minutes constituting an hour, this is all an invention of man's brain, twenty-four hours for a day and thirty days for a month a. s. o. A whole mathematics of time. It has facilitated our relationships with one another but it is only a symbol. The centimetre, the inch, the foot, the yard; all these are measurements, man has created them like numbers one to nine. To measure infinity these numbers from one to nine and their permutation, combination, like the notes in music, they are symbols. Symbols have their own beauty, they have enriched man's life. But symbols are only indications of reality, not reality itself. There are no days and hours and weeks and years in reality. Life or reality is timeless-

ness. Life is the eternity or infinity exploding before us as this moment, the now, the here. The now, the here is the explosion of that eternity. But the past, the present, the future, the months, the years, the days are only measurements, they are symbols. To know them as symbols, to use them as symbols has its own beauty, but if we think that life is really cut into days and weeks and years and we begin to measure our life by that and we begin to feel that there was a yesterday and there will be a to-morrow, then we are going to sow seeds of anxiety, of fear, of worrying, of brooding, a habit of chewing into experiences of the so-called past and chewing into the dreams about the so-called future. Life has been complicated by these. So I'm indicating now in the second session that man created this symbol of psychological time and that has caught him so very deeply that he believes to-day that there are really days and years and to-morrows and he becomes a victim of chronic fear, chronic anxiety. He becomes a victim of chronic brooding on that which he has lived before, and the whole thinking and feeling is in the framework of this time, as the past and the future, the yesterdays and to-morrows. He can't move his mind without referring to the past or projecting the future. A pure simple direct contact with what is becomes impossible because his mind souses either into the future that does not exist or into the past which his mind has created, oscillates between the two and cannot have a sustained relationship with what is. I'm not saying any of this with the hope that you will accept it, I'm just sharing with you as it appears to me, as I see it, as I've seen it not intellectually but in life. So this is a symbol and the mind cannot move but through the groove of time and space. Once you mention time, you have already mentioned space, because space and time always exist together, rather they are two names for one dimension. So the mind functions in the framework of time and space. Whatever it sees is in the frontiers, within the frontiers of time and space. Life is immense. Life is vast. But when we look at things, we look through the framework of time and space. That is why our brains cannot see the point before birth and cannot see the point after death, it's a time-bound and space-bound movement. It's very important to realize this. If a person travels in space and goes around the globe, goes around the earth say twen-

ty-eight times in twenty-four hours he has seen twenty-eight sunrises and twenty-eight sunsets. How many days has he lived? One day of the earth and twenty-eight days of space. Do you see the relativity, the relative reality of the concept of time? It is very beautiful as a symbol, but how many days has a person who travels in space? Twenty-four hours by the earth clock and he has gone round it twenty-eight times. How will you measure his life? You see, these are only measurements.

And the last measure that I come to is the symbol and the concept of the "I". the "me". I measure life and other individuals by the measurement of the "I", the "me", the "self". Whatever is outside the skin is not the "me", and whatever is inside the skin I refer to as the "me", the "I". We use these terms, everyone uses them and we never feel the necessity of finding out for ourselves who this "I" is, what this "me" is. We have to use it day and night. It's not only a question for monks and nuns and philosophers and theologians to find it out, you and I have to deal with it every moment. So the "I"-consciousness always divides life into the me and the not-me, the relationship between mine and yours, I and it, I and thou, me and not-me, this division. As if the "I", the "me" has an independent existence of its own, self-sustained, self-controlled, as if it has an identity, an entity apart from others, independent of others. This is how we feel, this is how we live. One may have crude gross selfishness, another may have enlightened self-interest. The frontiers of one's "I"-consciousness may be limited to his own life, the frontiers of another person's "I"-consciousness will have the frontiers of the family and one may look upon his whole community. Another may identify his "I"-consciousness with his country, with his race, with his religion. You know, you can go on widening the frontiers, but it moves from the centre to the frontiers, the "mine"-ness, "I" and the "mine"-ness, "me" and the "mine"-ness. So "me" as the centre and that which I look upon as "mine" is the circumference. So that is the psychological house or structure or nest that we create for ourselves wherein we live. We look at everything and every human being out of that nest, out of that house. What is this I? This "I"-consciousness is going to deal with all the global problems, political, economical, social. It is going to create the new human society. We must know what it is, this physical organism with its built-in li-

mitations, the mind with its defence-mechanism of habits and the "I"-consciousness at its centre. This is really the stuff of our life and the content of our relationships in daily life. So one must understand what this "I" is; the relationship of this "I"-consciousness with the body, with the name and the form that the body has. One has to have a name. The parents give a name to a child to tell it apart from other children. One has to see them apart, so you give a name. You give it with an aesthetic sense, with a religious flavour if you are a poetic minded person. You can give a flavour to it, cultural flavour. But the name, the purpose of the name is to tell one person apart from the other. And the parents from the very first day of birth begin to describe; it looks like mother, it looks like father, beautiful, dull, ugly; within a few months clever, dull, brilliant, ugly. All these descriptions go on and they feel that they are not doing any damage to the child, that's what they feel. But one verbalization in the presence of a child, one hour born or one month born when you expose the child to your descriptions, your comparisons, your judgements, that affects the child very deeply and then the child is told that it is dark or brown or fair or dull or clever, so the child says: "I am clever, I am fair, I am brown". One does not say that the body is brown or the body is fair or the body is black. It is made to believe. So the identification is first with the name Harry, Jones, Georgia, Nellie, whatever it is. Then there is the identification with the form, description of the form, then the description of the mind, the brain. The brain is conditioned. He gets angry like his father, he's jealous like his mother or she's like her grandfather. You know, we go on describing. So the second layer of identification is with the qualities of the mind, layers after layers of identifications. And then we say that he likes sweets, he hates this and he dislikes that. So the third layer of identification begins with "I like this and I do not like that". The child sees that this is the only way to live, to behave. I want this, I do not want that, I hate this, I like that. It is not the agreeableness of a thing to his constitution or to his life, but we teach the child how to like and dislike. We go on training the children into our prejudices and preferences, imposing them upon the children, consciously or unaware sub-consciously. And the children assimilate many prejudices and preferences from their schools, from their

homes. So the third layer of identification is of opinions, likes, dislikes, prejudices, preferences, norms, standards of behaviour. By the time the child becomes thirteen or fourteen: I am this, I am that; solidification of different layers of identification. If you try to analyse the "I", the "me", you will see that it is a very expansive myth that we nourish, maintain. So the Hindu "I"-consciousness, the Muslim "I"-consciousness, the Pakistani, the Bangla Desh, the Maoist "I"-consciousness, the Marxist "I"-consciousness, the Fidel Castroist's "I"-consciousness, the French, the English, the Dutch a. s. o. It becomes so solid that we really believe that I am the anger, I am the jealousy, I am the pride, I am the vanity, I am silly, I am brilliant, whatever it is. Nobody has educated us to look upon these as the sheets, the descriptions of the form, attributes of the brain. The physical organism is a part of our being, the brain is a part of our being. Nobody has told us that. So the "I"-consciousness becomes like a solid bundle, layer after layer, which has become very rigid by usage through the years. It has its own utility.

I for one would not like to destroy any of the symbols that man has created, but to be aware of the symbols as symbols and to be aware of their limited utility in their respective fields and not to confuse them with the total reality. That is essential. So one has to see that we function through this "I"-consciousness which is a man-invented contrivance for the convenience of collective behaviour. It's a contrivance. Man has manoeuvred it, manipulated it. When you say this is my house, you have taken an area and you are limiting the space and you arrange the space inside the house. After all engineering is the art of arranging and managing space, manipulating space. So you build four walls and manipulate space in different rooms. The more skilful you are in your relationship with space and you know how to handle it, the more beautiful a house you build. In the same way this "I"-consciousness, the structure built around it; some may have very skilful structures and others may have very crude ones. The "me", the "self", the "ego"-consciousness of an illiterate person in the wild jungles or forests of India or Africa or the tribals in Australia may not be sophisticated and the "I"-consciousness of an educated man in America, in England, in Holland could be sophisticated but the raw material is the same. So this evening I have tried to point out how

man the world over lives, how he is surrounded by limitations, how some are built-in in his physical organism, others in his psychological structure and how he opens his eyes or opens his mouth, functions through all these limitations. I only wanted to point out that when we feel we are free to create a new world, we are free to bring about revolutions in the world, we may not be aware of the actual state of our own living. And those who would like to see the present shape of affairs changed in the world would have to arrive at an inner freedom first, unconditional, total freedom to move with the movement of life. To put oneself in harmony, to be aware of one's totality, to put all the parts of our being in a harmonious whole. To live and move as a whole. Then only the talk of bringing about a revolution in the collective will be meaningful.

3rd Talk and Discussion
Monday-morning 19th June 1972

I wonder if it would help us to explore the difference between a fact, a truth and reality. What I call a fact may not be exactly the same for you, the subject-object relationship results in the concept of a fact. If you send ten reporters to watch an event, whatever they report to you about happenings, they will bring back versions of facts. They will call them factual reports. But the versions of the facts will be slightly different from one another, because the person who looks at the fact has a particular perspective of it. The perspective is not only intellectual but it is also emotional. Then there is a certain angle from which a person looks, the angle from which you look at an objective so-called fact, an objective event, the perspective that you have due to the permutation, combination of your thoughts, ideas, feelings and sentiments and the actual state of your being. If a person who is emotionally disturbed looks at the same, then the subject-object relationship in that focus of time and space will give a different colour altogether. So facts differ.

Then there is a truth about the same fact - if four, five or six persons are watching the same accident or some football match, some sport, some competition - now we have gone into the subject-object relationship giving birth to a fact which may be different for each individual but at the base of those versions there is some objective data, the raw material out of which the fact is born. So, what example can I take? Say the example of highjacking that is going on or the conflict between Pakistan and Bangla Desh, conflict between Pakistan and India, Israel and the Arabian countries in the Middle East, the conflict between the negroes and the non-negroes or the whites in America, conflict between Rhodesia-Zambia. You could take any example which you have studied.

Now for example in Bangla Desh, the facts as well as the truth reported by journalists from all over the world, what was the truth; that the Bangla Desh people, intellectuals, were massacred, slaughtered - about three million and sheik Mujib and his army which they

called Mukti-Vahini, had arms and ammunition, some say from China, some say from Russia, some say from India but they had arms and ammunition. So they also were engaged in a fight against the Pakistani army and they also had killed, they also had tortured, they had their prisoners of war and so on. So there was violence on the part of the Pakistani army, the same effort to resist it and to fight back by sheik Mujib and the bloodshed and the slaughter. Now anybody who would report on the situation in Bangla Desh would refer to the truth of massacre and slaughter on both sides, one on a large scale and the other could not be on a large scale because of the limited arms, ammunition and trained personnel they had. This is a truth, you see and the refugees were running over India.

What is now the reality? The reality is the relationship of the human mind with power, with money, with the sense of property and ownership. For understanding the reality behind the whole truth of the Bangla Desh and Pakistan conflict one will have to make a study of how for the last twenty or twenty-five years all the wealth of the Bangla Desh people was exploited by the people in Pakistan, West Pakistan, who had the power; they were taking away all the money.

The relationship of man's mind to power, to money is the real culprit. Whether the power is in the hands of the Pakistani people in West Pakistan or in the hands of Indian people in Delhi in India or maybe to-morrow in the hands of East-Pakistani people - Bangla Desh people - man's relationship to money, to ambition, to power, the lust to dominate, to own and to do anything to maintain the position of power is the real culprit. It is the ambition - whether the ambition is in relation to one individual, one family, one religion or one race - it is ambition for power, lust for money that creates a Hitler, a Mussolini, a Stalin, a Yahya Khan, a Salazar. You know the reality is the basic relationship that human mind has.

One who reacts to the fact reacts out of his personal emotions and idiosyncrasies, his tendencies, his conditionings. One who sees the truth behind the fact wants to adjust the forces, says first of all: keep the Bangla Desh people and the Pakistani people away, keep them away from the position of fighting, so stop the war; that is what the politicians would do, stop the war.

Stopping the war is not creating peace, not having a

war is not having peace. But they will say the truth is the war must come to an end, the killing must come to an end.

Then the economists say the Bangla Desh people, poor people, they have been exploited, they are so starving, give them money, give them aid in cash and kind and rehabilitate them.

They may rehabilitate and I have nothing against it as they have to be rehabilitated but if we stop there without referring to the reality of educating the younger generation, the children, to be related to power and money in a different way, then whosoever wheels the power will always be callous and cruel. Whether the power is held by a few corporations and guilds of corporations in America, the military, the industrialists and the power-holders together form a kind of trinity in the name of democracy. Power is built up there, whether you build in the name of the people's republic in China, a group of a few people, or you hold it in Yugoslavia in the name of the proletarian. You see, I'm trying to let you see it, to distinguish, because unless we go to the basic fundamentals we will not understand what reality is.

I say reality is universal, it is neither eastern nor western, neither coloured nor non-coloured, neither American nor Hindi. Reality is the universal principal of life as H₂O is water whether you experiment in India or Australia it is just the same, like the law of physics and chemistry. Reality is universal, it is neither personal nor impersonal but it permeates the whole life. We do not experience the real; reality, being the universal or the totality is beyond experiencing. You know, experiencing needs a centre called the "me", the "I" and when I say I experience something, I imply don't I. that I go through an event. I give it a name, I identify it, I recognize it and react to that recognition according to my interpretation. That is experience. Events get converted into experience when a person recognizes something in the light of his past knowledge, he recognizes it, identifies it, interprets it and reacts to it. That is what we call experience.

So, the totality of life, the totality of universal life which is reality cannot be imprisoned in the frontiers of my past knowledge. So I will never be able to experience it, to identify it. Reality will always be as it always has been: unnamable, immeasurable, infinite. When I call it infinite, immeasurable or unnamable I'm

not describing its attributes you see? I wonder if the point is clear, but reality being the totality of life, being the whole of life it cannot be experienced by our petty little mind, our petty little conditioned brain, who has to name, recognize, identify, interpret according to the conditioning fed into it. Experiences are relative to facts as we understand them, experiences are relative to the truth as we observe it. But reality, divinity, totality universality of life, give it any name you want, defies the touch of the mind, defies the touch of the ego, the "I", the "me". It cannot be experienced. It cannot be named, it cannot be imprisoned in any form, any shape. It remains as the undercurrent of human consciousness. One can be in communion with it, but not experience it. Does this help at all or does it complicate it?

Q. What are the priorities of life?

V. Don't you think the priority of life is to live? Life is for living, isn't it? Now the top priority is to live; not any extreme purpose or aim or goal outside life and living but to find out what this business of living is, what it implies. I think, every young person wants to live, not to vegetate, not to become a repetitive machine, not to reduce oneself to a computer or not to reduce oneself to a passive unit in the stream of mechanical ways of behaviour. One wants freedom. So it seems to me life is for living and to live is to be free, to move with the movement of life, not to get stuck up. Not to get stuck up either in biological impulses or psychological conditionings, the compulsions of society, the dictates of organized religions, the dictates of political leaders and so on. To live is to move and in order to move one must be free.

So one who is interested in living will say my priority is to live, nothing that comes in my way of living, that is to say moving with life, will be tolerated by me. You know it needs a very revolutionary attitude to be able to live. As we said yesterday life is infinite motion, and it is in the nature of life to throw up challenges. In order to live one needs the austerity to be attentive, to be on one's toes all the time, not to lapse into inattention, distraction. There are many distractions and society places before you a network of distractions to keep you away from the act of living and growing, because society needs a status quo to be maintained. This is nothing new, right from the days of Socrates the

same thing has been going on.

So in order to live one needs freedom, so the priority would be freedom. To be free one has to have the strength not to be swept off one's feet by the propaganda; whether it is political propaganda of ideologies, or economic propaganda of industrialists and businessmen who exploit the built-in biological impulses, the physical needs of people, their psychological needs. They exploit by studying psychology, female psychology, teenager psychology, child psychology and they go on producing consumer goods in such an infinite variety that you are tempted by the very variety not only to choose, but you are tempted and you become slaves of affluence. That is to say you forget the actual needs, physical and mental and you become victims of artificially stimulated wants. Stimulated wants is one of the sciences of progressive economy they tell me, as deficit budgets is one of the sciences of progressive economy. By stimulating wants they make you feel you need this; through wireless, through television, through magazines, through papers they even exploit the tendermost feelings of human life. They exploit sexual instinct and make everything sexy.

So to be free one needs the strength not to be swept off one's feet, whether it is political propaganda, cultural propaganda or religious propaganda. It is extremely difficult whether you are in a communist country or a so-called democratic country to live as an individual, to have your initiative, to be free to move. That's why we need a handful of revolutionaries, wherever they may be in the world, who say that we want to live, want to be free, not against someone, want to be free because that is the only way to live.

So the second priority would be freedom. It will make me see, it will enable me to observe where I am not free in my life. It will help me to find out the amount of slavery that exists in my life, the kind of slavery that I go through in my life.

So the third priority naturally comes when one becomes an observant, an observer of one's own life, very vigilant. Vigilance is not only the price of democracy, vigilance is the price of freedom even in the individual life. One becomes watchful, alert, one observes: am I free in my habits about diet, am I free in the way I look upon my body, am I free in relation to sleep, am I free when I speak, whether one smokes a cigarette or whet-

her one drinks wine, or whether one drinks a glass of buttermilk. Is one addicted to it, is one psychologically dependent upon it? So one becomes an observer and finds out the places of dependance, the individuals on whom you depend, things on which you depend and so one finds out the addictions. You don't want me to go into all the details, but this is a subject of how the priorities for living in an alert person flow from the understanding. You don't have to sit down and say: "let me find out my priorities". Say we have twenty-four hours to live. I know that the time by the watch is limited, but what do we do in those twenty-four hours, what kind of job do I take up, what kind of town or city do I live in, what kind of friends do I have, boy-friends or girl-friends, or whatever I have, what kind of pictures or shows I see on television, what kind of games I go into.

You know, one who is interested in living has a tremendous self-respect, not self-centredness but self-respect, so that he does not insult his body either by denial, suppression, repression or does not convert his body as an instrument for sensual pleasure. Whatever he does, taking a bite from a slice of bread, sipping a cup of tea or coffee, or going out for a walk, whatever he does, he finds fulfilment in the very doing of it. That is the way to live.

So I think the priorities flow from the understanding of basically what I want to do in life. Do I want to live or do I want to get terribly respectable in society? Do I want to earn money, do I want to earn fame or prestige, what do I want from life, from others and from myself? So that has to be clearly seen and if it is a concern for living, then I think from one to another the priorities unfold themselves. One does not have to make an effort of the will and sit down and very solemnly decide about them and write them down on paper and follow them. Approximation to some ideas becomes unnecessary when one understands basically what one wants from life. Some people may like to live, others - oh, it's a very great ordeal, let us not go into all that - earn money, live the way in which society around them lives. After all it is a life of fifty, sixty years, who knows, so follow the way of the majority and go with it, you see. Q. You said: "Be free when you drink for example a glass of buttermilk", but what about freedom in friendship with somebody else. I mean, I feel really freedom

when I am in friendship, but also I'm bound, I am responsible for my friend. What does freedom in friendship mean? I mean, I can understand when you speak about things, but with another person it is more complicated. V. The greatest challenge is a human relationship and one has to find out the dynamics of human relationships and the dimensions of relationships. So what do I mean by friendship, what do I mean by a relationship? I have a relationship with my clothes, with my car, I own them, I have to own them, I have to preserve them, I have to keep them clean, safe. That is not the relationship with human beings. You cannot own human individuals, you cannot possess them. They are ever moving, ever growing entities containing tremendous potentiality. Man is a mystery, the most unpredictable creature because of his potentiality. So in human relationship this habit of owning, possessing, preserving is irrelevant, is it not? That's what we have to eliminate, we have to find out what it is not. If we become aware of what it is not, perhaps it will dawn upon us what it is. So individuals cannot be owned, cannot be possessed. Man has tried to own and possess individuals through ethical dictates, through religious sanctions, through social sanctions. That relationship becomes very static, I can't go into all the aspects of relationship. You know, once you want stability in a relationship, sanction of a society, you want to preserve it like tinned fruit and canned fruit, relationships cannot be tinned and canned, otherwise they become lifeless. So owning, possessing by sanctions of other people or my inner sanctions is out of question.

Can there be dependence in relationships? And if there is dependence can there be friendship? I'm just limiting our exploration to friendship. It is a job for me to exercise all the self-restraint when talking, because when I see around me there are so many who have studied psychology and young people who are interested in living; just to touch and let go is difficult. But you have raised a very interesting issue. So in friendship can there be dependency, that is to say, can I afford to get attached to the person emotionally or look up to him intellectually? When I get attached to a person, when I depend upon a person I am expecting him or her to react and respond according to my needs, sometimes according to my wishes, sometimes to my obsessions, to my whims, connive my weaknesses. Getting attached to a

person is obviously expecting our calculated or deeply wanted results from him or her and expectation is the most subtle form of dictatorship. Some people dominate in an external, obvious, visible way and those who expect and put the chains of their expectations around the feet of their so-called friends cannot love because expectations, dependency, attachment make the relationship static. It is an obvious fact that attachment and dependency make you feel jealous. The moment the person has a friendship with another, one feels jealous because one projects the same relationship of attachment between the other two persons. He has lived that attachment, has lived the dependency, the expectations, so he imagines that in the other relationship the same contents will be there. So in friendship there can't be dependency, there can't be attachments. To me friendship is out of love and love is freedom. Then you love the person for what he or she is, as he or she is. You don't expect him or her to change according to your ambitions, you don't depend upon him or her and convert him or her as an escape from boredom of life, from the successes or failures of life. Then to be together, to share life, to grow together has an indescribable beauty. But we have been used to relationships of owning, possessing, depending, expecting, getting attached and it seems to me all these deprive us of the capacity of getting related with others.

Q. Is there not a mutual dependency in every human relationship?

V. The moment I have to hold something purposely, does it not indicate that there is a reluctance on the part of the other? That's why I have to hold. Why do I have to hold? In love there is no purposeful or intentional holding out of effort. Love brings people together and they are together because togetherness expresses their action of living. They are together. When I have to hold someone it means I have already lost him or her. I have already lost him or her and now I'm trying to manoeuvre, manipulate and make an effort to hold on. Yes, if the other person is not well, physically or mentally and is not capable of understanding what he or she is doing, then that holding becomes a part of a therapy, not a normal relationship. Out of love and compassion you hold on, but that is nursing a person, that is a part of therapy without letting the other person feel that it is a kind of therapy. You know, it is with the nectar of

compassion and love that it will be done, but we are talking about - even I hesitate to use the term - normal. We don't know how much normal we are. All of us live in a neurotic condition some part of the day or get neurotic half a dozen times a day; when we get angry or feel jealous we lose our poise.

It is very difficult to express and communicate through words, but I was trying to say that our present patterns of relationships are based on bourgeois values, on reactionary values. And the talk of freedom in socio-economic and political relationship has got to percolate now to the individual life, the individual nature of relationships, the family life, one's relationship with one's whole being and relationship with others. If freedom is not a value there, where can it be a value? If it cannot be a value in friendship, if it cannot be a value in friendship of a man and a woman, boy and a girl, cannot be a value in the relationship between parents and children, where and how do I bring the dimension of freedom into economic and political life without having it in individual life? You know the dilemma?

Man says no, for relationships you must have security, stability, you must have continuity, that must be manipulated. For that there must be a technique, a formula, whether I do it in the name of religion or morality or do it in the name of society or culture. As long as the foundations of values are not in the individual psyche and in the individual relationships, you cannot bring the foundation and the same values in economic, political or other collective patterns of behaviour. We give society that what we are. Talking about peace, non-violence, world-brotherhood, talking about elimination of pollution through elimination of national sovereignty, sounds very good at Stockholm conferences. If it comes to elimination of violence, elimination of war, of national sovereignty these sound as very good phrases, but let us come down to individual life. What place has freedom in our mutual relationships? What place has love, peace, poise in our relationships with words, gestures, with food, with our movements and so on? That which does not exist in the individual is nearly impossible to bring into socio-economic and political context by ballot-box or by bullets. You can't do it. And in the present crisis humanity is going through we have to prepare ourselves like the seeds, you see, which are thrown in the fields; there may be a handful.

So this self-education is the most revolutionary aspect

of our life if we feel concerned about the crisis to-day. I understand what you mean Sir, by dependency, it is true. In a family where parents are responsible for bringing up their children, children are dependent on the parents. When we accept the members of society, we regulate certain responsibilities to the so-called state and the government, whether you accept rules of social contact theory or any other theory. In the history of society we regulate certain responsibilities and we invest powers in the so-called state, in the so-called society, government and we depend upon them and that voluntary dependency is socio-economic life between the producer and the consumer. That will be there in a family - a kind of dependency is there - but when you grow up in friendships, in love between man and woman, attachment, ownership, possession, jealousy, greed, violence, assertion, aggression, all these worn out values have been motivation forces in personal relationships. And the need of total revolution is felt by an enquirer of truth, by an enquirer of what the meaning of life is. That need is felt in the individual life itself. It is painful to grow into love, to grow into freedom, it is not easy. Every growth is painful, the turbulent days of puberty, the turbulent days of teen age, with every growth there is something new, new challenges. So when we grow out of these present patterns of relationships, it is not going to be very easy and a smooth path of walking on roses, there will be thorns also. As we live together for the next five days and enter into such intimate discussions, you will see what the meaning of self-education is: to be willing to grow into the state of love which has no inhibitions, which has no fear, no desire in the name of personal security to cling to the other. What we call love to-day, I wonder if we really understand what love is. Man has measured thoughts and feelings, sentiments and emotions, the movement on the cerebral plane. But love being the movement of the whole being, its velocity, its vibrations have not been measured yet. Love has its own intensity, its profound depth. It not only brings people together, but the very intensity, the very passion, the very profound depth keeps people together. They do not have to make an effort. So Sir, the third priority after freedom naturally flows: the dimension of love in human relationships. That is the new dynamics of human relationships. People talk about love in the church, they will talk about

Jesus of Nazareth, his love, his compassion, or these people of the Harakrishna movement - they talk about Krishna and his life of love.

But love has not become a motivation-force in human relationships. You and I, those of us who feel concerned about the present affairs in the world, have to explore how we can grow into that dimension first, that dimension of freedom and love in our life. Live there, move out of it, so the new dynamics of relationships flow from us. This is the essence of religion for me. This is the essence of spirituality, I do not know any other spirituality. That which takes you away from your relationship with others, may it be called peace or liberation, satori, muksha, nirwana, I don't know.

Nirwana has no value for me if it is only attained in isolation and can only be sustained in isolation.

Q. In freedom do we have to obey the laws of reality?

V. What happens to me when I am aware of the limitations either built-in in my system or created by me or caused by me? What is the state of mind when one realizes there are a number of limitations, that our perceptions are fragmentary, our contact with the outside world, the visible, the tangible is partial and not total and the responses are inhibited by the conditioning through education, culture, religion and so on. What is the state of mind at this point of realization? What happens to me, what is the state of mind when I realize this, the impact of realization, the biochemic impact of realization? What is it like? Do I gather this as an idea, a new theory, a new idea and transfer it to memory under some label or do I understand it as a fact that there are these limitations? I do not listen to this statement; there are these limitations. We went into them step by step.

Now understanding of the limitations, does it stimulate my knowledge and memory or does it stimulate something else? For example just imagine: I'm walking by the side of the tallest of the company, say the tallest person here. I'm walking with him or her and I realize I'm so short and the person is so tall. I can't do anything, oh, I may wear some high-heeled shoes you know, and try to appear to be taller, but I know very well even wearing those shoes that I'm short. If I'm a sensitive person the pretention does not sweep me off my feet. Now I'm walking and I realize at every step that I'm short. What does that realization do to me? Does it sti-

multate self-pity: oh, I'm so short, it's so nice to be tall and here I am, born in India, it is nice to be fair-skinned and here I am brown-skinned.

Realization of facts, does it evoke or stimulate self-pity, does it stimulate an irritation or annoyance against the fact? When it is against me it is self-pity, when it is against the fact it is irritation, annoyance. I grudge it, there is a constant friction, when I go out for a walk for an hour or half an hour with you and every step - inaudibly I'm saying to myself "Gosh, what is this, every step annoyance, irritation, self-pity", or I say "here it is: one is short, one is tall, one is fat, one is slim" and there is an end to that. Realization of the fact sets me free of the complex of that shortness, it can do either of the two. It can set me free, so that I move freely, unmindful of the shortness or the tallness of the physical body. Then I am free to talk, to share, to communicate. The fairness of the skin does not stimulate any complexes in me, superiority or inferiority, no inhibitions. If the realization that there are so many limitations built-in in our biological structure, if that makes us feel depressed, frustrated or disappointed then there can be no further enquiry.

If that realization makes me aware that whenever I perceive, whenever I listen, whenever I get into relationship, the relationship is bound to be limited by the limitations. The awareness of those limitations in the moments of actual relationship will stimulate in me a kind of humility, a kind of modesty. Then I will never be in a hurry to judge other people, to condemn them, to criticize them, to compare them, because I know all the judgements, comparisons, evaluations based upon my conditioning have only a relative utility. They are not absolutely, unconditionally true. They are only true for me because I have been conditioned that way. Awareness of limitations can stimulate a humility which operates and functions in the moments of relationship; the likes and the dislikes, the prejudices and the preferences, they are there. They come up and yet they lose the grip over you, they lose the capacity to twist and distort your responses.

Look, when I realize and I understand that anger is one of the parts of a defense mechanism built-in in the psychological structure and it comes up, it comes up according to my conditioning. You do not know Hindi or the Sanskrit language, say; there is one word in Sanskrit

or the Hindi language that you use as an abuse, strongest possible abuse, and now I use the term here. You won't understand it, so you will not react to it. There will not be any emotional reaction to that word because you do not know the meaning, the dictionary meaning of the word and the association of emotions and ideas with that word does not function in you. But one who understands the Hindi language will jump at the word and would like to strike back at me if I utter that word. In the same way if there is a word in the Dutch language used for insulting or abusing and if you utter that word and we do not know the Dutch language, that word does not do anything to us, anything to me.

So anger is a habit of reacting to certain words and that habit has been organized. Now if I see anger as a cerebral way of behaviour, jealousy, or greed or envy as a cerebral way of behaviour in which the brain has been trained and conditioned, then what will happen to me when you get angry at me? I have become aware that this is how the brain functions and you get angry with me. I don't hold you by the hand and sit down to explain that look, this is the cerebral way of behaviour. You will get hundred times more angry with me then. That's not the moment to talk to you, but when you get angry I cannot explain to you, I cannot go into the immediate cause of your anger and the distant, remote cause according to the psycho-analysis and what Jung says, what Adler says and what Freud says, you can't go into that. So I cannot do anything to your anger.

But if you get angry, if I am aware that anger is a pattern of behaviour, then that anger will not stimulate anger in me, at least one evil is less. I do not get angry then. I see it because I am aware of the whole modus operandi of the human mind, of the human brain. I don't condemn you, I don't criticize you, because I have gone through anger, I have seen how it functions, how it makes a man neurotic, how he loses his balance momentarily. The behaviour in the moments of anger is just like behaviour of any neurotic person. So I see the anger in you and I see the habitual reaction coming up in my subconscious, and it goes over me like the tide or wave and does not distort my responses.

So realization of facts sets you free of the sting of that reaction, sting of that limitation. So from morning till night one is aware of the built-in limitations arising from symbols, the words of symbols and this habit of

comparing, of judging others, evaluating others and trying to impose one's ideas and thoughts and ways of behaviour upon others; all that fades away.

If you are a very intense person it drops away instantaneously, but if you are not a very intense person the whole system is not very sensitive to keep pace with the pace of understanding, then it goes away gradually. Disappearing instantaneously or fading away gradually is related not to the fact of understanding but to the sensitivity of your body and mind.

So realization of limitations, understanding of the bondage sets you free of the contents of the bondage.

Freedom does not exist independently or separately from bondage. Freedom is contained in the understanding of the nature of bondage. Bondage and freedom - there is no dichotomy between the two. Nobody can bring freedom in an abstract way from somewhere else and give it to me. It is contained in my ignorance about the nature of the bondage and the way bondage functions.

The moment that becomes clear to me then the bondage cannot keep me in its slavery. This is worth experimenting with, this is worth going into; the moment I understand the known, the understanding of the known opens the doors to the unknown. There is no separate category as the unknown that turns away from the known and then you will discover the unknown. Understanding of the bondage and arriving at freedom are not two independent events. Understanding results in freedom.

Freedom is the by-product of understanding and that freedom gets reflected. Then if I take food, if I am out of habit fond of things that do not suit me, then I am fully aware that this is not going to agree with my system. I'll have to pay the price for what I am eating today. It is up to me whether to eat it or not. When eating one can say, it does not suit you therefore you must not eat it. The moment you have to use the word "must" or "must not" against yourself, you are using a kind of coercion or violence against yourself. If you use it against yourself, you are bound to use it against some other person at some time in your life. I have a respect for my body, for my mind, so when I am tempted to eat fried things or sweets or whatever it is and I know full well, then either I eat it and the next day I fast and pay the price for it, or I become sluggish, I get a sore throat, something goes wrong and I go through that event of physical uneasiness, knowing full well that I'm paying

the price for that injustice against the body, exploitation of the body. Because the body has the elasticity to digest things, I say, it does not matter, I will do it to-day, let me eat it to-day, tomorrow I will see, but tomorrow never comes.

So understanding the limitations does something to my psyche, it brings about a pliability, it brings about a humility, it sets me free of the dictates of those limitations. The limitations do not evaporate, they do not melt away, please be very careful about this point.

Understanding the unknown, the unmeasurable does not take away all the limitations of the known. When I am using the words with you, when I talk with you, I work through the brain. The conditioning, all that is there, but you see them as the limitations, you see the false as the false, you don't mistake it for the truth, you do not mistake the symbol for reality, the limitations for freedom, bondage for liberation. You don't confuse, you live in the light of clarity and you function through the limitations, being fully aware of the limitations. It is in that sense that scientists must have said: "after all the knowledge that I have acquired I feel as if I'm picking pebbles on the shores of life". Every piece of knowledge I acquire widens the horizon of my ignorance, makes me aware of the vastness of my ignorance. This is one effect and let me turn to another impact of this realization.

In my actual relationships when I cannot understand a specific behaviour of another person, I do not attribute motives, I do not suspect, do not indulge in accusations, allegations against the person, but I have the humility to say without irritation and annoyance: "goodness me, I'm at a loss, I can't understand why the other person behaves in this way". You can say this thing in very many ways. If you are so sure of yourself that you are in the right and the other person is in the wrong, then you say with a kind of implicit arrogance: "I can't understand why he or she does it", implying that she is doing something wrong. Or you can say it to imply implicitly an accusation against the person: "I can never understand what that person means, that is to say his behaviour always defies understanding: something crooked, some screw is loose there in the other person". It can be an accusation; or in innocence, in modesty, in humility you say: "I can't understand".

When you say "I can't understand" in actual relationship

wherever understanding fails, instead of indulging in accusation, allegations, suspicion and so many other things. when you innocently say "I don't understand", then you do not close the door against the other person in your own psyche. You do not block your way and you do not close the door against the other person. You leave it open, there is a space for understanding if the understanding comes the next day. But generally we are not willing to leave the door open. If I can't understand you today and if after a couple of hours you come to explain, I say "it's no use, you now come and tell me this but you must have meant the other thing". See, in our daily relationships things may appear very insignificant but no movement is insignificant, no moment is insignificant. Eternity vibrates in every moment and life unfolds in every movement. So when I have the awareness and understanding of so many limitations in me and limitations in the other persons, then in actual relationship when I fail to understand, I confess it to myself very freely, innocently that I can't understand and that leaves a space. No irritation, no annoyance, nothing inhibits me, nothing isolates me, there is space enough for me to move or for the other person to move, there is neither guilt-conscience, nor fear and we want to live, we are interested in living. So that is the second impact if one has really understood the nature of built-in limitations and limitations of functioning through symbols.

The third impact is - I wonder how you will receive this word - stimulation of faith in human nature, faith in the human being, faith in the potentiality of the other person, the possibility of change and growth and transformation in the other person. Love knows what faith is and faith always generates tremendous peace within you. Peace - another name for peace is patience - not tolerance, not charity, not conceding things to others, but faith generating peace within you, within your whole being, does not give jerks and breaks in human relationships. It is easy to break away, it is easy to turn away, it is easy to condemn. Don't you remember how the unfortunate woman was brought to Jesus of Nazareth? People of the village were so sure that she was impure and they were out to punish her. And one who was living in chastity and purity and was perhaps purity incarnate, said: "Only those who are pure of heart, only those pick up a stone and throw at her". And the people threw the

stones away and went away. They were so eager to judge her, to criticize her, to punish her; religiously they wanted to punish her, not out of personal hatred but out of a religious conviction that impurity must be punished this way. And there stood Love with immense peace and faith in the possibility of human nature and I think that that peace and that love must have taught the woman much more than anything else could have done, any sermon could have taught her, but it was the movement of love and peace in relationship.

So understanding of the limitations releases a kind of faith which is not intellectual, academic. Faith becomes a dimension then, and this mutual faith is absolutely necessary for the new dynamics of human relationship. I think it is this faith that Albert Schweitzer must have called "reverence for life". It could not have been a sense of charity that drew that great noble person to Africa and made him work there. It must have been this faith in man that had stimulated Martin Luther King, who worked in Montgomery, Alabama. Faith in man, faith in the possibility of man.

Faith in the possibility or the divinity of man does not make me oblivious of the defects and the shortcomings of the person. When you see a person out to damage you, you do not stand there and say: "resist not evil" and "there is tremendous possibility in the other man, so let him do damage today and tomorrow he will compensate for it". That's not the way to live. Faith does not deprive me of all my alertness, sensitivity, attention, it does not deprive me of any of these. So, if someone is out to damage, to sabotage, I have the alertness to dodge his efforts, to see that he does not function. Sensitive, alert and intelligent persons can be a hundred times more skilful in relationships than those who are slaves of their own minds. Intelligence gives you the alertness to see what the other person is going to do, out to do. So you can dodge the weaknesses and shortcomings of others and give full scope to the good part in the person to manifest and unfold itself.

Great skill is needed in human relationships also, but this was not the aspect that I would have dealt with this morning; in fact I would have dealt with transcending the frontiers, transcending the limitations and growing into another dimension. But because the questions were converging on the point of relationships I tackled this aspect this morning. Perhaps we will go into the issue

of transcending the limitations, growing into another dimension and using the physical and the psychological organism from that new dimension. That aspect of it we will take up perhaps today or tomorrow.

4th Talk

Monday-evening 19th June 1972

What I am going to share with you this evening will require tremendous attention and sensitivity as well as patience. We are going to deal with human consciousness; the consciousness, subconscious, unconscious layers of it, the way they function, their interrelationship and the possibility of transcending the frontiers of consciousness. There is nothing conceptual or theoretical and no speculation will lead us very far. We might have to deal with waking consciousness, dream-consciousness and consciousness functioning in profound sleep, their relationship to time and space and so on. So we are launching upon something very subtle after having prepared the basis in the first two sessions.

Human consciousness we had seen is a complex consciousness, not a simple consciousness. It is complex in the sense that it is self-conscious. The birds, the animals, the plants can feel, they have sensitivity, they can respond, they have brains, they have memory, but human beings can know and be aware that they know. They can do things and be simultaneously aware that they are doing something, why they are doing it, how they are doing it. Their conscious motives and the subconscious pulls and drives and trends, obliging them or compelling them from within to behave in a peculiar way. So man thinks and at the same time is aware that he is thinking. This self-consciousness is the foundation of the whole human civilization and culture that man has developed. Philosophy, psychology, ethics, theology would have been impossible without this capacity of self-consciousness. One can probe within, find out the motives working at different layers of consciousness, lurking in different corners of the psyche. So this is a complex consciousness.

It is on the basis of this self-consciousness that man has been able to develop sciences like somatics, linguistics, develop social sciences, work in pure science, applied science, technology; all this would have been impossible if man were not endowed with the capacity of self-consciousness. This self-consciousness can work in many directions at the same time.

The two directions we have seen: I speak, it is an outgoing activity - I speak with someone, I am aware of the presence of the other person, I'm aware of the surroundings in which I am placed - so it is an outgoing activity of my attention. At the same time the attention can move inwards without disturbing the outgoing activity. It can move inward and find out the motive behind my words, the motive behind my perception, the motive behind my glances, the inward and the outward, the subject-word movement and the object-word movement if I may use the terms tentatively. So these two we know. Then the attention is capable of being aware of what has happened before without disturbing the capacity to be in touch with the present, the now, the here. First was the capacity to move outward and inward in space as it were and the second is to move in time, backward and forward. The attention can be aware of the sound, the colour, the light, the shape, the size, the form, the name, it can move in different directions at the same time. One who drives a car will understand this very vividly. A person who drives a car is aware of the whole movement of the car. He is aware of the pressure that his foot is having on the accelerator, touch with the hand-brake, the foot-brake, he is aware of the gears, the brakes. He is aware of the traffic coming from both sides, he is aware of the rules and regulations of driving, he is aware of the movement of the car, the condition of the gas in it, the oil in it, the condition of all these separate parts and put together as a whole, the movement of the car. He is aware of his own movement whether he is becoming tense or he is relaxed and he is aware of the people moving on the road. This attention can move simultaneously in so many directions without damaging anyone of them. So this complex consciousness is something very marvellous. Man has been using it in many directions and with the help of this self-consciousness we are going to move too this evening. We are going to find out if one can learn to watch the movement of all the layers of consciousness at one and the same moment. To be aware of the subconscious, the unconscious in relation to the conscious and the conscious in relation to other people. Now when I use the term subconscious or unconscious let me clarify that I do not imply thereby that they are watertight compartments. Consciousness is one indivisible whole. For the sake of understanding

we are trying to analyze it into conscious, subconscious, unconscious, as the superficial of the surface consciousness and the deeper layers. There are no layers in consciousness, but we are trying to understand it. As when we try to understand the nature of things around us we posit something, we say this is a point, no length and no breadth and this is a point. If you try to put the point on paper then you will see that the definition is not valid anymore, but we have to posit the point so that the science of geometry or trigonometry engineering is possible. In the same way we have to posit these layers of consciousness as subconsciousness and unconsciousness, tentatively we use the terms. On the surface layer of consciousness is my knowledge acquired by me from childhood. On the surface layer of consciousness are those conditionings that are absorbed by me, unawares, unintentionally since childhood. On the surface layer of the consciousness are conditionings assimilated by me due to certain motives and intentions and ambitions that I have. On the same layer of consciousness are conditionings imposed upon me by socio-economic or political context. So acquired by me, absorbed by me, assimilated by me, imposed by the context of life and so on - the thoughts, the ideas, the theories, the values, the norms, the standards, the criteria and so on. All these are on the conscious level. Deeper than the surface layer seems to be a layer of inheritance, that which I have inherited from my parents and I wonder how the psychologists in the occident, in Europe and America look at it. But as far as the orient goes - Indians and the Chinese are concerned - they say that the inheritance goes back to three generations; three generations on mother's side, and three generations on father's side. That is to say, deep unfulfilled ambitions or desires, passions that have been thwarted, ambitions that have been viciated, all these are inherited. The biological and psychological inheritance is traced back by Indian psychology, astrology and some other sciences like yoga and tantra to three generations. So the biological and psychological inheritance is there, the experiences of my parents, their knowledge, their shortcomings, their excellences, the trait of the family, the country, the religions, community, all these are contained in what we call the subconscious. They throw up their intimations sometimes in waking hours. You look at a person you have never met before

and you get a kind of uncanny sensation, it is not a prejudice but the whole being as it were is pulled back or repulsed or is attracted.

There are pulls and pushes of the subconsciousness that overwhelm the conscious mind. You decide to do a thing intellectually, you work it out, you plan it and suddenly there is some push or pull from within, inner compulsion - compulsions may be emotional and mostly the compulsions are emotional - but the emotional compulsion from within has such a strong chemical impact upon you that it overwhelms your decision, everything that you have analysed, worked out, planned, everything is vitiated, thrown to pieces. So sometimes the pulls and the pushes, the drives, the inherited ambitions, the inherited dislikes and likes - you cannot even understand why you dislike certain things - they are inherited, either the family inheritance or the religious community inheritance, or the national traits and so on. So they create compulsions and they overwhelm the intellect, the brain, the cerebral movement as if they take the steering-wheel in their hands and just turn it the way they want and one feels helpless. I think this is the experience of many of us. In dreams they throw up intimations but the subconscious can be analysed, can be understood if one tries to analyse it. The conscious mind can analyse, interpret, find out the root-causes of these subconscious pulls and pushes. Deeper than the subconsciousness seems to me another layer of experience and knowledge which is inherited not from the parents, not from any community but from the whole human race; the racial unconscious or the collective unconscious as it is called in the west. Right from the first human being who might have inhabited the globe, the knowledge and experiences of the whole humanity are contained in the form of some chemicals in each of us, whether it is experience of a savage, a barbarian or it is the experience of a Jesus of Nazareth of a Krishna, of a Buddha, Lao-tse, Confucius or whoever it is. All these are contained in that deep layer of consciousness which they call the unconscious, that part of the psyche of which we are not conscious in waking or sleeping hours.

The subconscious is that part of the psyche which exists and functions invisibly, inexplicably, but which can be interpreted and analysed by the conscious. So there seems to be a vast area of psyche; the visions,

the experiences that sensitive people get and they say no one in my family had ever had such an experience, but those visions, those experiences, those feelings are related to the deepest layer of consciousness, that which they call unconscious. Now the whole of it is there. If you have observed huge ships sailing on the oceans, three-fourth of the ship is beneath the water. In the same way our behaviour may be reflected by the superficial, the surface layer of consciousness, but three-fourth is beneath it, holding it in some ways. And this is not a statement of a theory.

If one would like to probe and find out it is possible and within the reach of every human being to observe the contents of consciousness for himself or herself. For that one has only to learn to watch, to observe, to put oneself in a state of observation. If you have to take a photograph you have to hold the camera steady. If the hands are not steady, if they shake and if the camera shakes you might take the focus first but the moment there is the slightest movement of the camera, the slightest movement of the hands, you don't get the picture, it is hazy. In the same way if our total being cannot be steady, cannot sustain the condition of observation, then that which will be observed will be shaky, will be hazy.

So to learn to put oneself in the state of observation is absolutely necessary and for putting oneself in the state of observation three things seem to be vitally necessary. One: the physical organism has got to be in a condition where it can be steady, it can sit still, stand still, lie down still, whatever you like, but it can be still and sustain the stillness without being tense. If it is tense, if it is not relaxed, then that tense stillness is not stillness, because the very tenseness disturbs the stillness, the very tenseness inhibits the stillness or the quietness. The quietness cannot operate, cannot function because I'm tense. So one has to study how to be relaxed and yet to be in a state of sustained quietness. Whether you sit down, whether you lie down or whether you stand is your choice, but the only requirement is the spinal cord, the neck should be straight. When you lie down then one will have to lie down on a straight floor or ground and not on a cot where you have those springs getting loose and your body having a curve in the spine. So whichever posture one takes to learn to be still and quiet the requirement is that the

spinal cord and the neck should be straight; so that the inhaling and exhaling of breath is not disturbed in any way, is not jerky, shaky, but there is a kind of rhythm in the inhaling and exhaling, the breath inhale can travel through all the parts of the body without any obstruction. If I sit like that may be then there is an obstruction. So the movement of the inhaling and exhaling should be without any inhibition. One has to study how to be quiet without being tense. If I'm very much aware that I'm sitting still and quiet, teeth put together and every nerve is tense, then within five minutes the body will begin to revolt, the knees, the hip-bones, the neck, everything will begin to grumble as it were. So one has to learn to put the body in a quiet position. It is a question of learning; as you have to learn swimming, driving a car, a bicycle and so on you have to learn this, to keep the body neither in activity nor in inactivity, but just quiet. Inactivity is the opposite of activity. So it has the tension of inactivity. As activity has the tension of inactivity, there is a duality, but quietness is non-duality. So you put the body in the state of non-duality, relaxed quietness and that one has to learn. There comes the point of self-education or self-equipment.

Learning to put the body in relaxed steadiness or quietness is not meditation. Please do not confuse it with meditation. But this is equipping the physical instrument for steadiness so that the observation that takes place can be precise and accurate. If there is a chemical disturbance or a neurological tension in the body, then the observation will not take place properly, it will be inaccurate. I'm coming to a very interesting point: to keep the mind steady. If the mind is emotionally disturbed there is a chemical disturbance in the body and when there is a chemical disturbance in the body, it gets reflected in the condition of the mind - they are interrelated, very closely interwoven. So I have to learn to keep the mind steady. The mind has not been educated to be in sustained steadiness or quietness, it has been trained to react. The moment it looks it judges, it compares, it wants, it does not want, it likes, it does not like. In the process of sophisticating and refining the brain man forgot the elegance of innocence, man forgot the beauty of spontaneity. So when he looks there is a motive, when he looks there is a comparison, when he listens there is a comparison. He cannot look without comparison, evaluation, judgement, criticism,

condemnation, acceptance, rejection; the very process of perception and audition is contaminated. When such comparison is necessary one has to have a comparative glance. But we don't know how to look otherwise; to look innocently, to listen innocently; the beauty and elegance of innocence, spontaneity, total relaxation; ours is a lop-sided growth. So twenty-four hours the mind is busy, acquiring impressions, acquiring pieces of knowledge acquiring experiences. storing them in memory, putting them under different categories with the motive to keep them handy, so when we need we can just take one by one and use them, catch them. That is what we have been educated to do.

So one has to learn to keep the mind steady, neither active nor inactive, to learn to look innocently, not to judge and compare when comparisons and judgements are not warranted. I have to compare when I have to buy clothes for me; I have to compare, I have to find out, acquire information, choose. So choice has a role to play in human life. When I have to eat, I have to find out what suits and agrees with my constitution, so there the choice is needed. To use the capacity to compare, to judge, to evaluate, to choose when such choice is necessary, when the things that I look at are necessary for providing the needs of my body and mind, then I use the capacity to choose. Thousands of years have been put into this sophistication of the brain and we are not going to throw it away. We are going to use it beautifully, elegantly, competently, but only when it is necessary and where it is necessary and not allow it to interfere with our other moments of life.

So, to learn to watch without comparison and evaluation when choice is not warranted and to use the capacity to compare, judge, evaluate and choose when choice is inevitable, these two we have to learn. This has not been taught, so one has to educate oneself and learn this, as one has to learn the physical quietness and steadiness, one has to learn how to keep the mind steady. If the bodies are not underfed, nor overfed, if one has not underslept nor overslept, then the chemical condition of the body is very helpful, there are very few disturbances chemically and very few tensions neurologically if one has not underfed or overfed, underslept or overslept. And one has learned to use choice, comparison and judgement only when it is warranted, only when it is inevitable. Otherwise one walks around,

one looks at things whether it is a rainbow, a hailstorm, the drops of rain hitting against the window-panes and the freshness of the rain reflected in the eyes of my friends here, you look at it, you enjoy it. When one has to be busy comparing, choosing, there is very little scope for pure innocent joy and bliss. So to reduce the area of choice and to widen the area of choiceless awareness, innocent observation, one has to learn all this. This can be learnt.

First of all, as we saw the body has to be educated to keep quiet without becoming tense, one has to learn a few tricks of inhaling and exhaling so that throughout the day the breath is rhythmic, inhaled and exhaled in a rhythm.

Then one has to devote some time perhaps every day in the beginning, to learn how to watch. This watching innocently, watching without comparison and evaluation needs some effort. This is not meditation, this is not silence, because we are going to observe. We will not be the experiencer and the doer, but we will still be the observer. We are going to sit down to observe, first of all learn to observe.

There are two ways: one way is to sit down, stand or lie down and watch the breath inward, outward. In the process of watching the breath the mind becomes quiet. So we are not making an effort to make the mind quiet, but we are giving it a job. a very innocent job "watch the breath, travel with it inward and come outward with it". That is one way of helping the mind to be quiet and it is great fun if you would ever sit down and watch the breath, how it enters, its journey after it has crossed the nostrils, the windpipe, the lungs, the various areas of the stomach. the back, the neck, the ears, the eyes, the forehead and so on. To watch, and as you go on watching in the quietness of the mind the sensitivity goes on becoming intense. You don't have to make an effort, but you just watch the breath. If you watch it for a long time you will be aware even of the sound that the breath has when it goes in and when it comes out, not only at this level of the nostrils and the sinus but even within the body as it passes various nerve-centres. Whether you call the sound sound-vibrations or the splitting of the sound, or the flowing of the sound, I do not know your latest theories, but I feel that it is something subtler than ether, it is subtler than my blood that flows in my veins, because the sound is felt at various

nerve-centres. So one watches and through the quietness of the mind one is capable of even listening to the journey of the sound of the breath, inhaling and exhaling. It is great fun, just for the fun of it one may learn. If this is felt very difficult for an occidental then use the other method, these are all aids you see; you may even call them tricks. This is not something to which one has to stick to throughout life, but in the beginning it helps to learn how to watch and how to become steady. The other method or the other aid is watching the movements of the thoughts as they come; sit down quietly, close the eyes and watch how the mind moves, how the thoughts come and subside and the interval between two thoughts and again the emergency of a second thought, its prolongation and its subsiding, its duration. Now the first thing that you will notice is as soon as you begin to watch the thought, the thought comes and you have judged it. Without knowing you have judged it - it is a good thought or a bad thought, it is a moral feeling or immoral feeling, it is vice or virtue, because all that has been at the back of the mind. Everything has been judged, defined, chiselled out for us and fed into our brain systematically, so the moment the thought comes you have judged. I look at thought without judging it and as soon as the thought or the feeling comes up, we have been trained to act upon it, either to suppress it, repress it, calling it bad, ugly, sinful etc., or accept it and act upon it. Either of the two. To suppress and repress is also to act upon it. So we have been trained to act upon the feelings and the thoughts and when we sit down and begin to watch - oh, there is great fun - you are attent for one moment, you watch and suddenly you have become the experienter and you have become the judge. And then you become aware, "oh, I have lost observation". You come back to the moment of observation, again there is a lapse, and the fun goes on. If you say "oh, I could be in the state of observation only for a fraction of a second and then I was floating with the thoughts" and you become fretful about it, if you become annoyed with yourself: "I can't observe", if you begin to resist the lapse of observation, if you begin to become annoyed and irritated with it, then the way will be blocked. But if you are aware that "I had lapsed into experiencing, into comparing, into judging", the moment you become aware of the lapse you are already in the state of ob-

ervation. So you will be in the state of observation, there will be a lapse, you will be aware of that lapse and that awareness will bring you back to the state of observation. This is how it goes on, because after having spent twenty or thirty years in certain cerebral habits and certain cerebral ways of behaviour, you cannot educate the mind in one day, one month, one week. To have sustained seriousness and a deep concern is necessary. Only that deep concern and sustained seriousness will give us the strength to educate the mind.

Now supposing I can be in the state of observation, chemically relaxed, undisturbed neurologically relaxed no tensions and I'm not the doer, not the experiencer just in the state of observation, I may spend only half an hour a day, but if I take a plunge into that state of observation, then the sensitivity stimulated in that half hour is retained throughout the day. When I go to the office, or when I cook a meal, I am in that state of observation, may be not all the time but I am in that state of observation when I listen to my boss, listen to my colleague, see the meanness or the helpfulness of the person. I am aware of that and I am aware of the reactions coming up within me. Now people like to do something with their reactions. First of all they are not aware. When they become aware, that sensitivity and the acute awareness makes them feel guilty and they want to do something with their reactions: the anger, the jealousy, the greed, the pettiness, the suspicion, the desire to accuse etc. I've seen it, but now what do I do with it?

That is to say from that state of observation one wants to go back to the state of the doer, the judge, to do something about it. That is the period of temptation. Observation has brought me to the acute awareness of the whole momentum of my subconscious, momentum of the network of my reactions and now I want to deal with them. I want to grab them and either wipe them out completely from my consciousness, throw them out of the window, do something about them. Because I have become sensitive I can't stand it now, I become very much annoyed with myself, why is that anger there? I have seen it and why does it not disappear with the seeing of it? You know the romantic ideas about spirituality, the dreams about it? It is not easy, things have been rooted in every drop of blood, we

carry the whole history of humanity behind us, their follies, their commitments, their experiences, their excellences, all are condensed in each human being. We are a link between the so-called past of the human race and the future. So impatience does not help, you can't wipe it out, you can't root it out. In the beginning you become aware of it and it still has a grip on you. You react according to it and even in the process of reacting you are ashamed "goodness me, again it has happened". So you are not aware of it before it comes up. You feel a bit uneasy but the momentum is too much for your delicate understanding, the thread of understanding, so it overwhelms you and the moment you have acted upon it you feel very sad that you have given in, that you have again been a victim.

If one does not give in to frustration and if one does not give in to haste and hurrying but keeps on making the body more and more sensitive through this self-education, then the momentum comes up and as it comes up you become aware of it, you don't have to suppress it, but you are aware of it. So it comes up, it troubles you, bothers you and yet it cannot distort your response to the other people; that is the second fase.

In the third fase, the sensitivity in diet, in sleep, in the whole way of living is so great, that before the momentum has come up you know the whole game of Lord Ego and Lady Vanity and what they are going to do with you. You know the whole manoeuvring as on the chess-board. You know the chess-player sees the whole thing before him and if he is an expert chess-player he knows what the next movement is going to be. That's how he moves his own pieces but he makes his own movements because he is aware of the next movement of the adversary. So, the sensitivity and the state of observation gives you a premonition of what the subconscious is going to bring up and your response is set free of the grip of that subconscious. That happens in the time of actual relationships. One who is interested in probing the unconscious and subconscious and making the whole area of the psyche conscious, then that which is unconscious and that which is subconscious can be converted into conscious. We call it unconscious because we are not conscious of it. We call it subconscious because it is suppressed and not visible to us, but the whole of it can be converted into conscious. Now the seven or eight minutes that are left to us I will

introduce that topic.

I watch the movements of thoughts throughout the day. When I have watched the movements of the surface consciousness, that is to say I am aware of my thoughts, ideas, motives, feelings, sentiments as a woman, as a Hindu woman, as an Indian woman, as an educated woman, as a woman who has travelled across countries, you know this all on the conscious level. When I have gone through the travail of the conscious level then the experiences, the pushes, the pulls, the drives, the passions contained in the subconscious are exposed to my awareness and my attention even when I am sitting quietly and observing. This is now for one who is interested in transcending the frontiers. So he has observed the conscious and now when the conscious mind becomes quiet because he has observed it, the subconscious begins to function. When you sit down quietly, your eyes closed or open, you can feel the knowledge and experiences of the parents and the community and the family, it begins to come up. It may come up as a vision, it may come up as an experience, experience in words, experience in forms, in light and so on. All these things hidden in the subconscious come up and they get exposed.

Now when the subconscious is exposed to our quiet attention there is every danger that I try to grasp it and store that experience in my memory. I would like to claim that experience and store it in memory, that is the temptation. Because the moment I try to grasp it, arrest the movement of the subconscious, grasp and experience and transfer it to memory, my state of observation is damaged.

There are many people who stimulate the subconscious either through chanting mantras or through inhaling or drinking chemicals, drugs as they are called. Others are exposing themselves to the occult powers of some other people who can stimulate their subconscious by touch, by pressing certain nervous centres, or laying their hands on some machine and the machine and the electric current stimulates their subconscious and they begin to talk, they begin to see.

Those who stimulate the subconscious so suddenly, or get it stimulated by others through a shortcut, they have not got the steadiness, the quietness, they have not got the equipment in their psychological and physical organism and there is a sudden exposure of the

subconscious, it disturbs the nervous system, it shatters the nervous system. Because it is a kind of violence against one's physical and psychological structure to expose the subconscious so suddenly without educating one's physical and cerebral structure to withstand the impact and effect of such exposures. If you take very strong drugs like mescaline, or others, if they are very strong, penetrating, then you may even stimulate the unconscious, the racial experiences and suddenly you may see what a Lao-tse, or a Confucius, or a Buddha, or a Jesus has seen. You may feel this. Your capacity to experience becomes so very sharp, sensitivity becomes so very enriched, the colours are a hundred times more vivid, the feeling is more acute, energy is accelerated and suddenly you are transported into that without the previous equipment. That can happen, it is not difficult to stimulate the sub- and the unconscious artificially, but then it becomes a homogeneous whole with the conscious.

What is necessary is to probe into the subconscious and unconscious, let it expose itself to my attention and awareness without any force or violence used against it so that the whole becomes one movement. It is a total growth. If and when the state of observation is sustained through the period of subconscious getting exposed to my awareness, if that state is sustained then the deeper layer of the racial unconscious also gets exposed. This is no theory, this is what one has seen, this is what one has lived. If there is anything that I have consciously decided in my life, it was at the age of seven when I had decided to use speech only to communicate what I have gone through and not to communicate and not to speak about serious matters unless I had personally gone through them. The purity of speech, the chastity; not to violate the purity and chastity of speech while communicating like this with people. If I do not understand and if I have not studied or not seen, then in the beginning I say "this is what the people say, but this is not what I have seen".

I would like to express that this verbal communication is an act of worship for me. I do not know any other temple of divinity than the human being. So the racial or the collective unconscious is exposed to the light of your awareness provided the state of observation is sustained and you are not eager to grasp that as an experience and arrest it, communicate it to other people,

trade upon it, cash it, because these experiences give you many powers. When the subconscious and the unconscious are opened and exposed to our awareness, these experiences increase the powers of the psyche. Without your effort to acquire them you can feel the thoughts of other people before they are verbalized, you can feel the colours of the thoughts, the colours of the emotions, you can see if there is any sickness in the body before the symptoms are visible on the physical structure. You may go through powers like clair-audience, clairvoyance and so on. There are many powers hidden in the psyche which begin to manifest themselves as the sub- and unconscious and the experiences and knowledge contained in it begins to expose itself to the light of awareness. When the state of observation is thus sustained naturally you are just watching, you are not experiencing, you are not judging, you are not comparing, it is in the state of observation that this chemical and neurological relaxation is sustained.

What happens in that chemical and neurological relaxation is the topic I'll take up tomorrow morning, but while we are in the state of observation something is happening to our whole being. Some kind of energy is functioning. You see, when we sleep and the mind does not function, motives do not move, the ego does not operate and we are profoundly relaxed in body and mind, deep in sound sleep, and the movement of life is going on in the hours of sleep, the intelligence contained in the body vibrating in every nerve, every muscle functions and rejuvenation takes place. The rejuvenation is not out of my voluntary effort. I do not grow the nails and the hair, I do not grow them, but the rejuvenation, the recreation, the renewing of energy, refuelling of the whole organism takes place in profound sleep. I do not bring it about, it happens. There are many more things that happen in our life than we ever can consciously do; that's the beauty of life!

5th Talk

Tuesday-morning 20th June 1972

To observe is to look at a thing or an individual without a motive, without a purpose, without an intention, without the desire to get an experience out of that looking. To observe is to watch, that is to say: to observe is to be attentive, to have the brain in the condition of alert attention. When the brain is alert and attentive it identifies the object of its perception, it recognizes it, that is inevitable. When the eyes are open and they see things around them the registration of those perceptions is an involuntary automatic process built-in in the biological structure. When we are awake the ears register the sounds that pass by us, recognize the sound as that of a horn of a motor-car, whistle of a bird, note of music instrumental or vocal a. s. o. This registration, this recognition is an involuntary process. Whether you want it or not this process is bound to go on because it has its own momentum. When you walk under the open skies in bright sunshine your skin is bound to feel the touch of the sun-kissed wind and breeze, the freshness of the air. The skin is bound to register the pleasant coolness or torturing heat of the atmosphere. So when the brain is alert and sensitive all this registration, recognition and identification is bound to take place without a voluntary effort or a conscious effort on your part.

But in our daily life we might have noticed that besides this involuntary automatic process of identification, recognition and registration, there is a second part blended in this. The second part of liking what you see or not liking it, wanting or not wanting it, comparing it and calling it good, better, best, or bad, worse, a. s. o. This acquisitive, comparative, evaluative process is a voluntary process. Because we have been conditioned to do so, we are not conscious of this extremely quick process of comparing, evaluating, judging, accepting, rejecting that gets blended together in the first pure process of perception.

To observe is to be in the first part of perception, identification, recognition and registration and not to react to what has been perceived.

To compare is to react; to evaluate, to judge, to accept, to reject is to react.

So the brain is attentive and not reacting; that is the state of observation. Somebody asked me at the end of last evening's session: "What is the state of observation?" Observation is a state of very sensitive alert attention by the cerebral organ without the reactions. To distinguish these two processes which appear to be one, needs self-education. It is possible to live in the state of observation so that nothing escapes your all-inclusive attention. Nothing escapes your attention and yet you do not react unless reaction is warranted where you are directly personally involved, where the things are necessary for providing the needs of your body, where there is a direct relationship with the individual and a comparison is warranted, the individual is asking something of you. So in cases of direct personal responsibility, relationship or the necessity to provide for the needs of the body, accepting these cases, accepting these moments to be in the state of observation, never to be absent-minded, never to be distracted, the brain is alert, attentive all the time. That is the state of observation when one learns to observe without a motive, without an intention. There is no tension. We get tired in our relationships, we get tired throughout the day because we look at things and individuals with motives all the time, with intentions, with desires. To be in the state of innocent observation, to be in the state of innocent humility of looking around, learning, communing has become very difficult for us. In that state of innocent observation - there being no thoughts, no ideas, no emotions - there is no tension, there is no neurological tension in the state of observation, there is no chemical pressure in the state of observation. To be an experiencer where experiences are warranted: you are sitting at a table for breakfast or for a meal, you are not only an observer there, you are an experiencer; you are tasting the food, you are chewing it, swallowing it, enjoying it. If you remain a passive observer at the time of the meal, then the joy and the communion with food, the joy of eating, cooking a beautiful delicious meal and enjoying it; all that will be lost. If you are talking to your friend, or singing together, or walking together, if you are not sensitive to respond to the attitude, to the behaviour of your friend, to the needs of your friend, to the communica-

tions of your friend, then you will miss the joy of being together.

So there are moments when reactions precise, accurate, prompt, very skilful, very tender are warranted. That is the beauty of human relationship.

If in the name of religion or spirituality, if in the name of meditation and I don't know what, man loses the capacity to respond sensitively with all the possible nuances of emotions, sentiments and feelings, then the beauty of living will be lost. But when such relationships are not occurring I think it is a waste of energy to react, because every reaction consumes your energy. You walk by the roadside and a car passes by, it has a colour that you don't like, or a shape you don't like and you verbalize or say it to yourself inaudibly, or say it to your friends audibly: "What an ugly car". The verbalization has deepened that reaction. You have noticed that it is not beautiful, you verbalized it: "it is ugly", and you put into that word "ugly" all the pressure of your emotion. You don't have to drive that car, but you exert yourself emotionally. Every emotion when it is felt, every sentiment and feeling when it is gone through, consumes your vital energy. No thought can be thought without spending energy, no feeling or sentiment can be felt without spending or consuming vital energy. But we compare, we judge, we accept, we reject, we hate, we like, we dislike - the whole day this process goes on. We cannot look without liking or disliking, hating it or madly liking it, you know the language that we use. When I have no direct responsibility or a direct immediate relationship with the thing or the individual, what business have I to get stuck-up in an emotion or a feeling, react very strongly, spend my time and energy in it and leave a scar of memory of that feeling behind? Every experience, every sentiment, every feeling, every thought and idea when verbalized to oneself leaves a scar of experience behind, scars and scratches; consciousness gets mutilated. So to go through experiences whenever they are necessary and just to be in the state of observation where experiences, reactions are not necessary, that is the art of living - in the orient they call it the art of yoga, science of yoga. To be precise this is the essence of raja-yoga, the prince of the yoga. Hatha-yoga - you might be knowing the letters "h" and "th" denote the solar and the lunar system functioning in the cos-

mos as well as in your own body; to regulate and to control those two systems and balance them through physical exercises as well as breathing exercises, that is the art and science of hatha-yoga. Well, there are a variety of yogas, I won't go into them, the state of yoga through action: karma-yoga; the state of yoga through devotion: bhakti-yoga; the state of yoga through knowledge and awareness: jnana-yoga; the state of yoga through meditation: dhyana-yoga, a. s. o. The science of yoga is a vast science with many fields. You don't become a yogi just by learning hatha-yoga. That is a misconception so very popular outside India; that you learn a few exercises and they call you a yogi. It is not that easy. To be aware of total life and to move in the context of that totality; that is the beauty of life. So we were referring to the state of observation which has no neurological tension and chemical pressure. It is worth experimenting even for the fun of it for a week. To observe how every thought leads to a neurological tension, every feeling or sentiment results in a chemical pressure, affecting the blood circulation, blood pressure, breathing, inhaling, exhaling, digestion, sleep, everything. Everything is interwoven. This human being is a mystery, a most sensitive and refined instrument. Once we are in the state of observation throughout the day, it becomes a dimension of consciousness, one lives in it. There is nothing mysterious about it and nothing beyond the reach of ordinary people like you and me. It is the consummation of human growth, consummation of the evolution of consciousness. It is there for any of us who would like to grow into it. Now once one has grown into it then the all-inclusive attention takes in its fold every moment of life, the intimations of the subconscious and the unconscious. In fact when there is all-inclusive attention the unconscious and the subconscious get merged into the conscious and there is only one indivisible homogeneous whole.

For a person living in the state of observation there is nothing like unconscious and subconscious then, provided he lives in the state of observation throughout the day. He is fully aware every moment of what he is doing, how he is doing and why he is doing it and he goes through the pleasure and the pain resulting from his movements and actions so thoroughly that the pain of this moment does not cast a shadow on the next moment,

Without any inhibitions, he goes through the tears of pain and smiles of pleasure; he goes through them so thoroughly that the pain or pleasure of this moment does not cast a shadow on the next moment. You do not linger with the pain and pleasure any more. You live so thoroughly that there is no need to look back and chew into that experience, bite into it, suck its juice as it were, going on brooding about it, because you have lived through it, completely, totally.

If and when one learns that art of attention and observation, then the quality of sleep goes through a profound change. We, who have not been educated, live sometimes attentively, sometimes inattentively. In fact if I may be excused, we live either in the state of concentration or distraction, absent-mindedness or distraction. We know concentration but not attention. Attention is all-inclusive and concentration is an exclusive activity, we have a motive. Motive always makes you concentrate on the point of destination. So you are so obsessed with the motive and the point of destination that the rest of life and the movement of the rest of life is excluded from the span of your attention and observation. So we live either in the state of concentration or distraction, absent-mindedness, inattention; half-heartedly we go through the travail of daily life, not fully attentive when I wake up, when I take my breakfast, or take a shower, or ride a bus, or drive a car. We are fragmented, obsessed or taken up with the motives of the moment. When living in alternate concentration and inattention, strain of concentration or the fatigue of concentration and inattention, passivity, -exhaustion due to that -, when we live like this, then at night we go through dreams. Dreams first of all due to the state of inattention, distraction, absent-mindedness of the conscious level; secondly: one who has not looked into the subconscious pulls and pushes, drives and passions, urges, blind urges, coming up from the subconscious, one has not distinguished them as such and has not understood them, their nature, their way of functioning, then that inherited part also gets reflected in dreams. Wishes unfulfilled, ambitions unattained, desires stimulated by the surroundings but not fulfilled - all these get reflected and projected in the dream-consciousness.

So the biological, psychological inheritance and the failures and frustrations, or the attachments and de-

tachments of the conscious level and how one is aware of all these throughout the day; the subconscious, throws intimations while you are in actual relationship. One who is aware of what is contained in the subconscious and is aware of the nature of the subconscious and the conscious and the relationship between the two, his subconscious is exposed to his attention and awareness throughout the day. So it does not need a special outlet in the dream-consciousness.

I am with a great sense of responsibility trying to put across the possibility of eliminating the gap between the dream-consciousness and the waking-consciousness. I know that dreams are looked upon as a necessity for mental hygiene and health in the occidental psychology, whereas in the orient profound dreamless sleep is looked upon as the normal sleep-consciousness. Now if the dream-consciousness works as a separate consciousness allowing the subconscious to project itself in it, see what happens. In the dream-consciousness our relationship with time and space is different from our relationship with time and space in waking hours. You must have noticed it. You might have a dream lasting for five minutes by the clock, in a dream one could have gone through a war, a fight, a journey around the world. So many events take place. The momentum that takes place in a dream, the relationship of time and space in a dream is qualitatively different from the relation of time and space in waking hours. What you have seen in two minutes of a dream cannot even be described in five minutes when you try to put it into words and one oscillates between the waking-consciousness and the dream-consciousness. Those who are given to a kind of melancholia, those who are very much withdrawn into themselves, they begin to see dreams even in day-time, they call it day-dreaming. So they lose the connection with time and space even in waking hours, they indulge in that dream-consciousness. With open eyes you can see dreams, day-dreaming and night-dreaming. So the relationship with time and space that man has created in waking hours is snapped completely in dream-consciousness. But unless a person gets a couple of hours of profound sleep every night it is not possible for him to feel really fresh in the morning. If throughout the night there is only a series of dreams then in the morning you feel very much tired and if you

go on dreaming for a week like this or cannot sleep or do not sleep, then the whole chemistry is upset. You do not have an appetite, you cannot see properly, you cannot hear properly a. s. o. Doctors advise then some medicine for sleep, to aid the nerves, calm them down. What I am trying to say is, by learning to be in the state of observation and by allowing the subconscious to be exposed to the light of our awareness, this gap between the dream- and waking-consciousness can be eliminated because dreams become unnecessary for a person who does not suppress or repress the subconscious, does not go around forcing the subconscious to hide itself. It is only in the darkness of suppression and repression, voluntary and involuntary, it is only in the darkness of inattention that the mental disorders and sicknesses begin to flourish. Hypocrisy is a kind of mental sickness, aggression which is very closely related to fear is a kind of mental sickness. It is no use attaching moral or religious undertones and overtones to these things; they are simple mental maladjustments and they are due to our ignorance about the relationship between the dream- and the waking-consciousness. So dreams becoming unnecessary - the moment you stretch yourself for a rest in the night you are fast asleep. In the state of observation throughout the day when your reactions are not warranted you are in the state of innocence, humility, that inner relaxation and space, and when you stretch yourself for sleep at night you are fast asleep within a fraction of a second. That is to say the ego-centred activity around the I-consciousness ceases to function spontaneously as soon as you lie down in bed and you are in profound sound sleep. When you are awake you are in the state of observation, emptying the mind and the brain for reacting wherever relationships demand it. So there is a rhythm between the waking- and the sleeping-consciousness, there is a kind of rhythm as there is between inhaling and exhaling of breath. In the same way there is a rhythm between sleep and the state of being awake.

When that has been done and if that has been done, the person is equipped now to enter into the realm of silence. Up till now we have not referred to the word silence, if you might have noticed. We are quiet, we keep the body steady, we keep the mind quiet, but that quietness, that steadiness, that stillness has nothing

whatsoever to do with silence as a dimension of consciousness. As long as one is observing one is quiet, but that quietness has not got the flavour, the freshness or the energy of what we are going to talk about this morning: the dimension of silence.

So a person who has learned the art of observation and can stand a sustained state of observation - that is to say he lives in it - is related with people out of it. That person now is physically and mentally equipped to launch upon the voyage towards the unknown, to take a plunge into silence.

As long as there is something to be observed within us, the observer cannot cease to function, he will be busy. It is no use forcing the mind to be silent. You may force it by enveloping yourself in sound-vibrations, by working upon the brain cells through chemicals, you can make them quiet, that forced stillness gives you a dead silence. You may heighten the sensitivity and go through experiences, but silence as a dimension of consciousness has nothing whatsoever to do with that.

Now taking into consideration or supposing for the convenience of verbal communication that we have educated ourselves to be in the state of observation - neurologically relaxed and chemically poised - and whatever little disturbance is caused in our relationships, we have to use thoughts, we have to use feelings, sentiments, we use them in such a way, in such a skilful way, we go through those experiences without getting stuck up in pain and pleasure. We are concerned with communion and joy and not pleasure hunting or pain avoiding. So one goes through experiences in a very skilful way and otherwise he is in the state of neurological relaxation and chemical poise.

If it is so, then when you sit down by yourself and there is nothing more to be observed from within, the observer, the centre of the consciousness, the "I", the "me", the "self", the "ego", whatever you call it, has no role to play. It had a role to play, it was observing; now there is nothing more to be observed, so no role to be played. The capacity of observation has nothing to work upon now. So the observer ceases to function, to operate, and there is a strange kind of space within the heart.

We are not used to that space, we are used to limited space. As when you build a house and you have space in each room, so you have space in the psychological

structure between the ego and your knowledge and experience the circumference that you have built brick by brick by each piece of knowledge and by each experience, you have created a space, you have arranged that in your psychological structure; the erudition, the scholarship and all that is nicely arranged. That space we are used to. If there is no emotional anarchy and intellectual disorder then there is some space within us, but that is only limited, measured, manoeuvred by us. Courtesies, etiquettes, politenesses, you know the different sets of values, the different codes of conduct, everything is beautifully arranged in the drawing-room of our memory or brain. We are perfect interior decorators, you see, we decorate the whole psychological structure.

But now when there is nothing more to be observed and the observer subsides as it were, goes into abeyance but is not destroyed, the experiencer is not destroyed. If you annihilate and mutilate, annihilate or destroy the experiencer, it will not be possible for you to come back to relationships. So the experiencer was not destroyed and annihilated, the observer is not destroyed he is not eliminated, not annihilated, he is there but goes into abeyance. As the experiencer had gone into abeyance in the state of observation, the observer goes into abeyance in this new realm of silence. And the first encounter with that strange space where there is no centre and because there is no centre there is no direction in which you can proceed. Because there is no motive, there is no direction, there is no centre, therefore there is no circumference but a vast area of consciousness only.

And that encounter with the vastness of consciousness, directionlessness, motivelessness, centrelessness, that shocks you. The first encounter with silence is always shocking to every sensitive person. The "ego", the "I" wants to come back and say to you: "Goodness me, what is this! There is nothing to do, nowhere to go, no direction in which you can move, this is like a bottomless pit. I'll die."

The ego cannot exist without doing something or not doing something, accepting something or rejecting something, that is the only way that the "I"-consciousness can sustain itself. So in that realm of silence the centre, the observer comes back and says unto itself: "What is this, you cannot experience, there is nothing

to be experienced, nothing to be observed, where shall I go, what shall I do?" The realization that there is nothing more to be done, nothing more to be observed, confounds and confuses and frightens the ego.

The ego, the "I"-consciousness says: "Run away from this, this is a dangerous place. I'll die, life will come to an end, there will be no movement". So there might be tears, there might be fear, this dark night of the soul. Intelligence which is beyond the intellect is struggling to come out, out of that so-called darkness. The ego calls it darkness, the ego calls it motiveless, directionless, a bottomless pit a. s. o. It is the ego coming back, wanting to describe that silence. That is the last temptation and one wants to run away, seek refuge somewhere. What to do?

To be with that emptiness, apparent emptiness, to be with that apparent darkness and directionlessness needs courage and the austerity of enquiry. There is no enquirer who has not got to go through this so-called tunnel of darkness and emptiness. If one is determined to stick it out, not turn away or turn back, there may be tears out of fear, let there be. In an enquiry, in an exploration why should one always expect that there will be smiles? So there may be fear. Be with that fear! The moment I try to run away from fear and seek protection from someone else I will undo whatever I have learned before.

As I have observed the contents of the subconscious and the unconscious there is nothing more to frighten me, so to say, but it is only the encounter with a state of consciousness where the "I", the "me", the "self" cannot do a thing, the helplessness, the realization of the helplessness of the ego to proceed in the realm of the unknown. The ego, the "self", the "me" can deal only with the known, with the past and now face to face with the unknown, undescribed, unmeasured, untapped, it comes face to face with it and so it gets frightened. It is obvious.

If one has the fearlessness to be with that fear, to be in the so-called emptiness after the first shock and impact of that vast consciousness, after that impact has subsided and one has allowed the fear to come up and get subsided on its own, of its own, one has not run away from it, then one begins to notice that with the cessation of thoughts and emotions functioning, the energy that was scattered before in very many direc-

tions, has gone back to its own source.

I wonder if you have noticed that knowledge and experience are contained in the brain cells. The centre is located in the head. The energy that is at the root of our existence has its own origin or source at the navel point at the centre of the body. This centre contains the source of energy which is very closely interrelated with the pituitary gland located at the crown of our head; these two are very closely related.

But when the ego, the I-consciousness does not function then the energy that was scattered in so many directions goes back to its centre, it winds itself unto its own source and at the source the total energy now begins to function, begins to move, begins to operate. In daily life it is fragmented, it works at the level of the brain, it is a partial action. Intellectual action is a partial action, fragmentary action, but now the energy begins to move in its totality. The movement of the whole energy or the total energy releases what I call intelligence, it is not a cerebral capacity, it is not conditioned and educated, it is not a partial movement from the brain-cells, it is not conditioned.

The wholeness of the energy, the totality of the energy has its own way of moving. It releases a new sensitivity which I call intelligence, it releases the principal of life in its purest form permeating the whole body, the whole of our being. So it begins to move. The velocity of that movement has not been measured by man. It might be measured in a few years. I do not know. But it releases the sensitivity that was blocked because we were so busy always with the brain. This whole energy related to the unconditioned part of the brain begins to operate. It is the unconditioned part of the brain and the total energy together.

It releases a new freshness, a new intensity, a new depth and that intelligence, that sensitivity then perceives and it responds; it has no centre as love has no centre. A person who has really lived in the state of love knows that there is no centre, there are no motives. Or a person who loves music, when he listens to music he does not listen to it only with the ears. The sensitivity of the whole being is stimulated by the pure tones and notes of music and the silence between the two notes. It stimulates the sensitivity to such an extent that you listen with your whole being. A person who listens only with the ears does not know what music is. It is a kind of communion that you have, you get into,

and once you have listened to that piece of music you have gone through an event and not only a partial activity. So as in love, as in listening to music, or if you are a lover of nature, if you are with birds, if you fly with them when you see the birds on the wing, if you can be with the trees, the plants, the blades of grass trembling in the morning breeze - there is a kind of communion, the sensitivity of the whole being responds. The perception may touch the retina in the eyes at one moment but that touch stimulates the sensitivity of the whole being and you go through an event, a very deep event in your life.

So what I was trying to say is that in the state of silence, intelligence that has no centre and therefore no circumference begins to operate. The perception through intelligence is qualitatively different from the perception born of the duality of the "me" and the "not-me", perception born of the cerebral organ. So perception then is born of non-duality and the responses also are born of that non-duality. So silence comes to life, a new kind of energy is released, a new sensitivity which is intelligence, which is the nature of energy. Those who have studied physics, nuclear physics must know it much better than I can describe it in words that the smallest molecule of matter contains a quantum of energy. It is not a blind force; it has its own intelligence. You dissect the smallest molecule of matter and you arrive at energy, because energy is the principle of life and that principle of life in its crystal purity begins to function, begins to operate.

Living in that purity of intelligence, living in the chastity of that infinite sensitivity one can use the physical organism and psychological organism whenever such use is necessary. You use them as you get into the car and you use the car, you get into a boat and you sail, you know what to do with all the parts of the sailing-boat and you are acquainted with the car or the aeroplane or spacecraft whatever it is. In the same way you know how to play the violin, know when you have to tune it in. You need tremendous sensitivity to listen to each string, the tension in it and the relationship with the bow with which you are going to play, with all the fingers and their pressure.

If there were no intelligence in the fingertips how could you play a violin or a harp or whatever it is?

It has its intelligence, whether you call that intelligen-

ce, the principle of intelligence by the name of soul, spirit, atman. I'm not concerned with those names whether you call that intelligence the manifestation of divinity and God, it is up to you. I am trying to avoid as far as possible the words that are heavily loaded with associations - Hindu, Christian, Buddhist a. s. o. But I know one thing: intelligence that is infinite sensitivity, that is love, permeates the whole life. And therefore a person is in communion with life around him and within him, has a relationship of harmony with life around him. So he becomes so very tender; love is tender. It has the flavour of compassion in it, not pity, not sympathy. Pity and sympathy indicate arrogance.

So such a person lives then in the realm of non-duality, lives in the silence of that inner space and uses the conditioned brain and the conditioned physical structure whenever he wants to uncover his own essence, whenever he wants to get into relationship with other human beings.

So silence is a dimension of consciousness, as the conditioned part has the dimension of time and space, this dimension of silence is beyond time and space. Intelligence is beyond time and space, intelligence does not belong to any individual, it is the nature of life. Only it is expressed through me, that is all. So intelligence or silence is a dimension in which it is possible to live.

One who lives in that state of silence lives in the state of meditation. For me meditation is a state of the whole being and not a mental activity. When living in that state of intelligence or dimension of intelligence it is possible to behave differently with other fellow human beings, fellow animals, birds and fellow companions in the form of trees and plants. Spontaneously there will be a qualitatively different behaviour; then only you get a foundation for new socio-economic or political structures.

The foundation for structures must be in the human individual psyche. If they are not in the individual psyche then the foundations of economic, political structures only on paper do not give man peace, love or brotherhood as he has been talking about for the last few centuries. When I talk about a qualitatively different energy being released please do not imagine that I am talking about something utopian.

Scientists who have been busy with a research in the psychic realm in communist countries of East-Europe are far ahead of us, ahead of West-European countries as well as ahead of America. This psychic research began in Russia in 1937, in Rumania, in Bulgaria, in Tjecho-Slovakia. By 1953 there were research institutes, psychic research institutes in practically all the communist countries in Eastern Europe and they have today very sensitive and powerful lenses which can take the photographs of different bodies contained in this human form, this outer form, this human body which has its energy, glandular energy, nervous energy, movement of impulses.

As it has all these, there are other bodies contained in the human form which have independent existence of themselves and a different kind of movement and a different kind of energy. Of course the structure of a thought body, the colours of the thoughts, the momentum or velocity of thoughts and emotions, their forms were explored long ago. You might have noticed that Alexis Carroll wrote about it: "Man the unknown" long, long ago, or the theosophists talked about astral bodies. But now there are machines; people like their method of science you know. Applied science has a method of verification. It is only a method, but people have now come to believe that it is the only method; that which cannot be verified according to the scientific method is not true. But conceiving that point, now there are powerful lenses which can take photographs of the energy body; that is the third body in the human form. All this is now of course described in books, I need not go into it - intercontinental psychic conferences, the last held in Moscow in 1969 where psychic experts from many countries including America have participated.

There is a book "Psychic Discoveries Behind the Iron Curtain". There are many other books but I am referring to this, latest published in America in 1970. So they have taken photographs of the energy body; energy body of a leaf, of a flower. They have taken photographs of the inner movement of the energy body after a person died, one hour after he died, two hours, twenty-four hours, thirty-six hours and it is a controversy now; the definition of death is a controversial definition in the USSR. When is a person clinically dead and when is he legally dead? Because as long as the inner body is moving and the energy is functioning,

can you call the person dead? I am just pointing it out to share with you this fact that we are living in an extremely thrilling era. There is much more to man than the physical and psychological structure that man has discovered up till now. There is much more to a human being.

Well, I should not go into all these diversions, but when I talked about a qualitatively different energy being released I was referring only to very simple facts. There is energy; we know the muscular, the glandular, the cerebral energy but there is also a different kind of energy of a different quality altogether. So we are acquainted with the present form of perception born of the tension of duality, of the "me" and the "not-me", but the intelligence perceives out of non-duality. And therefore the responses resulting from those perceptions are also out of non-duality. In that intelligence there is no fear, no hang-over of the animal instincts, the desire to own, to possess, to dominate. All these are now in the psychological structure.

But in intelligence which is not conditioned all these inhibitions do not exist, therefore man grows into freedom, man grows into an inner freedom. He has discovered the roots of his being and is united with them. So united with the roots of life, unconditionally and totally free and uninhibited he moves in the tremendous sensitivity that intelligence expresses.

As I said last evening, the subject is difficult to deal with, we have to use words whichever language we use. We have to use words born of duality, we have to use words which have utility in the framework of time and space, we have to use words which have not the pliability to indicate something that is beyond time and space. When I say non-duality, when I talk about infinite sensitivity, when I talk about pliability, tenderness, all these are words for us. One has no language, one has no symbol to indicate something that takes place in the realm beyond time and space.

In the state of love you do live beyond time and space. In profound sleep one does live beyond time and space. The only thing I am trying to share with you is that it is possible to live beyond time and space, in the realm of that intelligence which is neither personal nor impersonal, neither individual nor collective, but just the universal basic principle of life.

It is possible to live in that dimension and use the phy-

sical and psychological structure intelligently throughout the day, it is possible to live in the relaxation of that dimension. That, I call the fourth dimension of consciousness, the conscious, subconscious, unconscious and I call it the fourth. I do not say it is the last, we do not know. I do not know how else to express it, but it seems to me there is a fourth dimension of consciousness. I call it the dimension of silence, not as an attribute of the mind but silence denoting the inner space, having no centre, no periphery, no time, no space.

6th Talk and Discussion.

Wednesday-morning 21st June '72

Q. When somebody has reached the state of silence is that everlasting or momentary?

V. What is everlasting and what is momentary? The idea of everlastingness perhaps implies continuity. Is it a continuous thing? Is it not what the word implies? Does the word everlasting imply continuity in time, or does it not? The word is related to the concept of time, is it not? Time by the watch, the clock, that man has invented and that concept of time, the concept of sequence, causality makes man imagine that there is something like continuity. If we see, that the idea of everlastingness is related to the concept of time, we better begin exploring if there is continuity, we better begin exploring what time is. Unless we refer to the concept of time, psychological time invented by man as a symbol, unless you count the seconds or the minutes into one, two, three, four and imagine a sequence between those moments, how can you ever think of continuity? May be there is no continuity, as the explosion of the time-atom or light-atom, the fastness of the splitting of the light-atom makes us believe that there is a continuity. When we talk of a ray of the sun, is there a continuity in light?

It seems to me, that as a bud opens into a flower or an atom of light explodes into what appears to be a ray of light, in the same way eternity explodes into what you call a moment. The timelessness expresses itself in what you call the "this" moment, the now, the here. One, who has arrived at the dimension of silence grows into that silence. As from childhood you grow into youth and in youth there is the freshness of youth; the vitality of youth begins to manifest itself through every movement. In the same way that silence begins to express itself or manifest itself in whatever you do. The question of everlastingness is the reaction of the old mind, conditioned mind, wanting to find out if there is anything like continuity, so that one may feel secure. In the timelessness of life there is neither security nor insecurity; security and insecurity related to the concept of fear are relevant only in the sphere of time,

psychological time. In the "is"ness of life or the "such"ness of life or the timelessness of life or the eternity of life one simply is - one grows into it. You don't have to protect that dimension of silence by vows, rules, regulations and restrictions, as you don't have to protect youth once you have grown into it.

You are there. You can misuse it, you can abuse it or you can enhance the beauty of youth, it is up to you; but you totally grew into it. In the same way from the state of observation one can grow into the dimension of silence and as the complex consciousness of human beings expresses itself in a qualitatively different way from the simple animal consciousness, in the same way that dimension of silence expresses itself through our cerebral and physical behaviour in a qualitatively different way. That is all that there is to it.

I wonder if I am making it clear that the question of whether that state is everlasting is not a question but a reaction of the conditioned part of the brain wanting to find out if there can be security, if there can be continuity. It is a reaction. We will have to distinguish the reactions of the conditioned part from a real genuine inquiry. Many a time we feel that the reactions are the inquiry.

Last evening somebody asked why I do not speak about death, why I had not spoken about death and the life after death?

I had not referred to it, because equipped as we are only intellectually acquainted as we are with concepts, thoughts and ideas, it will be very difficult for us to enter into a discussion of what happens after death. Through verbal communication you can discuss things that take place between the two points of birth and death. Life does not begin with birth and does not end with death, that is obvious. "Can you meet the person who is dead, where can he be? Doesn't it bother you if someone whom you have loved very much is separated from you by death?" Why should it bother? One will be visited by great and deep sorrow. If one suffers then one may enter into self-pity.

Suffering and sorrow are two different things altogether. Suffering is on the surface layer of consciousness caused by emotional disturbance. Suffering is always personal; the sentiments, the emotions, the feelings are disturbed and we suffer. It disturbs the chemical equilibrium of your being and you suffer by it, but sorrow is

something inevitable. Birth and death are inevitable, separation is inevitable.

So sorrow is an event one has to go through. Sorrow is recognition of the inevitability of certain phenomena in life, understanding of the inevitability of certain phenomena in life.

Life is a constant change. You cannot prevent the momentum of life, arrest the motion of life. You may very much like to be a child all the time, to be pampered by your parents. You might love to be always in the state of physical youth, the most intoxicating phase of human life and never want to grow into adulthood or old-age. But you cannot arrest growth as life moves on. In this physical form of flesh, bones, marrow, blood etc. there was birth, then childhood, teen-ager and the puberty period, then youth, then adulthood, then old-age. Like a river it flows on through this bed of the human body; these changes flow on, inevitably. Either you feel annoyed because the changes take place and try to cling to the outer expression of childhood or youth, or you reconcile to the fact of this constant change and flux that life is and move through it. If childhood has an elegance, if youth has an elegance and grandeur, so has adulthood and so has old-age and the freshness and pliability of life can be kept up, kept alive through all these phases. So sorrow is recognizing the inevitability of certain phenomena like birth, like constant change, like death, like the limitations that human relationships put upon your freedom a.s.o. They give a tinge of sorrow to you; the recognition and the understanding may cause a sorrow. Once you are visited by sorrow you are never the same person again. So death, if you look into the face of death as it approaches your beloved, takes him or her away, separates you from him or her, there is bound to be a kind of deep sorrow and that sorrow then enriches your perspective towards total life. It gives vividness to every movement of your life and you know quite well that death visits everyone, so you never allow life to catch you unaware, inattentive, slow, sluggish, lazy, lethargic. You are always alert, on your toes, because you know that life can be snapped away from you any time. So like a pinch of salt in your meals, this sorrow of the recognition of death and inevitability of constant change adds a new deliciousness, a new flavour to the act of living, to the movement of relationships through which you go.

Why should it bother you?

Does it bother me because I indulge in personal suffering: "oh, I'm left behind, he loved me, she loved me and now she is no more and I can't have his or her company any more. He or she was such a handsome beautiful person, such a learned person, such a scholar, such an affectionate person. Can I see him again?" Knowing quite well what death means: perishing of the human form, my mind craves for the pleasure of being in the company of the same person again, the form, the expression. And the desire to derive the same pleasure that I had before with him or her urges my mind to look back. It will bother me when I indulge in personal suffering and a kind of self-pity. I do not reconcile to the fact of that separation.

If you would like to deal with the other aspect of this question: what is death? What is it that perishes in the event of death and what is it that never dies? A thought never dies, does it? A thought born in your heart, whether you verbalize it to yourself, to others, or you do not verbalize it; once a thought is born, an idea is born in your heart and clothed into sound, it mixes with, not the atmosphere, but with that what Teilhard de Chardin has called the noösphere. Like the fish living in the ocean, man lives surrounded by the waves of thoughts, feelings and sentiments. They go on spreading. So the moment a thought is born it spreads, it has no limitations of your skin; the tangibility, intangibility, visibility, invisibility of things reflect only on our own limitations. Life is neither tangible nor intangible, visible or invisible. So the skin does not prevent the thought to flow outside and get merged into the ocean of thought - currents or currents of feelings a. s. o. It never dies and every thought has a form, has a colour. Whatever thoughts and feelings we indulge in, they leave marks on the sphere around us as well as within us. So thought never dies, feelings never die. Now if a person is on the same frequency of thought-waves as a person who is gone and dead had been in his life - the predominant thought in his life, or the predominant attitude in his life - if you happen to be on that same thought-frequency maybe you may see the form of that person, associated with that thought. There are many people who see the dead or if you are obsessed with fear, then fear - also heightening the sensitivity of the whole being - causes you to see those

shapes and forms again.

As it is with the thought-waves so it is with the sound-waves too. It sounds so strange but the sound-waves also do not die away once they are produced, they are there. So to hear a voice of a person who is dead and gone, to see a form of a person who is dead and gone is not impossible. If some people talk about it, it is something understandable, but why should one try to catch back the form, catch back the sound and meet the person again? And somehow the word death, the ideas associated very deeply with the concept of death have an uncanny feeling about them, so I don't feel like going into those issues, enter into some speculative theories. We don't know what dying is. To meet the event of death consciously in a relaxed way without any inhibition of fear or self-pity is very rare. Passively we are victims of that event of death. To be a victim of death is one thing, and to die is another.

I'm not referring to those who die on battlefields, they don't die. You know, it is not dying in a relaxed way, meeting death as it comes but it is the cruelty of the way of living that we create armies, navies, air forces and train people to kill others and to get killed.

So knowing quite well that I'm going there to get killed for a certain purpose and also as a mercenary getting a good salary a. s. o. ; when I go there it is not a healthy, normal phenomenon of life. It is one of the perversities of our civilization. We don't know when and how we are going to set ourselves free of the necessity of having this whole defence project and the science of arms, ammunitions a. s. o. but that is not what I meant by meeting death naturally as it comes. If an individual tries to flirt with death you call him a sadist and collectively we prepare to kill others and prepare ourselves to get killed and nobody calls the nations sadists, or perverse or morbid.

So death has many aspects and once you begin to go into it, then we go into many theories, such as the Hindu idea of reincarnation or the law of karma (is there reincarnation at all?), the Buddhist theory a. s. o. Some person had asked me yesterday how does one come back to waking consciousness from profound sleep?

Now unless one learns the art of being aware in profound sleep, how can one ever understand the moment of coming back from profound sleep to awakening? We

are not even attentive and aware of all our movements in the so-called waking hours. Even if one tries to describe them, it will be extremely difficult to understand the event of a person coming back to the state of waking up, being awake. Meditation enables you to enter the state what they call in the orient samadhi. It's not a trance, that is a different thing. Trance can be an experience, it can come and go but the culmination of meditation into a state of consciousness where you are never inattentive, being attentive, having all-inclusive attention is your nature as it were; it becomes the normal consciousness, normal state of your consciousness. So when you sleep the awareness is still there, the attentiveness is still there. That is why those who study yoga do not need many long hours of sleep, because in their sleep the alertness of attention and awareness is there. It goes on getting blended with the relaxation. After all sleep is profound relaxation of the body and the mind. A person who is relaxed physically and mentally throughout the day does not need seven or eight hours of sleep then, because he has been relaxed throughout the day, so sleep begins to get condensed and you come across such persons (unless of course you see them practically and actually living it's no use believing them; one can be deceived by the bragging or boasting of people). But one who learns yoga and lives in meditation may not need more sleep than three hours a day or four hours a day, because the depth of relaxation, the profundity of relaxation is so great. Now when you are relaxed and aware in waking hours as well as in sleeping hours then coming back from sleep to the state of awakening is like the inhaling and exhaling of breath.

Someone asked me yesterday: "you talk about the law of love as a universal law, you talk about the principle of intelligence, principle of sensitivity. If all this is predetermined and preformulated or prefabricated as it were, then where is the freedom of will of man to live?" Are not our physical organisms governed by the law of gravitation as long as we are in the earth orbit? Has the law of gravitation deprived me of my freedom to walk upon the earth, to run upon it, to dance upon it, to take long jumps or high jumps if I like? If the law of gravitation was not there I wonder if it would have been possible for us to walk at all? It is the cooperative resistance between your feet, the motion contain-

ed in your feet and the law of gravitation which makes the movement of walking and running possible for us. If I use the term tension now, please do not take it in the psychological sense. I would like to use the term in a scientific way. The tension between the law of gravitation and the motion contained in the feet, it makes walking possible, otherwise walking would not be possible. Yes, there is a limitation upon our freedom that whenever we remove ourselves from the earth the law of gravitation will bring us back to it. But I think that the limitations begin with the human form; the form, the shape, the size, the weight, the mass. It is only the formless that has no limitation, it is only the formless that is absolutely free. The moment there is a form and the moment there is a name there is a limitation upon the freedom. When you move through space there is a limitation because of the mass and the weight, the length and the breadth that you carry in this body, there is a limitation to the speed with which you can go through space. You can't move with the pace of an aeroplane or of a motorcar. But the limitation on your freedom is because of the form that you have. You have to cut the space as it were as you move on. So the special relationship or the temporal relationship of the human body to its surroundings has its own limitations and yet there is a freedom. A person may not walk around, may not enjoy this friction with space as he moves. He may just sit and the other person may not **only** walk upon the level ground but may even climb the mountains, may be skating, be skiing, swimming.

So what do we mean by freedom of the will in relation to the universal laws of life? We referred to the biological; let us proceed to the psychological, the psychological realm where the brain moves in time. As you move physically in relation to the earth, the brain moves always in relation to time. That is the soil or the earth as it were on which it walks. And the brain sees things in sequence that is the limitation of the brain, it cannot see the simultaneity of the total life; it sees them partially in sequence as cause and effect. This is the context of cerebral life. Now have we any freedom in this context or not? Limitation is: if I think a thought it will produce a certain effect, it will become the cause and it will bring about some effect. If I indulge in certain feelings they are bound to result in some effect, cause some effect. So the cause and effect

relationship is there and yet one has the freedom either to think evil things of others or not think evil things about others. One has the freedom to be cooperative, friendly or one has the freedom to hate, to resist, to oppose. Isolated from the earth, the atmosphere, isolated from the concept of time, the brain cannot function.

There is life only in relationship: the body in relationship to earth, to water, to fire, to the skies, the body has a life only in relation to these. It sustains life by drinking water, inhaling the air, getting heat from the fire, the sun a. s. o. In isolation there is no movement. In the same way thinking, feeling, willing or cognition, affection; these have an existence only in human relationships, not outside them. Every human being or every being that is born, has to die. So there is a limitation; birth and death. In the framework of these we have all the freedom either to live or not to live.

So, are things predetermined for us? Yes and no, both. The biological and psychological inheritance has decided and determined certain things for me. I cannot change them, I cannot deny them, I cannot hide them, but the socio-economic and political structure, the value-structure that society has created, the order of priorities that society has created; I have all the freedom to get related to them in a way that I see to be correct, to be healthy, to be sane and not otherwise.

If I do not get related then society will punish me. Yes, I will go through the punishment, because I will be living rather in that act of going through the punishment, I will be living there, but if I accept and give in to the values and priorities created by society then I do not live. So there are areas of freedom, individual initiative and freedom and there are areas where the movement is limited.

Somebody asked me: "it is all nice and fine here when we are in the camp, very cooperative, in an affectionate atmosphere, but when we go back to our places and we begin to work, whether it is our job or study or whatever it is, then what do we do, how do we begin? Do we go back to our petty little lives, the jealousies, the angers, the violences? It's all right sitting here and listening to you and enjoying the calm and quiet atmosphere", and I think it is one of the most pertinent questions that somebody had casually posed to me, one of the beautiful questions and I think that question is

to be answered by you and not by me.

If you say we would like to begin this way - but this is the difficulty - then if I feel that I can suggest something I will do so; but one has to begin. Academical, theoretical acquisition of ideas, intellectually acquiring ideas is not understanding life. Either you can say I have been so attentive, so receptive, so open this week and I have tried to learn and assimilate as far as I can, now let me see what happens when I get home. That's one approach. Let me see how I respond to the environment, situation, responsibilities, commitments, involvements when I get home, let me find out and one will make a note of it: I went back from the camp and this is how I reacted. After having watched it for a week, then one begins to enquire by himself: why did I behave in a different way when I did understand it? I felt in the camp I understood it and when I got back I lapsed into old habits, why? So the enquiry begins at a different point, not a theoretical point but a personal probing. So you watch what happens when you get back; make a note of the lapses or difficulties or whatever they are and begin to think about, enquire about them, either individually, alone, or with the help of friends if you have any. One goes into it.

Second approach is: one is convinced even while sitting here, this is all right here, but when you go back you are bound to get back to the old life. You can't manage, you will get angry, you will get irritated, you will feel jealous, you will be untidy, you will get irregular, unpunctual a. s. o. One says that is bound to be. This was something artificial though we called it an educational week, this is not my normal life, so I will get back to it. I am bound to get back to it. So one gives in even while sitting here. Psychologically one gives in, fatalistically one says nothing else can happen, it will be the same. I'm not saying that one gives an auto-suggestion to oneself through it, that would be rather going too far. But one says this is something different and you go back to it.

Third approach is being aware of how one has been living up till now. One has an idea of the various incapacities or incapabilities and one airs them out here and discusses not only with me but amongst all of you; discusses the ways and means of getting over those incapacities. Let me give you an example: I live in a hostel or some lodging-boarding house, I know what kind of

meals I'm going to get when I get back. So I begin to enquire here by myself and with the help of others: these are the possibilities of the food that I get when I go back, what are the things that I can change in that? Do you see? Then there is a possibility of taking the issues one by one and finding out what can be done, so one has an analytical approach, one has a fatalistic giving in, the third is trusting oneself, that one has lived this week so fully, so thoroughly, so receptively that one would like to find out what this understanding has changed within one's psychology. Because one has understood, the understanding is going to be translated into action. The understanding is the dynamic force, it is not sterile like knowledge. Knowledge or acquisition of ideas is sterile, it has no dynamism of its own. But understanding releases an irresistible force, it gets translated into action in practical life and daily relationships with a tremendous force, there is no time-lag between understanding and action. So these three seem to be possible to me, if there is any fourth, please suggest it.

Q. Could you perhaps go into suffering and sorrow?

V. Someone becomes ill and that illness unfortunately happens to be serious and drags for months and months, it prolongs. The person is bound to suffer two kinds of pain; one is the physical pain due to the sickness or the illness and the second is the mental pain due to understanding how the body has been incapacitated, has been disabled by the illness and cannot go through a normal healthy life as other people can. So there is a physical pain as well as a psychological pain and you suffer. That person can either become irritable, short-tempered, cynical, bitter, either can beg sympathy from others all the time because it gratifies his or her ego. That person can become bitter, cynical or always begging for sympathy and if she or he does not get it, then again gets irritated a. s. o. all the time. That is to say mentally the person becomes very sore.

Suffering is aggravated by the pride, the ego, the vanity. Suffering is there, the physical pain everyone has to go through, but he or she aggravates it by many complexes that one indulges in and the cynicism or bitterness makes him or her feel jealous of those who are healthy. "Oh, it's only I who have to suffer, why is God so cruel to me?" You know, all the talk we carry on with ourselves, chattering to ourselves.

The other person goes through the physical pain, intelligently, does whatever is necessary and whatever is possible to eliminate the pain, to treat the disabled part of the body. He does not give in, he does not become fatalistic. He says whatever is humanly possible must be done, goes through it, but he does not allow the physical suffering to distort his mind and therefore mentally the person does not suffer. There is sorrow in his heart but not the suffering. You must have come across people, even simple farmers or peasants, you come across such people who do not allow the physical pain and suffering to enter their minds and distort their attitude, twist their attitudes and approaches to life. Then that physical suffering leads them to the awareness of sorrow, involved in what is called life, life which is collective, personal, impersonal, universal, cosmic, what you will. So one becomes aware of the possibility of illness, accidents, nearness of death - you can feel the breath of death on your shoulder as it were - you know that you are walking in the shadow of death as you move around. So sorrow gets mingled, it is blended as a sting in every pleasure that you go through, it is there, you cannot avoid it.

So it seems to me personal suffering - suffering is always personal - suffering on the physical plane is unavoidable in many fields and to some extent. There are ways and means now through hatha-yoga and through nature cure and macrobiotic food and so many ways that man has discovered to keep the body free of illnesses and distortions but physical pain and suffering may be unavoidable. Mental suffering is not unavoidable. It is possible to have a mind unhurt, unsoiled, uncontaminated by personal suffering and yet to go through the deepest and saddest or the most exciting experiences of life. Sorrow converts you into an enquirer of the meaning of life and suffering imprisons you into isolation, self-pity, bitterness, cynicism, jealousy a.s.o.: this is the basic difference between the two.

If you allow pleasure to percolate through all the layers of your being and get converted as it were into joy, if you allow pain to percolate in the same way and get converted into sorrow, then joy and sorrow help you to grow. But if you suffer only on the emotional level, the personal suffering as we call it, then only feelings, emotions, sentiments are disturbed and this painfulness we call suffering, or if you feel excited by plea-

sure then you never allow the experiences to go to a deeper layer - you always oscillate between the pain and the pleasure but never get the joy or the sorrow which are the substances of life, like the sunshine and darkness, sunshine and shadow, as attachments or detachments, attractions or repulsions never allow you to go down to the deep level of love. You just float on attachments, repulsions and revulsions and you know hatreds, you are either pulled this way or pushed that way and never arrive at love. Because we are busy all the time yielding to attractions or riding over the arrogance of detachments; we are so busy with the two on the superficial level that we get no time to go to the depth of real love which is beyond attachments and detachments, which is beyond hatreds and jealousies. So to live is to allow each experience to percolate through the different layers, touch the roots of your being and get stirred there. Either we can live at the superficial or at the deepest layer. Then sorrow gives serenity, and joy results in an ecstasy which has nothing whatsoever to do with enthusiasm, excitements, elations, depressions. It is a kind of serenity, a kind of ecstasy, a kind of substantiality - you know there is no hollowness, the words are not hollow, the gestures are not hollow, the movements are not shallow - to get the feeling of substance, serenity and ecstasy at the same time, simultaneously from everything and anything that the person does. Then relationships have a meaning, have a significance. You really share something with one another. Otherwise what have we to share with one another if you live only on the superficial disturbances? Pleasure is as much a disturbance as pain is. Pain has its own intoxication and so has pleasure and we move from one to the other. I'm just indicating this because the question is very profound. This question of suffering and sorrow is one of the most significant and fundamental questions of life.

Q. In this connection have you the impression as I experienced it that there is also a kind of mental, psychic suffering that gives moments of deeper insight. You grow by it, but it also gives an acute lack of vitality.

V. Depression leads to an acute lack of vitality as well as it results in penetrating perceptions; both ways. I agree with you that depressions if they are not fake you see, if they are not stimulated by us in a romantic way, but if one suddenly like in a landslide finds oneself at

the bottom of the hill, that depression can heighten the sensitivity and give you insight. Not always, but sometimes it can give insight. But the acute lack of vitality is that an actual lack of vitality or is it a reluctance to express movement in any direction? Is it a reluctance or unwillingness to move physically, verbally or mentally, to move in any direction? There is a reluctance, a resistance to movement outwardly and inwardly. The inside moves, the inside discovers, even enlightens you on many issues of life. So there is a kind of inner movement in the psyche but either there is a reluctance to allow any movement to the physical, verbal or mental plane, or if you allow the depression to crystallize, then it can become a depressive psychosis, a melancholia, then the link between the inner movement and the outer expression is broken, is damaged. Either of the two can happen. Not that there is a lack of vitality, but I think many times there is resentment for any outer movement, any reluctance; the inner movement is so much, it is so intense that it is not felt necessary to express outwardly.

Q. Is it also an incapacity to express that inner disturbance?

V. If it crystallizes then there is the incapacity to express. But in the beginning depressions giving insight and penetration do not snap the link between the capacity to express and the capacity to perceive.

Q. I learned that it is rather a kind of blocked vitality or energy that makes it worse when you can't release it, then there is no channel to get it expressed.

V. What I have seen and observed in India is that exceptionally brilliant boys and girls I have had the occasion to come into touch with, half a dozen of them, exceptionally brilliant, suddenly became depressed.

They were in university hostels and they found the behaviour of other boys and girls around them so coarse, so cruel, so callous that they did not like to mix with them and they became withdrawn. In that solitude when they were withdrawn, their exceptional brilliance went probing inside the human mind and inside the human nature. Their mind became an event or an opportunity for them to probe and to explore, so they arrived at very basic and fundamental findings about human nature; how it functions, why it enters into vulgarity, why it goes into obscenity. Whatever they had noticed and whatever had pained them, apparently put

them into depression. In essence they were working at a very deep level of their consciousness. When they began to move at the profound level of psyche they got exhausted because they were formerly not used to working in those realms.

They had no one to tell them what kind of food or diet to take, so that the cerebral energy that was consumed in that intense movement would be replenished again. So they did not feel like eating the food that was offered to them and they did not know what kind would help their cerebral energy so they were under-nourished, famished, starved, which added to the already intensified heat in their body due to the cerebral activity. So one after another the complications went on adding to the so-called incapacity. These people were helped chemically. Doctors found out that certain chemicals were consumed too fast in the brain cells so through homeopathy certain chemicals were administered into their systems and they came out of the depression intact and with their brilliance polished as it were. So what I find is, the intense movement at the depth of your being consuming your energy, not getting sufficient and right kind of nutrition, results in the blockage of energy to come out and express itself. Before such a depression crystallizes and can result in pathological symptoms of incapacity, inertia, lack of energy a. s. o. , if the person is given some help, then I think that the blockage of energy is eliminated.

But if it is allowed to go on, as people do not understand easily and they think it is an idiosyncrasy, it is a whim that the boy has become strange or the girl has become strange and there is no cooperation with the person, then it crystallizes and the block becomes a really rigid one. If the person is not helped it can even develop into a split personality a. s. o.

Melancholia and depressive psychosis are more difficult to handle than those mental sicknesses which result in violence. The symptoms are so vivid that you can tackle them. But with depression or melancholia it becomes very difficult to even understand the actual state and agony that the person is going through. Others have no clue and the clues that some of the modern schools of psychology have found out in the United States or with which I came across in Australia, are very strange. They put these people in a room and say whatever points of suppression there may be just give

them an outlet; cry, dance, shriek, pounce upon one another, run, fall down, do what you want to do, do what you feel like doing.

They try to stir their feelings and they try to establish a link between the feeling and the doing. It's a very violent therapy.

Q. One often sees that it is an hereditary disease and you get it from time to time.

Q. Is it not possible to educate that in the person?

V. Yes, if in childhood the traces are noticed.

Q. Just as the boys at the university, the thing that brought them to this depression was a concern or a problem with people in their surroundings, this is perhaps a point for a discussion later, but to introduce now my concern too, and I think many people's in the groups concern is in that relationship with people - when we leave this camp and go by our own lives. I understand what you said about more or less controlling our food intake, I understand the significance of it, but my question is more about mental activity as it concerns relationships with other people. Did we not say that the beautiful release of the energies which we are trying to develop is the release through the inner exchange, an inner change with human beings?

V. Shall we take it up this evening?

7th Talk and Discussion
Wednesday-evening 21st June '72

Those of us who are seriously interested in exploring the possibility of growing into a new dimension of consciousness will be watchful and vigilant from the very first moment of getting back from this camp and will make a factual study of the movements of their minds. They will try to find out how in actual relationship the mind moves in habits. Unless we discover the amount of slavery to habitual patterns of physical and mental behaviour, we will not realize the miserable plight in which we actually exist. So those of us who are serious, will watch the amount of slavery, what kind of patterns have become rigid in their behaviour: behaviour with things, behaviour with human beings, behaviour with animals, behaviour with birds, behaviour with plants and flowers and trees and what you will. An inquirer will have to watch the areas of disharmony, disorder, anarchy and chaos in the mental world, the discord or the disharmony between the conscious and the subconscious, and how that discord gets reflected in our relationships. This is a matter of study.

It won't take more than two or three weeks - if a person is seriously and soberly interested and feels concerned about the whole business - to find out the area of disharmony and disorder, the intellectual disorder that one notices throughout the day or the emotional disharmony that one notices, the conflicts and tensions between the conscious and the subconscious, so that one is acquainted and can move very freely in all the lanes and by-lanes of the psychological structure. One can feel the whole of it, as you can feel your whole body, feel the inner psychological structure, the get-up, the make-up, the lanes, the by-lanes, the corners, the darknesses, the suppressions, the denials, the hypocrisies; all that one has to feel personally, directly.

Personal discovery of the facts of life is the beginning of wisdom. Provided one has done this and one has noticed the excellences as well as the shortcomings, the distortions as well as the qualifications, attainments, as soon as one has done this, then one is

equipped to watch the complications that take place in our relationships with other people. As long as I do not know what I am, how can I understand the reasons and the causes of complications, conflicts and tensions in my relationships with others? I have to understand myself, not know about me through a book. Knowing about a fact of life is intellectually acquiring an idea about it. Knowing about facts never enables a person to have an immediate or direct contact with the fact. There is a difference between knowing and understanding. That's why I am submitting to you the necessity of watching, discovering the facts and understanding them first hand. Personal discovery of truth is the essence of religion. Personal discovery of the facts of one's own life is the beginning of wisdom.

Now provided one has understood what one is and how the mind functions, then there are no pretensions, there is no self-justification, no defence as far as one is concerned. One is capable of looking at one's inner structure with open eyes. One does not want to cover up something, hide something else, one looks at what one is; the pettiness, the stupidity, the intelligence, the dullness, the ugliness, the handsomeness, the beauty. Easy to stand before a mirror and look at oneself, but in the mirror of silence, in the mirror of vigilant watchfulness, to look at oneself as one really is, no images, no wishful thinkings, no judgements and opinions of other people "my mother says I have been like this from childhood", that won't help, "my teacher told me long ago" that won't help.

We are going to deal now with the images constructed by others about us, or our own wishful thinkings and images constructed by us about ourselves. We will have to keep the images away. If you don't put them in a waste-paper basket at least keep them aside for the present. This is the way we will proceed with our inquiry. I'm trying to find out what can be done when I leave the camp and go back to my place: looking upon myself as a participant, what would I do? So I think I will put aside all the images, the opinions imposed upon me by others and constructed by me, so I stand before myself naked psychologically, denudation of the inner being.

Now the event of relationship with other people and the complications that take place in the relationships: I have to be with people, who may not be interested in all

this understanding of oneself and exploration of a new dimension of consciousness, freedom, they might not be interested in all this. There may be people and most often we will come across them, who have very rigid patterns of behaviour, very rigid attitudes, with no pliability and no time to go into all this romantic talk about self-understanding, romantic in quotes as people call it. So I have to be with them whether it is a bus-conductor or a salesman in a shop, a girl friend or a boy friend, the parents, a variety of people. As an inquirer if I were to be in relationship I shall not allow the initiative in relationship to be with the other person and shall not allow the other person to dictate my response, to twist my response, to distort my response. Now let me clarify what I mean by the initiative. We don't have initiative with us. I get up in the morning very fresh, feeling innocently joyful and I say: ha, this is going to be a very good day, I would like to meet the day in joy, in peace. And it is not even half an hour later that my husband or my wife comes in and talks to me and says something silly that breaks the spell of the morning. Or a child runs in, my wife, my husband, my children, someone comes in and says something silly or something nasty or something absolutely flip-pant, superficial and I say: ha, the spell of the morning, the beauty of the day is gone. Being fresh and sensitive, I see that it is meaningless, I see that it is silly, that it spoils the dawn. I see that, you can't escape intelligence, can never escape understanding. as it is bound to understand - but then I let the initiative be with the person, with that one sentence or remark or glance. I allow my so-called mood to be spoiled; it is not only the day that is spoiled, my mood is spoiled too. I become peevish. Gone is the joy, gone is the beauty, gone is the cheerfulness; suddenly I become irritated, short-tempered. I have allowed the initiative to be with the other person and to dictate my reaction of irritation or annoyance, allowed him or her to dictate the reaction. This is the complication now.

The beginning of the complication is in allowing the initiative of our reaction to be with the other person. When I listen to that silly or nasty remark and I understand the impropriety, the ugliness of it, it pains me. Being an intelligent sensitive person it pains me acutely for a second. I see the futility, I go through that pain, the acute pain that it causes, the agony that it

causes. It is like someone throwing mud on a beautiful landscape on the campus and it pains you, but the pain does not upset the balance and make me angry or annoyed or irritated.

This is the subtle line of demarcation of having the initiative for the response or letting the reaction be dictated by others. Have you heard people saying: "I'm a very quiet person by nature but somebody provokes me and then they make me angry." I can never understand this but I come across these remarks dozens of times. Say in a week in each country persons tell me the man or the woman or the youngster: "You see, I'm a quiet person by nature, I don't like this getting angry and this whole business, but somehow people around me make me angry." Now I don't understand how others can make you angry. They can give an occasion for it by wrong behaviour, but unless the anger is there stored up in you, waiting for an opportunity to just come up and burst out, it won't.

Now if I have watched what happens to me when I get angry, if I have really studied it; how the whole being becomes tense when anger enters and begins to spread through my being - great fun. Just watch once: the whole being becomes tense, the first contraction in the stomach around the navel point rises up, it generates extra heat as it rises up, the throat is choked, then the blood rushes up towards the brain and the eyes become red, there is a tension in the optical nerves, the auditory nerves and if it is a very acute fit of very acute anger, you even lose balance, you feel giddy or dizzy. You can't utter a word, it sweeps you off your feet completely. Now one who has watched this whole ugliness of anger and it does not help you because you have lost your balance, so whatever you do under the spell of that anger may put you to shame ten minutes afterwards. You might feel embarrassed and ashamed for the words that have escaped you in the fit of anger, the behaviour, the movements, the gesticulations that have escaped you in the fit of anger, after ten minutes you may feel embarrassed. So one who has seen how one moment of anger releases a chain reaction of physical and psychological distortions, how it damages me personally first and then does damage to others, one who has gone into this, the whole phenomenon, sees that not only getting angry is really impractical as you lose your time, you lose your energy. I'm putt-

ing it in as simple terms as possible. The damage that it does to you, the harm that it does to you, the mutilations that take place in your consciousness; one is really moved to tears when one sees someone getting angry without knowing what he or she is doing unto himself or herself. One who sees the immediate cause, the direct cause, the distant cause, the remote cause; if one goes into analysis, then maybe one will find that the other person is responsible for it.

I'm trying to share with you a different approach: that allowing other persons to upset your balance, chemical or neurological, is the most impractical thing and if you allow it ten times a day, you have lost the initiative ten times. You are just dictated, your reactions are dictated, controlled, regulated by others - their stupidity, their weaknesses, their petty mindedness. So one would like to keep the initiative in responses. One who is jealous of one's own freedom will not allow being deprived of one's initiative. Anger will not stop the first day, may not stop in a week, but every time it comes up one is aware of all the implications of anger. That moment gets co-related with your whole life and the anger loses its grip on you.

Unless I compare myself with others I could not and I would not feel jealous or envious of others, would I? It is only when I compare myself with other people that I can feel jealous. Why do I compare myself with others? Why am I not satisfied and why don't I feel fulfilled in what I am and expressing what I am? Whatever I have may be very little but that is my being, the substance of my being. Why don't I feel fulfilled in expressing, uncovering, unfolding the essence of my being in all my relationships? Perhaps because since childhood I have been nourished on the images that other people have constructed about me, the opinions that other people have, and we have been told that one has to become terribly respectable, respected by people. One must feel concerned about how other people feel about you, how they evaluate you, judge you. So one looks into the eyes of the other people, would like to calculate the result of one's behaviour and seek the security of his agreeableness, his pleasure, his acceptance, his recognition. So one is so busy calculating the results of one's behaviour and trying to project the calculated results that one has no time to be what one is. And even when one has secured the calculated

results from others, one feels empty within because there may be a gap between what I am and what I pretended to be for the sake of the calculated results. This has been the way to live in relationships even in the intimacy of husband-wife or boy friend-girl friend. Very few have the austerity and the fearless courage to be what they are. We pretend, we tell lies, we enter into falsehoods, exaggerations, petty little exaggerations, petty little understatements, overstatements and a relationship based on pretention, lies, falsehoods, hypocrisies is no relationship at all. The foam on the waters of an ocean looks like milk, but it does not nourish you it only appears like milk, milky foam on the waves of the ocean and it shines so beautifully. If you have ever watched the waves on the ocean of a moonlit night it does not bathe you, it does not nourish you, it does not do anything to you. In the same way this myth of relationship based on falsehood, lies, dishonesty with oneself and with others does not give one peace and relaxation. So I was saying that one who would like to see that life is meaningful, one who would like to live and move with the movement of life around and within him, will have the fearlessness, the humility and the austerity to be what one is in the relationships and not try to balance oneself in the scale of other persons' eyes.

Third point: There is relationship as long as I don't want to convert others, to convert others to my point of view, to convince them of the rightness of my way of living, because that's one way of owning and possessing people; owning and possessing physically is one thing and it is rather crude but this is a psychological game of trying to possess others. If one is not interested in that psychological game then in relationship one hardly asserts oneself, assertion is the most subtle form of aggression, a very subtle point. So one does not assert, one is not out to convince, to convert others. That is to say as one is jealous of one's own freedom, one has the grace to allow the other person to live in his or her freedom, not showing a kind of superiority, wearing airs of superiority, or somehow making the other person feel that you are allowing him or her to be free. If you make the other person aware that you are allowing him freedom, then there is no grace. Your freedom stinks then, because within you somewhere there is a reservation, there is a suspicion; somewhere

there is the desire to hold, to cling to, and outwardly, being an intellectual democrat and so on, you would like the other person to move freely, to live freely. It is very difficult in actual relationships to allow other people to be what they are, that is to say: one will learn the art of finding out the areas where we can work together, emphasize the area and the points where joint working and cooperation is possible and live together and work together in that area without trying to highlight the area of discord, disagreement, contradiction. There will be areas, you can't have relationships where you have hundred per cent agreement and if there is hundred per cent agreement, I think life will become nauseating. There is no charm. Unless there is difference, variety, opposition, contradiction, you know, these are all the spices of life; they constitute the challenges, there would be no elegance, life really would be disgusting if there would be hundred per cent agreement among all relationships. So the art will be that I will see that there are certain areas of agreement, similarity in idiosyncrasies, similarity in urges of life. We emphasize that. Live together, work together so that in the very act of living together and working together the area of harmony widens and the love and friendship deepens, it is both an horizontal and vertical movement simultaneously. I have only indicated, I leave these three points for your contemplation.

Let me take another aspect of relationship. There are people who are sharp like paprikas, sour like sour cream, pungent by nature, you can't avoid this, there is a variety of temperaments. Some are pungent, some are sour, some are bitter. Maybe due to the context of life, maybe due to their conditionings, maybe due to some tortures that they have gone through, but we have to face these people in daily life.

It's no use when you get a piece of paprika to say why is paprika hot and why is lemon sour, why is something bitter, it is so. I complain only when I want paprika to be sweet and honey to be sharp, then the difficulty begins. I'm sorry, I'm trying to put it in simple words - that is daily life.

Some visitors come, some so-called acquaintances turn up, some friends turn up and being a very intelligent, sensitive person I notice something wrong with one friend, something distorted in another acquaintance

and something unpleasant in the third visitor. You know the self appointed judges that we are; we go on verbalizing it to ourselves and we complain. So it does not leave a good taste in the mouth at the end of the day and we say: "oh, what a terrible day I have had; so and so came and he talks this way and so and so came and she is that way" and you know we go on verbalizing to ourselves or in the family to one another, to each other.

Now if I see that there is a variety of temperaments and a variety of contexts of life, and a network of reactions that people go on weaving with their thoughts and feelings and sentiments, I will face the paprika as paprika and I will taste the lemon as lemon and won't expect it to taste like a mango. It does not mean that when a person of bitter temperament comes up, a cynic comes up and utters words very bitterly, have you ever had the misfortune or the good fortune of being with cynics and how they talk - the bitterness envelops their whole being when they try to put all the cynicism into words; if they could cut with their words they would, you see? So when you come across these people one does not become indifferent to the bitterness or cynicism, one does not say: "ah, the potentiality in human beings is of divinity and therefore I connive this". You can't, sensitivity won't allow you to be indifferent to the bitterness of the person, you feel it a hundred times more than any other person would feel it, because you have been acquainted with the whole physiology of the mind, so you feel it and jolly well we have to feel it. We can't avoid it, that is life. So I feel it. The only skill is not to provoke bitterness. Some people feel a great fun in provoking the other person and let him have the whole of it, you see, and then they sit back. So there are some people with a kind of morbid taste. They have nothing more to do, they are bored so they listen to such a person, provoke him and in between give him a glass of wine or a cup of strong coffee and he or she goes on. If we don't want to do it, even then we have to go through the phenomenon. So the art will lie in not provoking his weakness, dodging the weakness as far as possible. Not joining him, not provoking, not encouraging, not trying to deny and not trying to argue. The moment you try to argue with such people, they will have double momentum you see, because they feel you are resisting it. With every resistance you will

add fuel to the already existing distortion. Some person pours anger towards society, some will come and talk about the young generation and what not, you know all sorts of things that you have to go through. Now a person like me would observe very attentively without feeling superior and isolating myself into that superiority, without joining him or her in the distortion. I'll be there with the person. If I get an opportunity and if I find the person is receptive I may point out indirectly, suggestively that it's of no use going into all these things; life is like this - and end it there. But when the person is out of the room I do not allow the whole event or experience to haunt me for the rest of the day. Some people have the habit of going on repeating: so and so had come and wasted my time and I could have done this and I could have done that. If I have no time I just say: "I regret my inability, I can't be with you for more than ten minutes". But once I have given the person half an hour it is not my business to go on complaining afterwards. You see what I mean by dodging the weaknesses of the other people? Being sensitively with them, let them talk it out if they want to, not in a paternalizing or a paternalistic role, no, but the person really feels that he is sharing with you. You are there with him or her. So not provoking, not joining, not showing indifference but in my behaviour or response there will be nothing to bring that distortion out from the person. I don't know how to put it. So I do not resent, I do not resist, I do not isolate myself in self-righteousness and have pity and sympathy for other people. Nobody needs pity and sympathy. If anybody needs anything it is love and friendship. So one won't have the stupidity of showing pity and sympathy, or theorizing and sermonizing, no. So once you have understood the game of the mind the beauty of relationship consists in dodging the weaknesses of the other person, to find out ways and means of inducing the expression of the better part in him or her and go through the inevitable shocks of betrayals, deceits, cheating. One has to go through these. One will be alert and sensitive, one will see that one is not deceived but if in spite of all the sensitivity and alertness one goes at all through such an event of being deceived, being sabotaged, then one goes through the agony, the pain. So in relationships one does not lose the initiative, does not lose the freedom, explores the area of agree-

ment and the possibility of cooperation and dodges the areas of disharmony, contradiction and tension as far as possible and bears with the rest of it, whatever it is. In other words, one is relaxed, relaxation in relationship, attentive, sensitive, alert and yet relaxed. When one gives in to the reactions coming up in one's own mind then one is not relaxed, but when one sees the reactions coming up, let them go over you. So learning to be relaxed in actual relationships is a step towards the dimension of silence.

Q. Are you saying then that one is both the observer and the participant in an exchange with another human being? I'm not sure that I understand the point when you say that if you feel anger, your reaction coming up, you let it pass over you like a wave. Does that mean that you allow yourself to experience the anger, note it, observe it, or are you saying that in the state of exchange with another human being, if the other person takes the initiative, if we allow him to do this, then we are reacting to that initiative? We are endeavouring not to do that, we can check that reaction consciously, we could stop that from happening?

V. I would not stop it or check it consciously. I think as anger comes up, if I become aware of the anger coming up and spreading in my being, then the anger exposed to my attention or awareness has already lost the grip on me. It is there like dead ashes. It is there and you can feel the heat of it. The ashes also feel hot. If I try to check it or control it, then I'll be using a very subtle pressure and coercion against myself and at that moment my mind may surrender, yield and give in to my check and control but it will erupt at another point suddenly, without giving me a chance to check and control. It will overwhelm me. People who exercise controls, try to check themselves, regulate themselves by using some kind of force against themselves will notice that such controlling, repressing, suppressing or regulating takes its toll from you, exacts its price from you, not in that field but in some other field.

So that is one thing and secondly: awareness, the reaction exposed to awareness and attention; that event itself is very potential. When the jealousy, the envy, the anger is exposed to the light, to the focus of my attention and awareness, that exposure itself does certain things. So one day it is exposed and I am aware and

yet angry words escape me, but I know; I don't feel proud about it, I have already seen that I was angry and I behaved out of anger, of that much I was aware. I will live with that awareness, I don't feel proud, I don't want to justify myself, I don't try to put the responsibility of my anger on anyone else, so already these steps have been taken. You don't take them, but the very understanding has wielded you towards a different direction. So there is no pride and no justification about anger. Next time anger comes up and before it overwhelms me I see it. The first time I had seen it after I had been overwhelmed, it does not matter, I'm overwhelmed. So neither do I try to hide it nor do I feel proud about it and the second time half the force of anger begins to recede as anger is coming up because meanwhile I have been living sensitively. I have been watching the behaviour of my mind. Being aware of anger is not an isolated event of awareness. Awareness has become a way of my living, so sensitivity meanwhile has been intensified, it has deepened. So next time anger comes up it has not only lost the grip on me, lost the power of distorting my response, but half the force recedes as it tries to come up. So controlling, checking, suppressing, denying, hiding, they seem to be rather out of date techniques and ways and means, they are rather not scientific.

Q. Is it possible in a camp like this to help each other to find out about one's defence mechanism? Is it possible or impossible, dangerous or not fruitful - what do you think?

V. It's a kind of group therapy and it may be done with the help of a psychologist, under his supervision if one wants to do it. Talking across to one another needs first of all a group of four or five, six perhaps, not more. Secondly they need faith in the supervisor who is supervising and guiding their mutual exchange, so all of them accept his leadership in guiding and steering the whole discussion.

This is really a five days getting together, drawing the attention towards the possibility of transcending our conditioned part of the brain, transcending the frontiers of knowledge and experience and growing into the dimension of silence or meditation. If we have succeeded in these three or four days in seeing the fact that the physical and the psychological structure do not exhaust the totality of our consciousness and that the con-

scious, the subconscious, the unconscious do not exhaust the totality of human consciousness but that there is much more to the consciousness and there are ways of exploring that consciousness; but they have got to be non-cerebral, not through the mind, not through the brain. So silence could be a way. If this much has been clear, then I think half the purpose of getting together is served.

Secondly this exploration, this non-cerebral exploration through silence can be done or can be launched upon by individuals in total freedom, unconditional freedom without accepting the authority of a particular sect, dogma, individual, or theory. It can be done in freedom, it can be done in freedom from authority of individuals, sects, dogmas, drugs, anything that will upset the balance. So this requirement of unconditional freedom at the first step proves to be the last; if there is no freedom of the first step there cannot be any freedom in the last step, because the first mostly is the last.

So the purpose of this camp as far as I am concerned is: sharing with young people in Holland or whosoever comes to such gatherings the urgency of the situation, the problems, responsibility that the young people have to shoulder, and leave the rest to the young people themselves. So when you ask me: "Can we sit down together and help one another" - I really don't know, I would not expect it in a getting together of this kind. If people can sit down together and discuss even one issue, coherently, without getting distracted, pointedly, without accusing each other, without hurting each other, if there can be an art of participative inquiry, that is discussion. But exchanges and helps that you are suggesting are possible under the expert guidance and supervision of some psychologist, psycho-analyst or psychiatrist; it is a kind of collective therapy.

Q. When someone is cheating you or when someone is making you angry, why must there be pain? If you understand the other, why he is cheating you; you know all these things why he is doing it, why must there be pain?

V. Is there no pain? It is not a question of "must". If somebody pricks a pin into your hand or foot either because of mischief or wanting to test, or any other motive, the prick of the pin gives you a shudder, you tremble. It's like seeing a snake. You know what a snake is, you jump away from him. You don't say that

this is also a form of life and manifestation, so therefore I stand there. You don't say that, because with every form you know how to move with the form and how to deal with it. So first of all I feel pain that I was not attentive enough to see that I was going to be cheated. I must be alert and attentive to see, to be watchful, to be vigilant. A religious or a spiritual person cannot afford the luxury of being absent-minded, distracted, inattentive. Then other people are bound to cheat him, deceive him. In India they say "he is a religious person" and that means: anybody can cheat him. You see, that's the meaning of it. First of all I feel pain that I allowed myself to be cheated. Secondly I feel pain and agony that the other person could stoop down to the level of cheating a straightforward, innocent and honest person. You'll feel sorrow for his stooping down. Only when I have no self-respect will I cheat you, why should I otherwise cheat you? So there will be pain. If I see that somebody wants to strike I will just hold his or her hand and prevent him or her from doing so.

To be ahead of the other person, to be watchful, to be attentive and to be sensitive enough, to be intelligent enough to see, is absolutely necessary. Otherwise innocent persons, honest persons will have to live a very miserable life. Anybody can come and insult and anybody can humiliate and anybody can cheat. When somebody tells a lie don't you feel pain for the person, don't you get a shock at the very depth of your being that somebody can stoop down so low as to tell a lie, and is stupid enough not to see that truth will come out, if not at this hour of the day perhaps after a couple of hours or perhaps after a couple of days? It is stupid enough. Unless a person is stupid, will he ever tell a lie? It is in the nature of truth to explode. So it pains you to see other human beings humiliating themselves by such behaviour and it pains you because you have not been intelligent and sensitive enough to sense it, to feel it.

Q. Why does it seem that the relationship with other people are more complicated than my own self-education? It seems to me that what you told us this evening is more complicated, has more aspects, naturally because of the fact that I'm not self-educated, I think.

V. Why is it more complicated? Human relationships are complicated and somebody said this morning: "Is it all right saying that after going back from camp you have to look after your relationship with things like

taking proper food or taking exercises?" All that ! Why don't we take up the issue of our relationship with other human beings and the complications that come up there? This was suggested for this evening by someone so we took it up. Human relationships are much more complex than the relationship with food or with sleep or with exercises.

Q. But it even seems more complicated than the relationship with myself. Don't you think so?

V. Oh, yes, it is, because the other people with whom I have to live and work, they are their own masters. We do not know what is going on within them and at what turn, what kind of offensive or what kind of initiative they are going to take. We don't know and each individual is unique. So you have to deal with so many worlds. They have their own world and they live in it. So to have the sensitivity to live with the other person, to realize how the person is growing, changing, what he does with himself, to be sensitive to see all that is a complex business. That is why people like to stabilize relationships through ethics, through religion, through social pressures. They like to have a steam-roller, a relationship demarcated permanently; don't move to this side or to that side, follow the groove. And so you are safe. Stabilization. Not only stabilization, relationship also becomes static and repetitive, then they lose their charm.

Now if you want to have a living relationship, then there is insecurity every moment and one has to be alert. Either of the two: either one accepts the repetitive static lifeless relationship or the insecurity of a living and dynamic relationship where you don't bind, you don't put chains on the feet and minds of the other people and yet keep pace with them. And wherever you have to live together and do things together and grow together, when it is a joint adventure or a collective adventure one has to be with people so it does really need tremendous sensitivity and energy. Haven't you noticed that the real crisis to-day is in human relationships - individual and collective. At the level of a nation, the level of a state, the level of family, the level of man and woman, it's the crisis in relationship. So what you say is so true, it is much more complex than the relationship with myself and yet we have dealt with only the fringes of the whole thing this evening. You can't condense things more than this. The new dyna-

mics of human relationships could as well be a theme for a camp, for a getting together for two or three days. One could go into it from so many angles. I have not thought of going into so many details, but when I saw you sitting so quietly and listening so attentively it encouraged me to probe this direction and that direction and to look at it from different angles. Your cooperation has really enchanted me all these days. The way you listen creates an atmosphere of some indescribable beauty.

Q. This afternoon we talked together and there was such a different atmosphere than now when we are together with you.

V. It is bound to be, if - as our friend said this afternoon - alike minded people get together with one purpose, they sit in a room to talk about one issue and share, well this is a qualified relationship like a hothouse and a nursery. Life is not a hothouse, you don't live in a nursery. So when we go back we will be exposed to the harsh realities, the crudities, the grossnesses of life, but didn't we know that before we came here? We knew before coming here that there would be a different atmosphere. Here there is an effort to understand one another, to cooperate with one another, but when we get back, well, each individual is an island of social relationships, completely on his or her own to face the odds. Let me put it bluntly: we try to be polite, cautious not to hurt one another, we are afraid that we might hurt another person's feelings, offend him. All these things, as invisible inhibitions, limit the nature of that exchange and that discussion. All right? It is bound to happen that when people, who have not known one another and come here together, are defensive. They sit down to discuss but they are on the defensive. When they talk and exchange with one another they try to expose the best part of their inner life and they try not to hurt others, even in discussion. Even if I put a point this way and somebody takes an offence, let me keep quiet. I think it happens because we have not lived together for even one week. If there are individuals whose inquiry is stronger than that personal defence mechanism then the exchange takes place, but till then people will be defensive and discussions will be kept mildly polite, free to some extent as long as it is impersonal. Where it becomes personal, they withdraw a little; all this I think is bound to happen. Is that

what you were saying?

Q. He was asking himself that in a camp like this, where some people will get together, it is to be expected in an exchange of ideas to talk about what one thinks about the camp, what one was expecting, what were the experiences, trying to get an observation of silence and things like that and also saying frankly what one thinks of each other, what was his impression. They believed that in the beginning this kind of exchange would be aggressive, but finally as one goes on it can turn out to give more understanding, mutual understanding within the group and now the point is: they want to know what you think about this, whether such an encounter is fruitful, or is it useless? It is my supposition that it is a demonstration of one's and each other's mechanism of defence.

V. I think such encounters take place naturally when people live together. They are unavoidable, they are natural, they do take place. I mean, I thought it is an organic or integral part of small camps. That's why one does not like more than twenty-five or thirty people. You try to understand yourself and when you are thrown together in relationship, whether working in a kitchen or playing together or sitting to find out what has happened in the morning, then you are exposed to one another. Here you are not exposed to one another, you are exposed only to your own self. That's the difference and I think that difference will be there when we are exposed to one another in direct immediate intimate relationships.

Q. How do you help yourself on that, being exposed to other people like we will be, what do you do with yourself, with your defence mechanism?

V. Have we not been talking this evening about what one does to oneself when one is exposed in relationship? Are we afraid of relationships? Is one afraid of relationships? Is one afraid of being with the people, not in direct personal relationship but being with the people; is there fear? Do I move out of myself through the eyes, through the speech, through the touch, through the ears, do I move outward with a kind of subtle fear? Being with other human beings, does it begin in fear? What is the nature of that fear? Am I afraid of people? We are not talking about being afraid of a person if somebody stands up suddenly with a gun and wants to shoot. There will be no time to indulge in fear, you

have to act immediately, otherwise you are lost and gone. You can't have the luxury of indulging in fear then, because that situation demands action. You have to do something. Are we afraid of being with people and why are we afraid? Are we very particular that people should be agreeable to us, or should we be agreeable to others? That they should please us or we should please them? Are we out expecting acceptance on their part and afraid that if the acceptance does not come, we will be thrown overboard? What is the nature of that fear, if there is any? What is the difference between fear and expectation, or does every expectation involve fear? If there is fear, then my defence mechanism is more active than my initiative. I go out to move with the armour of my whole defence mechanism around me. That is to say there is the initiative but before the meeting can take place, the defence mechanism is there. So I move half-heartedly, somewhat afraid, trying to be free. So fear and defence mechanism go together and if there is an expectation then what happens to me, how do I behave when I am out expecting something from you or wanting to snatch it from you, to acquire it from you, to grab it from you? Expectations can have many gradations. So do I move with expectations? We are not yet talking about very intimate relationships of husband-wife or girl friend and boy friend or parents and children, they are more complex, but our being with people; sitting at the table having meals with strangers, travelling in a plane, travelling in a train, working in an office. So in simple relationships which are temporary, momentary, how do I move? Let us find out what is implied in being with people.

V. The direction in which an inquiry about fear could be conducted is whether fear is involved when we move outward and whether that fear inhibits the relationship; fear of being exposed as we are to others. And if there is fear, obviously there cannot be any relationship, because fear and defence mechanism move together. That's what we have said and left the matter for the contemplation of all of you, so I thought I had finished the question. If you would like to make comments, to go into the issue deeply, say something about it; I would like to hear you. Relationship is a challenge for each human being.

Q. I have an idea, that fear might come up because you don't know anything about what the relationship shall be. Maybe the mind already starts to make images, but in the meantime he knows that the images are completely different from your relationship.

V. You have touched the basic point, that's exactly what it is. Fear is involved in relationships because we cannot predict, calculate, project the results that are going to issue from the relationship. One would like to know beforehand the exact nature of the relationship, the precise outcome of the relationship and relationships require humility and fearlessness to move into the unknown. Every relationship is really taking a leap into the unknown.

Knowledge and experience do not help very much when it comes to human relationships. Knowledge and experience help me when I'm related to things. When I know how a microphone functions, I can have a static relationship with a microphone, adjust my voice to the tune, the pitch, the volume etc. When I know what a table is, my relationship with the table is arrived at once and for all, the table does not change into a chair throughout the night. So with static things relationships are simple, they can be established, stabilized and one can fall back upon previous knowledge and experience.

But in human relationships the authority of knowledge and experience, even when one had some previously

with the same individual, does not help much. It's a moving and growing entity. So the mind would like to have the results already converted into the known, the mind would like to know in advance the outcome of the relationship, the nature of the relationship, but relationships are not like school time-tables, you can't have it. Even with the same individual, leave aside different individuals, it cannot be repeated and the mind would like to feel secure in the repetition of behaviour and relationship required and if it is to be a lively energetic dynamic relationship, it requires that I don't repeat.

Even with plants you can't repeat your pattern of behaviour. Your plants need one kind of care in spring and another in summer, a different kind of care in autumn and again different in winter; the temperature of water that you give to the plant, the dryness, the humidity. One has to be extremely sensitive if one would like to be related even to the flowers that one cuts. Rather with a little insensitivity we cut them away, put them in vases and decorate the room; even with those flowers you need sensitivity.

So relationships make me frightened every time I move out and meet people, because the results cannot be predetermined and the sooner we realize that the results can never be predetermined, if relationships have got to be alive and dynamic, the better. The earlier we realize that this craving for predetermined results, pre-calculated modes of functioning or operating with people, is impossible in the very nature of relationship, the sooner there will be no fear.

As you know that which begins has an end, so one who is born is bound to die one day. One who knows that the body is governed by the law of birth, growth, decay and death, will not indulge in chronic fear of death. He says death does come some day, what's the use of wasting time in fear of death, because that fear will inhibit my mind and will not allow me to live blissfully to-day. So fear of death is inhibiting the relationship to-day, with the now, with the here and when a person knows that, he does not suffer from chronic anxiety or fear about death.

In the same way, when we realize that relationships are adventures into the unknown, there is no security, because security is only in repetition. Life is an adventure. Could it be that every relationship with human

beings, involves some kind of disturbance to the status quo that I have established within me? I have very carefully constructed an image about myself and I go out and meet people and that image gets disturbed. In the mirror of that relationship with others I discover that I'm not what I thought that I was and I would like to believe that I am, I would like to believe that I am according to the image constructed by my parents, by my friends, by my teachers, by my community. So relationships disturb the images that we have stored in memory about ourselves and nobody likes to be disturbed, so one says: "let me not meet new people, let me not be in new places, let me be in the company of those whose images I know; I have already found out what image they have about me and I have my image of them." So it is a nice dealing between images - their images of me and my images of them. So smoothly we go on dealing with images, politely and courteously. As soon as it becomes necessary to meet people whom we have not known - we don't know their patterns of conditioned reflexes and involuntary reflexes, we don't know their traditions, we don't know their upbringing - one does not know what to do. So as long as there is a desire to be on the defensive psychologically in relationships, there will be fear.

To be cautious and to be on the defensive as far as physical life goes, may have become a necessity of modern civilization; so to be on the defensive or to be cautious on that plane is absolutely necessary. Whether you are in the woods, in forests or you are in big cities, or you are driving a car on a highway, that attention, that attentiveness is very necessary. But to be psychologically on the defensive in relationship is to deny the possibility to oneself of a relationship. If you would like we could take one step further: that this fear, this urge to be on the defensive in human relationships may be due to the acceptance of authority, authority of knowledge and experience in our life. Knowledge and experience, thoughts and ideas, information acquired meticulously, put into order systematically, organized, is necessary to deal with objects which are static. We've gone into it: the cars, the aeroplanes, the space crafts, the computer. With everything that one has to deal with, precise accurate knowledge and skilful use of it is absolutely necessary, but in human relationship, is it valid to accept the authority of our

thoughts, memory or experiences? Supposing you have had a rather unpleasant experience with an African, with an Indian, with a Chinese, with a Japanese, with an American - we generally brand the people by the name of the countries they come from - so when one has had an unpleasant experience with anyone, X, Y or Z and that X, Y or Z comes from India, Japan, China or America, next time you meet a person coming from that country you say: "I know, all Americans are like that. I know, all Indians are like that", you have branded the person. It's not always Pekoe tea, Darjeeling tea and Chinese tea; human beings cannot be branded that way. But I would like to refer to the authority of my previous experience and say: "I have had that experience with an American, with an Indian, with a Chinese". So here comes an American, here comes a negro, I know how to behave with him. You see, already the authority of experience has inhibited me from meeting the person, and the next person that I meet may be one of the noblest human beings, but I don't look at the human being, I look at the Indian, the Chinese, the Japanese, the American, because my memory and the authority of my experience stored in my brain makes me behave before I know what I am doing, what is happening to me. This acceptance of the authority of one's own experiences has generated invisible inhibitions. So acceptance of authority, putting the defence mechanism into gear, fear is regulating the defence mechanism, that is how we go out to meet people, to be with them. So how can there be a relationship with others?

Could it be that human relationships require, along with alertness and sensitivity, also innocence and humility? Acquisition of knowledge and experience does tend to make us arrogant. As men in political power feel arrogant, men with riches and wealth feel the power of money, so, if we feel the power of thoughts, knowledge, experience within us, sensual experience, sexual experience, occult experience, we feel the power of that experience. That power, that feeling of power, love of power, sense of power, does also inhibit, it damages the innocence, it damages the humility. So with a very alert, efficient and rich brain, man needs the space of innocence and humility within, so that he can listen to others, he can look at others without imposing his likes and dislikes immediately.

He would listen to them. Not that one has to agree and accept everything that someone else says, but human beings have to grow into innocence and humility, looking around, learning, discovering and not allowing themselves to be inhibited by the authority of: "I know how women are, I know what men are." We go on generalizing so quickly: "Oh, I have lived with her for two years, I know jolly well what she means by that," and maybe the person does not mean that. She may have been repeating certain patterns for a year or two, but who knows when a change comes into human beings, it comes so suddenly that unless you are on your toes and alert and sensitive, you may not notice the change that has taken place in the other person. No mathematical calculation can entitle me to feel that, because a person has behaved this way for two years, he or she is going to behave the same way until eternity. It does not work that way. Without innocence and humility there is no spontaneity; without innocence and humility there is no abundance - it is a movement. Relationship is a movement and unless there is a space that humility and innocence gives to you, we'll get stuck.

We may reject the old patterns of relationships and create new ones but they could be as static, as lifeless, as the patterns of the older people. You might have noticed that I'm saying "could it be, is it due to?" because I would not like to give any categorical statements, I am just suggesting it for your contemplation, for your discovery. My reverence for life and other human beings does not allow me to say "it is so". One will say "it is so" only in relation to the essence of life, the timelessness of reality, the infinite momentum of life and so on, but when it comes to the nature of relationships and factors involved, these are the factors that seem to me probable, that is all one can say. So what we have seen in the last half hour is, that relationship is a challenge; it implies a leap into the unknown, it is bound to disturb the images that one has gathered about oneself and others. One does not like to be disturbed, so one would like to move about in relationships without getting disturbed and that does not happen. There is fear of being exposed because if the factuality of my existence is exposed to others, the image that they have constructed about me will get shattered. So I don't want to disturb the image that they have of me. I have been presenting my best aspect

of my psychology to them and now if they see me as I am, they will not respect me. If I'm exposed that way they will discover my pettiness, my shoddiness, so I would like to see that their image about me is not disturbed, and every relationship, being a challenge, does disturb. If relationships are not dead, if they are not mechanical, automatic, if they are living, they are bound to disturb and what is wrong in being disturbed? What is wrong in images being shattered, being cracked? What we may call the urge for security may not be the urge for security in the sense of physical security but the urge for security may be only the desire not to be disturbed; we are as we are, don't disturb us. So one has to be free to move in relationship. One has to be free from the images that one has gathered about oneself and about other human beings. One has to be free of the authority of one's own knowledge and experience and how many of us really like to be free? To be free is to be vulnerable. We would like to have our invisible enclosures, psychological enclosures, feel safe in them, open the door or window of that enclosure and just peep out and say: "hello".

Love of freedom is very rare to come by, because in the state of freedom you do not belong to countries, nations, races, organized religions, sects or dogmas; you are an organic part of life around you. Freedom is very austere. So we, the lovers of enclosures, are afraid of freedom. It is fear of freedom within us that inhibits the relationships around us. In the austerity of freedom there is no luxury of having opinions and theories and ideologies and conclusions all stored; open the drawer, take one out, use it. This is our meaning of freedom but you can't do it in freedom. What we understand by freedom is to have the scope and space to do as we like, what we like, when we like, that is our meaning of freedom. It does not matter if that freedom brings disorder in our life, disharmony in our own life. Our meaning of freedom to-day is having the scope to do anything and everything as we like, when we like, no restrictions. Dictates of our impulses oblige us to behave and we feel that giving in to the dictate of an impulse is being free. We do not correlate the impulse with our whole life, leave aside the world - that is not freedom.

Freedom, being austere, has its own inner order which is not discipline formulated intellectually, it has

its own inner order. So we are afraid of freedom. We like to play around with our wishes, our whims or obsessions, our desires, our impulses without trying to understand them or understand the interrelation between them or without trying to correlate anyone of them with our whole life. So the fear of freedom, the fear of life gets expressed in the moments of relationship with others. We think it is the fear of the other people; it is not the fear of the other people, we attribute it to them.

Q. Could you say something about freedom in relationship to facts, reality and truth? I think freedom and truth are interconnected, they are on the same plane.

V. You see, we already did go into the discussion of facts, truth and reality and to-day we have gone into the issue of freedom as the foundation of a relationship. The only thing remains is to coordinate the two.

I do believe that the essence of education is in the suggestivity. Suggest it and leave it. The moment you try to put things: "the coordination is like this, the freedom in relation to fact or truth, and humility and innocence in relation to reality" if you begin even to give the ready-made formula then the personal discovery or personal understanding may not take place. It is really very helpful if things are left at the level of suggestions for contemplation, for experimentation and for discovery. So he has hit the nail on the head, he has referred to the necessity of coordinating the two, and I am glad you have suggested it, but I think it has got to be done by the individuals themselves.

Q. What do you think about the scientific discoveries, there have been so many and I think it is very difficult to keep pace with them.

V. Yes it is difficult to keep pace with the scientific discoveries that are taking place.

Q. I think many people are busy with their discoveries, but that prevents them from thinking of their own self, prevents them from educating themselves.

V. It is obvious that one cannot keep pace with the tremendous discoveries and inventions taking place in the realm of pure science and applied science, science and technology. It is difficult for a person to keep pace with them. That is a statement of a fact, it is not a question. Now you feel, that being always busy with those discoveries prevents us from being busy in our self-education. Is that what you are saying?

Q. Yes.

V. I think one can deceive oneself in believing that one is interested in what is happening around, collecting information about the discoveries, the inventions and saying that one has no time to experiment with one's own life. It could happen. That is really the crux of the issue. In the orient you get heaps and heaps of books about religion, philosophy, spirituality and they have their cosmo-genesis and what is true and what is not true, so they used to believe, and some of them still believe, that there is nothing to be discovered outside the skin. They look upon this engagement of man with science and technology as materialism. When they are starving they beg for food to the same countries but they don't hesitate to condemn them as materialistic countries.

That is the contradiction in the East. They have to reconcile to the fact that even if their Vedas or Lao-tse or Confucius or the five Patriarchs in China or the Zen-Buddhist masters, whoever they are, even if they have said something about the cosmo-genesis, what science is doing with the method of verification and the exploring of the possibility of universal application of each invention and discovery, what science is doing, is of great importance to religion, to spirituality itself. They have to learn that. And in the occident where science and technology have advanced in a miraculous way - look at the discoveries of the sixties in biology, in medicine and in physics, in psychology a. s. o., whether you begin from William James or from Freud - whatever has been discovered about man is the totality of man; whatever has been discovered by biology and medicine is the totality of man and no inner discoveries, inner explorations, inner experimentations are necessary; then again this is one-sided you see? I think that the occidental and the oriental, if they would like to live in the new context of life, would have to learn that their views and traditions have been one-sided. The tradition of science, experimentation and verification possible in the tangible and visible world may not be applicable in the invisible, intangible, timeless and spaceless. There maybe a non-cerebral exploration will be possible. So if they rely upon the authority of this method in the occident and the orientals rely upon the categorical deductive logic that they have, then I think both of us will miss the blessing that

is vibrating in the air to-day of an integrated or harmonious total revolution. So I appreciate the point our friend has made that it is already difficult to keep pace with the discoveries and one keeps intellectually busy with them and feels that one has no time for the inner experimentation because it is hard work to learn to observe, to have a rhythm in diet, to have an inner order in relationship with things, to transform the quality of sleep. It's hard work. It needs energy to work upon oneself without getting fanatic and dogmatic about it.

Q. What about the feeling of responsibility that comes in when there is freedom? I always have the feeling that when freedom comes in that on the other hand there is responsibility that keeps it in harmony.

V. That is exactly what I was trying to suggest by saying that freedom has an inner order. Whatever is done in the state of freedom is born of an inner harmony, not discipline, coercion, suppression or violence against oneself, but a kind of inner harmony that flows from understanding the meaning of life and the inter-relationship of life.

Q. You said that when you are free you are also very vulnerable. It is my experience that you can almost lose your ego trying to be free. So my question is: isn't it better, more efficient, not to pay so much attention to get free? Perhaps it is better to accept your conditioning and try to change something for the problems of the world.

V. Who will change it? Who will change things for the problems of the world? The problem is of imbalance and disharmony in individual relationships, injustice, exploitation, violence in individual relationships, in collective relationships. And if I am a victim of all that, how am I going to change things for solving the problems of the world.

And in freedom is the ego lost? Is he destroyed? Or is there a new awareness of the limitations of the ego, the limitations and frontiers of the field of utility where the ego can function, an awareness that life is much vaster than that limited field where the ego can function. The "I"-consciousness developed by man through centuries cannot be thrown into pieces, cannot be thrown to whims. It is a part of our being; it will be there. One has to understand how it has come into existence, the contents thereof, the modus operandi of that "I"-

consciousness and use it in its relative field efficiently and to see that it does not interfere outside its field of utility. Wherever mechanical activities are necessary, the brain, the mind, the ego has got to be used. So in the state of freedom is the ego lost or does the ego go into abeyance in the moments of human relationship and functions promptly, competently wherever mechanistic movement is inevitable? In the state of innocence or humility the ego is not lost; one does not become very naïve. Innocence and humility cannot be played around with casually; it is very difficult to cheat an innocent person, it is very difficult to deceive and cheat a person who lives in the state of love, because love generates and releases sensitivity, intelligence, which is incomparable with the cerebral activity.

The only thing one would like to share with you is that this inner transformation has to take place in our daily life, wherever we are, converting the relationships into opportunities for self-discovery, converting challenges into occasions and events for self-discovery, not running away from them. So when living watchful, revolutionary individuals begin to move in society wherever they may be, engineers, doctors, teachers, social workers, housewives; if they have the revolutionary fervour and they are busy working upon themselves for an inner transformation and their perspective of outside relationship has gone through a change, then wherever these living cells of total revolution move, they are going to disturb the status quo of society in a constructive way, not in a destructive way. There will be disturbance.

Yes, for the problems of the world what can we do? Help the poor countries, the starving countries in Africa and Asia? How do we help them? Charity, collect funds and send them the money, and those silly countries in Africa and Asia have been asking for money and wherever the money has flown easily it has sown seeds of misery, anarchy, mutual conflict and tension; be it Korea, Vietnam, villages of India and Pakistan, countries in Africa. So how do we help them? Money in the hands of starving millions is only a provocation for corruption and they lose their self-respect, lose their initiative. What do we do for the problems? We meet in Stockholm, have a conference; one hundred and fourteen nations come together for discussing the issue of global environment and we are stuck against

the rock of national sovereignty, whether it is Britain, France or China, they say: don't touch us. Now what do you do to the psyche, you cannot plead with Mao, Heath or Pompidou; no argumentations and debates are going to change them, because they know what they are saying. It is the conceit of national sovereignty which has lost its relevance to the facts of life and yet lingering in the human psyche that creates this conflict and contradiction. If I realize this then I say to myself I am not going to tackle Pompidou or Mao or Breznjev or whoever it is. Am I free from this malady of out-moded concepts and theories in economics and politics? If and when there are a handful of individuals then they together can break new paths in socio-economic relationships. The problems of the world appear to be in socio-economic or political field, but they are only symptoms, the malady is deeper in the human psyche. It is only education that can become a medium for total revolution and for such education a handful of individuals who feel deeply concerned and are willing to explore, to experiment in their own lives and go through a radical mutation in themselves, it is only such a handful of revolutionaries who can become teachers for the new education and the new schools.

Q. There are so few people who can and do go into such revolution that it seems to be an exclusive act and perhaps it would be more effective to educate the politicians instead of the young people.

V. There are many who say that, many, and if one has been near the politicians one knows what they are.

They say: go and talk to the people, we have the sanction of the people of our countries behind us, we are their representatives and we do what they want.

I know that they don't do what the people want, they do what the military wants, the industrialists want, the few, the minority and wherever we turn, my friends, in communist countries or in so-called democratic countries, the whole way of living is such that the power is getting centralized in fewer and fewer hands, economically, politically, socially, even culturally. The centralization of power, the whole pattern of our living encourages centralization of power. We are using technology and science in such a way that power goes on centralizing and in centralization of power the top becomes very heavy.

But if anyone feels that there is some use in meeting

people at the United Nations as I had to deal with them once working on the World Council of Young People and the World Assembly of Youth, but I wouldn't say that because I had this experience you shouldn't do it. If somebody feels there is some utility, let him or let them as a group do it.

I only feel that centralization of power gives a sense of being nearly infallible. The arrogance of power is so much and when the industrialists, the military and the power-wielders come together, that trinity is terrible. You raise your voice and it goes to deaf ears, you see? Yes, if it comes to reforms, small patchwork here and there, then they are willing to throw crumbs at you, become popular and every reform is a postponement of the urge of revolution.

Q. Do you think that the pressure on the top is so heavy that the human beings will be pressed and will not be able to function as human beings?

V. Why are we going into this issue, sir? Why do we feel it necessary to go into this issue of the power and the politicians and educating them, why? Have you not witnessed the history of the peace movement in Europe, in United Kingdom, in America? Have you not witnessed the whole peaceful movement of the negroes, not now, not since the Black Panther and the Black Power concept has come up and become popular, but before that. The whole movement for educating the politicians that was conducted by Abernathy and Martin Luther King, the Peace Movements the Committee of Hundred, the War Resisters International, Fellowship of Friends of Truth, Nuclear Disarmament, they tried about ten years in France, England, in many countries.

Demonstrations, peaceful, militant, all sorts of things and one does not deny, I mean, if one feels it necessary there are movements, organizations dealing with the politicians. Right now here in Holland there is an Emergency World Council trying to work for an Emergency World Government. They have their headquarters in The Hague. So there are such movements if people feel interested they might go and work upon it. I feel it necessary to deal with the roots, the grass-roots, the challenge in the psyche, the crisis in the psyche and therefore I talk to individuals. For me the days of organizations, sects, dogmas and propagandas are over. The days of person to person contact, small scale work, the dynamics of interpersonal living to-

gether and education, the era, the times of such work now is before us. The capitalist, the socialist, the communist, all of them have played around with the dimension and dynamics of organized, institutionalized work, dealing with the power-holders, changing the hands in power, changing the structure, the set-up and so on. The human race has spent at least the last hundred and twenty-five or thirty years doing it in the name of change in the occident, and doing it in the name of religion the orient has played around with it for five thousands years. The individual is the reality, he is the foundation. That which can happen in one individual psyche proves the possibility and the potentiality for the whole human race. So like a few seeds individuals who are willing to let the radical transformation take place in them, let the mutation occur in them, such individuals I think are necessary. I may be wrong, but this is how I look at it.

9th Talk and Discussion
Thursday-evening 22nd June '72

A couple of days ago somebody raised a question about criminals and whether they have any chances as far as the psychological mutation is concerned. It is extremely difficult for me to speak about things and events related very closely to a particular socio-economic or political context.

No one is born a criminal. Why do people become criminals? The tendency to commit crimes, beginning with telling a lie, stealing small things, cheating and deceiving people, then looting, decoying and banditry a. s. o. goes on, increasing in skill at deceiving others and oneself. We cannot go into the whole issue, because to my mind we, the so-called society, and our whole way of living is responsible to a very great extent for the unfortunate persons who become criminals. If they are responsible say for fifty per cent, we the members of society and the whole way of living that man has developed is also responsible. So who is going to, first of all, bring them back to society, let them live as members of society, give them the opportunity to rehabilitate themselves psychologically? Then only the question of psychological mutation can come up.

A person said to me, if you do not understand what is happening around you, if you cannot understand and you feel lost, what do you do?

It is quite possible that when people get together, live together there may be some who do not understand the whole way of living that we have done for the last four, five days, and one feels isolated, lost. One feels a kind of irritation with oneself, that others follow and I don't, others understand and I can't. So one may even get angry with oneself or annoyed, irritated. What does one do in such a state?

If I want to find out why such a state is there, first of all I must not condemn myself. If I have already condemned myself, because I cannot understand, I cannot follow, something is wrong with me, something is missing in me; if I have condemned myself by saying that something is wrong with me, then it may lead to a nervousness, an isolation and the inquiry cannot be

conducted because I have already passed a judgement: "something is wrong with me, I can't understand". So to conduct an inquiry any judgement about oneself will have to be held in abeyance; no judgement, no opinion, no condemnation about oneself. Who can say that others have followed and understood and I have not? Others may feel that they have understood and followed, they may nod or smile in agreement, perhaps even without realizing the full implications of the nodding or of the agreement and I can't do it. How am I to feel; what entitles me to feel that the others have understood and I have not? I will start questioning at the very beginning, so I will not pass a judgement, any criticism against myself. When you have to understand a child, what do you do? If you begin to criticize the child at every step that the child takes, you will never understand the child. Can it be that I have never been in such a gathering before; I have never had such exposures before and so everything is new to me, unusual to me: the food is unusual, the atmosphere is unusual and the unusualness, the strangeness of the atmosphere, the way of living, the diet and the whole gathering, that unusualness causes a kind of aloofness in me. Can it be that I do not understand the language that is spoken or the subject that is taken up. Though we have all been talking lightly here, the theme that we have dealt with here, all of us together for the last five days, is a very serious thing and we have been dealing with it at a very subtle level, not only superficially. It will exhaust any person, the amount of energy, attention, depth, intensity that we are putting in.

So if I am not acquainted with the subject maybe I came with some kind of vague idea that there would be some exercises or sitting in silence for three hours or four hours with hardly a talk a day which would be about meditation and about nothing else. Maybe I had a certain impression or idea about it, because I heard something from different people and here I come and see: a subject is taken up in the morning; in the evening also discussion about the same subject and the vast canvas of total human life is spread before me and sometimes you touch it from one angle and sometimes you touch it from another angle, and it can be confounding to the person who has not studied say economics or political philosophy or psychology, it can be. Not that the person is inferior to others but one may not be acquainted with

all the comprehensive perspective and any theme that you take you tackle from all the angles and one cannot keep pace with those probings and one feels lost. Can it be that?

The strangeness of the atmosphere, the unusualness of the whole way of living, difficulty of the language and the lack of acquaintance, because these are not academic discussions. We refer to the academic part of it only to understand the concrete expression of the problem.

Could it be that I have not exerted myself intellectually to understand things in my life? I have been carried by emotions, sentiments, following people, the old crowd, the new crowd, crowd of young people, latest modes, latest fashions a. s. o. So I have been following emotionally and falling in line as it were and never tried to think about life independently of my own, on my own, then also I can get lost because I'm not used to watching, analyzing, observing. I did not watch my sleep, I never watched my dreams, I have never tried to find out the interrelation between these, so I get confounded when these subjects are taken up. I'm not used to look at things so scientifically.

You know a scientific approach is as arduous and austere as any religious or spiritual discipline. If you remember those space rockets or missiles landing on the moon; if there is inaccuracy of a thousandth part of an inch then at the starting point it may be a thousandth part of an inch, but when it lands on the moon it could be miles from the target. So in observation and in a scientific understanding of life one needs accuracy and precision. So if I am not used to this kind of approach the very scientific austerity may tire me out and may make me feel that this is not emotional entertaining, this is very austere, not rough, not harsh, but it appears dry, all scientific.

So if one has been used to living emotionally, floating on the foam of traditions, acceptances, then one is bound to feel that he or she can't follow all this. There is appeal to love here, there is appeal to understanding, there is appeal to the potentiality in man. But you might have noticed no appeal to sentiments or emotions or feelings, no movement on the superficial layer is encouraged here; so one may feel "I can't understand what is going on".

The difficulty is, if it is fifty per cent of the person

who feels he can't understand - fifty per cent of the responsibility I'm willing to shoulder, because I do not like to stimulate anyone emotionally or provoke intellectually. To influence a person is to cast a shadow on his face and I shall not do it. My respect for fellow human beings won't allow me to influence him, to provoke him, to stimulate him. Once you get into the state of stimulation, excitement, then you accept the authority of that person. To put a person in an emotional excitement is nearly halfway to exploit him. So here is an appeal to the intelligence of a person, but no effort to stir the emotions, sentiments, feelings and we are used to living in that way: excitements, depressions, stimulations, and here we get nothing. So that also may cause the feeling that I can't follow. There is nothing to feel sad about, to feel disappointed about, if in the first exposure of such a kind, a person has not felt like running away from the camp, one must congratulate oneself and I mean it. Even by mentioning meditation, people are emotionally stimulated, excited, their enthusiasm is kept sustained on the emotional excitement. I for one would feel ashamed to do that. The depth of love, yes, if it is stirred, love is the fragrance of divine potentiality in a person. So if a person feels that he or she can't follow, there is nothing to feel sad or depressed about. It is a very honest healthy and simple response that I cannot follow what is happening around here. It is not a negative response at all and I am not saying this to please anyone. If one has not felt a repulsion, if one has not had a feeling to run away from it, then the first exposure is really a very good exposure. That the atmosphere or proceedings of the whole thing has not made me run away, is not negative. I feel like staying here, I like certain things, certain things I can't understand, certain things I don't like. But in spite of all this I feel like staying on. If that has happened, then one has opened up without one's knowing and the assimilation and even the absorption of what has happened might prove helpful and useful when one goes back and after a week or two, or after a few weeks suddenly when one is confronted with a challenge or a problem something that one had listened to here carefully comes up, one acts and then says: "ah, where did I get it? Yes, I heard it there or I discussed it there".

One more point and I will finish this question. If in

childhood, at home or school, one has been condemned as a dull person, if one has not been loved at home or at school, no concern has been shown about a person, then the sensitivity is blocked, it is benumbed. It does not get destroyed, but it becomes benumbed, it gets frozen and the person feels he can't follow, can't understand, because since childhood she or he has heard that. The "my first son understands everything, the second son does not", that kind of language is used in the homes. The boy is brilliant, but the girl absolutely dull and stupid; so one feels in the subconscious the words that he is stupid or she is stupid or he is dull or she is dull, all this, this has mutilated the subconscious somewhere.

The wounds are there, deep wounds and suddenly in youth all those wounds which the parents did not know about, the teachers did not know about, nobody around you knew about, you yourself were not aware of the depth of the damage done, but suddenly when you move around and try to mix with people you find yourself kind of benumbed, incapable. You want to respond and you can't because that part has been weakened, sort of made passive. This also can happen, and I would be glad when I find out that I cannot relate myself to the surroundings, I have discovered something about me and the surroundings. Discovery, whether it is of my excellence or of my weakness, discovery makes me glad. Because it is a personal discovery of some truth. It is only a proud person who gets hurt by the discovery of his own weaknesses, but if I want to live then I say: "I did not know this about myself, ha, here it is". One feels sad and at the same time one feels relieved that now there is a clue where to turn, how to turn.

So nothing to be frightened of if a person feels that he can't understand, has not understood the happenings around him. If this becomes a discovery of truth about oneself and not a condemnation or a criticism about oneself, then there will be a relief when one gets back. One will find a kind of relaxation that something new about oneself has been discovered. So what are the atmospheres where I can't get related, which are the areas where I feel I can't follow? Now I get an incentive for further discovery about myself and since the days of Socrates self-knowing is virtue, being aware of one's ignorance is already the beginning of wisdom. Being aware of our frontiers and limitations is already stepp-

ing beyond the frontiers and this is not rhetorically said.

Q. When I am in a state of observation, in which we try to be most of the day, I just wondered when I come across nice thoughts and nice things which I would like to follow in that state of observation, can I think: "that is nice", or is that comparing?

V. While one is learning to observe, such reactions as nice and ugly or beautiful and ugly are bound to erupt. A person who has a very keen aesthetic sense will observe the ugliness of a shape, the size, the loudness of a colour, the shrillness of a sound, all that will be registered and recognized, but beyond that I hate it because it is ugly, or I madly like it because it is so beautiful. This part of wanting or not wanting, accepting or rejecting, liking or not liking, this tension of duality does not creep in. When you ask "in the state of observation will the observation or could the observation imply: this is nice, this is beautiful, this is not beautiful" then I think that in the beginning, while still learning observation, this might come up. Later the relativity of all definitions, norms and standards of beauty and ugliness will lose their demarcating lines. It does not imply that you call a square a circle, a square is a square and a circle is a circle. You notice them as such, but the roundness of the circle or the shortness or the angle of the square do not stimulate further reaction.

Q. As I was walking to-night I was talking to a friend and this friend was telling me such nice things, just communicating and I thought it was nice. Now if the person had said bad things or told me something that was not so nice, I can understand, just listening; but if it's nice I get a joy from it.

V. The beauty and the encounter with beauty is bound to result in joy. But I think joy is the response of life and the result of communion, but when that beauty or the niceness has given me joy, my mind wants to convert it into pleasure and say "ha, I would like to have it to-morrow". When the mind wants to convert the result of that instantaneous communion, wants to convert that joy into pleasure, store it in memory and would like to produce the same circumstances to-morrow in order to gain joy again, then the trouble begins. If you see something beautiful and you are with your friend and both of you have a deep love for beauty; you may say it in words or you may just look at each other

and share the communion. You may say it is beautiful or how grand it is or you may not say it. But the very exchange of looks and glances will result in sharing of that deep communion with nature - it is bound to be and it will make your heart joyous.

But joy is not a pleasure. As sorrow is different from suffering the same way joy is qualitatively different from the sensation of pleasure. The sensation of pleasure is momentary, it leaves behind a desire, a lingering desire to have it again, to repeat it again.

But you cannot repeat joy; joy is not a sensation and needs no repetition. In the very event of joy that which has stirred your whole being has enriched you. As when you eat food it gives you nourishment and gives you joy as well as nourishment, in the same way the joy out of communion with nature, communion with your friend, communion with birds, animals, whatever it is, that joy nourishes, enriches you; as the food has enriched the physical system, joy has enriched the whole being. So there is no desire to repeat it again.

A plant has buds and flowers, no two flowers are a repetition of each other. In the same way a person who is living will discover joy in one event to-day and to-morrow in another encounter with absolutely different circumstances; he will come across joy again, because it is somewhere at the root of his being, therefore that is not a repetition of the previous days of joy.

Pleasure can be repeated but joy cannot be repeated, cannot be at our call, at our command.

So in the state of observation, communion and the results of communion and spontaneous exclamations about the event, about the joy, about the sorrow will be there. But in a split second the mind comes back, thought comes back: how beautiful it is, we must come back here to-morrow. Then from the state of observation one has lapsed into the experiencer.

Q. But afterwards, when one has had joy then still some days later one feels happy because of this joy.

You have told us that one should live intense at every moment, so that it is not necessary to have memories of that later on. But I fear it can make our life poorer.

V. After such experimentation, if you find that life becomes poorer, drop it. This is an experimental science. If you feel that living thoroughly from moment to moment makes life poorer, then it is not necessary to carry on the experiment, drop it, leave it.

Dealing with the present, living in the present, meeting the mystery contained in the present moment, if my mind then is distracted by the memory of the past, past joy, past happiness, then that distraction is going to cost me a great deal. I will be removed from my immediate contact with the present moment and the memory will drag me away, so I have no relationship with the present. Life moves on, so that moment has flown away from me unmet, I have had no communion with that moment, with that challenge, with that situation, because I'm brooding.

It is like this: a person had a wonderful delicious meal, say a month ago, at some marvellous place and he enjoyed the meal very much. Of course the richness of the flavours, the blending of the flavours, the deliciousness of the way it was cooked, the way it was served, everything had enriched it. It has not only given him a sensual pleasure but has satisfied his aesthetic sense, has satisfied the eyes, the palate, given proper nutrition to the glands, the muscles; everything was happy, vibrating with happiness.

Now the person sits at a table to-day; it is a good meal, a simple meal, but something reminds him of that meal he had two weeks ago. He says: good but not like that, that other meal was such an excellent, such an extraordinary meal. So with his mind he is trying to taste the flavour of that meal again. Memory gives you back the vicarious experience of the same taste, the same flavour, you see before your mind's eye everything. It can happen to a meal, it can happen to a sensual pleasure, a sexual pleasure, your mind can refer back to anything, the past memory, so there is no relationship with the present, that which is before you, whether it is a meal or whether it is an individual. So there is a gap between the present moment and what it has to offer to me and myself, because the memory has taken me away. This is the way we have been living, and rich is a person, or rich is considered that person who has a very huge storehouse of memories. You remember when questions come up, they come up through an individual but they have a universal content, it is the human mind that speaks through a person. So, whether the memories enrich life or whether living through every moment and going through every experience so thoroughly that you live the full of it: the sorrow or the joy, whether it is bitter or sweet,

whether they bring tears or smiles, whether it is darkness or sorrow or the brightness of joy, both have done something to your whole life. You have grown. So if one grows through each experience and each event in life, then referring to the past memories is like referring to the toys that one used to play with in childhood. You don't feel like going back to these memories, as you don't like to pick them up. Sometimes if you sit in a room and somebody brings them up before you, you might say yes, I used to play with this. A person grows through experiences, becomes more mature. Perceptions become acute, responses become more profound and the sensitivity is so heightened that you need not go high; you're always on the high, you see? You're always there. The sensitivity is so heightened that every experience and every moment is fully vibrant for you.

But after all this is how I have seen it. No one needs accept it. If living from moment to moment and living so thoroughly that no scars of memory or scratches of memory torture you, haunt you afterwards, if this is felt to make life poorer, there is absolutely no reason for any of us to carry on with the experiment. Say one has seen it, experimented with it and finds it impoverishes life, then drop it, try it in another way, discover, find out.

Q. Yes, there is the difference between joy and pleasure, but what do you say about longing, or desire for joy? I mean man must have a possibility in himself, a certain spiritual longing for real joy or real love, because we can grow into that state. So there must be something in him, but we have got to know how to practise it, to distinguish between that real longing for joy and desire for pleasure.

V. How to distinguish between the desire for pleasure and the urge for joy, longing for joy?

The revolt in the young generation in Europe and America has proved it. All the pleasures are available; material, economic facilities are there, means of physical, mental, intellectual pleasure are there and yet the young generation says: not this, not this.

The fulfilment of life is not through this. So there seems to be an inherent longing, an innate longing or urge for ecstasy or bliss of joy. Otherwise young people in affluent countries like Sweden, Holland or America would not run away from the security of affluence and

abundance of means of pleasure.

So there is a basic urge for something much deeper than the duality of pleasure and pain as there is a longing and urge for health for the physical body tingling in the blood, the sensitivity of the nerves. Health is the beauty of physical life, so there is a longing for it. In the same way there is a longing for silence which is the health of the mind and there is a longing to understand the meaning of life, to find out one's place in relation to this vast cosmos, to find out one's roots. Also the relationship with the unknowable, the immeasurable, relationship of the particular to the whole, myself to the universe or even to the cosmos, this urge to find out the "me". I think, it seems to be built-in in the human heart to arrive at the understanding of the relationship with the stars, with the other planets, with the sun, with the birds, with the animals, with the waters, with fire, space, all kinds of relationships. So the awareness of that relationship brings the person into the kingdom of inner joy; out of the tiny little shells of the "I"-consciousness and "sex"-consciousness, the person gets transferred into relationship with the totality of life and that gives him joy. So it is not very difficult to distinguish between the superficial desire of the pleasure hunting "ego", "self", "me" and the deep urge of the whole being for love and harmony, for inner order and relationship with everything around oneself.

I know this may sound rather strange to say that out of bliss we come and into bliss we do go back. Out of immortality is the expression of mortality, out of the infinite is the expression of the finite, out of the formless realities are all forms. This may sound rather poetic; life is poetic, what to do.

So awareness of the relationship of the form to the formless, the finite to the infinite, the expression, the content to the total life, that gives joy. Then you belong to the whole.

A desire for pleasure may result in conflict of interests between persons even in one family or classes in society. There can be a conflict of interests when we hunt for pleasure, but the search for joy does not lead to any conflict, contradiction or a tension among the human beings.

10th Talk and Discussion
Friday-morning 23rd June '72

The foundation of life is the love for life. Life is worth living just for the sake of living, moving with the movement of life and human beings do not belong to classes and countries and races. Life is worth living with human beings as they are.

The best temple of God that I have ever come across is the human form. So human beings should not be classified by the countries they live in, by the colours of the skin they have, by the patterns of conditioning they have, physical or psychological. There is much more to every human being than all the patterns of conditioning and ways of behaviour that he manifests; they are only a part of him. So love of life means in practical terms the love and reverence for human beings.

I know there is somewhere one more question waiting for me, somebody said last night "there is a question" and I said "Yes, to-morrow morning I'm going to take it up". But what I was going to say is: if I have taken up every question, it is not to please anyone of you, to satisfy anyone of you, but here is a challenge through someone. Life throws a challenge at me and life shall not find me unwanting in facing and meeting a challenge. If I do not take it up I am missing an opportunity to live and if at the end of the discussion the listener feels "ha, that is too high, it's not for me, that is for the person speaking from a platform sitting somewhere, it is only for him or her and not for me", and if the listener is left with that feeling, then the speaker has failed completely. Maybe the listener feels "I did not understand it, but it seems to be in the reach of all human beings, so if I do not understand it to-day I might understand it to-morrow, but it is not beyond the reach of a common man". If the verbal communication widens the gap between human beings, what use is the communication.

So taking up every question, every suggestion, looking at every gesture with all the receptivity and intensity and attention at my command, that is the only way to live, how else could I live. The words that I speak are

as sacred to me as my life-blood. I would not waste my life in trying to speak something that has not been lived, that is not important to me. How can I give unto others what is not precious to me? The living together would be like those drama's and opera's acted in theatres, though I love and respect Shakespeare, I would not agree there that life is only a farce or the world is only a stage. There you play roles; when you act a role for three hours, we play a role. Life is not for playing roles.

If you play roles, then you lose the beauty and you will miss the beauty of living. It is sharing, it is exchange, it is participation, sharing the misery, sharing the joy, sharing the stupidity and as we are transcending the frontiers and borders, thanks to the advance in science and technology time and space are shrinking. The global human race is becoming like one family. Economy, political life, everything is interwoven. Man has no way to turn; science and technology have put him with his back against the wall now, has put him in a corner, he has to learn to live as one family, to share life. So this inner equipment to share, to exchange, to love, to live in peace, is the challenge before us.

So such gatherings where individuals from different families and different conditionings come together with the willingness to expose themselves to each other, learn together, grow together, those are the moments of great joy to me, whether they happen in Australia or in the Netherlands, in Norway or California:

Q. I was wondering about your meaning of understanding. A couple of days ago you were speaking about three matters of handling that what we heard in this camp. You can go home and analyse your daily practice and learn from it, or you can think here in this camp about how to handle the difficulties you meet at home, and also you can think "oh, it is not for me, I'm afraid I cannot make it". You were saying that that was given here just now, but I should like to ask the question: is there no growth in understanding? You can be afraid not to reach, not to find the way but there is a beginning if you want to find another place, another inspiration. You will take it up again and again and then there is some growing and finally there will be a movement; because you said that if he is afraid and says it is not for me, he has not understood at all.

V. Understanding is spontaneous, without a time lag.

Q. Is there no possibility for hesitation?

V. First way: one thinks, visualizes the difficulty and thinks them out here, thrashes them out here; second way: one goes back and watches the difficulties and the processes and patterns of behaviour and so on; third way: one leaves it to one's own understanding, what he has absorbed or assimilated or understood, and sees what happens, how it gets translated into relationship and behaviour. Not that I am going to translate it into action, not that I am going to express it in behaviour, but watch how that what has been understood here gets translated by itself and fourth way: someone may feel this is not for me and if he says that, then he has not understood at all.

Is this the way I have spoken? If it is, I think that if any person feels that this is not for me, I can't do it, then he has accepted defeat in the very beginning. You see, when he says that this is not for me, I can't do it, then he has accepted a defeat and once you accept a defeat and give a kind of auto-suggestion to yourself that this is not for you, and say: "I don't think I can do it", then the psychology of helplessness begins to play its mischief. The intelligence instead of getting released within me gets blocked. As a person who is ill says to himself "I don't think I'll ever recover, this is too bad", then he is giving the suggestion to his whole system and the healing power in the body does not get a chance to operate on him. In the same way a person who says "this is not for me, I don't think I'll ever make it", is giving a kind of negative suggestion to his whole being and denying himself the possibility of the release of intelligence and creativity in him. That is why I said that if a person says "this is not for me", then he has not understood what I have been trying to communicate all these days.

Now turning to the fifth factor: Is understanding spontaneous or can there be a growth in understanding? Can it be gradual, that I understand a little to-day and then somewhere in some other situation I understand a little more and it grows?

I would discriminate the process of learning from the event of understanding. Acquiring knowledge is a process, an additive acquisitive process; it is slow, it is gradual. Now "learning"; there can be a process in learning too, but "understanding" is an event that takes place in the person and immediately everything within

the person goes through a change. Knowledge can be acquired, piece by piece; you read a book, you attend a talk or you experiment and through acquisition of pieces of ideas, thoughts and experiences through experimentation one acquires knowledge. Obviously the time factor is involved in it.

Now learning; I am learning to drive a car, a bicycle, I am learning to swim, learning to cook, so also in learning time and space both are involved. I learn a thing and then I try to correlate it to the rest of my life. Knowledge does not get correlated with the whole of my life without extraneous incentives. Knowledge is stored in memory but I need providing independent incentives to myself in the name of ethics, morality, religion, spirituality, society, war, peace, whatever it be. You have to provide incentives, knowledge has not got a dynamism of its own. So there is a double process; acquire knowledge, provide incentives and then only you can bring it into action. So it is a very complex process and you need effort of the will to bring what you have known into practice.

Now learning; one learns and tries to correlate it with the whole of one's life and with the whole of one's being. You don't need a separate incentive there. The desire to learn, the urge to learn provides you with the incentive to correlate what you have learned with the whole of your life and with your surroundings. Supposing I have learned about macrobiotic food and balanced nutrition, I have learned it. The moment I get back, there is a spontaneous incentive to find out how that which I have learned can be put into practice. I don't have to make an effort of the will, the desire is "can I cook the meals that way or what changes are possible within the context of my life?" The first time I go shopping there is a spontaneous desire to go to a reform-store, a health-food store to find things organically grown. I don't have to make a special incentive or special effort. So learning implies the capacity and the availability of an incentive to correlate it with the rest of life. So one complexity less and yet time is involved in the process of learning.

Understanding is; you listen to someone, you may listen to a song of a bird, you may listen to the sound of the flowing stream, you may listen to the roaring of the ocean waves or the thunderstorm and suddenly a kind of awareness of a new relationship dawns within your

heart.

You listen to a person; the person or his words may not be responsible for the event of understanding in you, they might be one of the factors, one of the causes, but the cause is somewhere within you, the maturity that you have. You may read a book now and you may read a book after six or twelve months and suddenly it clicks because the maturity that one has gets related to those words. There is nothing special about those words or nothing special about the person, but just the focus in time and space of your maturity, receptivity and the words, and it clicks. You have now grown into a new relationship with your own body, with your own mind or with your own surroundings. You don't have to correlate it.

When we say understanding is spontaneous or understanding gets instantly translated into action, we are trying to describe the explosive nature of understanding itself. So learning is less complex than acquiring knowledge and the event of understanding is still simpler and less complex than the process of learning. But what is required for understanding? For knowledge: economic pressures, social pressures, pressures of the family, responsibilities and so on. For learning: the desire, the urge to discover, to find out and so on. But what is required for understanding? It seems to me understanding requires receptivity and humility, openness, vulnerability, to be vulnerable to life, the willingness to expose oneself to life and the receptivity.

How does one arrive at this receptivity, this humility, this openness and so on? As far as I have seen it and lived it, the foundation is faith; faith in life. Life is a mystery; there are many paths and many lanes that man has not yet discovered, whether in the east or in the west. Life is immeasurable, indescribable, unknowable, it's vast. The vastness and the immeasurability of life generates in me a faith towards it. Instead of stimulating fear and a sense of insecurity, it stimulates in me a kind of faith that that which has not happened up till now could happen to-morrow, could happen the next moment, but the intellectual sophistication deprives this capacity of having faith. I hope it is not necessary for me to differentiate faith from belief. There cannot be faith in a person, in a human being; human beings are fallible, they are limited. There can be faith in life, faith in - if you like to use the

term - faith in God. God for me is the totality of existence, divinity is the totality of existence, call it life, call it life-cosmic, call it life-universal, call it God, give it any name you will, but there is the vastness, the immeasurability of life, the tremendous potentiality and then there is no fear to open yourself up unto it; then there is no fear of the unknown; the unknown is no more dark. It is only a part of life which has not been known to me, that's all; it is a part of life. Even death becomes a part of life then and one looks forward to the fun of dying. When there is fun in living there must be fun in dying.

You must have read about Socrates, how he was waiting for the cup of the poison hemlock and the person who was grinding it and Socrates was watching how it was being prepared. He said: "I have lived, now I'm anxiously looking forward to see how one can die". So, the poison was administered and he went on talking to his friends and then he said: "Yes, now the feet are getting cold, the toe is benumbed, now the feet are benumbed, now will you cover them with a little blanket, now the numbness has come up to here. He was watching and his disciples were completely lost, they had not seen a person watching the coming of death upon him. He said: "I would like to watch when death comes and not be absent, the greatest fun, the last event, because it is bound to come one day". So he was talking to his friends till at last he said: "It does not seem to be possible, something is becoming chilly here". The last talks and conversations of Socrates are worth going through. He is not a mythological figure.

So life becomes great fun, great sport; one falls down, one hurts oneself, one gets up and so on; it is a great joy.

So there is faith, faith in life gives you the humility that life is not limited to what I have known through the brain; life, the contents of life are not limited to the total knowledge and experience of humanity; there is much more; so that gives humility. Faith gives openness and this awareness of the limitation of human knowledge and experience, awareness of the frontiers of the human brain generates humility - humility, faith, openness. So one is now equipped and prepared chemically, neurologically. A man of faith lives in a very relaxed way. He does not cultivate tensions, there will be momentarily tensions when he has to go through

something, but he goes through the tension in a simple way.

A few friends walked yesterday in the rain and when they came back I was standing in the door and I said: "ah, you're soaked, drenched" and they said: "Yes, great fun". So sometimes your being is soaked in tears and sometimes it is clothed in smiles.

So faith keeps you relaxed and the receptivity, openness and humility do not block the way of life universal to enter, to penetrate through you and is willing to function there, operate on you. Knowledge and experience do not block the way of the unknowable, the immeasurable to step in. So understanding is an event that takes place when there is humility, openness, faith on one hand and on the other hand space for the immeasurable, the unknowable, the unnameable, the mysterious to step in you.

So understanding brings along a transformation, chemical and neurological, which is not of your making and that is why it gets expressed through your behaviour. Knowledge is acquired and put into memory; learning is correlated with an effort of the will, with the rest of your life. But understanding is an event where a change has come over you without your knowing, so it is bound to be expressed wherever you live.

A girl becomes a woman and a boy grows into a young handsome person. They don't have to solemnly sit down and write down the pledges or vows of how to express my youth now that I am young. They don't have to, they are not even aware of it. Suddenly their parents notice "ah, the boy has shot up in the last six months", or "look at this young girl, she is pretty, dancing now". You see, the changes operate by themselves, because they are total. So understanding is the event of total change coming over you through the openness, receptivity and the congenial atmosphere around.

And I come to the last point now, that those who have faith in life and those who have the fearlessness to be open and vulnerable have never to live isolated lives. In the psychical realm there seems to be the principle of love, the law of love as I like to call it. It never allows a real inquirer to be lonely, to be isolated. Life either takes the individual, the inquirer to a place, to a surrounding where the understanding will dawn upon him or life brings the persons, the individuals

through whom the understanding has to come, or the books through which the understanding has to come into his hands, into his neighbourhood. This meeting - the inquirer and the understanding meeting the receptivity of life - this event of meeting is not of man's make, but it does happen.

Not fatalistically, but having observed the lives of individuals, inquirers of various countries, one feels entitled to say that a real inquiry, a real humility, a real faith is never betrayed. Life has not betrayed the faith of inquirers up till now. I have no words to put it in more rational terms before you. People feel that this is becoming occult, this is becoming something mysterious. This is not mysterious, that's why I used the term "law of love" or "the principle of love". Whether it is Lao-tse or Confucius, whether it is Jesus of Nazareth, whether it is Buddha, whether it is a Krishnamurti or a Martin Luther King, or Abbé Pierre in France, life provides opportunities. That is how life seems to move.

So the inquirer and understanding are brought together, the only task remains for us is to open the windows and doors of our psyche, use the conditioned part of our brain as efficiently, as precisely and accurately as possible, enjoy the physical organism given to us with a sense of inner order and freedom and always be vulnerable to the mystery of life.

When the understanding takes place it will not be that every individual explodes into a huge phenomenon and becomes a guiding star or a guiding light unto thousands and millions. It is not important what the capacity of the candle-power of the light is, whether it is five candle-power or two-hundred candle-power. What is important is that the lamp is not unlit. What is important is that the individual becomes a lamp unto himself and in the light of his own understanding marches ahead in his life. It may not be as bright a light as the sun, it may be that the light in my heart can show me a path for taking one more step, that's enough for me. So to live is to take the light of one's own understanding in one's hands and walk in its light, move in its light without grumbling against the darkness around us everywhere; in the affluent countries and the starving countries, the democratic countries and the communist countries. We are surrounded by darkness because the human race is passing through very critical times, old

ways and old ideas and old patterns are collapsing, old institutions are tumbling, collapsing, getting crushed. Even symbols that man created are getting unrelated to the facts and context of life. One who begins to be frightened by the surrounding darkness and feels one's lamp is so small and the darkness so big, then the lamp will not get the fuel with which it can sustain its life. But if I begin to move in the light of my own understanding in whatever, whichever corner of the world I am, then the light of understanding expresses itself in clarity in behaviour, simplicity in behaviour; so when one moves the very relationship, the very expression in relationship provides the fuel for the light and it burns bright.

So let us hope that we will be a light unto ourselves and if somebody comes and smothers the flame of my light, perhaps the faith in life will kindle it again. It is so difficult to speak simply about what happens in life, because life is poetry and the words sound poetic.

Vimala Thakar's publications

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