

**FROM
HEART TO HEART**

VIMALA THAKAR

- 90, 91 "choice" not "choise"
- 96 18th from above "inaccessible" not "inaccessable"
- 105 3rd from above "which" not "wich"
- 109 Please read 3rd to 0th line as follows:
 "creates tension in the human mind. The Hindu honestly feels that The Vedic- The Upanishadic-religion is the **only universal** religion; an honest Christian feels that the teachings of Christ are the real universal religion and a Muslim feels that every non-Muslim is inferior to"
- 109 4th, 5th and 6th from below "divide" not "devide"
- 121 17th from above "system is not" instead of "it not"
- 140 7th from above "refering" not "returning"
- 142 11th from above "expounding" not "expanding"
- 143 10th from above "converting" not "averting"
- 147 15th from below "impose" not "pose"
- 152 7th from above "of" not "af"
- 164 3rd from below "Does the person experience" instead of "is the person experiences"

With due apologies
 from -
 The Publishers

FROM HEART TO HEART

Vimala Thaker

Page	Line	Corrections
1	16th from above	"converse with the people"
7	7th from below	"life" not "live"
16	14th from above	"idiosyncrasies" not "indeasyncracies"
29	19th from above	"self" not "selfs"
40	3rd from above	"of" not "at"
51	4th from below	"past" not "part"
56	14th from above	"is" not "it"
60	7th from above	"the" not "he"
60	12th from above	"through" not "to"
60	19th from above	"I" not "in"
60	8th from below	"seekers" not "speakers"
60	7th from below	"developed" not "develop"
65	11th from above	please drop "in"
65	13th from below	"but" not "bus"
70	20th from above	"choosing" not "chosing"
71	1st from above	drop the word "either" and read "choose" instead of "chose"
72	2nd from above	"do" not "go"
73	13th from below	"forcible" not "forceable"
73	last line	"in" instead of second "by"
77	1st line	"born of" not "born in"
77	2nd from below	"are" not "is"
79	5th from below	"of" not "or"
81	1st line	"morality" not "reality"
81	2nd line	"no" instead of "na"
83	6th from below	"spatio-temporal-relationship"
86	11th from above	"I am not at all" not "I am at all"
87	16th from above	"see" instead of "sea"
87	20th from above	"groove" not "grove"

Rs. 6.55

FROM HEART TO HEART
Vimala Thakar

Published by

Mrs. E. A. M. Frankena-Geraets and Mr. L. E. Frankena,
Surinamelaan 5, Hilversum (Holland)

The Publisher's Note

These pages contain the verbatim report of some of the talks given by Miss Vimala Thakar in Holland. We hope that the readers will enjoy reading these talks as we have enjoyed listening to them.

Fam. L. E. Frankena-Geraets

Translation and all rights reserved
Copyright 1965 by Mrs. E. A. M. Frankena-Geraets

FIRST TALK IN HILVERSUM - OCTOBER 25th 1964

Friends.

In this series of talks, what we are going to do may be rather unfamiliar to all of you. The relationship between one who speaks and one who listens is one of activity and passivity. The speaker is active and the other is passively listening. Now, as I am not a preacher or a teacher or a professional speaker, firstly I would like to invite you to enter into a new relationship of communication, conversation or mutual cooperation. So the relationship between you and me should be on the footing of equality. It should be one of a friendly communication and communion. This new dimension of interpersonal communication might be one to which most of us are not used. But fortunately for you and me, I am an absolutely common person; one of you. I have no claims to any authority. I have no claims of teaching any ideology or preaching any pattern of life. So let us hope that we will grow into a new relationship of mutual communication during these five talks. I love to converse them rather than talk to them or give discourses to them.

I wonder if you appreciate the radical difference between these two relationships. As long as a person is speaking to the people, it becomes extremely difficult, if not impossible, to develop a relationship of friendship, though the speaker might be genuinely anxious to develop it. Let this relationship then be the foundation for the five talks.

Secondly in this first series of talks in the Netherlands, we are going to deal with life as it is and the problems that you and I individually experience in our daily life; rather than with the narration and description, elaboration and explanation of any idea, theory or view expounded by any religion, teacher, cult or sect in any part of the globe. Let us be clear that we are going to deal with our individual problems as we experience them from morning till night in daily life.

Thirdly, I would like to request that while participating in this communication we should give expression to questions and problems which are living and burning in the heart, and talk about things which one has a first hand experience of.

In other words let us not indulge in any academic discussion, or academic argumentation; but let us discuss fruitfully, problems as I see them and feel them. Let us not borrow questions, doubts and problems from books and personalities. Let us not waste our precious time on arguing about borrowed challenges and problems, because that discussion will not lead us anywhere. It will not enable me to perceive truth or understand life in any way when we leave this room. So problems or challenges which are not born and grown in the soil of our hearts, problems which are artificially stimulated or intentionally cultivated, through self-imposed disciplines, can find ready made answers and solutions. But neither those problems nor their solutions enrich our lives; they never transmit Truth or Reality or Freedom. So I would request everyone of us to keep these three points very clearly in our minds before we proceed any further.

Now today we are going to deal with the problem of basic psychological fear. If we peep into our hearts very honestly, we will find that our consciousness is ridden with a variety of fears. I use the word psychological fears because there is no need to go into the phenomena of physiological fears. The physiological fears are in fact inadequate answers to the challenges of nature around man. Every moment nature throws up a new challenge before man. Take for example the challenge of floods. In tropical countries people are faced with it nearly every year when the monsoon sets in. The scientists, technologists and the governments have to find out ways of fighting the floods and providing security for the people against them. In underdeveloped countries there is always a fear of different diseases like malaria, typhus, small-pox etc. Again the medical world has to take up the challenge (and it has taken it up to a great extent) and to help the developing countries with adequate knowledge and

means to fight those diseases. Thus physiological fears and anxieties are dealt with by natural and social sciences. In the twentieth century man has become mature enough to analyse these fears and understand them. So it is possible to get over all manner of physiological fear. Fear of poverty and starvation is being combated in a sane and rational way to a very great extent. All efforts are being made to free man of physiological fear.

So let us proceed to the realm of psychology. As far as the psychological fears are concerned, every individual is unique. Every individual lives in a psychological world that he has created for himself. No two individuals live in the same world. Because from childhood onwards we are busy constructing our own psychological world. So fear experienced by one person is entirely different from the fear experienced by another person. Hence psychological fears are unique to each person. The tensions, anxieties, conflicts and fears experienced by me are by their very nature extraordinarily different from those experienced by you.

Now it is very obvious that no fear can exist by itself. Fear is a feeling experienced in relation to some object. I do hope that everyone sitting in this room will discover this simple fact by watching the process of one's own mind; that there is nothing like fear, an experience of fear, unrelated to an object. I am afraid of death i.e. there is fear of death. I am afraid of losing my husband or my wife, I am afraid of losing her love and respect, thus there is fear of change in my relationship with the others. I am afraid of society i.e. I am afraid that I shall not acquire social recognition and respectability, or if I have already acquired it, I might lose it. So fear is always related to an object.

Moreover it is related to the known. There can't be fear of the unknown. I cannot be afraid of the things that I have not consciously or unconsciously known. Either I have known them or my family or my community or, in the end, the human race has known them. Thus fear is not only related to an object, but is related to an object that

is known. Fear about the unknown is not possible. We are apt to think that we are afraid of death, which is surely unknown to us. But if we try to analyse the anatomy of the fear of death-what do we find? If we honestly confess to ourselves that we don't know a thing about death, if we have the humility to admit that death is an entirely unknown phenomenon to us, that it is something which is unknowable, unidentifiable and unrecognizable by our minds, then obviously death cannot evoke a feeling which we call fear. Then why does death frighten us? Because it means total discontinuance of my present life. Death means a complete loss of everything that I have acquired and accumulated, valued and coveted in my life. Death means separation from those whom I have loved and who have loved me. Thus I know death to imply permanent separation from everything and everyone who has belonged to me. I know death to imply the discontinuity of the I, the Me, the ego and because I cannot stand the idea of the loss, the separation and the total annihilation of the ego I am frightened of death. So whether we like it or not fear of death is the fear of separation and annihilation, rather than fear of the unknown. If there were no attachment to the known, death would not evoke any feeling of fear at all. You are not frightened to see the autumn leaves falling away naturally and soundlessly. On the contrary you go out either for a drive or a walk to enjoy the autumn colours which indicate the decay and fading away of the green leaves. You enjoy the gorgeous and glorious autumn colours. It does not evoke any feeling of fear. The river is flowing. If the river were to say that it would gather all the water and would not allow it to flow because it will never return to itself, it would no longer be a river. You are not frightened to see the water constantly flowing down the bed of the river. We are afraid of death only when it occurs in relation to us. We are afraid of wars in which massacre of human beings is involved. But I am not going into that aspect today.

Let us deal with the basic fear that controls and regulates all our action. I have submitted very clearly that fear exists only in relation

to the known, in relation to the attachment to the known, in relation to the accumulation of the known. Now why is there this attachment to the known? Why do we accumulate at all? Why do we want to belong somewhere? Why do we like to imagine that the 'I' continues after death? What is this phenomenon of acquisitiveness and accumulation, which results in an urge to continue, and around which all our activities generally revolve, the whole psychological structure built upon this desire to acquire and accumulate? This desire is the stuff of our consciousness, it is the driving force behind everything we touch. What is it?

If we try to analyse it, we come across a very interesting psychological fact viz. that everything around us is constantly changing. Nature is changing every minute. Environments are always changing. Thoughts, emotions and reactions of people are all the time changing. Socio-economic patterns and political orders are constantly changing. Cultures and moralities are changing. The history of human life can be described in one phrase: A phenomenon of constant flux. Relationships between nations, races and classes are all the time undergoing a change. So everything changes. Now when we observe this gigantic force of change we forget to include ourselves in that phenomenon. We like to imagine that we are out of this and apart from this vortex of constant change. We wish to believe that we are permanent and desire to preserve that permanency in the tempest of constant change and impermanency around us. We know that the body cannot be permanent. Of course we do try to prolong the duration of the physical organism. In the twentieth century preservation of health and prolongation of life have become relatively easy for those who are alert and active. But everyone is fully aware that physical life is governed by the principle of birth, growth, decay and death. So we imagine that something within the body is free from the touch of impermanency; we like to imagine that there is some part of us which is not a victim of change. What is this permanency in us which we take for granted? Our imagination, belief or conviction about this

permanent entity is based upon what we have been taught by the society in which we happen to have been born. Untold centuries have been hammering into us that there is a 'soul' or a 'spirit' beyond the body and the mind. I am not going into the validity or otherwise of such beliefs and convictions. It is not relevant to the problem which we are dealing with this morning. But let us be clear about one thing; that this so called experience or conviction about the permanency within, is responsible for the conflict with the phenomenon of change. The root of psychological fear is in this belief or conviction of something being permanent within me. I accept change as a law of life on the physiological plane because I cannot escape it. In the psychological world however man all the world over has created an entity of permanency for himself and likes to be firm in that self-created eternity.

If man had seen the truth of change within him and had not postulated an entity of permanency, fear would have had no scope to enter the human heart. But the assumption of permanency divides the flow of life into permanent and impermanent. This division is at the root of every fear. If one would see that the 'I' or the ego is nothing but solidified emotions, feelings, thoughts and memories, that this crystalization creates an appearance of a permanent entity, which creates a resistance to the free flow of consciousness and it is at the root of fear, then the mind would become immediately quiet; then the mind would not crave to acquire or accumulate. Wherefore should one belong to anything and identify oneself with anything when life is a 'dynamic change', when everything is impermanent? There will be no temptation to accumulate and protect ourselves against tomorrow, the moment we realize that no two moments are alike and no two challenges are alike. The protection that I build up today might be completely meaningless tomorrow.

I wonder if I am making it sufficiently clear that non-understanding of the fact of constant total change is at the root of basic psychological fear. The traditional identification with the I, the self,

prevents us from perceiving this simple truth. Our laziness to analyse the nature of the self and the mechanism of the mind and memory, our blind acceptance of a variety of traditional concepts and beliefs makes us live according to these suppositions. Thus we are led into the realm of conflict and tension, which is another name for fear.

Let me assure you that I am not talking about the acquisition of and provision for the elementary human necessities. It is obvious that those needs must be provided for every one in a human and decent way. Acquisition to provide the needs is one thing and accumulation born of greed is another thing. When the mind starts colouring and distorting the purely materialistic needs and starts stimulating artificial wants then we enter into the psychological world.

All complications begin with the touch of the mind. And a mind burdened with conflicts and tensions is not capable of meeting adequately the swift movement of life. Such a mind is busy either ruminating over the past or dreaming about the future. It is not free to live with the present. Freedom of fear is possible only for the mind which dares to live totally in the present, to face the challenges as they arise without allowing memory to twist or distort them. No one can ever be free of challenges. Challenge and response is the content of life. But challenge is one thing and problem another thing. The mind converts a challenge into a problem only when it fails to meet it adequately. It is the reaction of the mind to a challenge, which is called a problem. Problems are not a fact of life. They are subjectively created. Therefore psychological problems are unique with every individual. No two individuals ever have the same problems.

What we have done in the last forty minutes is to discover the spirit in which we have to participate in these talks and discussions. Let us be clear that these talks are given by a person who does not possess or claim any manner of authority. They are communicated by a person who is poor not only in material wealth but is also utterly poor as far as knowledge and cultivation of the intellect are concerned. So these talks are friendly communications. And I have insistently

submitted that this new dimension of inter-personal communication is absolutely necessary if man wants to do away with the age-old traditional relationship of a spiritual leader and followers, of a Master and his disciples. This is necessary if man wants to grow into a relationship of friendship which is based on the footing of equality.

Secondly, we discovered that we are interested in dealing with life as it is and not with any theories about life.

Thirdly, we discovered that we are concerned with problems which are born and grown in our hearts, and not with those which are borrowed from books or personalities. We have found out that borrowed problems lose the quality of dynamism. Borrowed problems are dead and hence they get ready-made solutions or explanations. Dead problems and dead answers never enrich or enlighten anyone's life.

We proceeded then to discriminate between physical fears and psychological fears. We found out that every psychological fear is created by the human mind. We saw that the relationship of the human mind with the known, creates fear, when that relationship with the known is based on acquisition and accumulation, and when it is stimulated by the desire of continuity then that very relationship is reduced to tensions and fears. We went on to find out why the human mind wants to acquire, accumulate and continue. In that investigation we discovered that the inability to meet the phenomenon of constant change within and without, frightens us and gives birth to the desire of acquiring, becoming and continuing. We are afraid that in reality there may be nothing like a self or an ego. We do not want to face the possibility of the non-existence of the I.

The solidified resistance to life is the I. Crystalized resistance to the flow of life is the ego. Through investigation and understanding, it is possible to arrive at a state, in which this resistance melts away. When it melts away, there is no soil in which fear can take root. Such a state of unconditioned freedom is absolutely necessary if we want to solve various human problems existing all over the world.

Only that mind is capable of understanding the nature of problems

and challenges, which is completely free of fear. Thus in the end we arrived at the point, that perhaps I is a myth, it is perhaps an illusion or a mere belief, and that belief is responsible for creating conflict with the fact of constant change. When one becomes free from that belief, then the urge to acquire and accumulate melts away and the urge to continue fades away.

Let us now proceed to discuss. I do hope that no one will feel shy and no one will feel hesitant to participate in the discussion.

Q u e s t i o n e r — How shall we discuss? Which form will it take? Shall we ask questions or state our opinions?

V i m a l a — The way all of you would like to discuss. If you would like to pose certain questions those questions could be taken up by all. If someone wants to say something relating to this morning's topic, he is welcome to speak about it. Let the discussion be as informal and intimate as it possibly can be.

Q u e s t i o n e r — Is not the desire to be happy at the root of fear? We are afraid to change because we feel it will disturb our happiness, whereas the real happiness is contained in change.

V i m a l a — The lady suggests that fear is due to the desire for happiness and she goes on to state that real happiness consists in meeting the fact of change as it takes place every moment. Have I stated it rightly, Madam?

Q u e s t i o n e r — Yes, you have.

V i m a l a — Now, what do we mean by the term 'to be happy'? What is implied in the notion of happiness? Do we know what happiness is? We can't want anything which is completely unknown to us. We can't have a desire for something which is not known to us; it is known to my conscious mind or it is felt by the subconscious. The subconscious contains the memories of the whole human race. You and I contain in our hearts the residue of the total human experience. I was asking, not the lady but myself, whether I knew what happiness is. Is not some description or definition of happiness implied in the very desire? That which can be identified and recognized by the

human mind is surely the known. It cannot be called the unknown. Thus the content of the desire for happiness will and does vary from country to country and from culture to culture. Then what is happiness? Is happiness that state of complete freedom which can never be recognized and defined by the human mind? The lady suggests that happiness lies in moving with the movement of life and not in identifying oneself with anything.

Questioner — You say that fear is always in relation to the known but I have experienced fear which has no relation whatsoever to the known. It has something to do with the unknown.

Vimala — The lady suggests that it is possible to experience fear which has nothing to do with the known and she says that she has had an experience of such a fear. Now we have seen that fear cannot exist by itself. It exists only in relation to some object known consciously or subconsciously. It is not an independent entity which is self-generated and lives by its innate force. It is not a self-energizing phenomenon, it is like a parasite living on the mind's relationship with some object.

Do we ever experience fear which is completely unrelated to the known? When you say you do, I would like to invite you to analyse that feeling which you call fear. After all fear is a feeling which grows in the heart, according to the conditioning in which a mind is brought up and trained. For example, a child born in a communist country will grow up with the fear of the state, but it will not have the fear of heaven and hell, because the pattern of conditioning in the communist countries is entirely different from the pattern of conditioning in the countries where organized religion exists in some form or other. A child born in a country where organized religions exist will have a kind of vague fear of death and the so-called post-death life. Such a fear will be in the subconscious mind though the conscious mind may not be aware of it. Obviously the subconscious is created by the environment. It is nothing mysterious. It is created by the pattern of thinking, feeling and living in which a person is

brought up. So let us analyse that feeling which you call fear. Is it a kind of restlessness? A kind of uneasiness? Is it a state in which the imagination is running wild? Is it the reaction of a hyper-sensitive-ness? What is the content of fear unrelated to an object?

Questioner — Could it be a sense of insecurity?

Vimala — What do we mean by a sense of insecurity? Please, I am not cross-questioning or cross-examining. But we will have to go into the meaning of every word we utter.

Questioner — I think that fear is about the unknown which we cannot understand. All religions are based on this fear of the unknown. Just as an animal is frightened all the time about the security of his life, man is also afraid about his life.

Vimala — Are you suggesting that an animal is frightened though it does not understand intellectually the meaning and the cause of fear? Does it not boil down to what this friend has been stating as a sense of insecurity?

Questioner — Yes, it does.

Vimala — Now what is the unknown? Why should this unknown always create fear? Why can't it evoke joy? Why should it not evoke freedom? Why should it stimulate tensions? Or have we already a ready-made notion of the unknown? Is the unknown also contaminated by the human ideation? If it is really unknown the mind is simply incapable of reaching to that. You mentioned the animal and his instinct to preserve life. Human beings are animals. Perhaps we have carried over that animalistic habit, that instinct of preservation of life to our psychological world. With the biological mutation man got over many animal tendencies and inclinations, but perhaps this sense of constant insecurity has been a 'hang over'. It is necessary and natural to have an instinct for preserving physical life. Preservation on the physical level is desirable and justifiable. Even an Enlightened one, a person who understands the significance of total life has got it. He will not be so stupid or silly to overlook that aspect of life. But we are not talking about that instinct of self-preservation. We

are talking about psychological fear which is another name for the conflict between the permanent and the impermanent. Fear which results from psychological acquisitions and accumulations. Now, when you say fear is a sense of insecurity on the psychological level what do you actually imply? What is the content of that sense?

Q u e s t i o n e r — Is there a clear distinction between a physiological fear and a psychological fear?

V i m a l a — Unfortunately our mind as it is, has not gone into a scientific discrimination of these two. But you may be aware of the fact that the medical science is bringing more and more diseases under the category of psycho-somatic diseases? Which means, does it not, that mental tensions, worries and anxieties lead to organic and functional disorders on the physical plane. The integral understanding of our complex human organism and consciousness is freedom. An integral understanding of total life is liberation. Physical and mental planes are not like watertight or airtight compartments. So when you get a total understanding of the human mind and its mechanism, as you have got an understanding of the human body, it will become easy to maintain mental health as it has become relatively easy to maintain physical health.

Coming back to our previous question, what is a sense of insecurity? What are the implications?

Q u e s t i o n e r — What is this fear which prevents me from being always loving and friendly to people? Many a time I suddenly feel afraid and shut myself away?

V i m a l a — What is this fear, asks our friend, which prevents people from having a relationship of friendship and affection though they really want to be friendly and loving? What is this fear which compels one to close oneself in and isolate oneself from people? Shall we go into this a moment later, Madam? Shall we first follow our previous question to its end? Does that question indicate that we want to have pleasurable sensations and avoid painful ones? Does it indicate that we crave for the company of people whom we like and

insist on avoiding the company of those whom we dislike? Does it indicate that I want to possess everything that I come across; things, ideas and human beings? Do I want every one in the world to live up to my norms, standards and values? Do I want to dominate over every person who comes into contact with me? Do I want to control and regulate the destinies of everyone I come across? Is the sense of possession and domination the content of the fear or insecurity? Does commitment to and identification with a pattern of thinking and feeling lead to a sense of insecurity? A person who does not own a thing will never be bothered by a sense of insecurity. Thus a sense of insecurity implies possessions and ownership by the mind; possession of ideas, emotions, ambitions and thoughts. Obviously such a mind is troubled by insecurity, because it cannot calculate in advance what life is going to unfold the next moment. Does it not make clear that all insecurity is felt in relation to the notion of the I? If there were no identification, there would not be any urge to acquire and accumulate. And fear would not pollute such a state of non-identification. Fear can't be eliminated by any means as long as the identification with the ego is the basis of psychological relationships.

Let us proceed to the question of isolation. Do you know what our relationships are today? Do you know what their texture is? Our relationships are nothing but adjustments between various resistences. I am resisting life in one way and you are resisting it in another way. We try to adjust our resistences when we meet and this adjustment is called a relationship by society. Let me explain. The society in which I am brought up teaches me to compete for material acquisitions and intellectual attainments, in order to become socially respectable. You are taught to earn money, power and prestige through competition. Obviously constant indulgence in competition and comparison creates resistance in our hearts and those crystallized resistences which are called individual character, become our protective walls. So when we meet one another, we meet from behind those screens of reservations. In other words we meet like those

leaders of the competing nations meeting around a table. They are competing for economic supremacy and ideological domination over the developing world; they are competing for supremacy in nuclear armaments and then they meet to discuss the problem of World Peace! On the one hand the socio-economic and political planning of every nation is based on competition and still they talk of preserving peace!

There is thus an inner contradiction in the personality of nations. In the same way we want to love and to be friendly and at the same time we want to own and possess. Have you not come across persons who want to dominate in the name of love? An adjustment between the urge to dominate and the desire to be related, is called a relationship. Naturally I seek the company of those who are agreeable to my temperamental ideasyncracies, my emotional tendencies and my intellectual commitments. In such a company I am jubilant and wax eloquent. On the other hand when I am placed in the company of people who have different intellectual identifications and a different pattern of emotional reactions, then I being unaware, withdraw into myself. So though I may be polite and courteous, there is no real meeting and no communication. Life oscillates between identifying with agreeables and withdrawing from disagreeables. Either we cling to one or we turn away from the other. That is how relationships are cultivated and balanced. Are these relationships worth the name? Are they not a futile play of the obstinate ego? Relationship is possible only when there is absolute renunciation. Only the mind that is free from likes and dislikes, identifications and commitments, is free to meet people and be related to them in friendship. Till the mind is free, life oscillates between the state of total abandonment and partial or complete withdrawal. When we grow into that state of mature freedom, in which the whole being is ever open and receptive, when it is ever flowing and sharing spontaneously with everyone, then and then only will we understand what affection is, what friendship is.

We are carrying within our beings the animal fear, the animal instinct of preservation and other animal habits. Unless the mind goes through a radical psychological mutation, the mind will not be free of fear. A psychological mutation in which all animalistic habits will drop away by themselves, is urgently needed. Unless it takes place we will not be worth the name of human being.

Q u e s t i o n e r — Could it (fear) be lack of faith?

V i m a l a — Lack of faith in what, sir?

Q u e s t i o n e r — Lack of faith in the unknown.

V i m a l a — The mind now wants to play with the unknown as it has played with the known. So instead of calling it fear of the unknown, we now call it lack of faith in the unknown. We insist on relating with the unknown a feeling which we have experienced in relation to the known. Then why do we call it unknown? How can you have faith in something you do not know? I do not know if I am making myself clear. But how can faith and the unknown go together? Even the Gods in whom you have faith are created by you. You have shaped them, you build temples or churches for those man-made Gods and even dictate the code of conduct for them. You then have faith in those Gods. But the real God, the real life which cannot be contaminated by the touch of the mind, which cannot be measured by the mind, defies description and definition.

Do you not see that life is something immensely vast and therefore unnamable? Every mental activity ceases to be in the presence of that which is limitless. Thus the unknown is beyond the grasp of your mind. It is vast as the skies and fathomless as the oceans. It is uncontrollable as the breeze. It cannot be caught and imprisoned in any image or symbol. So all our efforts to impose a relationship with the unknown are bound to fail. Faith in, or lack of faith in the unknown, is thus a contradiction in terms. It seems to me, that the unknown can never be encompassed by the human mind. Unknown is unidentifiable. It is unrecognizable; it is surely unacquirable. It is something which dawns upon us when this monkey-mind becomes

silent. In that silence, the immeasurable illuminates the whole being. It melts away every manner of anxiety and fear. Then the whole life becomes an unconditioned expression of love. We do not know what that love is. We do not know what the unknown is.

I know there are a thousand definitions of love and truth, but they do not help us to become aware of the state of love. Unless the mind is willing to give up completely the process of naming, recognizing and memorizing; unless the mind stops this vicious game i.e. unless this activity comes to an end; the immeasurable has no empty space to step in. Unless there is the space created by silence, the new cannot unfold itself.

Understanding the whole game of the mind, brings about humility, which is silence and in which freedom from fear takes root and grows.

SECOND TALK IN HILVERSUM - NOVEMBER 1st 1964

At the end of our last talk we found that the root of every psychological fear is in the urge for security, and the content of every fear is a sense of insecurity. Let us go deeper into the meaning of this urge for security. What is security? What does the mind actually want, in its urge to be secure, when it is seeking to be safe? To be secure implies to be safe against unforeseen, unimaginable and unpredictable dangers and troubles. We want to be secure against something which is not present at this moment and which I cannot think of today, nor can I foresee it for tomorrow. So, to be secure implies to guard oneself against all manner of disturbance. Security is, in other words, a guarantee against disturbance.

We saw very clearly, last Sunday, that we are not here to discuss how security on the material level could be organised in human life. We are not denying that material security is necessary for the preservation of human life. The human animal, all over the world, needs food, clothing, shelter, education and medical service. Man has got to provide these things for himself. Those who have got all provisions must help others who have not got them yet. Thanks to the advance in science and technology, it is possible today, to create such an order in the human relationships that no man goes hungry, no man lives without a shelter. It is only possible to do this if man wants it. That is not the problem. If there is poverty and starvation in the world, man is responsible for it. Mal-distribution of resources available to man and mal-adjustment in socio-economic relationships is perhaps at the root of it. Nature can and does provide enough to satisfy the basic needs of all human beings; so we are not going to deal with that issue today.

We are going to deal with the urge for psychological security, which is experienced by every one of us. I want to be secure against disturbances in the psychological realm. I do not like to be disturbed on the ideational and the emotional plane. Somehow I like to construct

an enclosure around me in which I can live in peace. Through an intellectual and an emotional enclosure, I want to guard myself against every possible danger. What does this denote? Does it not indicate a recognition of time as a governing factor of our life, governing our relationships? I do hope that this point is clear to every one of us.

Now, time exists on two levels for the human beings. There is that time created by the revolving of the earth and the movement of the rays of the sun. Surely that is what we mean by chronological time. We say the 'sunrise' but the sun neither rises nor does it ever set. Only the relationship of the sun and the earth create time for us. There is really nothing like morning, midday, evening and the night. For the sun there are no days and no nights. The sun simply is. So minutes, hours, days and months is an arrangement created by the human mind to organize our material life with the help of this peculiar relationship between the sun and the earth. This is obviously a fact of life. We are now sitting in Hilversum and this is morning. It is nearly evening now in India and if you go to Japan now, it should be night. So neither the day nor the night has any absolute reality. The determination and division of time is in relation to our physical position on this globe. You might have read the reports of the astronauts who went a number of times round the earth in twentyfour hours. Now those twentyfour hours constituted one day for you. But the astronauts had a number of days in the same twenty-four hours. So the enumeration of weeks, months and years is nothing but a means to arrange and organize human affairs. Thus even the chronological time is not an absolute fact. It is relative to the human mind. It is essential to realize the relativity of time. I need not go into the discoveries of Einstein who introduced time as the fourth dimension. Time as a dimension governing human thinking, feeling and willing. It is extremely interesting to learn how Einstein's inventions revolutionized the whole of physics. This is not relevant to our subject and hence we need not go into it today.

The other aspect of time which is not a fact, but a creation of the human mind is time as past, present and future. If this division is used for the sake of verbal communication and as a part of grammar, it does not do any mischief. But this division does not remain confined and limited to the level of verbal communication; it does not remain limited to linguistics. It enters into the psychological plane and begins to regulate our relationship with people. Have you noticed how the mind stores experiences, ideas, thoughts and reactions and evolves a pattern out of that accumulation? A pattern for thinking, feeling and willing, which gradually crystallizes into a pattern of living? Crystallization takes place first on the conceptual level and then it gets reflected in the physical habits. So let us be very clear about this dual aspect of time in relation to the human mind. Because if there were no recognition of time as past, present and future, the urge for security would never enter the human heart. The urge to accumulate is brought about by this recognition of time as an absolute fact. We accumulate everything in the storehouse of memory to guard ourselves against time. We store them in order to use them when we are confronted with a challenge. We want to store knowledge and experience as a guarantee against time. We are afraid to meet life as it comes. We are afraid to get totally exposed to life. We doubt whether we would ever understand life without the authority of knowledge and experience. So in reality this accumulation is against life. Thus in the name of security, life is spent in acquisition, accumulation and preservation of knowledge and experience.

It is very important to see where we begin the whole game. We are afraid and we want to be secure. For security, we start the game of accumulation and preservation. This is one part of our psychological life. The other part is to create an ideal or aim for life, which will keep us on the track. Thus a child is taught to have some noble ideal for life. Accumulation of knowledge on one hand and having an aim on the other, is a dual process of safeguarding ourselves against the dangers of life. A projection of an ideal becomes very necessary for

a person who is seeking security. We create ideals and beliefs. Some create ideals of economic and political power and others create spiritual ideals. They want to become spiritually advanced and attain the realization of God as they understand Him to be. Thus ideals on the material and spiritual planes are created.

Now what is an ideal? An ideal implies, that I want to become something different from what I am today. Surely that is what an ideal is. It is a point created by the mind to get away from what it actually is. I am violent. I am jealous. The moment I am aware of the violence within me, I create an ideal of non-violence. I say — let me become non-violent. I am attached to things, ideas and persons and I create an ideal of detachment or non-attachment. Ideals are created to attain that which we do not have. It is not material acquisition. It is acquisition on a very subtle plane of consciousness. But the urge to become and to acquire is the same. This constant dual activity of storing into memory and projecting into the future, is the content of our life. We hope to be secure through this double activity. That is how religions get organized and spiritual cults and disciplines come into existence. That is how authority of experience and of ideals is created in human life. This is a plain and simple truth which every one of us can understand if he cares to observe how his own mind is actually functioning.

Now what takes place while the mind is busy with safeguarding itself? What happens to the quality of the mind? And the stuff of the consciousness while the mind is creating enclosures for itself? What is the quality of our total life then? Firstly is it not that the memorising and accumulating creates a burden on the mind? Have we noticed how it sometimes groans and grumbles under that burden? The mind being very clever, plays a trick as soon as it feels the burden of memory. It stores the pleasant ones and refuses to store the painful ones. The mind thus starts selecting and choosing. The acceptance of the happy and rejection of the unhappy ones, becomes the channel of functioning. You might have noticed that mind is troubled by those

memories which it has rejected. Those memories become much stronger than those of the happy events. I wonder if you have noticed, that those memories which the mind wants to reject cling to the mind and those which the mind accepts are already there. Thus this burden has got to be carried by the mind whether we like it or not. Acceptance and rejection based on choice, imply constant wearing out of the mind and when such an exhausted mind comes face to face with the living present, it has no energy and pliability to meet it and understand it. The nature of your perception of the present is determined by your memories and identifications.

I am trying to find out for myself what is taking place in my own mind and I find that the mind that is heavy with the experiences of the past, — experiences of my family, my community, my religious brotherhood, my nation and my race — cannot meet the present but through the screen of memory. And this screen of memory determines the content of my perception. I meet the present according to my conditioning, whereas you meet it according to your conditioning. So we do not meet life. We do not meet the present. We look at the present as a means to achieve something for the future. Either the perception is the result of the past experience or it is a means to some future gain. The present gets stifled and is not allowed to unfold its message or express its immeasurable vitality. That is our life. That is what happens in our daily life. We do not meet people. We meet the images that we have created in our minds. We impose our memory on the facts and hence we really do not meet anyone. This incapacity creates the boredom in our lives and makes us machines of repetitive actions. Is this incapacity not the result of the dual process we have mentioned before? In my investigation I find that it is.

Let us go a little more into the process of creating ideals, beliefs and dogmas and religions. Most of us turn to God or religion either because we are afraid of death, we are unable to understand the mystery of death — or because we do not know what happens after death. It is comforting to feel that God takes the dead in his arms.

It is painful to feel that with death life comes to an end.

So man imagines a kind of continuity after death. The mystery of death and its fear compels man to wish for a continuity and some kind of permanency. Thus imagining a reunion with something permanent, comforts and consoles the human mind. Without bothering to understand what death is, man lapses into self-complacency. Why do I turn to religion? How does religion give me security? Religion tells me that my deeds are rewarded. If I do something good, I get a reward and I get punished if I do an evil deed. The Hindus call it the law of Karma. That notion gives me security. I become assured that even though I have not received the fruits of my good deeds today, I might get them in the future; if not in this life at least in the next life, so on and so on. And the guarantee that good deeds will be rewarded becomes the incentive for good behaviour and not the love or understanding of what goodness is. Do you see the trick of our mind? Do you see how it wants to acquire and accumulate through everything that it comes across? This is only one example of how you derive security through religion. Moreover it gives you security through making you a member of a group. You can belong to a group or community. Have you not observed how Hindus feel great and proud because their forefathers wrote the Vedas and the Upanishads some ten thousand years ago? They identify themselves with their ancestors! It might be the same with the Christians. As the Hindus rarely bother to discover for themselves the meaning of the Vedas and the Upanishads, there might be very few Christians who bother to discover for themselves the meaning of what Jesus has said. Reading interpretations and studying commentaries does not imply discovering the meaning in one's own life. Thus man feels safe when he identifies himself with an invisible and abstract entity, i.e. the brotherhood.

As an ideal provides an escape from what I am, this notion of belonging offers me an escape from the fact of what I am. I do not feel any necessity to probe within myself and find out what the

quality of my mind is; what the texture of my relationship with people is. Please look at the vicious circle created by the urge for security. The mind is busy playing with religions, disciplines and gods in the name of security. It avoids facing itself at any cost. The mind avoids looking into the mirror of daily relationships. Every human relationship is a mirror. One who looks in that mirror can easily find out the actuality about himself. As no mirror deceives you, no human relationship will ever deceive you. If I am alert and watchful in every relationship, I will learn the truth about myself. But surely, it is a painful experience to see myself as I really am. The most difficult job in the world is to face oneself as one is. Naturally we try to avoid it as far as possible.

We have been trying to find out the root of the urge for security. We said that this urge implies recognition of time as a controlling factor of human behaviour. We then went on and discovered that time has a dual role in human life. Time as a relative physical fact created by the positions of the sun and the earth, and time as past, present and future which is a creation of the human mind. Acceptance of time as an absolute fact and ignorance of the truth, stimulate a desire to acquire knowledge and accumulate experience as a guarantee against troubles and disturbances. So the mind becomes heavy with the accumulation and seeks a release through projecting aims and ideals. Ruminating over the past or dreaming about the future becomes the sole activity of the human mind. The mind is thus never free.

We discovered in the end how mind gets crippled through its activity; how mind gets crushed under its own burden. Ruminating over the past and dreaming about the future, incapacitates the mind to meet the present. We went into these aspects. Now, this vicious circle must be broken. The moment we become aware that time is a myth and that the urge for security springs from this myth, past stops haunting you; future stops enticing you. Then the present becomes totally important. In that encounter with the present the mind

becomes naturally quiet. All its activity spontaneously comes to an end. The mind is not forced into silence. It becomes silent when it is faced with its own mischief, i.e. the mischief of imposing psychological time on the fact of chronological time. With the awareness of its own mischief, the cessation of memorising and projecting comes into being. Nothing is reduced to experience or memory. Nothing is projected as an ideal. This silence of the mind is real freedom from the urge for security. No other method or technique can help the mind to become free of fear or security, because every effort implies mental activity. You cannot follow a method or experiment with a technique without employing your mind. As long as the mind is active, it cannot be free. Surely mind cannot free itself through an act of the will. Thus methods and techniques are irrelevant to freedom. Anything which implies the functioning of the mind cannot obviously bring about silence or freedom. You cannot go beyond the mind with the help of the mind. Going beyond the mind means absolute and unconditioned silence of the mind. Spontaneous cessation of mental activity opens the door to the unknown. It is no use stimulating the mind to experiment with some ultra-modern technique. Let me assure you that understanding of how the mind becomes a prisoner in its self-created enclosure results in silence. Awareness of its own limitations makes the mind humble. And in that humility the new is born; in that silence the unnamable Truth dawns upon the human heart.

Q u e s t i o n e r — when you realize that lack of love in your heart is responsible for getting hurt in relationships, is that love also a form of security?

V i m a l a — Are you suggesting that when we feel hurt by anybody's behaviour our lack of love is responsible for that and when there is abundant love in the heart we will not get hurt but will spontaneously try to understand why that person has behaved in a certain way?

Questioner — Yes.

Vimala — But what is your question? Are you suggesting that love is a kind of security?

Questioner — Yes.

Vimala — Is love a security? Do we know what love is?

Questioner — It is not true love. Love cannot be discussed. It is there.

Vimala — She is talking about true love. In fact there is nothing like false love. But the word love has been misused. It is necessary to disinfect that word. It has been associated with wrong things. I am afraid we do not know what love is. But we know what love is not. We can discover that much for ourselves. It is absolutely true that as long as you are not in a state of love, relationship is bound to disturb you. What do we mean by that? There must have been moments in everyone's life when the "I" or the ego was totally absent. Every person must have acted sometime in his life quite spontaneously and with his total being. You must have had an experience in which your action was neither motivated by the ego nor controlled by it; the moments in which the urge to acquire or become was simply non-existent. The total absence of ego in action, could be the experience which is nearest to the state of love. The yearning to give oneself up completely to one's beloved is a common experience. Even the consciousness of that surrender is absent in those rare moments of life. The total abandonment of the whole being in action is perhaps what love means. We are not in that state all the time. Partial abandonment and partial withdrawal is our way of life. We behave with reservations. We are not like a flower constantly giving out the scent to every passer-by. For the flower that giving of the scent is life. Flowing without reservation is the life of the river. Radiation of light and warmth is the existence of the sun. When our lives will become a radiation of unconditional total abandonment, then the question of security will never arise. Security becomes irrelevant to the state of love. When love consumes your

whole being, when it percolates through every layer of your consciousness, the notion of security cannot enter your heart. You enjoy being vulnerable to everything in every moment. Love knows not yesterday or tomorrow. Love is fresh as the morning breeze. It is fresh as the sunrise or the snow of every winter.

So the problem of security exists only as long as the ego exists. Security being in relation to the ego, it is irrelevant to love.

Now we were saying that the ego creates enclosures in the name of security and becomes its own prisoner. We were saying that when one becomes aware of this basic mischief, the mind stops fooling about. In that silence which is freedom, reality can come to life. In fact no words can describe what happens in that state of spontaneous silence. Words are useful only to state what is false. Words are helpful as long as the ego is operating. In the realm of silence or freedom, in the state of being, where the ego is totally absent, the question of security simply does not arise.

Questioner — I would like to know what you understand by wisdom. Is wisdom equivalent to knowledge and experience?

Vimala — What do we understand by wisdom? To me, wisdom is that sense of accurate and precise discrimination, which is arrived at, after one has gone through many experiences and one has acquired knowledge. It is the residue of knowledge and experience. A mind that has gone through a variety of experiences develops a kind of intuitive perception; it can discriminate what is proper and improper, good and bad, so on and so on. It has been called a virtue by some. Wisdom is a capacity for accurate intuitive perception. It is perhaps the essence of knowledge and experience. Not every person develops wisdom. Those who are alert and watchful transform experience into wisdom. Wisdom is refinement of human mind and reason. Let us not forget that it is still a capacity of the mind.

Questioner — I should like to state that as we become one

with the experience of beauty, if we could become one with the experience of pain, the pain would not hurt us because we live in it.

Vimala — It is suggested that in the moments of an experience of beauty, you are with it and in it and if we could be one with the experience of pain and sorrow, if we could understand the cause of pain and the nature of pain, then the pain would disappear. Then the pain becomes secondary. It needs a very sensitive and vigilant mind to observe the phenomenon of pain. When you feel hurt or humiliated, when you experience sorrow, the ego immediately starts struggling against that sorrow. In the moments of happiness the ego is quiet. But in the moments of sorrow and misery the ego, the self, becomes tremendously active. It wants to conquer the misery; to overcome the pain. And in that very effort to overcome pain, the self creates another set of miseries, another chain of sorrows.

Now is it possible to remain alert and observant and yet not react to the pain? If you do not react to pain but try to understand how it came about, not only your particular pain or sorrow, but the phenomenon of sorrow in relation to the total human life, then the activity of the self gets suspended. Thus it needs a highly sensitive mind to observe and understand pain while one is going through the moments of pain. Have not you experienced or observed what happens to the mind when one is going through a long illness? The physical pain creates a kind of self-pity in the mind. That self-pity is the real content of sorrow. A complex of self-pity is created by the mind out of physical pain or disability. The mind gradually starts taking a morbid joy in the continuity of pain. If you observe your own minds in the actual moments of pain, insults and humiliations, you would find all this taking place within you. You will discover how the mind tries to glorify itself through that sorrow. So you see that it is difficult to be alert and not to allow sorrow or misery to corrupt your mind, not to allow insults and humiliations to create a complex of martyrdom in you. It is extraordinarily difficult to have

a healthy and sane approach to pain and sorrow. It needs tremendous energy and alertness to have such an approach. If and when the mind can do it, pain loses its sting. The enquiry of truth penetrates the sorrow and goes deeper within you.

Questioner — Life knocks you down and you find yourself in a very difficult position. Every one used to compare me to my brother who was very clever. It created an inferiority complex in me. I was on the verge of committing suicide. Then I came across two Christian themes: the Lord tries them whom he loves and the Lord gives every one force to bear his cross. And from that I got strength, I felt that there was someone looking at me and that I was not alone. I never felt any comparison thereafter. Is this wisdom?

Vimala — I wonder if I have understood you correctly. Will you please correct me if I present you incorrectly? The gentleman is trying to say that when you feel alone and knocked down, if you can comfort yourself that in the eyes of God all are equal, then you do not feel any inferiority which you would otherwise feel. He proceeds to ask whether this is wisdom or is it getting thick-skinned?

It is not getting thick-skinned, surely, if the feeling of loneliness and inferiority has come to an end as a result of perceiving that no two human beings are ever comparable. To compare human beings is the real poison. Comparison, evaluation and judgement of human beings is a poison which contaminates the whole life. This is a simple fact. Every human being is unique and extraordinary. As no two flowers can ever be compared, as it is meaningless to say that a lotus is more beautiful than a rose or that a rose is more beautiful than a jasmine, so is the comparison of human beings also utterly meaningless. To recognize and understand the difference and variety of talents is one thing and to judge human beings and compare them is quite another. The difference and variety is the wealth of life. Is it not? Our society is based on comparison. The whole educational system is based on that. Society evaluates you

according to the measurements of wealth, power and prestige. People like you and me who have no wealth and power, who have been fortunate enough to be born as the commoners, have the privilege of enjoying the uniqueness of everything around us. Everything has its own significance in life, whether it is a tiny blade of grass or a huge banyan tree. Everything has its own beauty and its own place. Awareness of this beauty is the realization of what you call God or Reality. So if through this awareness all comparison has come to an end, then it is not getting thick-skinned. I am not using the word wisdom, because it is a capacity which can be developed, whereas awareness cannot be cultivated. You act according to the wisdom whereas action flows out of awareness without any effort on your part. In the realm of awareness, mind does not function, but wisdom dwells in the realm of duality. In the realm of awareness action flows out of an integral understanding of total life. Have I made myself clear?

Questioner — Yes, Madam.

Questioner — May I say a word about mind? I think it is something very marvellous. If we cannot make a proper use of it, it is our own fault. I see that mind is something positive.

Vimala — What is positive, please?

Questioner — You say mind is of so little use. But what remains when the mind is still?

Vimala — You are saying that if we cannot use the mind properly, it is none of mind's fault. How can the mind be still and what remains when it is still? Mind is of no value and it is not the right medium for coming face to face with Reality. Mind is not the instrument which could help you to meet Reality, God or Truth. Mind is of immense value for the furtherance of sciences and advancement of technology. Mind is useful when you want to communicate on the verbal level. But surely, there is a deeper level of existence, deeper than even the unconscious, and mind cannot

penetrate there. There is a dimension of existence in which we do not exist and function through the mind. What I have been trying to say is that mind is unable to measure the Truth. Truth is beyond the touch of mind. Truth cannot be captured in any image or symbol. Reality being something unrecognizable and immeasurable, the mind cannot know it. Mind can recognize only that which it knows. Mind can identify only that which is known either to me or is felt by me in the unconscious, which is the residue of the collective experience of the whole human race. Truth cannot be even verbalised. Mind cannot form even an idea about the Truth. Ideation, imagination and verbalisation being the groove in which the mind functions, I say that mind has no scope as regards the direct perception of Reality. I am not saying this in any derogatory sense. I am pointing out the limitations of the mind. Reality can come to life only in that silence of the mind, because it is not of the mind.

THIRD TALK IN HILVERSUM - NOVEMBER 8th, 1964

Those who were present for the last two talks, know it very well by now that these talks are intended to clarify the mechanism of our own mind, and the process of its working on the conscious as well as on the unconscious level. These talks are not meant to expound any philosophy, to propagate any ideology, or to convert people to any specific view of life.

I have to make a special request today to each one of you, to be very careful while listening to this morning's talk. We are going to enter deep waters today. Let me assure you that the words which will be used will not have any terminological association attached to them. It is necessary to make such a request, as the subject is rather a complex one. Moreover you must have noticed by now, how difficult it is to listen to anything; not only to any speech or discourse, but to listen to anything at all. It is one of the most difficult jobs to listen to something, without translating or interpreting; without allowing the mind to compare and judge according to our own theories and ideas; our own norms and standards; our preferences and prejudices. To listen to a word of a friend, to a whisper of a bird or to a note of some song, without allowing the mind to creep in, is extraordinarily difficult. The moment the mind creeps in and passes a judgment on what is being said, the act of listening comes to an end. The mind is eager to identify everything. So whether it is perception through the sight, the ear, or the touch, our mind does not allow it to be a simple act of communion. The mind tries to name it, identify it, recognize it, verbalize it and to store it in memory. So it is indeed extremely difficult to listen to something without interpreting it simultaneously. And so we cannot listen to anything at any moment, without allowing memory to contaminate the freshness of that experience. Most of the time we are listening to the noise which mind creates; to our own noise. When we are listening to talks and discourses, we are in fact listening to our self-

created preferences and prejudices; to the noise of our memory. You might have noticed this in your lives.

This mind becomes silent only when it is confronted with a phenomenon which has staggeringly huge dimensions. It is quiet only when it cannot interpret. As long as it is able to interpret with the help of memory, and pass a judgment, the monkey-mind is always busy. So an experience of simple observation and simple listening is a very rare one. I was wondering whether it would be possible for all of us to communicate without the contamination of the past. I am not at all suggesting that any one or every one should agree with what I am going to say. Let us leave that nonsense of agreeing and disagreeing to the political, religious or spiritual leaders. We are common human beings. Let us communicate with one another. I am not expecting agreement or disagreement on your part. When I say that the mind should neither compare nor judge, I am not insinuating acceptance on your part. Where is the charm of communication, if one is anticipating agreement or acceptance? If one wants carbon copies of one's own minds, one should rather sit at home and listen to the noise of the mind. We are not here for that. Let us listen carefully to everything that is being said without hurrying to find out whether we can agree with it or not! Let us listen to it without exerting to judge it. You know, just to listen to it. That is vitally necessary. Let me assure you that I am learning as much through these talks as any one of you may be doing. I am discovering things which were not known to me previously. I mean it.

We are going to talk about authority in individual and collective life. The terms 'individual' and 'collective' seem to be familiar. At least we feel that they are. An aggregate of individuals is called collective. But this collective and its life is different from the collective life of a herd of animals, or a group of birds. In a group of birds, they all fly together. There is an understanding among them. They have their own gestures, symbols and languages. To some extent there is a togetherness among the birds. There is a feeling of togetherness

in a herd of animals. But when we talk of a collective life of human individuals, we imply much more than only a feeling of togetherness. We imply an arrangement in relationships; a management of lives; an administration and so on. Thus as regards the human beings, collective life comes into being on the implicit or explicit understanding, that the individuals would contribute towards the organization of the collective life and would sacrifice a part of their individuality to enrich it. So contribution and sacrifice together create an order in the so called collective life. It is not necessary to go into the whole human history or to go back to Rousseau and his 'Social Contract' theory. It is not necessary to go into the evolution of society, states and nations. Suffice it to say that the individual has invested power in the so called collective. It is he, who has relegated powers and duties to the collective. All the powers vested in the collective today, have been relegated by the individual. You all know what you regard as the collective life. The authority that the collective has, was initially conferred by the individual, in order to organize and manage relationships. That authority has become a tremendous force in the hands of society. It has wrapped up the individual in its folds to such an extent that there are no individuals left anymore. Nothing like an individual mind exists anymore. Mind has become a product of education, environment, cultural and religious patterns in which one is brought up. It is a mechanical process now. We shall go into the details presently. There are the so called individuals and there is what you call collective life. Whether an individual is the end of the collective or the collective is the end of the individual; whether the society exists for the individual or the individual exists for the society is converted into a debatable question. It is also a controversial point for many a people, whether the goal of the individual and of the society is the same, or whether there is a conflict between the two. Social sciences like economics, political philosophy and sociology are intended to deal with these problems. We are not going into those aspects. We are going into the basic problem of what

an individual is. Can an individual live apart from the society? Is it necessary to go into isolation if one wants to live as an individual? Is it possible to live in society and yet maintain one's individuality? Surely that is the crux of the problem.

Now, it is obvious that there is no life in isolation. I know that people withdraw into isolation; they go to caves; they retire to monasteries; they join some spiritual centres; but surely, they create a different pattern of relationships in ashrams and monasteries. They create their so called religious brotherhoods. So they withdraw from one kind of relationships in order to create another set of relationships. They do not live in complete isolation. In the East some seekers of truth retire to caves. They do withdraw completely from the civic life. But I question the fact of their being alone. Physically they might be alone. But they do not get free of society i.e. their psychological structure, by such physical isolation. As long as you carry your mind to the cave, you are with the society. You know, the mind is a product of society. Those who have been to the East know very well, that there is a competition for spiritual superiority; that there are jealousies and comparisons; that there are conflicts and hatreds among monks and nuns. The big monks and sadhus have their disciples and followers, so they are living in a world that they create for themselves. Isolation and life cannot go together.

Isolation is death. Life is to be related. Let us be very clear on this point. No human being can and does live in isolation. As long as one is living with the mind, on the mental plane, one is virtually living in some manner of relationship.

On the other hand there is no life, when you identify yourself completely with the society. It is an open secret that in the communist world as well as the so called Free World, human mind is being constantly regimented. Regimentation of thought and feeling, brain-washing and indoctrination has been going on in the communist world for nearly half a century. Elimination of Capitalism through a class war, dialectical materialism, abolition of religion, so on and

so on. In fact the communists have evolved a new religion. The State seems to be the God and worship of the state seems to be the religion. No withering of the State and no wiping out of the state boundaries as the First International had propounded. Somehow regimentation of the mind seems to have become a way of the Communist world. Nearly half the population of the world is living that way.

We have no reason to feel happy that we are not living under a communist regime. The so called free world has got its own ways and methods of regimenting the human mind. Have you observed that all industry, trade and commerce have special psychologists working in their department of advertisements? The psychologists have to study the ways and means of tempting the human mind; the technique of enticing the mind on the conscious as well as on the unconscious level. So the science of advertisement is exploited to create tastes and stimulate needs. Likes and tastes are created, moulded and regulated through the television, wireless, newspapers, magazines and films. Organized entertainment is as dangerous as the organized religion; it is as dangerous as ideological indoctrination through education. We have become so used to go in, for ready made food and clothing that we have formed a habit of going in for ready-made opinions, evaluations and judgments about human life. Ideas, thoughts and feelings can be bought and sold. It is a very inhuman business if you really go into its most subtle nuances. Every sensitive mind is found to feel humiliated when it sees through the whole game; when it sees how authority is created over the mind; how the mind is regimented through that invisible authority. It is easy to feel repulsed against the naked form of authority in the communist society. It is difficult to understand the refined and masked forms of authority exercised in the Free World. But it is as brutal and callous as the first one.

Individual life, thus, has become nearly impossible. Now we are asking ourselves whether it is possible to live in this society without losing our uniqueness? Whether it is possible to live in

freedom without physically withdrawing into isolation? Is it possible not to be enslaved by the Society and not to be tempted to go into isolation? Is it possible to live without accepting any kind of authority at all?

A mind that does not accept any authority, not even its own, is the religious mind. A mind that lives in complete freedom is the religious mind. A religious mind is not one, which tries to go to a church or a temple. Surely, a mind that accepts beliefs and dogmas can't be a religious mind. A mind that starts functioning on the basis of authority is not an intelligent mind. Acceptance of anything which you have not understood, the meaning of which you have not discovered in your life, is slavery. Whether you accept a pattern of dress or a pattern of thought, without discovering its meaning in your day to day life, is a slavery. Accepting authority of ideas and beliefs is as devastating as accepting authority of a dictator. I do not know what religion means to all of you who are sitting with me in this room. Is religion a hobby? We have economic security; we have a home, a family and all the comforts, so some of us develop a hobby of reading; some cultivate a hobby of writing poems or novels; some have a hobby of smoking and drinking; some love to go on long voyages. And some people develop the hobby of reading religious books, going to the churches and listening to some spiritual discourses. Is religion a hobby to be cultivated after satisfying the animal comforts of the body? Is it something to be indulged in, in old age when we have one foot already in the grave? What is religion? Is religion a set of beliefs to be taught to children? You teach a child what to think and what to feel. You tell the child: 'This is the truth because the Bible has said it'. This is the truth because it is written in the Vedas; in the Upanishads; or it is written in the Koran. We ingrain the acceptance of authority in the very blood. Who bothers to discover the meaning of life? Norms of morality are accepted without taking the trouble to find out what is morality. Whether it is Roman-Catholic religion, orthodox Hindu Religion, or the progres-

sive religions of Buddhism, Zen-Buddhism, Theosophy and Anthroposophy or the new Krishnamurti religion, acceptance of authority seems to be the foundation. We are not suggesting that those great men have not contributed to human thought and experience. We are saying that accepting anything without discovering its meaning in one's own life is meaningless. It is a poison which destroys the sap of life. It dulls and benumbs the mind, it stops the growth of mind. And our lives are based on acceptance of authority. It seems to me that the beginning of true religion consists in questioning the validity of anything offered to you. The right kind of enquiry into the meaning of everything and the discover of the truth in one's own life is the beginning of religion. It is a first-hand discovery of truth. That surely is an arduous task. It needs tremendous energy which is a capacity for total attention. We are not prepared for it. We like everything prepared, cooked and even digested for us. We like to be provided with ready-made experiences of reality. This habit of being provided for, is causing the loss of sensitivity. We are losing initiative and creativity. If we examine our lives we will find out how much we live on imitation, repetition and conformation to authorized patterns of thinking; how rare are the moments when we live spontaneously and creatively. How rare are the moments when we are not repeating someone's ideas or we are not imitating someone's way of life. Living as a flower does; living even as a blade of grass lives and flutters in the wind. Life and creation, freedom and spontaneity demand a tremendous work on our part. We are lazy. We do not like to work hard upon ourselves. So we go in for the easy way of accepting authority. To me, a religious mind is a mind that accepts nothing on the authority of anyone living or dead. That is real humility. Trying to discover the truth for yourself, is the essence of humility. It is the essence of learning. And you know only that person lives who is learning, every moment of life. I was wondering if we are interested in having a religious mind, in living religiously. That austerity of learning, of discovering for

yourself is needed. Are we prepared to live such an austere life?

For then, you can't have the luxury of having ready-made opinions and evaluations at the challenges of life, without causing any exertion to your brain. You cannot have the luxury of passing judgments on everything and everyone that you come across. An austere life is a very simple life. So no acceptance, no repetition, and no imitation; surely this is the essence of austerity. All the show of external austerity which is cultivated is sheer nonsense. So if we are interested in finding out what religion is, if we are interested in living in complete freedom, then let us proceed to find out how we can become real individuals. Not the egoists or individualists of today, who are revolting against everything in society. You know the Beatles, the Beatniks and the Anarchists. I am not talking about that kind of revolt, because such revolt is a reaction. You revolt against something. Revolting implies rejecting one pattern of life perhaps in order to select another pattern of life.

Rejection is possible only when you have a choice. Rejection is possible on the basis of choice. I like to go by my likes and dislikes; my impulses and desires. If my parents or teachers do not allow me to do so, I revolt against them. So choice — explicit or implicit — is at the root of revolting. Otherwise rejection is as meaningless as acceptance is. Thus revolting has no relevance to the freedom about which we have been talking. Freedom is not revolting against something. Freedom is neither for anything nor against anything. It simply is there, like the scent of a flower. Freedom is the scent of a mature mind. You know what maturity is? It is self-knowing. One who knows oneself totally, one who is aware of every movement of the self, is mature. Freedom is the perfume of self-knowledge. I am not being poetic at all. I am no poet. It is a simple fact of life. Maturity is self-knowledge. And freedom grows only in the soil of maturity. An immature mind can never be free. It lives on authority. It moves in acceptance and rejection. It lives through choice and selection. As long as there is choice, the mind is not mature. A mature mind under-

stands life as it is.

You do not accept or reject the sun-light, do you? You simply see it, you enjoy it. You don't have to believe in the sun-light. You don't have to believe in the beauty of the ocean. You directly see it. And one who is interested in understanding life need not go into beliefs and dogmas. Let one go the way of watching oneself in action.

Now, what do we mean by selfknowledge and how does one proceed to know oneself? Every one of us may be aware that we live on a dual plane of consciousness. The conscious and the unconscious which includes the subconscious. Generally we live on these two. I am not saying there are only two planes. I want to be cautious. Life is not limited to these two. I am only stating that while we are awake and while we are asleep, we live in the realm of these two. The conscious mind is trained from our very childhood. You know all the ways in which it is conditioned – education, environment, culture, religion, literature, the political and economic set-up – all these produce what we call the conscious mind. The conscious mind is created by the society. While we are awake – if at all we are really awake – the conscious mind is predominant: we speak, we sing, we think, we feel, we act. The I is active, the self is functioning, and we call it the state of being awake. Have you observed yourselves in action? Have you observed how many actions are born of the conscious mind, entirely of the conscious mind and how many are rooted in the urges, drives and ambitions lying dormant in the unconscious? How many actions are controlled and directed by the unconscious? It is an interesting thing to discover, you will find, if you care to observe, that even your feelings and emotions are moulded by the unconscious. So this interplay between the conscious and the unconscious goes on, in the day time. The conscious mind seems to be acting, though it is reacting according to the intimations and dictates of the unconscious.

While we are asleep, the unconscious is more active. Dreams indicate that activity. Dreams are, surely, suggestions and intimations

thrown up by the unconscious. Thus the mind is active whether we are awake or asleep. If you observe with sensitive alertness, you will discover that there is always a tension between the conscious and the unconscious, I want to be at peace with the world and with myself, I want to be nice and friendly with everyone. I leave my bed in the morning feeling that there is going to be a new beginning of my life. No more envy; no more jealousy; no more anger and no more hatred.

The baker does not bring bread in time. You wait and wait. The thought that you will have to go to the city in cold weather irritates you, and after some time the feeling of irritation changes into anger. You try to suppress the feeling of anger or irritation. The conscious mind thus gets into a conflict with the unconscious. You want to be very nice and gentle to your husband or wife, and unfortunately some words escape his or her lips that displease you. You know that he or she did not mean to hurt you. But those words remind you of some incident that had taken place weeks ago, perhaps months ago; so the screen of memory comes between you two. You say to yourself then that you could have been loving and gentle to him but for his words. You want to live in humility; but the ambition to acquire power, position and prestige, lying somewhere deep in the unconscious comes up and prevents you from doing so. Without your knowing, it gets reflected in your gestures, words and movements. The desires and urges seething in the unconscious get an upperhand while you are moving about in your waking hours. Ofcourse you cover up the whole mess with politeness and etiquette; with courtesy, so on and so on. We are very clever in covering up the mess within. We are busy doing that practically all the time. We are nearly experts in covering up and hiding the conflict which is boiling within. So this tension between the conscious and the unconscious goes on in our waking and sleeping hours.

The conscious mind does not function while you are asleep. It withdraws completely from the external world and so do the sense organs. But the unconscious is active. The conscious mind wakes up when

there is a strange dream. If it is a dreadful dream you scream or weep, and you wake up. When this tension or conflict becomes intense, it crystallizes into psychological idiosyncracies. When the conscious mind cannot control the momentum of the unconscious, you develop certain characteristics, certain whims and fads; certain obsessions. Your relatives and friends feel surprised when they discover it and eventually they get used to it. You adjust to the whims of your friends and they adjust themselves to your whims. That is our life. Adjusting to one another's idiosyncracies and resistences is called a relationship by us. When these idiosyncracies also get beyond adjustments then you consult some psycho-analyst or a psychologist. In other words as long as you can manage to cover up neuroticism under the name of idiosyncracies, you carry on your daily routine. When that neuroticism overwhelms you completely, then you consult the experts. Many of our neurotic tendencies are glorified under the name of personal characteristics. You start trying to understand yourself only when you get mentally ill. Then psycho-analysts or the so called spiritual teachers become your refuge.

Most of us are not aware of all this, and do not bother to understand why we act in a particular way. The first step is to become aware of the whole business. Second step is to control the conflict or to battle against it. The third step is the awareness of your inability to do so. The last step is to seek for help. I know, I am going into deep waters, but we have only two more talks and we must get to the deeper layers of consciousness if we want to enter the realm of silence. Now what does a psycho-analyst do? He provides you with an explanation, why a particular idiosyncrasy is there. He explains the whole phenomenon according to the theories laid down by Freud, Jung or Adler. He helps you to readjust yourself to society. If you go to a spiritual teacher, he most probably gives you a method to overcome the conflict. If you are suffering from anger, you might be advised to take a vow of silence. In the beginning, for a week or so; then once a week, and eventually

that silence becomes a habit of the mind. If you are obsessed by sex, you might be advised to take a vow of celibacy. If you suffer from greed, you might be advised to fast. These are rather simple examples, but the meaning is very clear; some process of technique is suggested for overcoming the tension. Explanations of the conflict and the capacity to adjust oneself to society, or techniques of overcoming conflicts, do not help you to get free of the momentum of the unconscious. We said that freedom was the essence of religion; we said that maturity was the content of freedom; and we said that self-knowledge was maturity. Now, we discover that explanations and techniques do not set one free of the momentum of the unconscious.

The conflict between the conscious and the unconscious will never come to an end, unless one is free of that momentum. That momentum is not created by you or me personally; it is the past of the whole human race. It is the residue of the collective human experience of all the bygone centuries. You cannot escape that momentum. You may not be aware of it, but you carry it within you. You may not understand the implications of carrying that within you. But it is there all the same. It is a tremendous force. It has its vitality and intensity. All efforts to control, to suppress or to subjugate the unconscious are futile. Those who try to do so are on the wrong track. Those who hope to discipline the unconscious are also — I am afraid — not on the right path.

Is there then a way out? Is it possible to get free of this vast and deep ocean of the unconscious which operates as the substratum of your whole being? All the conscious actions are like the ripples on those vast and deep waters. It is at all possible to get free of this tremendous and terrific force? The psychologists say that it is not possible. They tell you that the unconscious is indestructible. It is unconquerable. It is uncontrollable. Are we then to live as the slaves of the unconscious? Are we to be lifelong victims of the unconscious?

With all the humility at my command, I say it is possible to get free of the unconscious, if one understands the total thought-structure; how thought is born; how it grows and builds a structure for itself; and what experience, memory and knowledge imply, because all this is the stuff of the unconscious, memories of the past, urges and ambitions created by those memories, feelings and sentiments provoked by thought – not your thought or my thought – but the thought of the family, the cultural and religious community or even of the whole human race. Unless one understands this whole thought structure and the mechanism of memory, the significance of knowledge, one will not be able to enter that state of awareness, in which the unconscious becomes as trivial and insignificant as the conscious mind; in which it is possible to observe a thing without the mind contaminating the perception; a state of freedom in which it is possible to listen to everything, without imposing our interpretation upon it. Next Sunday we are going to talk about the trap of knowledge.

Let us, therefore, look at the field we have covered this morning. We started with saying that the individual and the collective life are not antagonistic to each other; the collective life is a projection and extension of the individual life. We proceeded to discover whether an individual can get free of the authority of society. We dealt with the conscious and the unconscious part of the human mind. We said the conscious mind was the product of society. The unconscious, on the other hand, is the untapped and unexplored part of the human mind. Most of us do not know anything about it. We are aware, all the same, that the unconscious controls the conscious and that it has a tremendous vitality. We discovered that the conscious and the unconscious were always in conflict. We found out how we suppress that conflict and how we consult experts when it goes beyond our control. We went into the details of explanations and techniques provided by the psychological as well as the spiritual specialists. In the end we found out that none of them helps us to

get free of the momentum of the unconscious. Momentum of the unconscious means the momentum of memory, momentum of thought and feeling. We shall find out next Sunday if it is possible to get free of all that.

Questioner — It is easy to discuss when one does not understand deeply. Many young people discuss life and talk about it through-out nights, though they do not understand anything about it. But honest persons cannot discuss. What you have said is so profound, that there is nothing to discuss about it, if one understands it.

Vimala — The gentleman is saying that discussion is possible only when you do not understand. Surely an academic or argumentative discussion is possible, when you do not understand or you don't care to understand. And none of us is interested in such discussions, for the simple reason that this is not a debating society. You can hold a debate upon borrowed problems and answers. But that is an immature juvenile business.

We are interested in a discussion which will help us to understand our living problems; which will lead us to the discovery of truth hidden in our daily life. For many an individual spiritual enquiry begins with borrowed problems. Death; life after death; liberation and immortality; all those are borrowed problems. None of us is bothered about liberation, about freedom in daily life. Discussion about truth and freedom is an intellectual past time for most of us. Our friend suggests that one cannot discuss such serious problems lightly. One cannot throw words and ideas at one another as the children throw empty shells on a sea-shore.

Sirs, what I communicate with you is as vital to me as my life-blood. My words may not be precise; the expressions may not be chaste; but what I try to verbalize is life-breath to me.

Questioner — You told us about our being bound by the race.

Vimala — Did I say we are bound by the race?

Questioner — No, you did not—but—

Vimala — I am not trying to cross-examine but we will have to be precise. I said that the unconscious contains the total experience of the human race. This unconscious regulates the movements of the conscious. Now what is the question?

Questioner — Could it be like a ring-pass-not?

Vimala — I do not get you. Could someone help me to understand her?

Questioner — It is a point from which you cannot get any further in your present incarnation. I can't say it more clearly.

Vimala — Would you state your question without bringing in that incarnation? It is rather a dangerous word. It has got a very powerful and intricate association. So let us keep it aside for a moment. Now, what is the question?

Questioner — It is difficult to state it without bringing in reincarnation. Because we have a ring-pass-not in every incarnation and...

Vimala — What is incarnation, Madam?

Questioner — It has something to do with your past, your soul...

Vimala — I am sorry, but I cannot understand the question.

Questioner — May I help you?

Vimala — Yes Sir, please!

Questioner — There is a theory of reincarnation. It is regarded that when a person dies, he goes to Heaven. After sometime he gets the will to start again, because he has not finished what he has to do and this goes on till he is fully free. I do not agree with what the lady says. You can't say for yourself...

Vimala — Please, excuse me, Sir; but we will have to find out what she is saying before we can agree or disagree with her. Are you suggesting, Madam, that there is a point in every one's life beyond which one cannot go?

Questioner — That is what I mean. Did we not create that

point by our actions – our actions in our former life?

Vimala – Why do you bring in the former life? Why do we bring in the life after death? Is it necessary to bring them in for understanding what life is today? Is it impossible to understand the meaning of life without referring to life before birth and after death? You will ask the speaker – what harm is there if one refers to them? Is it wrong? I am not saying it is wrong or that it is right. But I can tell you what the harm is. The harm is, they are not facts. They are interpretations. Life after death is an interpretation or a conclusion derived by the human mind. According to the Hindu religion the soul is immortal. Now the continuity of life after death has no meaning, unless you accept the concept of immortality. Reincarnation becomes meaningless unless you postulate the immortality of the soul. So one is derived from the other. The immortality of the soul is derived from the authority of the scriptures. If you do not accept that authority what happens to you? You are called an atheist or an agnostic.

Now I would like to understand the fact of life without accepting or rejecting the whole business. Rejection is inverted acceptance. Is it not? The moment you believe or accept, you exclude yourself from the non-believers. You exclude yourself from the believers, if you do not believe. Do you see my point? Belief, disbelief, acceptance, rejection, are exclusive activities which prevent total attention. Let us not therefore indulge in it. People who refine their sensitivity can look into the unconscious and talk about the past. But that is irrelevant to our point. Let us not lapse into an academic discussion, based on the acceptance of any theory. Communication comes to an end the moment you do that. Why not face the problem? Are you saying that every one sets a point for himself beyond which he cannot go? There is a dead point in every one's life?

Questioner – But life after death?

Vimala – Please excuse me. Do you know what death is? Can one know what death is without knowing what life is? Has one

had an experience of dying totally? An experience of the complete cessation of the I-process? Then why talk about life after death? Are we entitled to talk about life after death, without having an experience of death? Don't you see that one who does not live is incapable of dying?

Questioner — We make the boundaries and the frontiers which imprison us.

Vimala — Now — you have answered your question.

Questioner — I answered it after you had shown me the meaning of the problem.

Vimala — I have not done anything. Every question contains in its womb its solution. Life is not a book of mathematics, with ready made answers. The solution is hidden in the problem. We can cooperate in analysing the problem. But every one has to discover the meaning for himself. I am glad that you have found out how the frontiers are not objective facts but subjective creations. Understanding of this simple fact opens the door to freedom. One who is really inquiring can come by truth, if he investigates for himself the nature of his self-created and self-imposed barriers. Truth or freedom is not the privilege of the few. Freedom is there for the asking of it.

Questioner — Religion is re-uniting with things that you can't see. It is believing in things which you don't see. It is like fishing. I was once in a park and talked to the trees. Now trees do not talk to you, unless you are open to them.

Vimala — The mystery of nature reveals itself to those who have eyes to see and ears to hear. The secret of life is open to those whose eyes are not clouded by ambition; whose ears are not blocked by memory.

Religion is not believing in something you don't see. Why must you believe at all? We went into the problem of fear in our first talk. Did we not? Organized religions are based on fear of the

invisible; the fear of the unknown. Organized religions exploit the complexity of the human mind. They exploit the conflicting desires and contradictory urges. They exist by gratifying these desires and urges.

I do not call them religion at all. Belief is irrelevant to living. You need not believe in anything that you do not understand. And once you understand, belief is unnecessary. Life is for living. Only a immature mind indulges in beliefs.

FOURTH TALK IN HILVERSUM – November 15th, 1964

(Unedited by speaker)

I am making a request that you will be very cautious and careful in listening to the words that are being used. Every word has its association with the past experience and knowledge of the human race; every word is capable of being translated and interpreted in more than one way; and every word has a religious association, a cultural interpretation, an economic or political orientation, so on and so forth. For a person who wants to deal with a very delicate and intricate subject, like the subject of human consciousness, it is very difficult to find a word which is entirely uncontaminated by the past. So this morning I repeat that request, because we are going to deal with the problem of the unconscious and the problem of how to get free of that unconscious.

We had asked ourselves whether it was possible at all to get free of the momentum of the unconscious. We have said that in the waking hours, as well as when we are sleeping, there is a tension or a conflict in the conscious and the unconscious. Sometime the conscious succeeds in controlling, in subjugating, suppressing the urges, the wishes, the desires, the ambitions and the conflicting directions intimated by the unconscious. Sometimes the unconscious gets the upper hand and tries to suffocate the conscious mind. There is hardly a human action which is totally free of this tension, this conflict between the conscious and the unconscious. As long as there is this tension between the conscious and the unconscious, it is impossible for the mind to meet life, to meet reality, to meet that which is beyond thoughts or thinking.

Now is it possible to get free of this unconscious? What do we imply by the term 'getting free, getting free of, getting free from?' Are we suggesting that the unconscious, the whole part which is contained in the unconscious can be destroyed? Obviously it cannot be destroyed. It is the stuff of our consciousness. It is the content from which the consciousness is made. As a pot is made from earth or

metal, or cloth is woven out of yarn or cotton, in the same way human consciousness is really an amalgamation of past knowledges, experiences, memories, thoughts and so on. It is not possible to destroy the unconscious. It is indestructable. It is not something which you can burn away. What do we do then? Do we imply by the term 'getting free' that we are going to conquer it? What does really 'to conquer' mean? To conquer means to overcome by force and so to render it ineffective. You conquer an enemy, you battle against it, you fight against it and then you render your enemy powerless, you render him inefficient, incapable of functioning. Are we going to conquer this unconscious? Are we going to battle against it? If we are watching our own mind we will find out that we do not know the unconscious. We have read about it, we have heard about it, but we have not faced our own subconscious or unconscious. We do not know really the nature of the urges, the desires, the ambitions, a thousand memories that are hidden in the womb of the unconscious. Now unless you know where the enemy is, and what are the assets of the enemy, surely you cannot fight him. The unconscious is that part of the consciousness that we are not aware of, which is today incapable of being verbalized, identified, or recognized by us. We cannot fight it with the conscious mind. Surely you must have noticed how people who try to battle against the unconscious develop a number of idiosyncrasies, whims, fads, obsessions. And when these obsessions and whims and idiosyncrasies get beyond their strength, get beyond their control, then such people become neurotics. And if even the psychoanalysts cannot help them, they end sometimes in a mental hospital. Battling against the unconscious is really a very dangerous game to indulge in. We battle against the unconscious in the name of moral and religious disciplinc. We battle against the drive, the pushes of the unconscious by developing a technique, a method to try to succeed over them, to controll them. Different vows, different disciplines, are intended for enabling us to battle against the drive of the unconscious. So in that battle by self imposed vows of discipline

we try to subjugate, suppress, to sublimate the drives of the unconscious. Take a vow of celibacy, take a vow of non-violence, take a vow of abstinence from drink, from smoking; any example will do. The drive is there. Instead of trying to understand why the drive is there, we create an independent parallel force of a discipline. So the force of the drive of the unconscious, and the force of the drive of conscious mind, they are constantly fighting. This conflict we have gone into in our very first talk. The conflict created by an ideal, by an aim, by an objective and how this constant conflict dulls the mind, corrupts the mind, benumbs the mind, is something which we have gone through in our last three talks.

What I am trying to say this morning is this: That battling against the unconscious, with the help of the limited conscious mind, is at the root of many a misery, many a sorrow, many a neuroticism and many a mutilation of the human mind. To me it seems that trying to uncover the unconscious with help of the conscious mind, trying to overcome the unconscious with the conscious mind, is a futile attempt.

Now, is there any alternative or is a person entirely helpless against the momentum of the unconscious? We want to go into these deep waters of human consciousness. I wonder if it would help us to find out how thought and memory and experience come into existence. What is a thought? How does it arise? What is an experience? What do we mean by saying 'I have had an experience, I have an experience or I will go through an experience?' What actually is happening to the human organism and to the human mind? If the unconscious is the residue of the whole human experience and thought and memory, how does thought come into existence? What is the instrument of thinking?

To an alert and watchful mind it must be clear and obvious, that there is a part of the consciousness which we call the mind, and a part of the consciousness which we call the brain. We receive an impression, receive a sensation by the nervous system, and we carry

it over to the brain cell, to the point of sight and to the point of hearing, etc.; all these points are located in the human brain. If one is interested in finding out how the human brain works, one will notice it very easily that impressions or sensations are received by the sense organs, they are carried to the brain. When those points are tickled by those sensations, it tries to translate and interpret those sensations, those impressions, according to the pattern of conditioning in which the brain has been trained, according to the kind of education that the brain has had. The brain is an organism which is vitally important as far as this thought structure and the thought process are concerned. If the brain is not active, if this brain is not alert, then the impressions are received and carried without interpretation, without translation, without understanding. They are left there.

When I say I am an absentminded person, what happens really to me? Or 'I am a distracted person, I have a distracted mind', what does happen? It is this: the mechanical automatic process of receiving impressions and carrying them to the brain cells, is done without the mind coming in to translate it, to interpret it, to associate it. And therefore I pass on a road, without noticing things. The colour vibrations, the sound vibrations have been carried over to the brain but the mind has not interpreted them. A distracted mind and a dull brain, if we have a combination of these two, then we can never understand the significance of life. Life is a very swift movement and it needs a very alert brain.

These days medical science and the science of psychology have found out many ways of making the brain alert and sensitive and watchful. You might have read about the drugs and medicine like mescaline and LSD 25 and what not. These drugs, when taken, stimulate the cells in the brain, which are not active or alert at present. Those drugs act biochemically on these brain cells. stimulate them into action. A person may then have magnificent experiences and visions or an experience of trance and what not. It is the biochemical action artificially stimulated. So this human brain is a repository of

many experiences and training of receiving the impressions, and sensations, and the mind coming in touch with the brain, interpreting them. That is really our life.

This brain has taken years and years to develop into the complex organism that it is today. And even now, doctors tell us that the whole of the brain is not yet fully developed. The frontal lobe of the human brain has not been explored. Most of our activities through which we live are concerned with the backportion of the brain, which has been trained, which has been activated, and no one knows what will happen to the course of human experience, if the front lobe of the human brain gets activated. It is unexplored, it is untrained, it is like a Virgin land. Through meditation it is that part which is unexplored, by human knowledge and experience, which becomes active. It is that part which has a dimension which is not known to us, the dimension which cannot be described by any human language. No language has any words to describe it. I am not going into that.

I wanted to find out if that which you call thinking is a mechanical process of receiving sensation or impression and the mind according to its training associates, translates, interprets, and then reacts. You receive a sensation, you interpret it according to your background and then you react to the challenge. So between receiving a challenge and responding to it, these three mechanical processes have taken place and surely these three forces go very fast. So, no person can think without the help of mind and brain, which is time. Mind and brain which have been trained, which have been cultivated, which have been well informed. So, there are persons who are clever at this process of taking it in quickly, interpreting it quickly, associating and translating very swiftly. There are persons who have not cultivated it; they go slow. But thinking is a mechanical process and thought is a response of memory. Thought is a response of human experience. According to your experience you respond to the challenge. Now, sometimes your response comes from the deep layers of unconscious. That is, you respond without the help of the conscious

mind. The unconscious has now come into play. You respond to it, and you say 'I do not know why I did it'. 'I behaved in such a way.' Why did you do that? 'You say I don't know.' What does it mean? It is not anything mysterious. It simply means that I have not gone into the problem of finding out how I act. It is true, the conscious mind does not know. When I say 'I do not know why I responded in a particular way', it means that the response has come from the subconscious, from the unconscious. Thinking is a complex process in which the organism of the human brain is involved, the mind which is a repository of human memory is involved as well as the whole human body. That physical organism is involved. And we are taking it for granted that these three organisms are alert and watchful, they are sensitive and fresh. If the human body is not fresh, is not alert, is not properly fed, is not given proper sleeping hours, such a human organism becomes lethargic, slow at responding, slow at receiving. So, when we are talking about thinking, thought and experience, though we may not go into details of how you equip your human organism, we take it for granted that a person who is interested in understanding what reality is, keeps his body fresh, alert, sensitive. He does not allow it to go sluggish, to become benumbed, to become thick-skinned. If that is not done then thinking intelligently becomes extremely difficult. Its like a string instrument; every string must be in tune with every other string.

So after having dealt with the equipment of the human organism, we come to the equipment of the human mind and the brain. And I was saying that it is necessary to keep this brain alert and watchful. When you use it, it remains alert. When you do not use it, then it becomes atrophied. As you have muscular atrophy, nervous atrophy, you can have atrophy of the brain. It is a machine. And those of you who have seen how the electronic brain and computers work will understand very easily how the human brain works, because electronic brain has been brought into existence by observing, watching and assimilating the technic of the human brain. Then there is no mystery

about the process of thinking, process of thought.

When I have said that thought—structure and thought—process involves time, I meant all this. When I say it is the result of time, I mean that millions and millions of years have contributed to the present state of human brain and human mind. Now if you have watched how these computer machines work, you have noticed that information is fed into the machine and set the machine going and the machine does the work. In the same way human mind and human brain have been fed for centuries untold. This brain and this mind has been fed with emotions, with feelings, with reactions, with thought. That is what I mean by saying that we carry within us the essence of human evolution; when I say you carry in your heart the residue of the collective experience, collective unconscious, I mean this. As the human brain and mind has been fed, through education, through influence, and biologically you inherit certain qualities, psychological inheritance has come and we carry all this within us. So, as you set the machine going, it works in the same way. The moment you receive an impression, this mechanism starts working and it responds. If a human child today were not consciously taught anything, no conditioning was created for him, would he respond? Yes, he would. Because in the mind, in the unconscious he carries the past experience and the knowledge. So he would also respond. Unless we become very humble and face this fact of thinking and responding being a totally mechanical process, unless we see this, the next step we are going to take in dealing with the unconscious will not be possible.

What I am saying may be wrong, but that is how I see it. I am not all expecting agreement on your part and much less acceptance on anyone's part. But when I study the problem of human consciousness and go into it deeply these are the factors I come across. But I do feel that it is absolutely necessary to recognize this mechanical process of thought. All the pride and vanity that we have in saying 'I can think', all the pride and vanity about human culture, about

human civilization will be melted away the moment we know it is an automatic, it is a mechanical process. So it is not my own. I am not the creator of my thoughts; I am not the creator of my feelings, emotions, sentiments. It is something that has been set going for hundreds of centuries. This mind, this brain cannot deal with the unconscious, the urges, the desires and ambitions which are not verbalized. Those urges, those desires throw up their intimations through dreams, and we interpret those dreams according to our conscious training.

You know how psychologists are interested and deeply concerned with the phenomena of dreams and how they interpret the dreams according to their different theories. So, what we know of the unconscious is either a sudden response that we go through without the intervention of the conscious mind, or the intimations through dreams and intuitions that we come across in our lives. But we know nothing more about it. So the conscious mind has got to realize the limitations of its thinking process, has got to realize and become aware of the mechanical process of thinking, memorizing and experiencing.

Surely experience is an interpretation by the mind of a sensation, of an impression. And when there is no visible impression or sensation you have experience according to your conditioning. If you are a Hindu the residue of all Hindu experience lying in your unconscious throws up visions for you. If you are a Hindu you see the blue and the white flame inside your heart, because that is written in the books of Yoga. Or, in the books of Vedanta it is written that man is ultimately a center of light. And if I am free of wordly ambitions, material ambitions, then when the mind is quiet and I sit down in silence, it is easy for my unconscious to throw up that vision; and I say 'I have had a spiritual experience of seeing some light', or of hearing some sound. If I am a Christian I get a different kind of experience. But experience is possible as long as there is an experiencer to take it. So if the Ego, the Self, if the Me is totally absent this experiencing business comes to an end.

In the realm of real spirituality, in the realm of awareness there are no experiences. Experiences are projections of what is lying in the unconscious, thrown up when the conscious mind and brain happen to be quiet, happen to be silent. There is nothing divine about it.

If I see tomorrow a beautiful vision of some light, or if I hear some chanted Mantra from the Vedas or the Upanishads, there is no divine quality about that, because I am experiencing. Unless there is an experiencer there cannot be an experience. Experiencer and experience is the duality which works through time and in time.

I wonder if I am conveying to you that, as ideals are created by the conscious human mind, in the same way the unconscious is capable of throwing up visions which you have not known by the conscious mind and therefore you regard them as mysterious and mystic, and then you give it a quality of spirituality. So visions and experiences are possible only as long as the Me, the Ego, the Self is working. It is a relationship between the unconscious which is a repository of human experience and the Me, the Self, which is quietly sitting there. It is not dabbling with the outer world, it is as quiet as it is in sleep. In sleep you get dreams and when you sit in silence, when you sit in meditation you get visions and experiences which have nothing whatsoever to do with ultimate reality. They have nothing whatsoever to do with what you call spirituality. This game of the human mind must be understood very clearly, otherwise people get stuckup in visions and experiences regarding them to be spiritual, trying to interpret them with the conscious mind. Interpretation is impossible without the conscious mind. So, I experience something and I interpret that experience with the help of the conscious mind. So visions and experiences and dreams are a play of the unconscious and they have nothing at all spiritual. This must be very clearly understood. When the conscious mind becomes quiet and when the unconscious gets relieved and starts revealing itself through dreams, through visions and through experiences, such a person becomes very sensitive. The vitality of the person increases. Because he

is quiet the quality of his nervous sensitivity is sharpened, is changed. A person whose conscious mind and brain is capable of becoming quiet for a while may very easily develop occult powers, like clairvoyance, clairaudience, reading the thoughts of other people without their verbalizing them. All these powers get manifested when you go into silence and sit quietly without the intervention of the conscious mind. But that is not the last point. It is still in the realm of the known; it is still in the realm of the past experience of the human race.

This understanding of the working of the unconscious is necessary to get free of its momentum. Because if I do not understand, if I am not aware how the unconscious works to what I call experiences, visions or dreams, then I may change the direction of my life, I may change what I have been doing because I have had a particular dream or I have had a particular vision, or experience. Taking that one fragment I try to adjust my whole life to it. So it is as dangerous, it is as vicious as running after an ideal, running after dreams and visions and so called experiences; really it is a very dangerous game. I do not know if people indulge in that game in the West, but in the East, in the Orient people are very much captured by these dreams and visions and experiences of light. They hear certain words, and someone comes into their dream and gives them teaching and a message, and according to that message they change their lives. They feel very superior to other persons because they have had certain experiences, and they become exclusive in the name of religion, in the name of nationalism, in the name of ideology. Speakers of truth, many a time, become entirely exclusive because they have developed a little sensitivity and have had some visions, or experiences or dreams.

I am trying to brush them aside completely. They have no spiritual value, they have no value in an inquiry into truth. They are certainly valuable in understanding what is lying in your unconscious. They are indications of what is stored in your unconscious. But unconscious is still the known. It is not the unknown, and that is why I call

it a trap of knowledge and a trap of ideation.

This trap of knowledge, lying deep in the unconscious tries to get you in, every moment of life: if a person is aware, awake, wide awake every moment of his life, and if he is trying to meet life as it comes, without conforming outwardly to any religion, to any spiritual discipline, the authority of inner experience creates the conformity. A very subtle thing I am talking about: that, if it is easy to get free of an external authority, created by society, created by ideals, aims, ideologies, theories, you create your own authority out of your unconscious; I feel this, I experience this, and this authority of inner experience is a very tempting thing. One likes to go by that authority.

Awareness of this process of experiences, of visions and of dreams, understanding of it, is capable of enabling one to be free of this whole vicious game. If I see it as a fact of life, if I see it as in the realm of the known, in the realm of the past, then all the charm about these illusions, hallucinations, dreams, visions and experiences, all that charm, in one flash is brushed aside. So whether the conscious mind creates an ideal which becomes a trap in which you are caught, or the unconscious mind creates a trap of visions and experiences, we have got to be very alert, and be careful not to fall into the trap. Surely, you and I are not the first seekers of reality in this world. Many people who were born long ago and must have had even superior minds than you and I have, have gone into this search of reality. But this trap of human knowledge and this trap of ideation was there into which one was and is apt to fall a victim. Let me make it a little more elaborate.

A sensitive mind of an earnest and genuine seeker has seen the whole game of how human mind conditions itself, or the society conditions itself and the mind wants to get beyond it. This mind turns inward, breaking away from ambition, from power, from wealth; breaking away from all this mad race of competition in society, this mind turns inward. Thinking that now it is free to enquire after truth, it is free to find out and to discover for itself what truth is. That free-

dom has come by freedom from the outward. Now when he turns inward, when the mind is quiet, he likes to imagine how the unknown is, he likes to visualize how the Real is. He wants to capture that which is not known to the mind. Every seeker of truth wants to experience the truth. He wants that experience of transformation, he wants that experience of the mutation. So, the inward journey has now started with the urge to have an experience of the ultimate truth, liberties, liberation, Nirvana, whatever you call it. And in this inward journey he feels that he has rejected every authority externally, but internally the mind is busy and so the mind wants first to get an idea about the unknown. Have'nt you noticed that when people assemble to talk about reality, or truth, or liberation, the first question they ask you is 'What is liberation according to you? What happens in that state? When the mind becomes completely silent, then what happens?' They want first a calculated blue-print of what happens after transformation. 'What is the unknown? Is it one reality, or are there two realities? Is there a cosmic soul and are there individual souls? What is the nature of that reality?' They want to comprehend the nature of that reality, the nature of God, with this known, limited, petty mind. And they think that through an act of this mind, through an act of will, they will go beyond. So they will ask you 'What is God according to you? Do you think there is a personal God, do you believe in an impersonal God? What is your form of Truth?' They want the description, the definition of the Unknown, of the Reality, of God. What a vanity of the human mind, to think that they will ever be able to meet the unknown, to meet the reality through this channel; through this mind-work of naming, identifying, recognizing, defining! Surely, you cannot define a thing that you do not know. You cannot describe a thing which you do not know. And the mind, when it says I want to know the beyond, I want to know God, it is an act of vanity to say that this mind can know God, know reality. This mind which functions, which knows only one groove of working, and that groove is of thinking, willing and feeling. No other groove is

known to the mind, and thinking is the mechanical process. I hope you are seeing how this whole game comes into existence. This trap of knowledge, this trap of ideation is there already as soon as you turn inward and you are free from the external authority; you very easily become a victim in this trap of ideation, in this trap of defining, describing the unnamable, the unknowable, that which is beyond the human mind. I wonder if I have conveyed to you that the unconscious, that which is lying deep within the unconscious, cannot be destroyed. It has got to be understood. And in the act of understanding the unconscious loses the hold over the conscious mind. If I know that I am jealous, if I know there is envy, then in actual relationship before the wave of envy or jealousy comes and takes me in, I respond, because I am awake.

So, in your action, if you are awake and alert you do not allow the momentum of the unconscious to overtake you and to contaminate your responses. And that is possible if you know the game of projecting ideals, projecting thought and projecting visions, dreams and experiences. One may ask me 'Allright, we have understood the whole game, what do we do next?'

I would like to find out what actually happens to a mind which says that it has understood the game of the conscious and the unconscious. I would like to know what is actually happening to the quality of the mind that says 'I have understood that the conscious mind cannot conquer the unconscious mind.' What happens actually? Does the mind become quiet? Does the mind becomes silent? And does it give up all effort to conquer or to battele against the unconscious? What happens with the understanding? Please do not say 'I understand but nothing happens to me.' It is like saying that I have taken a glass of water and still I am thirsty. If I really drink water when I am thirsty, the water must quench my thirst. If it does not, either it is not water or I have not taken it. What I am trying to say is that understanding is a dynamic power. It has got its own tremendous explosive force. It is impossible that I understand and that understanding does not

operate on my whole being.

Take a very simple example please: You see a bottle on which is written 'poison'. You see the word 'poison' when you go near the bottle. You understand what poison is and that understanding instantaneously, immediately, operates upon your whole being and you withdraw without an effort of the will, without an act of the mind. You completely withdraw. There is no desire to drink it because you understand what 'poison' is.

So, understanding is a dynamic force, having its own momentum and it works upon us. What happens to a mind which understands that the conscious mind cannot overcome the unconscious, cannot battle against it, cannot transform it, cannot destruct it? Does this conscious mind become silent? Does it become silent not only when we are sitting together? Does it become silent in all my behaviour from morning till night? In other words: does it become empty of all the vanity and pride that it has? Mind is very vain. Every mind is very proud. It feels that it is the instrument for understanding reality, it is capable of understanding everything in life; it has only to make an effort. Let this limited, petty human mind become silent in humility, saying that it being a mechanical process of thinking, experiencing and memorizing, and this mechanical process being unable to meet reality, understand reality, let this mind become absolutely silent. Let it become completely empty of all the vanity of experience and knowledge. The dimension that humility has, the tremendous force that humility has, is something that is not known to us. If we have any humility, we have cultivated it religiously, because we have decided that pride is a bad thing, so let us cultivate humility. So the cultivated humility which has come through the effort of the mind is like an artificial silk, or artificial diamond. It is not really humility. It has no life. It is like flowers made of paper, which are kept for decoration which have no scent and fragrance. So cultivated virtues and cultivated humility are like paper flowers which can decorate our behaviour in society but have no scent and perfume of their own. So,

what I am trying to suggest is this; with the understanding of the limitations the mind becomes empty, the mind becomes silent. That silence and that humility is absolutely necessary if we are going to proceed with the realm which is beyond the known.

The last talk we are going to have next Sunday is dealing with 'Beyond the Known'. What happens to the mind when it enters this realm in which is not known to itself? Is there any mind at all? If there is, what quality does it have? Does the mind act then, does it act in the realm of duality and time? Does it still have the process of naming, of identifying and recognizing? Or does it transform itself into something else in which direct perception, direct communion takes place? Because as far as reality is concerned, experiencing through the channel of mind is impossible. Let us be very clear. However noble an ambition one may have of experiencing reality through the mind, mind is not the right instrument for that thing. The mind cannot work as long as it has no direction. The mind does not work unless it has a motive. Motive from within and direction outside. These are the two things which make the mind work. And communion with reality is a thing which has no motive and it does not lead you anywhere. So mind here becomes rather a wrong instrument. There is nothing wrong with the mind in its own place, but as regard to communion with reality, mind is not the right means.

What we have covered in the last one hour is a very complicated and a very complex thing. We have gone into the momentum of unconscious controlling the conscious action, the tension and the conflict between the two. We have gone into the problem of the conscious mind battling against it, through analysis and through discipline, finding it out that neither of them can help to get us free. We went on to discover that unless the conscious mind becomes aware that dreams, experiences, and visions have no spiritual value, the momentum of the unconscious will be there. So the trap of ideation and the trap of knowledge is existing in the deep layers of the unconscious which works through dreams, which works through visions,

which works through so called experiences. And this awareness brings a total silence, a total emptiness. The mind becomes totally silent means the conscious mind becomes silent. The tension between the two comes to an end, the conflict comes to an end and however many visions and experiences the unconscious may throw up, one does not get stuck up in them. One is not imprisoned in them. One does not get twisted and distorted by them. So total emptiness or total silence is the only way to get free of this momentum. — Complete emptiness which is humility. Surely, humility is saying 'I do not know'. Humility is saying 'I have no experience'. It is not ignorance, mind you, it is innocence.

A child cannot say 'I do not know' because a child is ignorant. But innocence which comes with maturity, innocence which comes with understanding the whole game of thought, memory and experience, can say 'I am free of that, I am not going to be involved in that game, I am out of that game of thought, experience and memory. I am out of the game of creating ideals, I am out of the game of interpreting dreams and visions', like an innocent fresh young mind. That youth, that freshness, that innocence opens the door to the unknown. But as long as the mind wants to interpret, as long as the mind wants to battle, as long as the mind wants to have an experience, the real, the new, has no place to step in. The real, the unknown, the new, can step in only when there is space. The whole consciousness today is cluttered with experience, the whole mind is stuffed with information. Where can the new take place? Where can the unknown, or that what is beyond limitations and frontiers be born; it has not even a place to put a foot in. So if at all one has to make an effort, one has to make an effort at understanding all these things. And the emptiness that is created by understanding, emptiness which is the result of understanding, in that emptiness something new is born. Call it God, call it awareness of reality, call it awareness of Nirvana, call it by any name. Give it any name you will, but this total emptiness of this mechanical process coming to an end, is absolutely necessary.

I am aware that this subject has been rather stiff today, and it might have been difficult to understand the words that I am using because I have been using words very hesitatingly, not knowing which words would be free of association for both you and me. Which words would be free of any association, of any interpretation and I am sorry to say, that in spite of all alertness on my part, words have got their interpretation. Humility, awareness, either they have psychological overtone, or spiritual undertone. And everyone who has read some books on religion, or psychology or spirituality might try to translate the words according to their information. I have tried to use them as I understand them, as I see them. Not according to any particular way of interpreting, any particular terminology, whether it is of Theosophy, or Hindu religion, or Anthroposophy, or Krishnamurti terminology. I have tried not to use words which carry any weight of association with them. But I am sorry, one cannot find free words. This verbal communication is really a very limited way of communication.

Questioner: The moment of the total silence of the mind, is that the only moment that the heart has its chance?

Vimala: What do we mean by heart? Heart as a part of human organism we know, there are lungs and the heart. What do we mean by the word heart here? We are not referring surely as I understand to that physical organism which is called the heart, but then what are you referring to? In that total quietness the heart functions, are you saying that?

Questioner: Yes, then it is the only moment that it has a chance.

Vimala: Yes but what is that heart? You understand, whenever anyone asks questions, please, if I try to analyze it, I am not cross-questioning at all; but what do we mean by the word heart then? That total quietness when brain is quiet and the mind is silent, what works?

Questioner: Yes, that what makes the world go round. The

only thing that is important. You talked about Love the last time. I mean that.

Vimala: The mind is silent. Conscious and the unconscious, both they are silent and the brain is quiet. In that state of quietness what takes place? And the lady suggests that heart has the chance to function in that quietness. For me it is difficult to verbalize, what takes place in that quietness and in that silence. I cannot verbalize it; if at all I verbalize I can put it negatively, saying that there is no ideation, there is no imagination, there is no feeling, there is no reaction, there is not the 'me' who works there, there is no experience and experiencer. So negatively I can put it. But the heart comes into the scene, or the heart functions. What I feel is that perhaps our friend is suggesting that 'heart' is a symbol of love. Beyond the mind there is heart. That is how we have been told, that is how it has been written in books. That mind thinks, the brain interprets, but the heart is there, the substratum of the whole being in which love can take place. We can verbalize only on the level of the mind. We can verbalize and we can communicate verbally only when the mind is acting. When the mind is quiet, brain is not acting and interfering then in that realm of silence, that which takes place is really beyond words. People have described it, I know. But if a person tries to describe what happens in that state, our mind immediately captures it in an idea and then says 'Oh, in silence that happens; so now I must reach that silence, so that I can act that way'. So an idea is formed and the whole life becomes an approximation to that idea, creating again a conflict.

So in the realm of silence certain things do happen. If you call it heart, if you call it love, if the love is there the love flows out, truth radiates, beauty flows with all its gloriousness. Yes, words can be used. But again, what is truth, what is beauty, what is love and then again we come back to the same difficulty that truth, beauty and love cannot be verbalized, cannot be described.

But yes, tentatively as the friend is suggesting, that the heart has

the chance of functioning and she has explained it, elaborated by saying 'Love has its only chance then?' In the total silence love has the only chance to radiate itself, or to illumine the whole being.

Questioner: When you were speaking of the child, do you mean to say it is unconscious of itself?

Vimala: The child carries the unconscious; that is the collective experience of its parents, family and the collective experience of the community in which the family lives; because the parents in their minds, in their consciousness, carry the influence of religious community, the social community, the economic pressures, the political pressures. All the knowledge that they have earned through reading books and all the experience that they have had while responding to life, all that is carried over to the child.

Questioner: I understand that you don't mean by meditation sitting still and thinking?

Vimala: Our friend has posed a very interesting and instructive question. He says 'What do you mean by meditation? Is it sitting still and thinking?' Not that he does not know what meditation is, but I think he has brought it up for the sake of discussion, because I know he is one of the very informed persons.

Sitting still is a symbol of stillness within. A person who begins with meditation sits still in order to help the mind to become still and quiet. I wonder if it is necessary for me to make a distinction between meditation and concentration? I wonder! Because in the East meditation is confused with concentration.

Concentration is a tradition in the Orient, whether they are Hindus or Buddhists. It goes back to about 7000 years or so, when the Yoga-sūtra was written by Patanjali. In the Orient they have six schools of six systems of thoughts. And then the blending of the Hindu thought with the Buddhist thought and with the Moslem thought again has created different systems which you come across if you go to India,

to Japan, to China, to Tibet and even in Indonesië. So this system of concentration came to the Orient thousands and thousands of years ago, and it is easy for one who is born in the Orient to concentrate. Concentration is an exclusive activity of the mind. The mind decides a point, choses a point, and says withdrawing from the rest of the world I want to concentrate on this point. In the Yogic system of concentration you have even physical points. You have a blue point or a dark point on the wall and they sit in front of that at some distance, about five feet from the point, and they concentrate, they look at the point. And they look at the point with such an intensity that the mind withdraws from the rest of the world. So on and so forth. But this concentration is not meditation.

Concentration is an exclusive activity in which the mind choses something, rejects something and then tries to focus this energy on the chosen idea, chosen point, or subject. That is concentration. It is an exclusive activity which sharpens the mind, develops a number of powers in the mind. We are not dealing with that kind of meditation. They call it meditation but it is not meditation.

In meditation one is aware of the totality without choise. One is aware of the whole complex process of life without chosing anything, without selecting or rejecting anything. But in the beginning one who has'nt entered the flame of meditation, the realm of meditation, he withdraws to a room, sits quietly. This sitting quietly does help to relax the mind. In which posture you sit, depends upon how you find your relaxation. Persons in the East may find different postures in which they find relaxation; persons in the West may find relaxation in different postures. One has to discover in which position he can sit quietly, without tension. But when the body is still, sitting quietly, the mind is not quiet yet. The mind still wanders, hops from topic to topic, dances over subjects. It's a mad race of the mind, because it knows now, that you are not busy with any work, it has the only chance to run madly. So this wild running of the mind when you sit quietly is a common experience of everyone of us. What do you do

with this? Either you chose an idea or a slogan, a point, to concentrate, denying the mind other thought. This is a trodden way. A path on which many have gone. But when you ask the mind to concentrate on one point, the mind is like a small child who wants to revolt and go exactly to the point, which you don't ask it to go to. So you want to concentrate and the mind wants to wander. A battle between you and the mind goes on. To me, this battle is unnecessary. If you sit quietly and watch the mind and travel with the mind wherever it goes, without asking it to stop, without condemning it, without judging it, without scolding the mind, just accompany the mind where it goes and find out what it wants. If you ask the mind to stop, the mind gets double force for running ahead of you. Mind is not better than a monkey. It cannot sit still, so it wanders. You accompany it wherever it wants to go, and when that subject of its desires comes, you ask: Now, you want to run to Amsterdam, to London, what do you want to do there? Do you want to go home, are you hungry? Not that. For a second, for a split second you accompany it to Amsterdam, without scolding it, it comes back with you. Next moment it goes to another place; you go with it. So this observation of the mind and its wandering, without scolding it, without judging it, without restraining it, without denying it, observing the mind, watching the mind, is the beginning of meditation. Watching it, without scolding it, is not easy, because if it gets an evil thought you are sitting with a pious intention of meditation, and the mind thinks of very material things; the mind thinks about sex, cinema, opera, about play, about drink, about smoking and then we want to scold the mind. You are jabbing the mind, you are not watching it.

Have you observed a child? If you scold the child, you cannot watch it anymore. Because the child then tries to withdraw and hides its movements, its desires from you. Only when you are absent, then the child plays according to its desire.

So, in order to meditate, it is necessary to allow the mind to exhaust its momentum. And the mind will exhaust its momentum only if you

watch it without comparing, without judging, without scolding, without restricting. Let it go, whatever it wants to do. It is very painful. If you are sitting quietly and the mind begins thinking about the sex, you feel ashamed of your self. You feel guilty. Now, you have no right to feel guilty and you have no right to condemn, because you are sitting there to understand. So if you do not scold, if you do not feel ashamed, if you do not feel guilty, but are just watching, then you will find within a few days, or perhaps weeks if one has never experimented with sitting in silence, the mind exhausts its momentum. It knows that no one is there to restrict it, no one is there to scold, so the momentum is exhausted by its own wanderings within a few days. And then when you sit quietly the mind becomes silent within no time.

It stops its monkeying, it stops its tinkering away, running away, and then it cooperates. Total silence of the mind is the cooperation that the mind can offer you. So, meditation for me, is in the beginning, watching and observing the mind, without interpreting, without doing a thing to what you see, without trying to change it. If I am sitting here and I watch and I observe that my mind is jealous of someone who is more beautiful than I, my mind is saying „Oh if I had been so beautiful it would have been good.” Now the moment I observe this, I feel guilty and I say „Oh goodness me!” I call it envy, I call it jealousy, and I stop the mind. If I stop the mind now, it will start working after one hour, half an hour, one minute or two minutes. The momentum of the mind must be exhausted by itself. It can neither be destroyed by you and me nor can it be fought against, and the mind then becomes silent. The friend was asking whether it was thinking? It is not thinking; it is observing, it is watching.

Questioner: There is fear of what we know, and fear of that which we do not know. What is the difference between fear and fright?

Vimala: Fear and fright are the same thing in the English language, so far as I know. I am frightened of, I am afraid of. What is the difference in Dutch?

Questioner: Is it not so, that in one case there is an object and the other is, when you are in a panic, when you don't know why. In our language we make a distinction between the two words.

Vimala: Panic and fear? Yes? Can we translate in that way? Because there is an obvious distinction between panic and fear. Fear is a relation to an object, but panic — getting panicky — is a reaction of the mind when mind comes face to face with a phenomenon, the dimensions of which are beyond our understanding. Then you get panicky.

For example: God forbid that there will be any more war in the world; but if there is a war tomorrow between China and India, then the whole psychology of the Indian people and the Chinese people will be called a psychology of panic. It is an intensification of fear. In fear there is a possibility for the mind to choose a way to act. But in the state of getting panicky, in the state of panic, mind becomes completely paralyzed. It does not know which way to go, which way to act. So getting panicky means getting completely paralyzed. The activities of the mind come to a forceable stop.

Not being capable of understanding the dimensions of a problem, and seeing total destruction everywhere, whichever way you turn, you cannot stop, because the forces of destruction are beyond you. So it is a state of paralyzation first and then a state of surrender of the mind of the past to the forces of this destruction.

So what do we do with this distinction now? We have distinguished between the meanings of the two terms.

Have you any suggestion, Sir?

Questioner: I will think about it.

Vimala: A vague sense of insecurity, consuming the whole mind, is caused by the fear of the unknown by all of us. And what

we have tried to do this morning is to analyze the vague feeling or the sense of insecurity, and taking out layer by layer, we have found out that the sense of insecurity is in relation to the known, or imagination of the unknown. But the sense of insecurity is really and essentially born of our relationship to the known. Whether it is to the idea, to theories, to persons, to material things, to nations, to races, or whether it is an identification with any of these, the sense of insecurity is related to all these. If there were no identifications with anything in life, if one were to move with life as life is moving, and to face life as it comes, then this feeling of insecurity would disappear. It doesn't mean that we are not going to cook dinner for this evening, or we are not going to have clothes for next summer. Not that way. But in human relationships it is possible to get free of the sense of insecurity which controls and regulates, which directs all our activities and actions.

To me it seems that this is possible. And the joy of human relationship, the joy of communication, the joy of real meeting between persons is possible only when the mind is uninhibited by fear, when it is completely free of fear.

Questioner: Can there be complete freedom from fear?

Vimala: As far as the nervous response it will be there. Take as an example the volcanic eruption in Jugoslavia last year. So many people, thousands and thousands had become homeless. If you and I were there on the spot the nervous response would be, for a minute, of becoming paralyzed or benumbed. It is the sensitive mind that will react that way. But then, that nervous response will not stop us from taking a further step, composing ourselves, recollecting ourselves, and acting again. If we became victims of that panic and ran away from the situation, then it would be rather an immature action on our part. But the mature action would be to recollect oneself out of that state of panic, state of paralysis, state of being benumbed, and to try to find out the best way to help the people there. So as far as the nervous response is concerned, it is

bound to be there. But one will not be a victim of the response; rather, one will get over the response and behave in a mature way. Because a person who is free from fear, is not a person who becomes indifferent to things and happenings around him. He is not a person who becomes callous to human suffering. Rather he is an extremely sensitive person, alert and sensitive, responding to every situation in a mature, human, graceful way.

Freedom of fear will not convert the person into a thick skinned person, or a callous person. You know, either we become callous or benumbed and we do not share the suffering with others, or so hyper-sensitive, that we become victims of our own responses and reactions, and are not able again to help them. So we can become callous in the name of nations, ideologies and religions, or we can in the name of spirituality: that the whole world is an illusion and the spirit is the only truth, and suffering is also an illusion. In India you come across that callousness. So either we become callous or benumbed and don't share the suffering, or we become victims of our own reactions and again are unable to share the suffering of the human world.

So I was trying to say that in the state of freedom a person becomes so sensitive, so alert, so watchful, that he is no longer a victim of what is happening outside, nor of what is happening within. He watches it all, understands all, and is free of them, so he can act the next moment in the most sane and mature way. Action flows from him in the state of freedom. But if I say that action flows from him in the state of freedom, it might create a verbal or ideational concept about freedom in the minds of those who listen, so I was rather cautious in using the words, and I said he can act when he is free from both these complexes. Then he is free to act.

There is no effort, because effort is possible only so long as there is the I and the ego. So effortlessly the action flows in the state of freedom.

FIFTH TALK IN HILVERSUM – November 22th 1964

(Unedited by speaker)

As this is going to be the last Talk, it might contain the point that we have discovered in our previous four talks. We have been reasoning step by step; reasoning out the problems with which a genuine inquirer in Truth is confronted the moment he starts inquiring.

In the first Talk we dealt with the problem of basic psychological fear. And we discovered that at the root of every psychological fear there is an urge for security. Psychological security is at the root of fear.

In our second Talk we went into the anatomy of security. We went into the process, the implications of the urge for security, and we discovered that urge for security implies recognition of time: recognition of time as a factor governing human life. We went into the details of chronological time and psychological time and found out how even chronological time is no more an absolute fact of life; how it has become a relative fact. And we did discover how chronological time is a projective creation, how it is a creation of the human mind.

In our third Talk we went into the problem of recognition of time. Why does the human mind recognize time? And how authority of knowledge and experience in inner life and authority in external life – that is authority of society – is created by this recognition of time. And we found out that the roots of authority are not in the conscious mind, but they are in the subconscious mind, they are in the deepest layers of the unconscious.

So in the fourth Talk we dealt with the conscious mind and the unconscious mind. And how the unconscious contains the residue of the past, of the experience of the human race, and how the subconscious controls the conscious. And we went on to say that the only way to get free of the momentum of the unconscious is to

see the futility of action born in the past, action born of memory, action born of an idea. So as long as action is rooted either in the memory of the past, or is provoked by a dream of the future, authority will be there, authority of ideas, authority of memory. We went into all those details.

And today in the last Talk, we are going to deal with what is "beyond the known". I wonder how your mind responds to the words "beyond the known". And why does a human mind want to go "beyond the known". What is the response of the mind to that word "beyond"? Does that word create a feeling of direction? Direction in time? Or does it create a direction in the spatial relation? I am here, and what is beyond the door I do not know. Is it spatial? That is, a relationship in regard to space? Or does that word "beyond" create a relationship of your mind to something beyond time? I wonder if you see the point I am posing? Is it a spatial, temporal relationship which the mind creates as soon as the word "beyond" is uttered? This is known; and "beyond the known" there is something; the unknown, the God, the Reality, the Truth, Love, Freedom, Liberation; any word you would like to use.

Is this a geographical or spatial relationship? Or is it a relationship in chronological time? It is vitally necessary to find out how your mind responds to the word "beyond". What is the association of ideas and feelings connected with the word "beyond"? Because that association is going to determine the nature of your enquiry, nature of enquiry of what is "beyond". If you go into the history of theology and philosophy, you will find out that generally this word "beyond" does provoke a relationship which is time-bound and space-bound. Our bodies, or physical organisms are space-bound and time-bound. If you want to move from this place to the door you are moving in space as well as in time. This moment and the next moment; this point and that point. So all the movements on this physical level is bound by space and time. Obviously. And we have found out that all the movements of the human mind are

again time bound. It is not space bound; one factor has been eliminated on the psychological plane. But still it is time bound. It has created a past, it has created a future, and it moves from the past to the present into the future. The present becomes an instrument for the future; or the present becomes a resultant of the past. The present has no existence independent of the past and the future for us, as our minds are working, as they are operating. So everyone of us can find this out if one cares to. But all the movements of the mind, whether you are thinking or feeling, or reacting, are bound by time, by the past, by memory. Future is nothing but the projection of memory; so really it is bound by the time. And we are trying to enquire if there is a movement which is beyond space and beyond time. Are we capable of acting, of moving, of living free of space, free of time? Why do I enquire, why do I formulate this question?

Is this enquiry of what is beyond the known, is this enquiry born of frustration? I wanted to achieve success in this life; my family life is frustrated, it has become a boredom. Or I wanted to attain social prestige, recognition, power. I could not get it, so all social work has lost its attraction and fascination for me. I am frustrated. Is it a kind of frustration about the known which evokes this enquiry? I was loving someone and that person did not love me, did not respond. Is it a frustration on the psychological level, in psychological relationship? If the enquiry is a reaction to the known, then that enquiry is poisoned at the very root. We will go into it; how it poisons the root of enquiry. If I am frustrated emotionally, then I will enquire in such a way and I will find out some destination, some way of fulfilment, or some method of arriving at a destination where all my emotional, temperamental idiosyncrasies will be gratified. So what is beyond the known will be a projection of that emotional gratification because I could not find it in the known, in the past, in my present life. So enquiry of what is beyond, provoked by a reaction to the present, really is no enquiry at all.

I am frustrated, I am disappointed, I am all in misery, I am physically suffering because of some disease. If that leads to the enquiry of what is true, what is reality, then surely we are bound to find out a way, a technique, a personality, a group, a cult which will gratify me; which will compensate either for my suffering, physical pain, or which will compensate for my emotional, sentimental dissatisfaction or frustration. It will be a fragmentary approach. If I am disappointed intellectually and if this enquiry of what is "beyond" is born of an intellectual frustration, if it is a reaction of the brain to all existing thoughts, theories, ideologies and philosophies, then again the roots of the enquiry are poisoned.

You know what the Existentialists are doing or have been doing. So intellectually frustrated people will project something into the "beyond" which will gratify, which will give them the satisfaction of their intellect. So is it an aching in the intellect which creates this enquiry? Enquiry of what is Truth, what is God, what is Beyond should be a total enquiry and not be born of any reaction. As long as it is born of some reaction, as long as it is a subjective projection of something beyond in space and time, we are not going to meet the Reality. We will meet our most subtle projection on the intellectual or the emotional level. So it is essential to find out why I am enquiring. If it is not intellectual frustration, if it is not emotional frustration, than why is it that the mind wants to continue in some way? So is this enquiry born again of an urge of continuity of the mind beyond death and beyond life? It is a very subtle point that we have to go into. Does the mind want to expand its knowledge from known to unknown? Does it want to continue from the known into the unknown? So is it an urge for continuation and expansion or mental activity? For most of us it is. And therefore we say that life continues after death with Reincarnation and continuity of life. So we like to project the continuity and expansion of our activity into the beyond. Now as long as this enquiry of what is beyond is projected by the mind because it wants to con-

tinue after death it is no enquiry of God, it is no enquiry of Truth, it is no enquiry of Reality; it is a very subtle trick of the mind which wants to continue in some way. If it cannot continue in this body it wants to continue in a subtle way, in a subtle form after death. So urge for continuity and expansion of activity is no enquiry of Truth. Let us be very clear about it. Let us tear down to pieces everything that we have associated with this enquiry of God, Truth. Spiritual enquiry is no joke, spiritual enquiry is an arduous task. It is a task which is going to encompass the whole of your and my life. And if we are not willing for that, we had better not go that way of inquiry into Truth, Reality or God. It is like playing with fire. It either creates neurotism or a hyper sensitivity, an explosive activity, or it will take us away from normal life and daily activities. Those who are honest, those who are in earnest, let them probe into their own minds; let them dive deep into their subconscious and find out what provokes the enquiry of what is beyond, of that is God, what is Truth, what is Reality. Why, why at all do I want to know it? How is that enquiry related to my total life? If it is not an urge for continuity and expansion of the mental activity, then what is it? What can it be? What is the content of this urge to find out what is beyond? Is it an urge to find out the opposite of the known? I know that this talk is going to be rather stiff, I am aware of it, but I think I am helpless, and you must have patience with me to go into all these intricacies and most subtle nuances of mental activity on the conscious and the unconscious level. Is it an urge or a desire to find out an opposite of the known? All our life is a struggle between the opposites. We want to create an opposite of vice which we call virtue. We want to create an opposite of hatred, jealousy, which we call Love. We want to find out an opposite of immorality, we project that as morality. We are violent; we are not satisfied with it, we create an opposite and call it non-violence. So the stuff of our consciousness is a tug-of-war between opposites. And the whole theology is based on the tension between

these opposites. If there is no tension, religion has no place. Reality has no scope. The whole of morality and ethics is based and constructed on this tension of the opposites in which the human mind indulges throughout life. Whether you are in the East or in the West, this tug-of-war between the opposites is the real content of your and my life. Does the mind want to indulge into an opposite of the known? Here is the known. But not being satisfied with it, we find out the mechanistic nature of the known, we find out the limitations of the known. And now it wants to escape into an opposite. For most of us virtue is an escape from vice, which is a fact of our life. For most of us non-violence is an escape from the fact of violence. I am not saying that Love does not exist, but we do not know what Love is. We do not know what Truth is. Truth for us is an opposite of falsehood. Peace for us is an opposite of war, opposite of strife. Silence for us is an opposite of speech. In fact it is not so. Silence is not absence of speech and quietitude is not lack of activity. It is something much more positive, much deeper. It is much more vital than these artificially stimulated and cultivated opposites. Now we have to be very careful and find out if this mischievous mind is trying to create an opposite of the known by calling it the unknown. If it creates an opposite we will get stuck-up there. So we have to find out actually the motive behind this enquiry before we take a plunge into the enquiry.

What is the motive behind the inquiry of the unknown of God? When we find out that there is no traceable motive; it is not frustration, emotional nor intellectual; it is not urge for continuity and expansion of mental action, and it is not even an urge to create the opposite of the known; then we can proceed. But we will have to thrash every layer of our consciousness and be very clear about this, that there is no motive behind this enquiry. As long as there is some motive behind the enquiry into truth that motive is bound to lead you to some method or technique or some system. When you and I discover that there is no motive, what do

we mean?

When there is no motive behind this enquiry, what is the quality of the mind, what is the state of the mind in which this enquiry is born? When the mind is purged of all the motives, all projection, all urges, what remains in the mind in which this enquiry can be born? We do not know an enquiry without a motive. All our life is full of motives, urges, ambition. We do not know how to act without an idea, without a motive. So it may baffle and puzzle some of us, sitting here, when I say that an enquiry which has no motive is the real enquiry of Truth, for the joy of it, for the love of it, for the fun of it.

Have you ever met a scientist who is interested in pure science, who loves to find out what is truth for the joy of it? He works in the laboratory with no motive but to find out what truth is. The subject-matter is different. I am not comparing that enquiry to this. All similies, all examples are one-sided, so we cannot stretch the similies very far. But what I am trying to say is that a real enquiry, a genuine enquiry, what God is, what Truth is, what Reality is, should not have any motive behind it. Enquiry based on motive, and rooted in motive, creates exclusive spiritual cults, sects and religion, because they will satisfy the motive. As long as the enquiry is rooted in the motive, so will the result of the enquiry be such that it wil gratify and satisfy the motive. Not in a crude way: the more educated you are, the more refined your mental activities are, you will gratify them in a very subtle way. But we must unmask the mind, and we must find out what the mind is doing in the name of spirituality.

Now, let us presume that we have arrived at a state in which enquiry is not a reaction, not a projection; it has no motive. Can you see what the state of the mind will be then? The state of the mind will be in which all action, rooted in motive, will come to an end. All mental activity will come to an end the moment you realize that God, Truth and Reality cannot be found by a mind which moves

in time and space; which is pushed by a motive and arrives at a destination. So the futility of mechanistic mental action, the futility of action born of the past, will create a state of mind in which the known, the past, the memory, becomes quiet, becomes silent. It is nothing mysterious, nothing mystical. If you experiment with it you will find out that the awareness of the futility of mental action creates a state of quietitude. It creates a state of silence. It creates emptiness; emptiness within. When the total mind is quiet, the brain is quiet, the mind is quiet, the movement of memory has come to an end. You have not forced the mind to become quiet. If you force the mind it will get paralyzed. If you force the mind into silence, then the mental activity will cease because it has been atrophied. Atrophy of mental activity is not silence. So this awareness of the limitations and futility of mental activity will create a state of being which can be described by the word emptiness, silence, humility, quietitude or what you will. What happens when there is humility or there is silence? What happens when there is space? You and I can sit in this room and look at one another only because there is space. We exist in space because it is empty. If there were no emptiness it would not have been possible for you and me to sit in this room and look at one another. Observation, perception is possible only when there is emptiness. We do not perceive reality, because there is no emptiness in our mind. Our minds are cluttered with memory. Our eyes are clouded by authority, and our ears are blocked by our urges and ambition and desires. There is no emptiness within us where reality could step in and take root and grow and manifest itself. So the cessation of mechanistic mental activity which moves in spatio, tempo and relationship, cessation of the activity or movement of memory creates a state of being in which there is total emptiness, in which there is total silence. And this dimension of total silence is absolutely necessary if you and I are to take the journey beyond the known.

This dimension of silence is called meditation, the cessation of

total activity of the conscious and the unconscious mind; cessation spontaneously comes into your being, not forced, stimulated cessation of activity. It is very necessary to learn that if you bring the mental activity to an end, to a stop, artificially, it loses life. That is a dead thing, that is a dead silence. You are very well aware that people specially in the United States of America are becoming fond of drugs like mescaline, LSD 25 and other drugs which can help you to cross your conscious and unconscious psychological barriers and enter into a state of trance.

Even Mr. Huxley could not escape the temptation of experimenting with those drugs and afterwards wrote down the experience. Artificially stimulating the state of silence or emptiness through drugs, artificially stimulating and provoking that state of silence by repeating words mantras and chanting them, artificially stimulating that state of silence by repeating certain ideas, by going into physical isolation by forcible withdrawal from daily activities, this artificial stimulation of the state is not the fact of silence. Such artificially stimulated silence has no substance, it has no reality, it has no dynamic power which will function and which will transform your life. That is no mutation, surely. So we have to be watchful and very careful to note this point. By repeating a word, by repeating an idea, by taking drugs, by sitting in the presence of a person of whom you regard as a spiritually advanced person, what are you doing? You are trying to influence your brain cells, some chemical action on the brain. Either you influence it through drugs or through ideas or through chanting Mantras- and slogans, or sitting in a temple or a church looking and concentrating on the figure of either Jesus Christ or Lord Buddha, or what you will. So artificial stimulation implies, does it not, influencing the brain cells. Reality does not need any stimulation. When there is light, darkness is dispelled.

So this enquiry into Truth, of what is beyond, should not take us on a wrong track of provoking and stimulating physical or mental states of being, a state of silence, of emptiness. It is not that. But

when there is a spontaneous and total cessation of mental activity, when there is complete silence, then that dimension of silence starts working, starts operating. That dimension of silence leaves emptiness within. That creates the space, the emptiness into which Reality could step, into which it could come into being. As long as there is no silence, as long as the flame of silence does not consume the whole of your being, let us not labor under an illusion that through an effort of the mind, or effort of the will, you could arrive at Reality, or force Reality to enter your heart. Reality comes uninvited, unstimulated. It comes there, rather I should say it is there. We are not perceiving the Truth, the Reality which is beyond the known, because we are so busy with the noise that we create with our minds and brains. And we are not willing to let that noise come to an end because we are afraid of emptiness, we are afraid of silence, we are afraid of quietitude. We think that quietitude will mean inaction. We think that that silence will mean isolation. We think that that emptiness would create a void. Emptiness that I am talking of, has nothing to do with void. It is not a negative thing. It is a positive thing with a dimension of creativity, dimension of creation hidden in its womb. So, I am talking of an emptiness which is not an opposite of anything that you and I know today. It is something totally new. It is the unknown, if you like to use the word.

That space is necessary if the Reality is to dawn upon your heart. If the Reality has to descend upon your heart. You can call that emptiness, innocence if you like. Innocence is diametrically opposed to ignorance. We are not talking of ignorance. Generally people call children innocent, but they are not innocent, they are ignorant. Primitive simplicity of mind of a tribal person, of an aboriginal person, say one right from the forests of Africa; that primitive simplicity is not innocence. Innocence is the perfume of a highly developed mind. Innocence is the perfume and scent of a highly refined brain. An ignorant mind is crude, it cannot be innocent. The child has to grow physically, has to face the impulses, the motives,

the urges of the body. It has to face the sexual problem, it has to face so many problems in life. So a child of eight, could not be called innocent of sexual problems, for example. It simply doesn't know. So simplicity and maturity and innocence of sexual problems cannot be related to a child's mind. In the same way the simplicity, the innocence, that I am talking of, has nothing to do with the simplicity, the ignorance of a child, which is an immature mind. Innocence is another name for maturity. So let us be very careful about what we mean by the word emptiness, by the word silence, by the word space. Because all the creation is hidden in that emptiness. And mind you, I am at all being poetic. It will be a sheer waste of your time if I indulge in poetic language. I am stating simple facts of life as I observe them, as I see them. As you and I can live in a room that has space, in the same way the Reality can live, grow, exist only when there is space within you and me. When you and I are willing to become as nothing, as nothingness, then that state of humility, that state of innocence, is vitally necessary to grow into the dimension of the unknown. People call it by the word surrender, people call it by the word elimination of ego, dissolution of ego. You can use any word you like, but as long as the word "surrender" implies an effort of the will, it will carry us astray. If surrender is the result of maturity, if it is the spontaneous action of the total being, then I have no grudge. I have no complaint against that word, but as long as surrender is something to be done by you, then I say it is the wrong word. It cannot be used here. I am trying to use as harmless words as I can come across. So the word emptiness, the word innocence, the word silence, the word beatitude, the word quietitude, all these indicate total cessation of conscious and unconscious activity. And it is no use enquiring into what is beyond unless one arrives at this state of emptiness. If we do not want to indulge into speculative enquiry and speculative research with which philosophies are busy, then let us be very clear that the enquiry into God and Reality has no meaning as long as we are

not experiencing the state of total humility, total silence, total emptiness. Why do I say that? Am I dogmatic when I say that? I am afraid I am not. Because the total cessation of mental activity means complete break with the known. When you see the futility, the mental activity should drop away like a ripe fruitdropping to the ground, easily, naturally. Without forcing any discipline upon yourself the understanding and awareness of the futility of mechanistic action, should create a state of silence in which all activity drops away. Not gradually, not eventually, but immediately. That dropping away, that spontaneous and immediate and total dropping away of all mental activity is what I have implied by the term psychological mutation last Sunday. The total psychological mutation takes you into the realm of the unknown. I say that a psychological mutation brings about a transformation. What is this transformation? It is a transformation in the intelligence that is working within you. When I see the futility of all action rooted in the past, it is obviously my intelligence that is seeing it. Do you remember? We have said that with biological mutation a new phase in life comes about. Human beings are self conscious. The talents, the capacities to become self conscious, is the grove into which you and I have grown after the mutation. So, this intelligence started working after biological mutation in the human mind. And that is why you and I can communicate verbally, go into the nature of mental activity, go into the depths of mind. All that is possible because there is intelligence. Now, this intelligence sees the futility of its total action, and in that perception it gets its self transformed. If you remember we had mentioned that the whole human brain is not active today. The frontal lobe of the human brain is still not working. And if I have not mentioned it, but according to the medical science the whole of the human brain is not yet active. The whole frontal lobe is unexplored. And it is a virgin land, it is a virgin space, which has not been explored either by the medical science or the psychological science. Now what I am driving at is the total cessation of the

mental activity which is rooted in the past, and to bring into activity this space which is untapped, which is unexplored, by any human science up to to-day. In that state of meditation, in that state of silence and humility, this transformed intelligence becomes aware of the totality of life. Now again, is "totality of life" just a phrase? Is it only a figurative way of putting things? It is not. You and I suffer from fragmentary perception. We have't grown into a dimension of our life into which every perception is total. What do I mean by total perception? We are sitting in this room, many people, many dresses, many faces, every line on each face is eloquent with something, every I is full of some experience, some knowledge. And so many experiences materialized are sitting here in this room. When you sit in this room, when you listen to a talk or when you talk yourself, what is happening?

You are aware of the challenges which are thrown by all these persons sitting here in this room. Obviously. When I enter the room and look at the people, their un verbalized thoughts and feelings and emotions are felt; they are existing in this room while you are sitting, and their movement is very swift. They are not verbalized. You are sitting there not speaking out to me but the thoughts are there. And by every word uttered by the speaker you respond to the words. You respond to the tone, to the pitch, to the volume of the voice and your faces change, and those whose expressions do not change, still their thoughts compare, or evaluate or judge. I can feel the comparisons, the judgements going on in your mind because it is not something which is concealed. When one refines the sensitivity, one can meet the un verbalized thought and un-expressed feelings and inarticulated problems and challenges. The physical fact of this is. If you go into the books of Father Teilhard de Chardin of France: "The Phenomenon of Man", "Building the Earth", in "The Letters of a Traveller", then you will have noticed how Father de Chardin and also Sir Julian Huxley speak of Man living in a new sphere? They say that as fish live in water Man

lives in an ocean of thought. The whole globe contains an ocean of human thought and feelings. Every thought has vibration, every thought, every feeling has a form, a colour, a vibration. These statements have nothing to do with occult powers, nothing to do with anything mysterious. Just facts of life. Development of science of physics bring you to the depth of spiritual consciousness, if you go into the coordination of these two sciences; physics as the science of energy, and spiritual enquiry as enquiry into the root of all human energy. They take a long journey together. Ofcourse the spiritual enquiry goes much further. It is not necessary for me to say that. But still what I was referring to is a total perception, a perception in which you become aware about every thing around you without becoming attached to anything that you perceive. If I become attached to an expression of one of these faces sitting in the room, then for the rest of my time while I am sitting here, without my knowing, my eyes will follow that face or that expression. If I am attached to an agreeable response, then my eyes without my knowing will go into the direction from which I am getting an agreeable response. So as soon as you get stuck up in a point, as soon as you get attached to a point, you take your position in your attachment. You take your position to the point to which you are clinging. Obviously the mind gets crippled and loses the capacity for total perception. I have taken a very simple example, but this can be applied to your total life.

Every moment being aware of the total surroundings in which you are moving, human beings, things in nature, ideas by which you are surrounded, so that total perception has an integral factor in the objective surroundings and then this total perception includes awareness of your reactions; how you are reacting, the nature of your reaction, the nature of your response, is included. But the total perception includes more than that. It includes the background from which your reaction springs.

The background into which it has been rooted; the pattern of

conditioning which dictates, controls and regulates your response.

Do you see now the challenge in the form of nature; that is things, ideas, or persons? The objective challenge or stimulus comes through your sense organs which are connected to, and work upon, your brain and mind. Are you aware of it, without getting attached to anything?

Do you know how attachment comes into existence? Attachment is the result of choice. As long as I want to choose something it means rejection of something. If I do not choose, if I do not accept, if I do not reject, if I move in life in the spirit of renunciation, if I move in life with the austerity, with the simplicity of renunciation, then I see everything, I understand everything; I understand the swiftest movement of everything around me, within me, and without getting stuck up in any movement, of my mind or in any movement of any other person. I observe, I understand, I move with life.

Fragmentary perception is a result of attachment. Attachment is the result of selection, which means acceptance and rejection. Acceptance and rejection comes about when one has no humility. An humble person, what will he choose? A person who presumes that he knows, a person who is sure that his feeling and willing, his likes and dislikes are the correct likes and dislikes, will choose. A person of humility cannot choose, surely. I have my likes and dislikes, but I do not want to impose them upon you. That is humility. The moment I impose my likes and dislikes and tastes and norms upon you, I am trying to dictate life to you. What an arrogance! What an arrogance to have likes and dislikes, and moral norms, and spiritual standards!

So, a person who lives in humility lives in renunciation, which means absence from choice. Choice is an exclusive activity. When you choose, you exclude yourself from the rest of the life, and that again gives you a fragmentary perception. I hope I am making myself clear. So this subtle transformed intelligence, which has a

swift movement, swifter than the movement of the known. You see, let us be very clear. The movement of the intelligence after having gone through psychological mutation is a hundred times swifter than the movement of memory, motive, or the movement of the known, or the movement of the experience. So this movement of the transformed intelligence moves with life, which is never still. Life is all the time moving, changing, vibrating. That is what we saw in our first talk. Also that fear comes into existence because we have imagined that we are a static entity, and when we see everything changing around us, this imaginary static entity comes into conflict with these facts of change. And fear is the name of that conflict. We have gone into all those details, so I am not making any dogmatic statement that I am narrating the discoveries which I have made in the last four weeks. So what is beyond the known, can be understood, can be appreciated, can be enjoyed by that transformed intelligence which moves without a motive, which moves without a direction, which moves in freedom because it is moving in humility. It moves in humility because it has renunciation, it has no choice; it takes life as it comes. Please do not confuse it with accepting sorrow and pain, and not resisting. I am not talking about that. If I have pain I must go to the doctor to find out what can be done; if I am hungry I must provide food for my body. I am not talking about that. It will be a very immature and juvenile thing to mix up these two.

So going beyond the known is letting the intelligence transform its self from a fragmentary approach into a total approach. The capacity for a total approach is the essence of religion. A true religious mind sees everything in relation to the total life. It has no time for petty vanities and petty jealousies or pride and ambition. It sees its own life, and life of everything around it in relation to the total cosmic life or global life, if you please. So, perceiving everything spontaneously in relation to total life is the activity of a religious mind. Totality of approach is the essence of religion isn't

it? It is a movement without a motive or a direction. It is the nearest verbal description of life that is beyond the known.

Questioner: Is it not a hard task for you who is living in the Light to find the right words to pierce our hearts?

Vimala: Sir, is it a difficult task for a fountain of water to flow? In its constant movement drop by drop it can break the hardest rock. Is it difficult for that drop of water? Is it not its nature? Is it difficult, is it a heavy task for a ray of light to pierce through the darkness of ages? Whatever has been said does not belong to a person; it does not belong to me. If the perception has come to me it's not my fault nor my credit. It has been there, and it is there with you, if only you care to open your eyes, if you care to see without clouded eyes, if you care to hear without blocked ears. But what I am saying, Light is there, Truth is there, Reality is there. So it is not a task. This is the way Love moves and Love lives, isn't it? Love moves and lives, and the action of Love flows out from a state of being in which there is no self consciousness. So I don't feel I have done a thing but just responded to your affection and your attention. Have you ever seen how a drum responds, a drum which is completely empty? You cover that emptiness with pieces of leather on both sides. The drum does not contain anything, the drum does not contain any sound. It is the finger of the person who gives a delicate beating on both sides of the drum which creates the sound. When I was referring to total creation coming out of emptiness I had in my mind experience of playing on the drum. The drum is totally empty without sound. But the contact of the fingers and the emptiness creates sound, beautiful notes of music. So if we let our mind become totally empty like the drum, covered by intelligence, then every sensation, every stimulation will give the right kind of note that a really tuned drum gives out. So it is not a job for the drum if the sounds and the notes come out.

TALK IN AMSTERDAM - OCTOBER 21st 1964

Friends. It is a great pleasure and privilege for me to be amongst you this evening. I would like us to know very clearly what we are going to do while we are together for a couple of hours.

Not being a professional teacher or a preacher, I am not going to give a formal discourse or a talk. I would rather love to converse with you and communicate with you, than speak to you or talk to you. The relationship between a speaker and his listeners is entirely different from the relationship amongst people who meet to communicate with one another. So with all humility I would like to state that mine is not a claim to teaching or to preaching. The only claim that I could have for myself, is that of being one of those few human beings, who feel a great concern about uncovering the meaning of life, the meaning of truth behind everything that one sees around, everything that one hears and comes across in life.

I do hope that all of you sitting in this room are interested in this discovery of truth, not only intellectually but as a basic need of your lives. When I say, not intellectually, I am implying that many people in the East and the West are fond of converting the search for freedom into an intellectual pastime. In the Orient you come across many people who are academically interested in philosophy, psychology, ethics, metaphysics and such like subjects. They like to study the subjects for the sake of cultivating the intellect, rather than relating everything they learn to the total life, as it is; to life as they are living from day to day. So I do hope that we who are sitting in this room are not interested only academically in the theories of life and about life, in different ideologies and techniques of attaining the ultimate reality, but that we are interested in discovering truth in everything that we do from morning to night, in every relationship that we go through in our daily life. Because the approach of one who is interested in discovering for himself total truth, will be entirely different from the approach of one who is interested

only intellectually in knowing about life and about truth; who is interested in gathering theories and ideologies about reality; who is interested in acquiring and accumulating the wealth of the mind and the intellect rather than make it one's own concern to take one step each day towards Reality.

So let us be clear that what we are going to do this evening is to communicate about a firsthand discovery of Reality rather than describing, narrating or developing any theory about it. For one thing I am not capable of identifying myself with any theory, ideology or any particular discipline. I was born in the East and also brought up in the East. It is not easy for those who are brought up in India to keep their minds free from various theories about life and Reality. You know there are those Veda's and Upanishads and the six systems of thought, i.e. Sankhya, Nyaya, Yoga, Vaisheshika, Purwa, Mimansa and Uttar Mimansa which is known as Vedanta. And there are different disciplines expounded by different spiritual teachers. For example, the Yoga of Synthesis by Shri Aurobindo and The Yoga of Selfknowledge by Raman Maharshi or the teachings of Shri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda. All these ideas are ingrained in the very blood of the people. Either one studies these ideologies consciously or one absorbs them unawares, when one is brought up in India Then there is the Theosophical thought, which has become a part of the Indian thought. So all these and many other schools of thought are prevalent in the East. One may mention the Buddhist and Zen-Buddhist thought also. Of course I am not giving an exhaustive list, because it is irrelevant to what we are going to talk about, this evening. It is easy to study those systems and describe or narrate them. But description or narration of a theory does not help to understand the truth of life. Propagation of an idea does not transmit truth. Intellectual absorption of ideologies does not enable one to live and move in that dynamic truth.

So let us take it for granted that we are interested in understanding the movement of that dynamic truth which is vibrating within and

without us. Now, how does one begin? How does one set about it? How does one begin an enquiry about the Liberation, Nirvana, Moksha or total freedom? If I were to set about it I would start with finding out whether I really want freedom, whether I really want what is known as Liberation. Do I really want it? Do I really want it as I want food for the body? Food becomes a basic need of my life because I experience appetite. Do I feel the necessity of freedom as I feel the necessity of sleep? I can't live without sleep. Do I really need freedom as I need air to breathe? Without air I feel suffocated. The need for food or sleep is a basic need of life. Nobody has to tell me that the body needs food, for appetite is a living force within me which functions as a motivating force in my life. The first-hand living experience of appetite, the need for food, controls, regulates and directs my activities. No one has to preach or teach about that. The doctors could help me to find out a scientific diet which will suit my constitution, and help me to keep healthy. That is different. But the need for food is not something verbal, intellectual or emotional. It is something which consumes my total being, and so it is with the need for sleep. The necessity of sleep is experienced by me every day. Is the need for liberation as basic as these needs?

So I would like to find out whether the need for transformation or total freedom is experienced by me or whether it is stimulated by the society. I read books, I hear people talking about freedom and I come across religious leaders and teachers who preach the necessity of liberation and that stimulates my intellect. A need is thus artificially created. Or it is stimulated emotionally. To me it is vitally necessary to discriminate between an artificially stimulated need and a need which is spontaneously and totally experienced in the whole being. It is necessary to distinguish between the two. An artificially stimulated need can be easily satisfied with theories and ideologies, whereas a living need for freedom could never be satisfied with dead words and empty ideas. Theories and ideologies could decorate my

intellect, but they would leave my heart empty. If it is an emotionally stimulated need, then I may try to create or force upon myself, a state of mind, without relating such an effort to my total life.

So instead of finding out what liberation is and instead of gathering ideas about it, I would rather set about discovering what the actual state of my being is. What is going on in the psychological world that I have created for myself. I would rather find out if there is a basic need for total freedom or if there is not, why it is not there. Why does it not become the primary concern of my life? Why has it not the top priority in my life? Unless the enquiry of freedom is born in the heart and burns there like a bright flame, one will never come by that state, which is called total freedom or liberation. One will never come upon it unless the whole energy gets easily focussed upon the enquiry. Truth is not visible, it is not tangible. It has no shape. Sense organs are not able to touch it. This eye cannot see it, nor can this ear hear it. It is beyond the reach of the senses and most probably beyond the reach of the mind and the brain.

Thus truth being invisible, intangible and inaccessible to the senses, it is very difficult to set about its enquiry, unless your total energy gets focussed upon it. And the total energy gets focussed only if the need for freedom is felt spontaneously; it is felt livingly and dynamically in our whole being. So this is the first step one could take towards the enquiry of truth and freedom.

If I were to set about an enquiry of freedom my next step would be to find out whether my mind as it is today is equal to the task of such an enquiry. What is the mind? Not to accumulate theories about mind but to discover the actual state in which the mind is. When I say that I want to arrive at total freedom who is this 'I' and what is this 'I'? What is this mind? What is thought and what is memory? I think it is necessary to find it out for myself, rather than to accept any theory about the working of the mind. I cannot depend upon anyone in finding this out, because no one is capable of knowing what is going on within me. Even the person with whom I am living may not

know what is taking place in my mind. The world that a wife creates psychologically for herself, is not completely known to her husband and the world that a husband creates psychologically for himself, is not known totally to the wife. I mention this because it is one of the most intimate relationships that could exist between two human beings. We live thus in our own worlds which we create for ourselves. I would like therefore to find out what exactly I mean by mind and what is the condition, the quality and the mode of its operation. What is memory? What is thought? Is mind the proper instrument for the inquiry of truth? Is enquiry of truth a mental activity? What is the nature of our mental activity? Is the action of the conscious mind free of the subconscious? Or is it controlled by the subconscious? It is known to every alert and sensitive person that the subconscious controls the conscious mind. It is obvious to the watchful ones that the most subtle nuances of mental action have their roots in the subconscious. Everyone experiences the intimations of the subconscious in one's daily life. Thus it is essential to question the legibility of the mind for the enquiry of freedom. It is essential to find out whether the mind as it is today, is equal to the task of such an enquiry, and if it is not, is it possible for this mind to become free of thought, memory and the intimations of the unconscious?

Can the mind be completely stripped of all its shackles and become the right kind of instrument for such an enquiry? Unless one goes into the details of the psychological structure and the mechanism of the mind, its subtleties and intricacies it will not be possible to turn our faces towards the truth or move in its direction.

When one tries to understand the nature of mind and its mechanism, one may come upon a significant psychological fact, that the urge for total freedom is in fact in contradiction to the basic urge of security, on which the whole psychological structure is raised. To be secure is one of the basic urges of the human mind as it is today. So one must find out whether one wants security or freedom. No one can have a compromise between the two. One has got to face the fact

that there is a basic contradiction between the urge for security and continuity and the urge for freedom. If we do not face this fact and try to resolve the contradiction, our lives are apt to be spent in balancing the two. Have you not noticed that sometimes the urge for security becomes strong and the urge for freedom becomes dim and sometimes the flame of this urge for freedom becomes very bright and the urge for security is temporarily pushed aside. So the interplay between these two urges and the tension created by that, becomes the life-story of many a seeker of Reality. It is therefore urgently necessary to discover whether we want unconditional freedom or we want conditional freedom or we want security. Whether we want to construct walls of security around us and then take a vantage point from which we could look at Reality. We sit in our house and open the windows when we want to look out. We know that we are safe in the house. In the same way we want to construct a house of psychological security first and then proceed to look towards the Reality from a vantage point in that constructed building. I am going into all these subtleties of our psychological life because that world determines and shapes the nature of our enquiry and it will determine the direction of our movement.

Whether in the East or in the West, people have wrapped up the phenomenon of total freedom in some mystery. It is regarded as something miraculous and extremely difficult. So ordinary persons like you and me are apt to feel that freedom is the privilege of the few. And I am wondering whether freedom is difficult at all to come by, or whether freedom is existing within us and we are afraid to face it because of the all-powerfull urge for security. Whether freedom was something out there to be attained by us or whether it was already vibrating within our beings and we were not prepared to face that state of utter freedom which is absolute emptiness; because we want to be protected from everything - even from life and freedom. When you stand in the sunlight every pore of your skin gets exposed to those penetrating rays of the sun. We cannot protect some part of the body

and expose the other part of the body to the sun while we are standing in the sunlight under the blue skies. The rays of the sun are so penetrating that once you expose yourself to them you can't hide anything from them. In the same way the all powerful and penetrating vibrations of freedom take away everything from you; even yourself; your ego; your mind. You cannot protect and preserve anything. You cannot hide anything from them. You cannot say then I want to preserve my 'self', my 'ego' and I also want to be completely free. It seems to me that the state of total freedom is not difficult to arrive at, but the screen of the psychological structure which we have imposed on ourselves is the thing between that immeasurable Reality and ourselves. Many a time I wonder whether there is any other obstacle between Reality i.e. the state of total liberation and the actual state in which we are living today, except the notion of the 'I'; except the flimsy screen of the 'Ego'. Again the construction of the I-process is not anything mysterious. The psychologists all over the world have explained very clearly how the I-process is built up; how memory regulates thought; how emotions and thoughts are nothing but reactions; nothing but involuntary reflex actions. So we have been provided with the information as to how this 'I' comes into existence. It is not beyond the understanding of any person. There is nothing mysterious about it; nothing difficult about it for an alert and awakened mind. So the process of I and the memory have been analysed for us, to make use of and discover for ourselves the validity thereof. Thus for us, who are living in this second half of the twentieth century, it has become extremely easy to awaken into a state of simple awareness which is freedom. All the possible obstacles and barriers have been unfolded and analysed for us. Of course no science can provide us with the urge to be free. It is up to you and me to have that burning passionate urge for freedom. Nothing can provide us with that passion for freedom. Explanations can be provided. Layer after layer of the human subconscious, individual and collective, can be unfolded and analysed; but the passion for freedom has got to be

born within our hearts. It has got to grow in our beings.

Thus what remains to be done by an earnest inquirer of truth, is to find out if he really thirsts for freedom. I feel that very few of us really want total freedom; that very few of us are prepared to pay the price of ruthless and merciless understanding of our own selves, for that freedom. It seems to me, that in the state of freedom, you can't have the luxury of having opinions and ideas; theories and ideologies about life. In the state of freedom, no one can have the luxury of belonging to a family; to a race, a nation or a culture. Freedom does exact its own price. In that state you are as nothing; you are as empty as the skies and as vast as the oceans. But man loves limitations. Man wants to belong somewhere and to something and he wants someone and something to belong to him. I am not referring to the purely materialistic needs, like a house and food and clothing and so on. It is obvious that all the elementary needs of the body must be provided for, in a decent, human way, to everyone on this earth. I am referring to our psychological life. We do want to belong to something and thereby want to feel secure. We want to admire, to worship and to dedicate our lives to something; to identify ourselves with some cause or way of thinking and behaving. Life as it is has no attraction for us. Naturally we feel apprehensive if the state of freedom is going to take away everything, even our own 'self' from us. We feel frightened of a state of being, in which we will be stripped of everything without and within us; of everything that our mind and intellect has put together. You know, nothing is as destructive as freedom. Of course pure destruction and pure creation are like the inhaling and exhaling of breath. So let us be clear about one point; that freedom does destroy everything that human mind has put together. Liberation does annihilate everything that human desire has raised and human ambition has constituted. Freedom strips you naked of everything that you have created or society has created or the theologies and philosophies have created and exposes you to the light and movement of life. That state of being constantly exposed to

the light of truth and love is something of which we are afraid. That state of emptiness and aloneness is something which we are afraid of. And therefore one part of us wants freedom and another part wants to maintain a respectable distance from the state of total freedom. It sounds absurd but it is the description of the state in which most of us are factually living. Our consciousness is ridden with this grave contradiction. I have noted with great concern that our minds are clouded with the urge for psychological security and they are heavy with the burden of many a contradiction and conflict.

Naturally we are not capable of perceiving the simple truth that freedom is a fact of life and bondage is man-made. We have converted the simple perception into an arduous and difficult job. We have created a pedestal for awareness. We have created the illusion of distance and then we imagine that we cannot arrive without someone to help us; without someone to confer the grace upon us. It seems to me that man in the twentieth century is mature enough to stand on his own and make the discovery by himself, only if he genuinely wants to do so and if he is willing to pay the price for it in his own life. It is very comforting to dream about the state of freedom and wait for a moment when someone or some coincidence will push us into that state. It is pleasant to visualize the possibility of being passively pushed into that state by an accident or chance. It is not very pleasant to face ourselves in every relationship and to observe the happenings in our whole being. Rather, it is the most difficult job to face our own minds; to watch our behaviour and its causes, in every relationship and face the fact of our being petty, jealous, ambitious or envious. To face our mind as it is, needs tremendous humility. Therefore we like to avoid facing our own minds. We want to escape from our minds as far as possible.

Thus the first-hand enquiry of truth has to begin with selfknowing; has to begin with questioning whether the need for freedom and truth is a basic and spontaneous need of one's life. Unless the need for freedom becomes a burning flame in the heart, in the light of which

we live, move and act, the enquiry of freedom has no meaning. The dimension of intense passion is absolutely necessary for the enquiry and the discovery to take place.

The enquiry is bound to remain at the intellectual or the emotional level without the first-hand experience of a basic need for freedom. The enquiry will never penetrate and percolate through the deeper layers of our consciousness, if it is only on the mental level.

Moreover it is vitally necessary to understand the nature of the mind with which we want to discover what Reality is. It is essential to make sure whether the mind as it is, is equal to the task of discovering and recognizing Reality, if it were to be confronted with it. It is urgently necessary to realize that the mind is nothing but a bundle of memories, thoughts, emotions and reactions, urges and ambitions which again are the results of a particular pattern of conditioning into which the mind has been trained. If we realize the innate incapacity of the mind for discovering Reality what are we going to do with the mind and the psychological structure which it has built around it? What are we going to do with the urge for security around which every psychological movement revolves? We must be very clear about this aspect of the problem. And lastly, let us be fully aware that unless the contradiction existing between the urge for security and the urge for freedom is resolved, real enquiry cannot take place. It is no use spending our whole life in balancing these two urges. It is no use allowing our life to oscillate between the two.

The energy that you and I have today i.e. the physical energy will not be available to us to-morrow or the day after. The human body has to live in the framework of the law of life which is the law of birth, growth, decay and death. No one can escape it. So why not create a crisis out of time and say that I shall not wait till tomorrow? I shall find out why the transformation is not taking place today, this moment, now?

I am not concerned with those who are not interested in under-

standing the meaning of life, in discovering what liberation is and in arriving at a mutation of the mind, but I feel truly concerned about those who are earnestly interested in it and yet allow their energy to be dissipated in a search of a technique and a discipline, a teacher or a master rather than focussing all their attention on the understanding of the movement of life within them. It melts my heart and brings tears to the eyes to see that they fritter away their energy in creating a balance between the conflicting urges rather than in trying to resolve the basic contradictions in their hearts.

Lastly let me assure you again that man has become mature enough to stand on his own, to begin the enquiry of truth on his own and to go through the drastic psychological mutation by himself, on his own.

TALK IN THE HAGUE – NOVEMBER 5th 1964

The subject for this evening is Peace, within and without. Peace within man and peace without him, in his relationship to society.

For the sake of communication one has to use words. Words have their own limitations. There is no word which is free from limitations. The first limitation is the association of ideas, emotions and reactions. Every word has its roots in the past. Every word, in every language, is man made and has been used for untold centuries. So, words have a religious and cultural association; an economic and political interpretation; and they have philosophical and metaphysical undertones and overtones. It is extremely difficult, therefore, to communicate in words which are contaminated by the past. Different fields of knowledge and experience have crystallized certain connotations for every word. Thus no word can be a free word. I am using the word Peace with a great hesitancy. It is one of those unfortunate words which have been brutally used – misused by man. There is no leader today, political, economic, religious or spiritual, who does not speak in the name of Peace. Whether you move in the so-called free world or you move in the communist world, you come across leaders, theorists and educationists, who are constantly using the term Peace. Peace, Coexistence and Happiness have become the most popular slogans of the day. Let us be very clear, what we mean by Peace before we plunge into an enquiry of its nature.

We want to deal with Peace not in a fragmentary way. Not with political peace brought about by sovereign states, through various treaties. You know the content of that political peace which is determined by sovereign states, in their mutual relationships. We are not going to discuss military peace. For example, peace which is existing today in South-East Asia, between China and India or between India and Pakistan, or between East and West Berlin or between South and North Vietnam. Military forces are standing across the borders;

they face one another and balance Peace in the scales of organized force. This kind of Peace is a military peace. If you go still further, there is a peace which is created out of terror. May I call it terroristic peace? The peace that is existing today due to an inhuman race in the nuclear armaments. All of us know very well that there will be no victors and no vanquished if there be a nuclear war. Techniques of a nuclear warfare have made victory and defeat equally meaningless. The peace that the world is experiencing today, is born of the fear and terror of a nuclear war. A peace can be brought about through legislation; I would call it a legislative Peace if I may. A state of international circumstances is created through an international court of justice in which there is an absence of war. So we are familiar with these varieties of Peace. Let us not forget one more variety i.e. civil Peace. Peace existing in society, when there is an absence of civil strife. Whether in civil life or in political life, absence of strife or of war is regarded as peace. So when we think of Peace without, i.e. outside the skin, we imply one of these meanings.

If we turn to peace within, what kind of peace are we familiar with? What do we know of Peace as regards the realm within, as regards our psychological structure? Any dictionary will tell you that peace means quietude or tranquility. We do not know what tranquility or quietude is; what we know, is an absence of disturbance. We have an experience of negative peace and if we investigate the content of this negative peace, we will easily find out that withdrawal from life is the stuff out of which this negative peace is made. Man creates an artificial peace by withdrawing from actual life. Withdrawing from the all-consuming touch of life; from its beauty and ugliness; from its joy and sorrow; from its pain and pleasure. Man withdraws from the struggle of life. Now withdrawal can be of two kinds. Physical withdrawal and psychological withdrawal.

When I become aware that I want peace, I withdraw to a cave, a mo-

nastry or a spiritual centre, to create an enclosure around me, so that there will be no disturbance. Through such physical isolation, man has tried to create a state of peace within his heart. Or man creates an isolation by imposing upon himself a variety of vows and disciplines. If you go to the orient, you will find that seekers of Reality invariably sing hymns to the vow of celibacy. There are people who propagate with a surprising vehemence, that liberation or transformation cannot take place without celibacy. Man in the East has tried to avoid every manner of temptation and conflict, through the imposition of celibacy on oneself. We are not going into the details of how this vow of celibacy develops a pattern of thinking and living. It is a vast and intricate subject. What we are saying is simply this, that those who do not withdraw to caves or monasteries, create enclosures around themselves through a number of self-imposed disciplines, and thus isolate themselves from the main stream of life. They want to control and mould the flow of life, through their self-imposed restrictions and regulations.

There is another way of withdrawing from life. One identifies oneself with some metaphysical notions, philosophical theories or religious scriptures. Have you not observed that we try to run away from the fact of death by accepting the theory of life after death or the notion of the immortality of soul? We identify ourselves completely with the law of karma or the continuity of life and turn away whenever death knocks at our door. We create a state of peace which we hope will not be penetrated through, by any disturbance and feel safe in that enclosure. We want to guard ourselves against the touch of this ever-fresh and ever-new life. No two moments are the same. No two experiences are ever comparable. No two challenges of life are the same. No two individuals can be ever compared. Everything in this world is unique. That is the beauty of life. But this extraordinary beauty of constant renewal is regarded by man as a great danger and he tries to make himself impregnable, invulnerable. In that attempt he seeks a spiritual master, a teacher or a group and

belongs to them. Through belonging to a teacher, he evolves a way of feeling, willing and living. That way of thinking and living eventually crystallizes into a pattern of life. So by belonging to a Guru, man feels that he has created for himself an abode of peace. I am trying to go into this problem of peace rather negatively. Let us first be sure of what it is not. Or, rather, what is the kind of peace that we know of. And then let us enquire whether there is any other kind of peace at all. Is there a radically different quality of peace or has man got to live permanently in this negative and dead peace, which is but an absence of strife and disturbance. Is negative peace the only possible peace for man individually and collectively? Or is there a way to get free of this dead peace and a way to live in a new dynamic peace? A living and ever-fresh peace which is ever-vulnerable and yet fears not disturbance? A peace which is beyond violation? Is there such a peace at all?

We have seen that the peace that we are familiar with, results from physical or psychological withdrawal from life. We have seen the whole business of religions, dogmas, spiritual cults and disciplines, saints, prophets and their teachings. It is not relevant to the subject of this evening, to go into the analysis of that phenomenon. If we are serious and earnest, it is not difficult to realize that we do not know what a real living peace is. And the peace we know of, has no life in it. It is true that there is no hot world war today though it could break out at any moment in any part of the world; because there are explosive situations and spots scattered all over the world and small battles and warfares are going on in many parts of the world. Really speaking no country is free of an explosive spot on its political geography. In America it is a fight against the racial segregation. In Africa the life of every country is simmering with explosive political problems. It is so, whether you go to Congo, Sudan, Ghana or South Rhodesia. There is no peace in the East and there is none in the West. Absence of a total world war is the only political reality. A collision is avoided through a balance of organized forces. Real encounter is postponed and a distance is maintained from a world war.

It is not even a respectable distance in these days of brinkmanship. So there is a state of cold-war with all its cruel implications. There are a number of military alliances like the Nato, Ceato, Cento. You know very well what these alliances are meant for. And yet the fear and tension of war is hanging like a sword over the head of every human being. So no sensitive person could justify the existence of the present circumstances or be satisfied with them.

People have realized that real peace will be difficult to come by, as long as there are nation-states; there are sovereign nations and man takes pride in belonging to them. Nationalism and patriotism do not allow the human mind to mature; they do not allow him to grow into a new consciousness of belonging to the whole humanity. The personality of the world-man thus is in a schizophrenic condition. He wants world-peace and at the same time he wants to take pride in belonging to some nationality. Do you not feel proud to call yourselves Dutch, English, American or Indian? To my mind, nationalism and peace can never exist together. It is high time that every one of us becomes aware of this simple fact. It is high time that we get rid of the seeds of war in our very consciousness. You cannot create peace by wiping away the states. You can contribute towards the creation of that peace by transforming your consciousness. When are we going to realize that race discriminations, colour-discriminations, class-distinctions and religious separations are at the root of all misery? When are we going to realize that men are equal in every sense of the term? You know, a new consciousness uncontaminated by all these age-old notions has got to be born in every human heart, if we are interested in Peace. So even as regards the Peace in the whole world, we have to begin with the individual. The problem of world-Peace cannot be solved by the representatives of national Governments at UNO, as long as the nations are competing for economic, political and military supremacy in the world. Man has to see this very clearly and get out of this ridiculous situation very quickly. He has to walk out of this before it is too late.

Let us now turn to another separative tendency, i.e. of belonging to exclusive religions. Identification with the separative religions honest Christian feels that the teachings of Christ are the real universal Vedic – the Upanishadic religion is the only universal religion; an creates tension in the human mind. The Hindu honestly feels that the sal religion and a Muslim feels that every non-Muslim is inferior to a Muslim. These sentiments and the exploitation thereof, by power-mongers, create many an intricate political problem. These, sentiments are at the root of conflicts of wars. The Buddhists and the Zen Buddhist, the Theosophists and the Anthroposophists and even the Krishnamurti-ites feel that the world will be a better place to live in if only people are converted to their way of thinking and living. The identification with a set of beliefs and with a pattern of living logically and compulsively leads the people to convert others to their way of thinking. Identification with theories and ideologies is the seed through which regimentation of the human mind has come to life.

Thus organized religion and belief has led to strife and war. Human history is full of such events. I say, therefore, that it is high time to question the validity of this tendency of identifying oneself with a concept or an idea; identifying oneself with a pattern of thinking and living. It is urgently necessary to go beyond this evil habit of belonging psychologically to something. Wars are created by this habit of the human mind.

Now a new religion has come into existence. It is of belonging to an ideology. Are you a communist or a socialist? – it is asked of you. Are you a Gandhi-ite or a Marxist - it is asked of you in the East. So ideologies are the religion of this century. As the world is divided into nations, so is it divided into ideological groups and blocks. People divide the world into the communist world and the non-communist or the free world. The basic tendency of belonging and identifying with, is the same, whether you belong to a nation, to a religion or to an ideology. The quality of the mind and its urge for

security is the same. We have seen how in the attempt to do away with religion, the communists created a God out of the state and a religion out of an ideology. Dogmatism and fanaticism is created out of theories like dialectical materialism and class-war. Thus in spite of the French Revolution there is no equality and fraternity and in spite of the Great October Revolution, there is no withering away of the state or wiping out of the state boundaries in Russia, or China. Nor has class-conflict come to an end in any of the communist countries. I am not here to criticize any nation, religion or ideology. But I do want to emphasize that a psychological revolution is vitally necessary if we want to live in peace. I am not capable of indulging in criticism simply because the failure of any person, be he a communist, a Gandhi-ite or a socialist – is my failure. Every one is my neighbour today. And every failure is integrally related to my life. Idle criticism has no place in an earnest enquiry of Truth. The failure of the French Revolution, the Russian Revolution and that of the Gandhian non-violent Revolution is my failure. You know how the Indian people have failed miserably in founding their whole national planning on Gandhian view of life. I am not here to criticize anyone. It is the humility of an enquirer that makes me talk about these matters with utter frankness. So let us not be under any illusion that we have known how to live in peace. In spite of all the progress in natural and social sciences as well as in technology, man has not discovered what Peace is and how he will come by it. A peaceful way of human relationship is not yet discovered. If man wants to survive, he will have to discover a new dimension of human relationships; a new dimension of a total relationship with everything in this world. This is the real challenge. We have been thinking of peace in a fragmentary way. Peaceful political relationships; peaceful economic relationships; peaceful international relationships, so on and so on. But there are no watertight compartments in life. Life is one indivisible whole and we will have to deal with it in a total way. If I have succeeded in bringing it to your notice then I have communicated what I wanted to do.

An equally radical and new approach is needed as regards the face within. Man has tried the path of isolation and withdrawal for untold centuries. The path of rigorous discipline and self-denial has been trodden upon too long. I wonder if religions and spiritual disciplines have not helped the hypersensitive and neurotic people to glorify their neurotic tendencies and idiosyncracies in the name of disciplines. I wonder if they have not encouraged physical and psychological lethargy in the name of austerity and penance. Glorification of eroticism in the name of God and Truth has been fashionable. You must have noticed how people are apt to behave in an abnormal way soon as they 'get spiritual'. They tend to develop many tendencies which isolate them, which create an exclusiveness in their lives. You cannot analyse all these details in an hour. It is, however, interesting to study how these vows and disciplines have mutilated the mind, how self-suppressions and self denials have impoverished the mind and how they have twisted and stifled the desire. So withdrawal from the world may assure you of a state of being in which there is no disturbance, but one may get imprisoned in that self-created prison without one's knowing; one may get stuck up there unawares. I know that there are yoga-schools and schools where meditation according to tantra is taught. There are esoteric schools and perhaps many others. I do not want to talk about any of them in a derogatory sense. But we must find out what all these systems do to the human mind. And we have seen how identification with ideas, theories and disciplines mangles the mind. Acceptance of an idea, theory or discipline becomes necessary only when one is afraid of life. One may say it is necessary for security. Now, security is a very complex thing. Security on a material level is necessary. Every human being should have an equal opportunity to acquire provision for all the basic needs of his life. It is not necessary to go into it.

But when we turn to the psychological level and enquire why we feel the necessity of security; why we feel the necessity to identify ourselves with a nation, religion or an ideology, we invariably find that there is fear of life. It is fear of life which creates an urge for security.

Fear of freedom creates an urge for belonging. Now if man has seen that this urge for security is at the root of all conflict, the urge to identify is at the root of all separative tendencies, why should not he realize that perhaps an entirely new approach to total life is necessary? Why should you not enquire whether it is a hang-over of the animal-life? In spite of the biological mutation that this human animal has gone through, he has perhaps carried over certain animalistic habits and instincts. It seems to me that urge for security is an animalistic habit which we are unwarrantedly carrying over from the physical to the psychological realm. And I am asking in all humility whether we are justified in so carrying it over? Is it at all necessary? Perhaps in the realm of relationships one should be completely vulnerable to everything; to every impression and sensation that one is confronted with. One should be able to meet every moment as it comes, without carrying the burden of memory; without getting entangled in the net of thought, i.e. time. I am thus questioning the necessity of psychological security. I am saying that accumulation and preservation of thought, which is the result of this urge for security is an undesirable hangover of our animal life. Acquisition, accumulation and preservation on the material level as well as the psychological level, is at the root of all conflicts, tensions and wars. So one who feels concerned about peace will have to dive deep within his consciousness and find out if it is possible to go through a psychological mutation. Psychological transformation seems to be the next step for the whole of humanity. A basic psychological transformation seems to be the only way to create peace.

Let us look at the problem of peace from another point. Is peace an end in itself? Is it an end to be pursued for its own sake or is it a by-product of something else? We try to attain peace but is it to be attained or does it come to life only when the mind is in a particular state; when the mind is silent and the brain is quiet? Poets, painters and lovers of nature have experiences of a state of complete relaxation. When they are in communion with the nature they are happy

beyond words. They enter into a state of total relaxation — physical and mental, in the presence of beauty. This relaxation has the fragrance of peace. When individuals who love one another, live together — I am talking of love and not of any biological attraction which is felt by persons belonging to opposite sex — their relationship enriches the solitude instead of violating it. How does it happen? Because there is no comparison and no competition among people who love one another. There is complete abandonment and through it, peace comes into existence. Do you see what I am suggesting? I am suggesting that perhaps peace is a by-product, which naturally results when the ego, the self, the me, is totally absent. It can also result when the mind is engaged in a genuine enquiry of Truth. Truth which is not put together by the human mind. Truth which is beyond the measure of man. When one is enquiring what the Truth is, while one is acting, moving and working in daily life, enquiry of Truth in action — then one unawares enters a state of peace. Because no enquiry is possible without humility. As soon as you begin to enquire, you become humble. No quarrels are possible for humility. Humility makes it impossible for you to envy, to hate or to offend any one.

Suppose you are a person who is interested in finding out Truth. Not Truth as an abstract theory, but Truth as something living and moving in you. What will happen to your mind if someone insults you? Will you react immediately? Will you get angry with that person? Getting angry or reacting is possible only if the mind is not engaged in an enquiry. A mind engaged in an enquiry of Truth will immediately try to find out why the person is uttering something silly, what makes that person act that way? Is it envy, jealousy or bitterness? If it is, why is it? You feel a kind of compassion for the person whose heart is filled with the poison of bitterness. You feel sorry for a person who cannot taste the nectar of life due to that poison. So this enquiry into the meaning of life does create a state of mind, where no disturbance can ever enter. A mind in which there is no scope for conflict and contradiction. Is it not important

to focus our energy on creating a state of being in which the urge to acquire, the urge to cover up the emptiness within with material possessions, ceases to be? Is it not important to empty the mind so that a new consciousness can take root there? The new or the Real manifests itself as soon as the mind is empty. Total silence of the mind is what I mean by the word 'empty'! Instead of tinkering with the existing pattern of human consciousness, is it not desirable to apply our total attention to the creation of a new consciousness? Patching up economic institutions and reforming political organisations is not going to carry us far. They have their limited purpose to serve. But I am talking of growing into a new dimension of consciousness. Elimination of acquisitiveness through legislation through terror and through religious injunctions has been given a trial. It was hoped that the quality of the mind could be changed through changing the socio-economic environment. But the quality has not changed. So a radical transformation cannot be imposed upon the mind.

Then what is the alternative? A basic total transformation in the human consciousness seems to be the only alternative. It is the privilege of those who are alert and vigilant, to bring about that transformation in their own lives. Science and technology have made it possible that no man needs starve today. If there is a problem of poverty in any part of the world, it is because man has failed to create a right basis for human relationships. Mal-adjustment is the real problem. So we come back to the one and only problem of bringing about a radical transformation in our consciousness. What do we mean by a radical transformation? Questioning the validity of all the age-old concepts and notions is necessary. Willingness to get free of them, if they are found to be outmoded and unrelated to actual life is essential. Willingness to let them drop without waiting for something to replace them; without waiting for a blueprint to be provided to you by someone. No one has got one. No one can have one. Because we have to grow into an absolutely new consciousness. Now are we willing to let this habit of identifying

and belonging drop away? Let us be honest. Let us confess at least to ourselves that we are not willing to get free of them though we might have discovered for ourselves how they are at the root of all misery and sorrow. Very few of us are really prepared for this tremendous mutation. We cling to those worn out empty beliefs and ideas. We want to hold on to them because we are afraid of the unknown. We are afraid of losing our moorings in the known. Being fully aware that no calculated results can be had before taking the plunge, we withdraw from it. New will not be new if one could calculate about it. This is obvious. Isn't it? No calculation regarding the consequences of a revolution are ever possible.

So persons who are willing to go through a psychological transformation are necessary. Man has spent money, time and energy for centuries on efforts of maintaining peace through force. Today he has to venture to break a new path for himself. Those who feel concerned about peace should pay serious consideration to what is being said this evening.

Questioner — Is there a practical way for changing one's consciousness?

Vimala — The first practical thing is to find out if there is a burning enquiry of Truth in your heart; to find out if there is total willingness to allow the freedom, the transformation to take place. Transformation is an explosive experience. Truth is explosive. It is very dangerous to play with Truth. It is not a change in one part of the being, while the rest of the being maintains the status-quo. If it comes and when it comes, it sets your whole house on fire. It consumes your whole being. It is that fire of Truth, which will burn every unessential thing to ashes. So, is one prepared to die to everything that he has built up? Is one willing to go through total annihilation? Is one willing to see the self being torn to pieces? Nothing is as destructive as Truth. Truth will blow away everything that the human mind has put together. That is bound to be a very painful experience. The first thing is, therefore, to find out whether

the enquiry of Truth is more important to you than your so-called life. If there is a willingness to allow such a radical change to take place.

Let me tell you repeatedly that life is not the same after such a transformation. The luxury of feeling safe in belonging to a family, a religion or an ideology will not be there. Mutation makes you extraordinarily vulnerable. There is no security of any kind whatsoever. There might arise occasions when the son will stand against the father and the brother against the brother. No safety; no security and no peace. No consolations and no comforts. You stand naked in the light of life, belonging nowhere. Are you willing to expose yourself completely to life?

Secondly, if there is that willingness what is the motive behind it? Is there any motive behind such an enquiry or do I feel the need for freedom as a basic need of my life? I have experience of appetite. Hence food gives me joy. I have an experience of the need for sleep. Hence sleep satisfies me. There is no motive behind these needs. Is the need for freedom as basic and spontaneous as these needs? I am talking about a first hand experience of that need; a living experience of the need for transformation. That experience creates humility because then you do not want anything from anyone in this world. You are engaged in something much deeper. You do not own anything. Neither do you seek nor do you reject. This renunciation changes the whole perspective of life. It frees you from dissipating your energy in reacting to everything. This is the practical way, if it can be called a way at all. In fact there is no crystallized path. Every one has to discover his way. No one person can do it for an other, simply because the psychological world that everyone creates is unique. So it is a pathless way. Rather there is no way at all.

Q u e s t i o n e r — What happens after that?

V i m a l a — Humility operates upon total being. Humility has its own dimensions.

Humility is the capacity to learn. It is receptivity on all levels of consciousness. In other words it is complete abandonment. We who have read and heard so much, who know so much, carry the burden of our knowledge. If the burden is not carried openly by the conscious mind, it is carried in the subconscious. How could we know the beauty of humility which is innocency?

One who learns is always observing. Have you seen small children observing nature? Every leaf talks to them. Every bird sings to them. Their eyes are wide open. Their ears are awake to every sound. The children are exceedingly fresh because they want to learn. The grown-ups lose this freshness. Humility revives that freshness. It recreates innocence. A person who lives in humility lives in meditation. Meditation in action. Silence in action. It is solitude unsoiled by your mind. It is not exclusive. It is all-inclusive attention. Thus enquiry is born. It changes the tone of your relationships. It becomes the top priority in your life. When the enquiry is transformed into a burning flame, humility comes to life. In the light of that humility every action flows out of meditation.

Questioner — You say that no one can know what is going on in another person's mind. But this is not true. Ramakrishna Paramahansa not only knew Vivekananda's thoughts but he also changed them. So it is possible to help, guide and even change another person's life.

Vimala — It is extremely difficult to discuss an issue when you are in personalities. Ramakrishna Paramahansa was certainly one of the greatest saints of India. I am not equal to undo the lace of his shoes. But when you have to discuss an issue it is meaningless to bring in personalities. It is irrelevant to the analysis of a problem. So let us keep them out of our discussion, whether it is Ramakrishna, Vivekananda, Aurobindo, Krishnamurti or any one else. Yes, Sir, it is possible to develop the power of reading other people's thoughts. Now what is this power? It is refinement of your sensitivity to such an extent that you can feel the vibrations of the thoughts before

they are verbalized. You know thought has vibrations as light and sound have got vibrations. Love has also vibrations and what you call healing is nothing but effective operation of those vibrations. Man has not made enough research in that direction; so he calls it a miracle. In the same way one can refine the sensitivity of the mind to a very great extent. This, however, does not change the fact that everyone lives in a psychological world that he creates for himself. Hence he himself must find out how to get free of that.

The second part of the question concerns the changing of other people's lives. Now help and cooperation are not ruled out of any human activity. They cannot be ruled out. Our talk this evening is an inter-personal cooperation on the verbal level. Ramakrishna's words or touch could change Vivekananda. But Rani Rasmoni or Mathurbabu did not change with his touch or words. Why, because change is a phenomenon which takes place when two hearts meet at the same point and the same level. For the alert ones listening to life is itself an event of transformation. Reciprocity of relationships creates a change. Transformation thus takes place only if there is maturity. Maturity is the perfume of a genuine enquiry of Truth. Let, therefore, your hearts be illumined by the flame of a pure enquiry.

1st TALK IN BILTHOVEN – November 11th, 1964

It is always a pleasure and privilege to be with people who are interested in understanding what life is; what death is; what the human mind is. In other words what this whole business of going through pain and pleasure is; of going through joy and sorrow is.

This evening we are going into an inter-personal communication. It is something with which most of you might be unfamiliar. We are used to attend meetings where someone speaks to us; someone gives a discourse and we hear him. In an inter-personal communication the relationship gets transformed. It is entirely different. No one is speaking to any one. There is no speaker nor teacher. No one is expounding any ideology or theory which the rest of the people can carry home after leaving the hall. It is rather a very frank and straightforward communication, about life as we live it; about problems that we experience in daily life. We are going to enter into this new relationship. This relationship has astounding dimensions.

You cannot avoid the teacher-follower or Master-disciple relationship as long as one speaks to the people. Fortunately we are not a large gathering. Fortunately for you and me I am one of you; an ordinary person who has no claims to any specialized knowledge, experience or authority.

I would like to find out with your help, why the human mind craves for religion; what is religion? What does the mind seek through religion? The world over, people have a craving for theology and philosophy. Why?

Religion is reunion. To be religious is to be reunited. To be reunited with what? Reunion with whom? With that which is limitless; which is vast. Every alert person discovers that the mind is limited; that the brain has its limitations. The urge to become limitless or to be united with that which is limitless creeps into the heart; to be united with something which has no frontiers whatsoever. We are bound by frontiers. The physical organism has its own frontiers. The human consciousness in which the conscious as well as the unconscious are

included, has its own boundaries. So the urge to go beyond frontiers and limitations is dormant in every human heart.

There is an urge to unite with that which is complete; that which is perfect. Now, those who are vigilant, discover without difficulty that whatever the mind touches it gets contaminated by imperfection; it is polluted by incompleteness. Nothing that is perceived by the intellect escapes contamination and nothing that is created by the mind is free from pollution. Nothing that is received through sense organs has the perfume of perfection.

So a mature mind, an awakened mind, feels an urge to get united with that which is complete, perfect and beyond frontiers; which cannot be contaminated. This urge seems to be at the very root of religion. I am not talking about organized religions which came into existence because persons were eager to carry the truth to the people. But truth lost its life and vitality in the very process of crystallization; in the very process of organization. So no organized religion could serve the purpose of bringing truth to the people simply because truth cannot be imprisoned in words, symbols and images. I am not going into the history of organized religions and the creation of priesthood through which they established their authority over the mind. I am not going to deal with the regimentation of feelings, standardization of reactions and the rest of it. I would like to go into this hunger for perfection; hunger for going beyond all frontiers; hunger for getting united with the limitless.

Let us find out why everything we touch gets contaminated by imperfection. Instead of indulging in theorization about the perfect, instead of imagining what is beyond the frontiers, let us get to grips with the existing frontiers. Let us go into the phenomenon of contamination which is our daily life. Why does everything get soiled with impurity, the moment we touch it? It is obvious that our physical organism needs constant purification and refinement. This is a simple fact. If we want to have an alert and fresh body i.e. the nervous and the muscular system and the whole complex organism, surely it must

be kept absolutely clean. It must be kept sensitive and supple through finding out a right kind of rhythm of life; a right kind of diet; a right kind of exercise for the total organism; every one has to discover that rhythm for himself. No rigid rules and regulations can be laid down for universal application. The rhythm will depend upon a number of factors such as the climate, the nature of occupation, the standard of living, so on and so on. It is essential to see that the body should not be allowed to become dull, sluggish and benumbed; that it should not be allowed to get over tired, exhausted or completely worn-out. All this needs attention on our part. It is quite a job to keep the physical organism ever-fresh. Food, exercise, sleep and all other items are integrally related to the purity and the freshness of the body. I like to believe that everyone sitting in this hall is conscious of this vitally important part of our life. Obviously, unless the organism is sharp, alert and sensitive, you cannot think, contemplate or meditate. You cannot possibly meditate when the body is lethargic and sluggish. If the body is over fed or the digestive system is not functioning properly, if the body has not had sufficient rest at night; if it has not been refreshed through sound sleep, you cannot meditate. All these are the elementary requirements of a healthy life. They must be satisfied. Everyone is free to decide how he will satisfy them.

There is no use imposing any discipline on the mind. The mind revolts against every discipline whether it is self imposed or imposed by someone else. But when one falls into that rhythm out of an understanding of total life, into a sane and healthy rhythm of life, then it is no more an imposition of the conscious upon the subconscious mind. It is no more a discipline which has a sense of compulsion about it. You do everything simply and naturally out of an integral understanding of life. Things which flow from understanding never become a burden to the mind. They are done without becoming self-conscious. It is not necessary to go into all that. Let us turn to the psychological world, in which we live most of our time. We were asking ourselves why everything that mind touches stinks of imperfection, which is

impurity?

If you observe your own minds you will notice that the touch of the mind is never simple. The complexity behind the touch breeds impurity. The touch of the mind is neither simple nor direct. It is very essential to discover how the mind touches everything. Now why is the touch complex? What do we mean by the word „complex“? It is complex because the mind touches everything with a motive. The motive always implies two things. The mind establishes every relationship either to gain a pleasurable experience or to avoid a painful one. So the mind cannot think, feel or will, without a motive. If you already have a pleasant experience the mind wants to continue having it. Or it wants to safeguard itself against a painful experience. The mind is unable to function without a motive. The motive may be on the conscious level and you may be aware of it; or it may function as an urge springing out of the subconscious. We do not know how to look at a thing without naming it; we do not know how to listen to a word without interpreting it; we do not know how to be related to a person without a motive. This motive breeds misery.

Now, what is pleasure? It is an agreeable sensation. And pain is a disagreeable sensation. Obviously to avoid pain and danger on the physical level is necessary. To put on warm clothes in winter is a rational thing to do. It is a sane thing to go out for fresh air when it is stuffy inside a room. I am not talking about the morbid mentality which invites pain and sorrow; the sadist mentality which is afraid of joy and pleasure.

I am not talking about the so called austerity. I am trying to get to the very roots of imperfection. I wonder whether this dual motive to derive pleasure and to avoid pain, creates imperfection; it creates a screen of impurity which comes between the Reality and the person.

Why do I want to derive pleasure out of everything and why do I want to avoid pain at any cost? What does this desire do to the quality of my mind? To the quality of my life? An urge for the continuation of pleasure creates an attachment to the things, ideas

or persons in whose contact one feels the pleasure. The moment, the urge of continuity becomes active, one wants to cling to the factors which had caused a pleasurable experience. One wants to repeat that experience by artificially stimulating or repeating those conditions. Storing the memory of pleasant experiences and a constant effort to repeat them, becomes a groove in which the mind moves. Do you see now, that attachment to, and ownership of things, ideas and persons is born of the basic motive for pleasure? Attachment has two aspects. When you become attached to something, either you run after it or you try to possess it. Either my mind goes about with a begging bowl, always seeking pleasure or my mind possesses the things that give pleasure; dominates the persons who stimulate pleasure; and owns the ideas which provoke pleasure. Thus dependence or domination is our life. We may not do it on the conscious level. We do not like even to confess it to ourselves. Our civilized minds feel hurt if we admit it to ourselves. So we avoid verbalizing such painful things.

What happens to you when you try to own things, ideas or persons? Possession and ownership is invariably accompanied by the fear of loss. Possession and ownership carry within them the germs of frustration. Surely one who owns nothing moves in freedom. One who possesses nothing, materially or psychologically, is free from fear. He lives in a state of fearlessness, as he has nothing to preserve and protect. He is as vulnerable as a tiny little flower; he is as vulnerable as a trembling blade of grass; he is inwardly free. He knows not fear for he is nothing. The quality of man's possessions has changed in bygone centuries, but the quality of the mind that craves to own has not changed. His mind is always ridden with the fear of loss; the fear of separation.

When I depend upon things, ideas or persons, for my happiness, what happens to the quality of my mind? What takes place within me? I am owned by them. I am possessed by them. I am a slave to them. It is a well known fact that your possessions possess you. They claim your time and energy. They exact your attention. It is a diffi-

cult job to own anything. So either you are possessed or you are an eternal beggar. Have you not observed how you struggle to acquire knowledge; to gather ideas and to accumulate experience. Have you not noticed how the game of selection, acceptance and rejection keeps you busy? The process of acquisition, accumulation and preservation goes on throughout your lives. Today you are a Hindu; tomorrow you become a Zen-Buddhist; and day after tomorrow you come across a person called Krishnamurti; you are attracted by his personality and teachings; so you belong to his thought. You can't belong to him, because he has no organization. But psychologically you create a framework and impose it upon him. He may deny authority but you impose it upon him and regard him as your Master; you depend upon him for your gratification; your satisfaction. Thus you move from theory to theory; from teacher to teacher; from one way of life to another pattern of life. That is our life. Is it not?

If we are very honest and willing to face the facts of life, that is the content of our consciousness. That is the stuff of our consciousness. Either we cherish the memory of the past or we entertain dreams about the future. We have no time to live in the present. We have no time to look at the present moment which is the only reality; which is the concrete perfection; which is the only eternity one could ever meet. We do not meet it, as our minds are divided between the past and the future. Anxiety for the future and memory of the past claim our total life. Obviously such a mind is a distracted mind.

We are trying to find out the roots of imperfection. We are taking an inward journey instead of theorising about perfection, instead of finding out what is perfection and where is perfection we are trying to probe the depths of our being, to discover the seeds of imperfection. This direction of the journey is completely different from the usual one. Instead of fooling around with the periphery we are trying to get to the centre. I hope you are observing how a mind divided between the past and the future is distracted. I am working in the kitchen. My hands move

mechanically. I have been cooking for years, so I can cook without applying conscious thought to it. I can and do think about something else, while physically I am busy cooking. I am working in the office.

I have got to work. My mind is, however, wandering somewhere. A part is in the office and a part of me is somewhere else. So every thought, feeling and action is soiled by incompleteness. The mind that touches is never whole. It is divided. Division is fragmentation; fragmentation is imperfection; this distraction is the very root of incompleteness. No action flows out of the totality of our being. Every action is mechanical. Every action is born of comparison and evaluation. Reacting to challenges, in a set pattern has become a habit with us.

The thoughts that we think are never complete. Feelings that we go through are not complete and our actions are never complete. It seems to me that the distraction is the real imperfection. Distraction is the essence of incompleteness. Now, what happens when you do anything half-heartedly? The residue of the half-done action or half-lived experience accumulates in the subconscious. That becomes active when you go to sleep. Because I do not act as a whole human being, I do not act totally, every feeling, thought and action leaves its residue, which gets stored up in the subconscious. That is the source of your dreams.

So in the day-time you are distracted; in the night you cannot relax because the dreams bother you. Distraction thus takes away the joy of awakening and the joy of sleeping.

When we realize this we try to go to some religious preacher or a spiritual teacher in the hope that he will help us to go beyond the boredom of daily life, that he will lead us to the realm of perfection; perhaps that I would find the perfume of perfection, the perfume of going beyond limits; going beyond frontiers. What I am trying to communicate is, that the search for perfection and limitlessness, the search for that which is beyond frontiers, is not to be made in an abstract way, completely disassociated from your daily life. Rather

the search for perfection has got to be made every moment of your life, in every action that you are doing, in every word that you are speaking. Is it possible to live in the realm of total awareness? Is it possible to live in the state of total freedom while we are living our daily life?

I say it is. I say it is possible to live in total abandonment, in total freedom, while we are discharging our responsibilities and duties at home, in office, in society, in whatever function we might be engaged. I say it, not in a dogmatic way; I say it, not with the intention of presenting a theory; I say it is possible only if we learn the art of not allowing the mind to be distracted at any moment of life. To do everything with our total being. Not to dream about tomorrow, or to ruminate over what I have done yesterday – one yesterday, or ten yesterdays, or ten thousand yesterdays. Not referring to or ruminating over the past, not dreaming about the future, but enjoying the action that I am engaged in now – regarding the present moment as Eternity.

I can learn the art of living totally in the present; enjoying every action that I am doing; doing everything out of Love and not out of compulsion; then surely that total abandonment creates a relaxation. Relaxation in action. Not going to some cave or monastery, or spiritual center to seek relaxation. It is easy if you are not in action. Sit quietly in a room and then your body gets relaxed if you are getting good food, good sleep, are having holidays, complete rest and no work to do. You feel you are having relaxation. Absence of strife is not relaxation, absence of work is not relaxation. It is an artificially created state of relaxation. Real, living and dynamic relaxation is possible, only while you are living, battling with your problems of life. Is it possible to meet every problem, to meet every challenge in that relaxed state of being? You will surely understand that I am not referring here to material life but to the projection of time in psychological relationship, projection of time while you are engaged with the present. You either project it one way and call it past

or you project it the other way and call it future. But you are projecting it all the same. So relaxation is possible if every action of the mind becomes an end in itself, if the present moment becomes for me as important as the so-called Eternity, if every person becomes as important to me as any leader, Holy person, or Saint or Sage and every person commands my love and attention and every moment commands my total attention. If we learn that art, then distraction disappears. And when distraction disappears – when you do something with your total being – then that action does not leave any residue of memory in the subconscious, and therefore it does not bother you in the form of dreams at night. Dreams are obviously the fruits of half-lived moments; of half-done jobs; half-heartedly done actions; halfheartedly met situations.

Now this is something very serious that I am suggesting. It is easy to meet pleasure with your total being. It does not need any effort on your part. When you are happy, you are totally happy for that moment. But what I am suggesting is, meeting pain, sorrow, suffering as it comes, without any reservation, without trying to escape from it. Why should life always be pleasant? Why shouldn't there be suffering? Why shouldn't there be sorrow? Why should we always run after sunshine? Why not enjoy the shadow and the shade as much as the sunlight? The moment I am not afraid of pain and suffering, the sting of pain melts away. It disappears. The sting of pain or of sorrow consists in my fear of sorrow. If I am not afraid of death, then death loses its sting. It becomes as natural as birth. Because I am trying to avoid pain, because I am trying to escape from it, this fear is exploited by many people in society. Organized religion would not have such a tremendous hold on the human mind if the human mind were not afraid of pain. Why should I be afraid of separation? Why should I try to run away from loneliness? Why should I be frightened of emptiness? If it is within, why not face it and try to understand it? No one can avoid pain in life. Life is a series of challenges and responses. No one can control the environments and atmospheres; they

cannot be cast into a mould by one's likes and dislikes. So pain and pleasure, this duality, is going to be there as long as you are living on the mental level. So, I think it is urgently necessary to see this beauty of life, that I do not try to avoid pain when the pain comes; the response of the system is there. If there is physical pain, I consult a doctor; I do what is necessary. I respond to it. If there is death in my family, I know that I am facing separation. I am now lonely, left behind. Instead of grumbling and grudging the loneliness let me receive this loneliness with open arms and let me find out what is the essence of loneliness; what is the meaning of separation why separation is becoming painful to me. Let me meet it. Let me understand.

The real beauty of life will be manifested if we do not turn away from any experience. Then anxiety cannot touch you. Then the thought of the morrow does not pollute the enjoyment of today. And the rumination over the past does not spoil the happiness of today.

So going beyond frontiers, and being reunited with that which is immeasurable, that which is limitless, that which is beyond frontiers is perhaps doing away with the self created barriers and learning the art of living totally from moment to moment. That mind is a religious mind, which lives and moves in freedom. That mind is a religious mind, which lives fearlessly without seeking something; without rejecting anything. Receiving everything that life throws up. Such a mind is a religious mind. It is humble before the vast life with which it is surrounded. It hasn't got the arrogance to say "I will select what I want from life, I will accept only that which I want. I will select what I like – whom I like". Then every person one comes across is a friend and a neighbour. Every situation is an occasion to learn the essence of life; to meet the essence of life. That mind is religious which has got the capacity to kiss the face of every moment. And it seems to me that this is reunion, doing away with the barriers of imperfection and incompleteness that the human mind has created.

That is the way to be reunited with that which the human mind has

ot touched; which the human mind has not created. I do not know whether I have made clear what I wanted to share with you; what I wanted to communicate with you. For the last fortyfive minutes I have been trying to put across to you a few important things. First, we are not dealing with any beliefs, theories, dogmas or ideas. We are not here in the relationship of a speaker and listener. We are here in a new relationship; in a new dimension of relationship; inter-personal communication, sharing.

Secondly, what is religion? We proceed to find out that the root of religion is in the urge for being reunited with something which is vast and immense. Why is that urge there? Because we find that everything that we touch becomes incomplete. Everything that we touch sows the seeds of misery and sorrow. Then we enquired: "Why does it happen? Is it possible to live without allowing the mind to spoil it, or to contaminate it?" We went on to see that it is possible if the mind is not troubled by the anxiety to continue in pleasure and avoid pain. This urge for continuity of pleasure and avoidance of pain comes through basic fear. It is possible to eliminate it if we know that the essence of perfection is somewhere within; which can be manifested only if we do away with self-imposed and self-created barriers — imperfection and incompleteness arising out of a distracted mind's touch.

We went into the phenomenon of distraction and found out how it damages our life; our waking hours as well as our sleep. Distraction is possible only as long as I am selecting something from life. Distraction means my intention to select. If you do not want to concentrate on something, will distraction ever be possible? A mind that is willing to face everything that comes its way, will that mind ever be distracted? Distraction is a result of my habit of choosing and selecting. Selection means acceptance or rejection. So the willingness to accept life as it comes, gives you the strength to live totally and wholly and completely at every moment.

We ended by saying that perhaps this is the way to go beyond the

frontiers. A religious mind lives in the humility of innocence. Not claiming knowledge, not claiming authority of experience, but living in utter humility and innocence, saying "Life is so vast, who am I choose? Who am I to select? Who am I to reject? Let it come as may, I will face it whether it is pleasurable or painful, my humility will survive the pleasure and the pain, the joy and sorrow. Such a mind is perhaps a religious mind. And that humility and innocence is perhaps the essence of religion. Humility has no frontiers. Humility has no limitations. In that humility the touch with the perfect, the touch with the vast, the touch with the limitless, comes into existence. If we could learn to live in direct and simple communion with the reality in our daily life, in every action, that will take away all the sorrow from our life. Pain will be there, pleasure will be there. We will walk through them, and no experience will leave any scar of memory on our mind.

Questioner: It is difficult to do away with memory.

Vimala: The lady says that it is difficult to do away with memory. Now, what are we implying by the term "doing away with memory?" Let us keep what I said aside. What do you exactly imply when you say it is difficult to do away with memory, or to live without memory? You enjoy much more because you have memories of the past experiences of joy. Is that what you are saying, Madam? Yes? Allright. Memory is one of the great joys of life says the lady. Now what is memory? I go to a wintersport place, or I go to the beach in summer. I spend a few weeks there and I have a wonderful time. I enjoy it completely. I have come back home and now till the next summer whenever I am bored with my present life, whenever I am tired, whenever something irritating or annoying has taken place, then I turn to my memory; I revive the experience that I have lived there. That memory gives me joy. Is that what you suggest?

What do I mean when I say that memory gives me one of the joys of life? What does it do? I have lived, and I have had one experience

When I get pleasure out of that memory after a month, or after a day, what am I doing? What is the mind doing?

Can I re-live that? Can I re-create all the situations? I cannot. But I can re-create the symbols, the images through the word; through the idea. Now I am sitting with you; this is a living experience. I am with you. When I go home I may revive the memory of this beautiful hall, and the nice people. Now my memory cannot re-create you. But my memory can re-create the image. As I am sitting here, and talking to you, I am not only talking to you; I am talking to you as well as receiving the impressions; your faces; your dresses; the lines on your faces; the way you are sitting; the way you are responding. All that is taken in. Without my conscious effort all these are received. And when I say I take pleasure in memory, or memory gives me joy; I am living in the re-creation of the image, of the symbol. I cannot re-create all of you, I cannot re-create this hall. Surely what we store in memory is the image. The image through a word, through an idea. I am a painter; I put a picture on the canvas. So memory is crystallizing a first hand experience into verbal or pictorial images. Reducing an experience to them. Whenever I find less joy in life; whenever I am bored with life, whenever I feel lonely, I re-create all those images and rejoice in them. Do we not do it? I think all of us do it.

When we have very pleasant experiences of life; when we have been with something which is very beautiful; we live on its memory. What does this mean? If the present moment in which I am living, is giving me joy, then it does not leave me time to re-create the memory of past experiences. I am perfectly satisfied with what I am doing now. If the present gives me satisfaction, happiness; then I do not indulge in the memories of the past experiences. When I feel bored; when I feel tired or ill; when I am lonely; then living second-hand on the memory of past experiences becomes the only outlet for my energy. Is it not so? So the joy out of memory is a second-hand joy. It's a joy out of images and symbols, which have been created through thought and feeling. Perhaps we are not meeting? I do not

Questioner: But we very often have to make a choice in daily life. How can we avoid a choice?

Vimala: Choice in what? I want to live in a house, I will choose the design if I am to build it. If I want to have clothes, I will choose the colour I like. I'll find out, if I have to travel by a train, what time it leaves and what train to take; or if I could rather go by plane or by car. So choice about what? I was talking about choice in relationships. A choice about environment, about situations. Generally we become selective about friends, about company, about situations, as we try to avoid that which is not agreeable to our temperaments, habits or idiosyncrasies, likes or dislikes. So we try to avoid that which is not agreeable to us and we seek that which is pleasant to us. I was referring to relationships or situations. I want to have always the same kind of atmosphere in my family, in my environment. I would like my husband to be, or my wife always to be, in a particular kind of mood. I would like my husband or wife to have the same tastes that I have, the same likes and dislikes that I have, the same urges in life that I have. I would like my children to have the same. So I am trying to select for them. I am trying to choose for other persons. I like my friends to meet only those persons, who are agreeable to me. This possessiveness, this tendency to dominate, to want to keep them secure for you as you like them to be; that becomes the real stuff of our everyday behaviour with others. I was saying that this selecting, this choosing in relationships, environments, atmosphere; trying to avoid some and trying to seek the company of others that is at the root of all anxiety; at the root of all sorrow.

When one is in love before marriage, you say "I take you as you are. It doesn't matter to me how you are and what you are". After marriage when the joint life begins, all the subtle nuances of each other's mind become manifest in daily life. In the beginning one ignores the differences, one ignores the inconsistencies, one even tries to ignore the complications and contradictions. After a few months one becomes so much aware of them that one says "We

ouldn't this be changed?" Very agreeably, very lovingly, very affectionately, one brings it to the notice of one's partner, that this is not very pleasant. But if the other person changes, you are happy. If the other person says he wants to change or she wants to change and changes for some time, but lapses back into the old habits, old tendencies, old inclinations, then a gap comes into being.

For my relationship is based on a very subtle level; even the intimate relationship of husband and wife, mother and son is somehow based on this selection, acceptance, rejection, it may not be verbalized. This selection and acceptance, rejection may not every time take place on the conscious level. When the subconscious controls our behaviour, through our gestures, through our non-cooperation, through our withdrawals, through our partial joining and partial withdrawing, we express that this is something that we have not liked. Then you have seen how in life, even in a family where there is bloodrelationship and the most intimate relationship among human beings, difficulties creep up. And I was wondering whether it was possible to live in the spirit of renunciation which is the essence of love in every relationship; whether it is husband and wife relationship or the relationship of friends, or whether it is relationship in business, school, job, occupation. That is what I meant by selection, or acceptance, rejection of life.

Questioner: It seems to me, that it is not possible to be aware all the time.

Vimala: You say "We cannot be aware all the time". What is all the time? Please I am not cross-questioning. I am just thinking aloud. What is all the time? Has awareness any relation to time? Is there a continuity in ultimate awareness of reality? Has freedom any relation to time? Freedom simply is. It only exists. As the sun is there. We create mornings and noons, and evenings and sunrises and sunsets, out of positions of the earth and the sun. But for the sun there is no day, no night, no morning, no evening. So awareness is like the

or the subconscious is in a sense indestructable.

I can burn this piece of cloth, but I cannot burn its memory. I do not destroy it, but it loses its force, it loses its momentum, it loses its vitality, it loses its hold over the conscious mind, it stops controlling, regulating, moulding my conscious life. Surely, that is what we mean by getting free of the subconscious. It is there. If you ask me today what is your name, I know that, though the name was given to me some years ago. I can tell you that my parents live in such and such a town, that I was brought up there; all that can be recollected. So it is there, but it has no longer any control over the conscious mind, it can no more distort, or twist the conscious action, or the conscious behaviour according to its urges. So the tension comes to an end, the conflict comes to an end. The subconscious is there as the colour of your skin is there. The breathing in and the breathing out is no more a burden to you. In the same way, the recollection of what is there in the subconscious, if any occasion arises, is no burden to the mind. You can recollect it without any feeling, without any emotion, without any reaction. I wonder if I am making myself clear. But in the realm of awareness, the subconscious becomes absolutely silent. It loses all its vitality. Now what we are saying is: "We cannot be aware all the time", "Can the subconscious do it for us?" Now in the realm of awareness there is no "we", there is no "I". Awareness is not an experience. Awareness is not an experience which will ever come to an end or which will have continuity. It is something which is unrelated to time. Because our consciousness works in the dimension of time, we do not know and we have no words to express what happens in this state which is unrelated to time; which is in the realm of timelessness. What takes place, what happens? There are no words. Words are related to the past; words are related to the known. But awareness is direct communion with the unknown. I have no words to express on the verbal level, to tell you that in the realm of awareness these things happen. I can talk about it only in a negative way. And so I am saying that in the realm of awareness there is no I, no me, to

be aware; to have the experience of that awareness. If I am aware the "I" is there, and the experience of awareness is there. Now as long as the "I" is there having experience, whether you have an experience of alcohol, or whether you have an experience of sexual intercourse, or whether you have the experience of something conceptual, ideational, metaphysical, the quality, the duality in which the mind is, is just the same. So, in the realm of awareness, the ego, the self, is totally absent. Subconscious, and unconscious are related only to the self, to the ego, to the "I". The "I", the "me" is a bundle of the conscious, subconscious, the unconscious. And Awareness being completely unrelated to the "I", to time, awareness being beyond the "me", beyond the ego, beyond the self, there is no consciousness of "I" being aware. Awareness is not an experience. Because awareness is not an experience, the conscious or the subconscious are equally helpless, the total silence of the conscious and the subconscious is the essence of awareness. The total absence of the ego is what I mean by total silence of the conscious and the subconscious, and this is the essence of that awareness. So once that awareness dawns upon you, you do not have to make any effort to keep it alive. Once that awareness of reality invades your heart and descends upon it with an irresistible force – tearing down everything that the ego has created; pulling down everything that the human mind has erected and constructed – once that awareness dawns upon you, you have not to do a thing about it. It is there, burning like a flame which is its own fuel. You do not even have to provide fuel for that flame. One only has to brush aside all the unessentials. The flame of awareness, once it is lit in the heart, burns away all the dross, all the insignificant; all the unessential things. And it keeps itself alive without your effort to keep it alive. It is something which you and I cannot imagine today, because all imagination has its roots in the past.

Questioner: "When I am going on the street, then I do need my memory, is it not"?

Vimala: Surely the functional memory and memory regarding our physical carrying and behaviour in life is necessary. Otherwise, if I do not know my name, and if I do not know the rules and regulations of the road, I will be taken to prison; or if I lose my memory and tomorrow morning I say to my husband "Who are you, I do not recognize you," he will take me to a lunatic asylum. We are not talking about that memory: Functional memory. I am returning to the memory which makes you compare, evaluate, judge everything that you come across. It makes you judge human beings, it makes you compare human beings. So when memory uses you as an instrument, works with its own momentum and becomes its self-appointed judge of everything that you come across, then it distorts and it twists you around. Then the memory of someone's mistake committed one month ago prevents you from meeting that person today, as he is. Perhaps he has changed in that one month, but I am carrying in the memory something wrong he has done to me one month ago. That memory does not allow me to meet him as he is today. Then it takes away all the freshness and the newness of life. So, memory should not become like a pair of eye-glasses through which I look at the world. It should not interfere with or control my action. Otherwise I cannot act. All my actions become reactions of the memory. The human mind has become a slave to memory. So that authority of memory which makes you compare and judge everything that you come across, that is what we have been talking about.

When a Hindu who believes in the immortality of the soul and the law of Karma and things of that sort comes across a Communist, he says: „This man is sure to go to hell. He does not believe in God. This man cannot have liberation, this man cannot be free." He passed a judgement against him, because the latter is a Communist. Similarly a Communist passes a judgement saying: "religion is an opiate to the human mind". So everything in religion is bad. He will throw away the baby with the bath-water. Memory provides us with norms and standards; ethical standards, moral standards, religious standards.

So we go on passing judgment: this is good, that is bad; this is moral, this is immoral. Whether we are related to it or not. We cannot look at a thing without judging it. It is that part of memory we are dealing with.

SECOND TALK IN BILTHOVEN – November 18th, 1964
(Unedited by speaker)

I was wondering while coming here, if anyone of us is interested in life for its own sake? If any one of us loves life and loves living. Not as a means to an end, but for the joy of living, for the love of living; living as an end in its self, life as an end in its self, living for and enjoying the ecstasy of life. How many of us are interested in life and living? In other words how many of us love life for its own sake? I am thinking aloud with you. For the benefit of those who were not here last Wednesday let me repeat that these talks are not narration, description, explanation, or elaboration of any philosophy, of any ideology, of any theory, about life. They are not meant for expanding any view of life, they are not intended to propagate any pattern of thinking or living. They are intended to be honest and frank conversations and communications. So I would like to take up this evening, if I may, this question of living for its own sake, and loving life as an end in its self, not as an instrument or a means of achieving something, for attaining something. Generally we are taught, are we not, that life is meant to acquire knowledge, life is meant to attain economic, political, social power, prestige. Life is meant to acquire knowledge about death, about what happens after death, what is beyond life and death. So we are taught from our very childhood that the meaning of life is to obtain knowledge, to gain some experience from life, to acquire something from life. Whether it is material acquirement, whether it is social, political, economic, cultural attainment, or whether it is so called religious or spiritual attainment. But life as a means to attain something: that is what one is generally taught in society. Whether you are born in the East, or you are born in the West, you are taught to use life, to utilize life. And one who exploits life to gain more from it, is called an intelligent person, he is a clever person. If he gets religious attainments then he is a religious person, an advanced person. If he has

spiritual attainment then he is recognized in the so called spiritual world as a Saint, as a Sage, as a Yogi, or what not. And to me it seems that all the joy of life is lost, the ecstasy of life is lost in the process of acquirement, in the process of acquisition, in the process of experiencing, in the process of competing, and protection of whatever you have acquired and accumulated. Because then the present moment in which you are living becomes secondary and the object or the aim of life gets the priority. It becomes the important thing. Not life. Life is important to you and life is interesting, and charming and fascinating to you and me, only as long as I can get out of it what I want. And when I cannot get what I want out of it, I suffer from frustration. Then I get bored, then I feel lonely, then I feel empty.

So I was wondering if we could look at this marvellous phenomenon of life in all together a different way. Whether it is possible or you and me to have been conditioned to have used life, and to exploit life for something that we want out of it, or whether it is possible for you and me to have a radically different approach to life, to love life, to live in the ecstasy of life. And with your help I would like to go rather deep into this aspect, into this problem tonight.

You know, one who is not interested in life, and one who does not enjoy life, is always afraid of death. The first thing, the first result, the first consequence of averting life into a means for achieving an end, is reducing life to a suspense for death. During the whole of our life, in a way, we are living in a constant fear of death. We are afraid of death. Fear of death, and attachment to life as the only instrument of accumulation, acquisition; this is really the stuff of our consciousness. We do not know anything else in life. So we are living all the time in the shadow of death. All the time. Whatever we do. If we are to take a journey together this evening, if we are to enquire in a cooperative way into this problem, let us begin at the very beginning. It is obvious that you have to acquire money, you have to

earn your livelihood, you need a house, you need your material need and provisions. One has to do that. So, when I say that life should not be utilized, not be exploited, I am not referring to that part. It has to be gone through. You have a choice, through which medium you earn your livelihood, what kind of house you may have, what kind of relationship you may have with things; you have a free choice there. As long as we are these human animals, we have bodies, we have appetites, we need clothes, we need food. There is no inconsistency in providing the body with its needs, and enquiring into the meaning of life. In the Orient for centuries past, this enquiry into the meaning of life, this Renunciation, this Truth, this Reality has been regarded as the privilege of a few people. So if you want to understand life, if you want to enquire into the meaning of life, you should give up your jobs, you should give up your house, you should leave your wife, you should go into a monastery, you should join some spiritual centre, you do this and that. So, for centuries past in the Orient a contradiction was imagined between looking after one's self and enquiring after Truth. But in the 19th century there came many revolutionary people in the Orient who discovered for themselves, and told the people, that there is no contradiction in these two ways of life. It is not necessary for you to give up your house, your wife, your children, and go to the forest or to a cave, or to a monastery. You can do it while you are living in your house, while you are discharging your responsibility, while you are looking after your wife and children, your husband or whoever he or she may be. So, that is to be done. That is taken for granted. If you and I have not had our meals today we couldn't come here to sit in such a quiet nice room and discuss at leisure. So please, that aspect of life is taken for granted before we proceed and take a plunge into an enquiry of Truth.

I am clarifying this because what I am going to say in the next few moments might be misunderstood, and might be interpreted to mean that one need not earn his livelihood, one need not do his job. An enquiry of Truth is the most important thing in life, but the other

ing I am taking for granted; doing one's job as a teacher, as a businessman, as an industrialist, as a shopkeeper, as a housewife and other, looking after the whole household; and while doing these things enquiry is possible. Now why do I say that that enquiry is possible, even when you are living in a society, when you are juggling a variety of responsibilities and discharging a number of duties? I say this, because to me, Religion is something that encompasses your whole life. Religion, enquiry into Truth, search into the ecstasy of life, all these things for me signify a radically new approach to total life. They indicate to me a new awareness, a new awareness of the total life, new awareness of every relationship, my relationship to things, my relationship to ideas, my relationship to people. So for me, enquiry into Truth is not denying the other aspects of life, it is not negating the material aspect of life; rather it is a new perspective to the total life in which the material life happens to be an integral part. For many people religion and spirituality have no relationship with their daily life. It is something confined to the temple, to the church, to the religious congregations, to spiritual conferences. Something to be looked after for one hour everyday, or once a week. It is confined to certain rights, to certain disciplines, to certain vows, to certain relationships I am trying to say this evening that religion cannot throw a new light on the total human life, such a religion has no significance for me. If spiritual awareness cannot enrich my daily life, if it cannot transform my work in the kitchen, if it cannot transform my action while I am scrubbing the floor, while I am typing in the office, if it cannot transform the texture of my action, the tone of all my relationships, if it cannot do all this then that spiritual awareness is an illusion, it is an hallucination, it is a fabrication of the fertile imagination, and it has no substance, it has no reality. This awareness of total life, this religious approach to the whole of life, this transformed attitude towards everything in life, how does it come about, and how does it enable you and me to love life, to love life for its own sake, to live for the fun of living, for the

joy of living, to act for the joy of manifesting your love? Unless this thing takes place the whole of life becomes a big shop, a big business in which you are giving things in order to get something back. Your marriage, your having children, your having jobs, your having friends your going to the temple, your going to the church, all is a commercial proposition then. It is a commerce and trade, in feelings and emotions and reactions. It is a business commerce and trade with that delicate part of our life which is the psychological part.

So friends, I would like to share with you the possibility of a new approach to life. Now what do we actually mean by saying that life is a means to an end? What do I actually mean when I say that we are exploiting life to gain something back? What is the implication not in an abstract way? It is not a statement, it is not a theory. If it is a fact of life how does it operate in your and my life? When life becomes a means to an end, for gaining a joy out of it, getting experiences out of it, getting spiritual power out of it, what happens to the life? Firstly, the whole being cannot act, there cannot be complete abandonment in every moment of life. Why and how?

Complete total abandonment is possible only when there is no duality. When there is not the I, or the ego, the self or the 'me' wanting to take something out of life. You know, life becomes an object and your I, the self, the me, the ego becomes the subject, and thus you develop, you cultivate a relationship of duality with life. The moment you say that I want to gain this out of life, life becomes an object of your mind. And then what takes place in this duality? You say, 'I want to gain spiritual experience according to the Vedas, to the Upanishads, to the Bible, to the Koran, to the Buddhist scriptures, according to the Zen masters, according to Rudolph Steiner, etc. a subject-object relationship between life and you. Surely the desire for acquisition, the ambition for accumulation is the play of the mind. The I, the Ego wants to achieve, it wants to acquire. So, then the relationship of duality comes into existence and in that duality a tension is created by some theory, some ideology, some philosophy

some discipline. This duality becomes more complicated by the introduction of theories and ideologies, If you are not interested in spiritual matters and are a materialist, then you introduce a Marxist theory or a Leninist theory, or Utopian socialism, Democracy, Democratic Socialism and what not? There are thousand of theories. So, whether you are religiously minded or not, whether you are spiritually minded or you are materialist, this duality and the introduction of tension through an ideal or aim, through a theory or ideology, comes on. I do not know if I am making things clear? This evening it is going to be a bit difficult because I am dealing with intangible things which are going on with in us. But if we observe our own lives, we will always find out how the relationship of subject and object and the tension between the two because of an ideology, is created by us. As soon as you introduce a theory or an ideology, then relationship between you and me becomes more complicated. First the internal complication within oneself, and then complication between relationships of individuals. Comparison, evaluation, and judgement comes into being because you and I have theories, norms, standards, ideologies, which we pose upon life and through which we want to gain experience out of life. If that were not introduced then comparison and evaluation between individuals would obviously become impossible. You and I judge each other because we have a code of conduct, ethical standards: I have a moral standard, I have a religious ideology, you have a religious theory and your scriptures. So, unless there is an inquisition of an ideology, of a theory, of a pattern, comparison between human beings, evaluation of human beings, comparison of things, of places, of clothes, of everything that you are related with, would become impossible. I hope you are watching how this duality and the complications created by the introduction of a third factor is at the root of all misery and sorrow. With the acceptance of an ideology, with the acceptance of a theory, with the acceptance of a way of thinking, a way of feeling, a way of living, something also is happening to the quality of the mind. This mind

acquires an experience, when it responds to a challenge, and it store the memory of that experience with the hope that if that situation is repeated again, this memory of experience wil help one to meet the situation. So, accumulation of memory, accumulation of experience becomes the groove through which the mind moves, becomes the channel through which the mind moves, and the mind that accumulates, that stores memory, can never act. I hope you are getting what I am trying to convey. All of our lives we are not acting at all we are reacting according to our memory. Our so called emotions, our so called feelings, our so called actions are all involuntary reflex actions. They are reactions of memory; they are responses according to our experience. So, duality of subject and object relationship to life, introduction of an ideology, imposition of that ideology on life, being related to things and people according to that ideology and then storing the memory of experience that you have got according to that theory, according to that ideology, this accumulation of this experience, this accumulation of knowledge and reacting according to memory, that is our life. We do not know what life is. We have become repetitive machines. As the electronic brains and computers work, in the same way we have filled our human brain with emotions, feelings, reactions. We have stored them in the brain, we have stored them in the mind. And as you press a button the machine works. In the same way whenever there is a stimulus, whenever there is a challenge, it is carried to your brain cells and the brain starts reacting according to the pattern of conditioning in which the brain has been brought up.

It is a tremendous thing to realize that all our life is mechanistic. All our actions, so called actions are not actions at all, they are reactions. Most of them are involuntary reflex actions. I take pride in my feelings, I say these are my sentiments, these are my feelings these are my thoughts. All this vanity, all this pride will melt away the moment you realize that the brain is a machine, like a computer; machine, like an electronic brain which has been worked upon after

understanding the human brain. As surely as you feed information into that electronic computer, so conditioning has been fed into the human brain and you are reacting. So you react as a Hindu, you react as a Christian, you react as a Buddhist, you react as a Dutch, an English or as an Indian person. All these reactions, feelings, sentiments have been predetermined for you. If the words destiny and redetermination, can be used in relation to human minds, this is the destiny. You are born in the West, you are born in the East, in a Hindu family or a Christian family, or a Communist family, and all our sentiments, emotions, thoughts, feelings are trained, regimented in a pattern and you go on reacting according to that pattern. That is our life. And therefore this repetitive action, responses of the regimented brain, do not give you and me any joy. We like to find joy in life. Today it is one toy for the child, tomorrow it is another toy. And for grown ups, today it is kind of dress, tomorrow it is some ballet, some concert, going for holidays, listening to one speaker after another, seeking some spiritual teacher. We are running from object to object, one after another, because our relationship between things, ideas and people, our relationship to total life has become a repetitive, mechanical action. It sounds very devastating doesn't it? But to my mind it is so. The whole cultural development of the human race, the whole progress of human civilization as far as psychology is concerned, gets reduced to this mechanistic way of living. Science and technology and mechanization, and automation is necessary, it must be done — I am not declining that, I am not talking about it in a derogatory way. But you must have observed that the human mind is incapable of keeping pace with scientific and technological progress. The human mind is not keeping pace with the radical developments in the nuclear age.

For example, science and technology have converted the whole human race into one family. Geographical distances do not count anymore. You can go from one end of the earth to the other within a few hours. You can travel into space. So, the whole human race has

been reduced to one family but the human mind is tied to the concept of my culture, your culture, your religion, my religion, my way of life and your way of life. I am not saying that these distinctions can be wiped out by a steam roller. It is not possible. They cannot be destroyed by legislation, they cannot be wiped out even by bullet and machine guns. The human being has to grow into a new consciousness of his own sweet will. He has to perceive where he is standing today. He has to see where and how he is going up a blind alley. He has come to a standstill, he has come to a saturating point and he will have to go through a psychological mutation, psychological transformation and grow into a new dimension of consciousness.

I was saying that the whole of our life has been reduced to mechanistic reactions. You might have watched it, you might have noticed it. The human mind thinks, wills, feels. Thinking, willing, feeling. These are the three ways in which we work. And I am saying that through centuries past mind has been trained to act in a certain way. So there is no individuality, no uniqueness, thought and feeling are products of time, products of past centuries. And in understanding the limitations of our mind as it is today, a great release of energy which is the substratum of all experience, comes into place. If you and I understand the whole mechanistic role of our so-called actions obviously we are bound to become humble, quiet, we are bound to become non-entities. Take an example. I am a short person and I am walking by the side of a tall person. I may feel an inferiority complex that I am so short and here is a person by whose side I am walking that is so tall, and has a fine constitution, and I wish I had that. But the mind doesn't stop there. The mind goes on comparing both at every step and says 'Oh, she has got it, I haven't'. So my mind suffers from an un verbalized envy, which eats into my mind, which eats into the very substance, which takes away all my joy of being with that person, or I get into an inferiority complex and I cannot behave freely, I cannot behave with abandonment. I am giving you a very simple example. If I accept the fact of my being short,

Pygmy, if I understand that it cannot be changed now in this life, I have to live with the fact of my being short. If I accept the fact of my being ugly, my being short, my being a Pygmy, my being not beautiful, my not having a fair skin as you have, if I accept it, then there is no envy in my mind. Then there is no inferiority complex in my mind. And then while walking by the side of the most handsome, the most beautiful lady in this whole human family, I can still walk freely, I can move freely. The understanding of my limitations should free me from envy, comparison, competition and an inferiority complex. As long as I do not understand, and as long as I do not accept the truth of the fact, my mind is entangled in envy, jealousy, and the truth of the fact, my mind is entangled in envy, jealousy, comparison, evaluation, judgement. The moment I understand it, I say "Yes it is so". If you have the joy of being handsome and tall, and I have the privilege of being small, then the variety of life becomes the wealth of life, and the variety, the differences, the beauty, the ugliness, all become the wealth of life, and you can receive joy even from ugliness, even from suffering and pain. You receive an ecstasy of life. Again, suppose I have gone through an accident and I have broken a bone. Now either I can grumble about the accident saying that the driver was very indifferent, very ignorant, he did not know to do his job, or the machine was old, the road was not good. I can go on trying to blame either driver, the machine or the road, or I may say it is my fate, it was predestined for me and still I go on grumbling. Now see what is happening. The challenge has come in the form of an accident, the challenges come in the form of a broken bone. How do I meet it? If I do not know how to meet a challenge, I create a problem out of the challenge. There are no problems in life, there are only challenges. And when the mind cannot meet the challenge adequately and properly, the mind creates problems out of challenges. It is a function of the mind to a challenge which is a problem. Otherwise to me it seems that life does not have any problems, any complica-

ations. It is the mind which touches the simplicity of life and creates a complexity out of that simplicity. It is the doing of the mind, the ego, the self. So when I say if we understand how thought is mechanical, how feelings, emotions and sentiments are involuntary reflex actions, how all of our life is spent in reacting and we are not at all acting; if we understand that, then that understanding creates a quietness of attitude, creates humility, creates passivity which is a marvellous thing. It seems to me that passivity is the only action which human beings are capable of. We do not know that. Generally we call activity action, and passivity inaction. All the time reacting. The more a person reacts, the more that person is regarded as an active person, as a living person, as a vibrant person, the more clever he or she is. And I am saying a rather devastating thing: all that is inaction because it is reaction. Whatever you call activity is reaction. Reaction is inaction, and passivity is real action. Now passivity is not laziness. Passivity means refusing to react. After understanding the nature of our reactions, the totality of reactions which is thought, feeling and willing, I refuse to react according to my memory. In human relationships I refuse to react according to the dictates of memory, according to the dictates of my subconscious. Then what happens? It needs tremendous strength and force not to react, not to become a victim to your memory, not to become enslaved to your unconscious, not to become a victim of the momentum of your unconscious. To resist that and to stand and say "I am not going to react" is an extraordinary thing. I would like to give you an example. You know the land of India as the land of Buddha and Gandhi and the land of non-violence and the rest. In 1962 China invaded India. There were thousands and thousands of followers of Gandhi and many more thousands of Buddhist people. I was watching their reactions. China has invaded India, they have invaded our territory, so the Indian government is justified in fighting the back. And if the Indian government does not have armaments and ammunition, let them get them from Germany, from England and

merica, from Russia, from any country, in the West or the East. They must fight back, war in the name of defense. Killing, massacres don't matter. So the whole nonviolent movement in India supported war or violence! We extend our moral support to the Government, and so. I am not going into the details. Even the Buddhists did. And my heart wept and wept. A person who owned allegiance to non-violence, what business had he to regard himself an Indian? I am not going into whether there could be, a kind of non-violent defensive action, or how non-violence could meet the challenge. It could. It can. But I am not going into it tonight because it is not relevant to the topic. I am trying to show how the mind becomes slave to reaction. I have seen the two world wars in the last fifty years, and that the educated Indian people who had come out of the universities, who were teachers, who were professors, had not realized the futility of war and of fighting back. And there were young people, young and old, men and women alike, mothers also, who were willing to sign in blood; put their signatures in blood and tell the Indian Government "We will give you every help; fight back!"

The momentum of the memory, the momentum and the force of the past, the subconscious, the unconscious came into being; that someone strikes, you must strike back. You belong to this country, and in the defence of this country it is justified that you kill thousands across the border. So this momentum of the unconscious and the subconscious works on the individual level, works on the collective level, and it twists life, it distorts life unless man finds out a way of getting free of this momentum of the unconscious and unless he dares to grow into a new consciousness, I do not see any solution to the problems that are existing in the world today. And that I was suggesting is, that understanding of the mechanistic nature of our actions brings about passivity, which is awareness of vital life. Let me illustrate this point a little more. Why do I say that passivity is the greatest action or why do I say that passivity

means awareness of the total life? Some one insults you, and you do not react according to your experience. Generally if someone insults you, you scold him or you answer back, or you give indication through a gesture, through a look, through a smile that that person has done something wrong. Or you develop bitterness, cynicism against that person. A person has insulted you, a person has deceived you, a person has told you a lie; what do you do? You react. Either you pay it back to him, or at the first opportunity you get, you react. If you do not react, what takes place? If you are really passive then the humiliation, the insult, the offence does not hurt you, do not create a suffering in your mind, but the total awareness makes you think in a new way. You say "Goodness me, why has this person uttered these silly words? These nasty words? Why has that person acted in this way? She would not like any other person to act to her in this way. Why has she done it to me? Is there bitterness in the heart? Is she suffering from envy? Is she suffering from jealous anger?" The moment you are passive, the moment you are quiet, the moment your mind gets above the reaction, the moment your mirror is free from reaction, that passivity throws a flood of light on the thing, the idea, or the person to whom you are related. You see a new point I hope. That that awareness throws a new flood of light, and then the sting of the insult, the sting of the offence, the sting of the humiliation has already gone, and you try to find out why the person had acted in that way, instead of thinking of yourself, your reaction, your emotions, or getting angry. You are free of reaction. You have seen the mechanistic nature of reaction. So you are concerned with that person. A kind of compassion, a kind of sympathy starts flowing out of your heart. And when the other person realizes that you are not reacting, you are not provoked, you are not offended, what happens? It is nothing abstract. The real truth of life is not at all abstract. The truth of life is vibrating, dynamically in every movement of everything in this life. Even a simple blade of grass, when it is trembling in a strong wind, indicates some truth. It trembles, it bends

ut a big storm can break down a huge tree. No storm has ever
oken a blade of grass because the blade of grass is always humble.
is willing to bend. And no one can break down humility. You can
arn from it. So everything in this world gives you new light, new
y the moment you refuse to react according to the momentum of
ur unconscious. That is why I said a few moments ago "Passivity
the greatest action, the deepest action of which we are capable".
e have not tried it, because passivity is confused with idleness,
ssivity is confused with inaction, and therefore we are eager to
erate on everything that happens to us. We have lost the sensitivity
watch, to observe, to be passive, to be aware, and to let the facts
erate. We have lost confidence in truth. We want to operate even
on truth. We have no trust in life, we want to operate upon life.
ut what I have suggested this evening is that through the under-
anding of the mechanistic nature, the whole human action grows
to passivity, grows into an awareness which will change the tone
your relationships, the texture of your behaviour, which will
row a flood of light on everything to which you are related, and
en every moment will uncover some new message of eternity to
u. Every human being will give you the joy of meeting a new page
cosmic life. Whether it is spring, whether it is summer, whether it
winter, nature will give you more joy the moment you cease to be
lated to it in order to derive something out of it. You are related
it, regarding it as an end in its self.

What I have done this evening is, to suggest that life has no joy
r us, life has no fascination, no attraction, no charm for us if all the
ne we are converting life as a means for achieving some end. The
oment you reduce life to a means for achieving either spiritual or
aterial gain, your relationship with life is not one of spontaneity, it
no more of love and affection and understanding. There is a dual-
y. You are there to get something from life, so the duality comes.
hat duality gets complicated by the introduction of theories about
e, and philosophies about life. Those philosophies create standards,

norms, values of action. Those values, norms and standards are grained in your blood through education, through literature, through social influences, and those values, standards, norms, theories, create your emotions, feelings and thoughts. They control them, they regulate them. When you are educated, your mind is cultured. What happens is only this: that you have got a set of emotions, sentiments, thoughts and feelings, and they become your involuntary reflex actions, and you react according to them. I am summarizing this case anyone finds it difficult to understand my English. So approximation to these values, that is reacting to these values, is our life. Reactions are always repetitive, they are always mechanical, therefore there is no joy. There is no joy in life, there is no charm, when we run from object to object, theory to theory to get joy. We think because this life has no joy, perhaps life after death has some joy, and as this life has no charm for us, perhaps a spiritual teacher will give us occult powers, some visions, some experience, and we hope joy will be there; somewhere, far away, not in daily life. We distort the daily life, we twist the daily actions, we stifle the moment before the moment can talk to us, and then we grumble and complain that life has no joy. Our life being imprisoned in the known, and our life being imprisoned in a set of reactions, understanding of this whole game brings about passivity which is the nectar of action, which is the essence of action, which is the real awareness. That awareness gives a new momentum to life, it throws a new flood of light. That is what I have been trying to communicate to you; that every moment of life is as important as the moment that has gone before, or the moment that is to come. Every human being is as interesting and important as the greatest leader, spiritual or political, on the earth. Everything then has something to tell us, and you have to communicate something to everyone in this world. This joy of communion, this joy of communication is possible, the ecstasy of life is possible, the moment you stop to accumulate psychologically. In other words, you have the strength to die every moment to every experience, the

ere is ecstasy in life, there is joy in life, there is no repetition, no y is like yesterday and every day is a new day and every relation- ip is then new. And one can grow into this religious approach to e, one can grow into this new dynamic awareness, new dynamic nsciousness which refreshes your life, which revitalizes your whole ing. You are never tired. Physically yes, for the body has its laws; needs food, it needs sleep and rest. But the mind is not worn out. e mind is as fresh as a rose every moment of life, because it does t accumulate and because it has the strength to die to everything at it has gone through. Such a mind is ever young, ever fresh, be- use it is humble, it is ever new. And it is possible for ordinary ope like you and me to go through this mutation, to go through is revolution, it is possible for you and me to have an absolutely d radically new life.

It is the urge to communicate this with you, the urge to share this ith you, that gives me the courage to go from place to place and untry to country and talk to people, though I have no authority, do not belong to any organization, I have no claim to any special owledge and I have no claim to any special discipline in life. But eel an urge to communicate with my fellow human beings, telling em that this new joy is possible for you and me. It is not a privilege those who are sitting in monasteries and ashrams. I have nothing gainst them, but that is isolation from the main stream of life, and me it does not mean anything, creating a special atmosphere, eating a special environment. If spirituality needs a special environ- ent, and if awareness of reality needs special cultivation, then it is game of the mind again. So friends, this is possible for you and me. at is how I see life, and that is why I am here.

Q u e s t i o n e r : I would like to ask about the mechanical part of e mind. It seems sometimes that it has its own independent life, d that I have no influence. You can be aware of it, and yet it es on.

V i m a l a : What do we mean by "it goes on?" What do we mean

by that?

Questioner: I mean there comes no quietness.

Vimala: Now, what is the function of the brain? I understand the point that has been posed. The point is this: The brain has a mechanical process, the process through which the brain functions. The brain is a machine whether we like it or not, it is a machine which is the consummation of cosmic evolution, up till now. Human brain, the human mind has been the consummation of the whole evolution, and the whole evolution has become selfconscious in art through a human being. That is the beauty. But the mechanism of the brain is such that it reacts according to the pattern of conditioning in which it has been trained. That is what the brain does. You receive a stimulus and that sensation is carried over to your brain and according to your memory you interpret it, you translate it, and according to that translation or interpretation you react or respond to the situation. Surely this is the simple way in which we work. Now our friend says that the brain has its independent existence, and that is true. The complex organism that brain is, is the result of millions of years. First there was a simple cell, and the cell became complex. How life came on this globe, how it evolves, is a romantic history. So the brain has behind it the momentum of two million years and the whole biological evolution, and you cannot wipe it away. If I remember rightly I said that the momentum of the unconscious, the momentum of the brain cannot be destroyed through legislation, cannot be wiped out by bullets and machine guns. What are you going to do with it? What you can do is to become aware of it, and not react according to its conditioning. You are free there. The human freedom of will has a role either to be a slave to the conditioning or to be free and say "I am not going to react according to that". That is where the freedom of will comes into place. In a way there is a destiny which means the mechanism of brain has been predetermined for us. In the mind and in the brain together we carry with us the residue of the whole of human experience. It has

vn momentum, it has its vitality, and this cannot be denied. And it comes up like a wave in the ocean, in the sea. Now either you are carried with the wave, or, if you are a person who knows swimming and you are sharp enough, you let the wave go over you without being carried with it. You know, the wave comes, you see how it is coming and you either allow yourself to be carried with the wave, or you go down and allow the wave to go over you. It is possible. In the same way a person who is all the time aware, does not become a slave, and is not carried off his feet by the response of the memory, or the reaction of the brain. That is the freedom. He is not carried over. Not that the momentum will not be there; the momentum will be there. You cannot suppress your subconscious or your unconscious. You cannot deny it, you cannot subjugate it, you cannot control it. What you can do is, to understand its mischief and refuse to be carried over, refuse to be carried off your feet. So Sir, you are correct in saying that the brain has its own independent existence, and even after understanding, it works. But then, it does not colour your action, does not distort your action, and therefore passivity or awareness becomes the deepest and profoundest action which we can grow into.

Questioner: It is clear to me about the mechanical side you have explained to us, but the difficulty is that it is not possible to be aware and to remain passive by the force of the will.

Vimala: Passivity cannot be an action of the mind. Passivity comes in the total silence of the mind which is born out of understanding. You know, when I say that you are aware of the mechanistic process of the whole mind, you are aware that the mind has no hope, it cannot sweep you along. So passivity is not a mental activity. Passivity can never be born out of an effort of the ego, effort of the mind; surely it cannot be. It is related to the total being. I see the whole game and passivity descends upon me. It dawns upon me. I cannot say "I will now have passivity, I am going to have awareness". Do you see the mischief of the mind? The moment I say "I want to be aware and I want to have passivity" the I comes in, the

relationship of duality which is the soil in which every conflict grows which is the soil in which every problem takes root. And we are seeing whether it is possible not to allow any problem to take root in the soil of your mind.

So this passivity has nothing to do with action or effort of the mind. And you are saying that the difficulty exists in this?

Questioner: Yes, the difficulty is that always in situations of life you are already swept away before you are aware that you are swept away.

Vimala: That is right, Sir. Because we have not become alert, so sensitive. In other words we cannot keep pace with the swift movement of life. What you state is very true. The awareness that I have reacted, the awareness that I have been swept off my feet comes after the moment. That is the momentum of the unconscious. That is the tremendous force and vitality of the whole human experience which is contained in your mind, and to which we have become slaves, to which we have been victims all our lives. And it needs to be tremendously pliable, subtle, alert, sensitive, tremendously strong, being to be aware, to be passive. It is rather surprising and it sounds ridiculous that only a very strong, mature person can be passive. Otherwise the lethargy, the idleness, the drowsiness of the lazy person will take him into inaction. But passivity is the profoundest action. So one has to be alert, always on one's toes. Watching every movement of life outside you and inside you; watching its relationship to each other, and enjoying the fun without distorting the relationship. It is difficult because you have never tried it. Century after century we have been told that you have to follow certain patterns of behaviour, or you follow certain gurus, teachers. The daily life is drudgery, it is wretched, it is miserable, and spiritual life and reality is somewhere far beyond. So, century after century the distance between daily life and spiritual life unwarrantedly has been created. A contradiction has been imposed upon these two. First a division has been created, then a contradiction has been imposed. §

our minds have the traditional inherited strain, and we are not capable. That is why a handful of persons are needed today in the world who are willing to go through this tremendous psychological mutation, who are willing to stand against the momentum of centuries which is lying deep in their unconscious, and who are willing to become lights unto themselves, and live as a radiation of that light. That is the total revolution, that is the basic transformation which is the challenge for this century. Man has achieved great things in science, in technology, things which would have been impossible even to imagine twentyfive or thirty years ago. You will be travelling in space in a few years for there are going to be space stations like the stations here on the earth, and this space travelling is fantastic if you look at it.

Now, what is necessary is to have the courage and have the spirit to go through a psychological mutation, break away from the mind and the stuff of consciousness that we have been repeating for centuries, and to break into a path of new consciousness, a new mind. This alone will create a new society of happy and loving human beings worth the name. We are not worth the name even though we take pride in calling ourselves human beings. It is difficult, because it is standing against the momentum of the centuries. It does need force, it does need strength, it does need an alert, vibrant body. But it is not impossible. It is the challenge that we are facing today and to me it seems it is the next step in the whole cosmic growth, if I may say so. After the biological mutation, psychological mutation seems to be the challenge for the man who is living in the second half of the twentieth century. You and I have the privilege to be born and to be living in this century, and you and I have the privilege to break a new path for the human mind. It is so thrilling; it is going to be a romantic adventure for those who are willing to go through with it. And it cannot be brought about in isolation, it can only be brought about while you are acting in your daily relationships wherever you may be. Your daily relationships are the mirror in

which you can watch whether the transformation is taking place or not.

Questioner: May it be this? I have seen the direction indicated by the speaker and I myself have taken that direction. Now what I examine, I everywhere see that it leads to nowhere, all blind alleys, all stands still.

Vimala: Let me find out if I have understood you correctly. Are you saying Sir, that in the moment of awareness one arrives at the point from which there is no direction, there is no where to go and one stands still, completely still without a direction? Have I understood you correctly? Now what is a direction in human action? On the physical level the body has to move in space and time. Our movements are in the framework of space and time. So the body moves from one point to another. We are not concerned with that direction here. But the human mind moves only if there is a direction and if there is an incentive, motive, push, drive, desire, ambition, what you will. So the human mind acts when there is a motive behind the action, or there is a direction for the mind? For the body it is space, time, geographical distance, so on and so on. What for the mind? For the mind, response of memory becomes a motive, desire, ambition, and a thought, an idea, a concept becomes the direction. So like the spatial-temporal movement of the physical organism, the human mind moves in the direction of an idea, that is future. Or it moves in the realm of memory which is past. So the human mind has two directions. Really it is only one direction, for future is the projection of the past, but for verbal communication let us say that the human mind moves in two directions, past and future.

When there is no thinking, when the mind is free of thought, when one becomes aware of the whole I process and its mechanism and is out of it, naturally there is no motive and there is no idea. Past and future exist no more in the realm of awareness. So what you call direction today, really does not exist. In the realm of mindlessness, in the realm of timelessness, in the realm of eternity there are no

directions in which you could move. It is the self generating energy which is its own direction, which is its own motive, which is its own cause. It is like a flame whose burning is its own fuel. In the realm of awareness, which is beyond duality, verbal communication becomes impossible. But I might give you a simlie. If a scientist splits an atom, goes to the minutest part of the atom, proton, electron, go still further, what does the scientists find? They find that there is nothing but energy; the minutest part of the atom after analysis is found to be a quantum of energy, and the mass of the atom, the length, the breadth, the width, the weight, the mass of that atom has no relation to the quantum of this energy. It is undefineable, it is inexplicable. So nu-clear physics have arrived at the point today where matter is no more matter but really energy. They call it a mass of energy today, instead of calling it a mass of matter. So that energy exists there, its existence is its own cause and it is related to other quanta of energy. So the whole universe gets reduced to a causeless energy, which is vibrating, which is living, moving without a cause, without a direction. In the same way a person upon whose heart dawns this new awareness, this new consciousness has'nt got any direction to move, to go to. It is not very mystic, it is not mysterious. You all have experiences of love. Love surely has no direction, has it? Love has no subject and object relationship. If you remember what happened to you when you were in love, the intensity, the depth of love, you found that there is no subject-object relationship. You don't feel that you are doing something for your beloved. Something is being done by you, through you, without your knowing, without the ego, the me, the mind coming in. It is just simply done because you cannot live without it. You do not do anything for the person. The person becomes an occasion to express the vibrations of love. So it is not mystical, it is not mysterious, it is not something hidden, it is a common experience of you and me if we can unravel, unfold layer by layer our experiences. So as there is no direction in love, as there is no duality in love, in the realm of awareness there is only spontaneity

which is a movement without a motive, without a direction. It is a movement unrelated to time. Direction can come to existence only if there is time. The physical organism moves in chronological time, the mental organism moves in psychological time. In the realm of awareness both do not exist. And therefore there is no possibility of a direction, where to, you can move.

So when we say beyond the known, beyond is not a direction. And the human mind has committed the mistake, the grave error of regarding beyond the known as a pointer of direction. And trying to move, in time, to reach the beyond. It is penetration of the known which opens the door to the unknown. Going beyond the known is penetrating through the known; seeing through all the layers of the known is getting beyond the known, surely. Then every moment is eternity. Then the experience of completely dying to every experience gives you the nectar of immortality. Then life has great fun, then life has joy and happiness which is beyond words.

Questioner: May I ask a personal question?

Vimala: Yes Sir.

Questioner: I would like to know if it would be possible for you to experiment yourself with this way of living?

Vimala: You are asking, is it possible for the speaker to live the way which has been described. Yes? Does it matter really whether the person is able to live this way or not? Firstly, there is no way. Not accumulating, not acquiring, dying to every experience. Not letting the memory of any experience to clutter the mind, meeting life as it comes. No exploiting life as an instrument to gain something, this is all negative description. It is not a way of life which could be followed by the mind, making a determination one, two, three, four and preparing a frame and a pattern to which every action will be approximated from tomorrow morning. It is not a way of life. Now the second part, is the person experiences what has been communicated, what the person is talking about? Didn't I say in the beginning that these talks are not intended to narrate any philosophy,

to explain or elaborate any ideology?

They are communications, interpersonal communications. Now if a person were to come and waste your time in saying something which the person has not experienced, if the person is repeating an idea, if the person is throwing empty dead words and ideas at you, you should throw out the person immediately. You should kick the person out saying that you are interested in life. It would be a great insult to the sensitivity of all of you if I were to sit here and talk about things which I had not personally experienced. It would be presumptuous on my part to talk about things, because then it would be imagination. It would be a network of ideas cleverly arranged by the help of fertile imagination, or it would be a formal discourse. I am not interested Sir. I am neither interested in words or ideas. But as you have asked the question, as I can say that I am covering my shoulders with this shawl, I can state it without a sense of any pride or vanity. In the same way I would like to state, that not a single word has been uttered this evening or last week, which has not been a vibrating experience of the speaker.

other publications:

"The Flame of Life", 1962

"The Eloquent Ecstasy", 1962, 20 poems, 32 pages.

Prices:		The Eloquent Ecstasy	From Heart to Heart	The Flame of Life
English	money	5/—	16/—	1/3
Dutch	„	f 2.25	7.50	0.65
Norwegian	„	N. Kr. 5.—	16.—	1.3
German	„	D.M. 2.75	8.75	0.75
Swiss	„	Sw. frs. 3.—	9.50	0.80
French	„	Fr. frs. 3.40	10.50	0.90
Indian	„	Lires 500.—	1300.—	1.20

For an order by payment on Postcheque number 134788 from Penn. Travel and Book Fund Vimala Thakar, Surinamelaan 5, Hilversum, Holland. Any Bank also can send money to this number.

In India the books are available at Miss Vimala, Shiv-Kuti, Mt. Abu,

