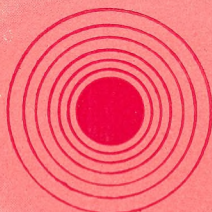


LIFE & LIVING



VIMALA THAKAR

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Talks given in Dalhousie 1983,

VIMALA THAKAR

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CONTENTS

- CHAPTER ONE:** Learning to live
Seeing our lives as they are
Questioning the validity of our lives
Realising we don't know how to live
Dropping the authority of the past
- CHAPTER TWO:** Understanding the movement of the mind
Recognizing that intellect has failed humanity
Investigating our relationships to reality
Exploring concepts of ego, time, space
Realising the fragmentary nature of the mind
- CHAPTER THREE:** Living your understanding
Observing the tendencies to avoid understating
Bringing order to all the life
Living in simplicity
Freeing the life of imbalances
- CHAPTER FOUR:** Avoiding the poisons of the mind
Recognising the dangers of ideation
Perceiving the pollution of idealism
Realising the destructiveness of comparison
Staying with the facts of the life
- CHAPTER FIVE:** Moving from Fear to Love
Understanding that love and fear are incompatible
Recognising fear as an instinct
Observing fear in relationship
Distinguishing love from ego-centered affection
Allowing the energy of love to flow
- CHAPTER SIX:** Relating to the Wholeness of life
Moving from exploitation to reverence for life
Observing the interrelatedness of all beings
Being receptive to the lessons of nature
Allowing the wholeness to operate on the being

CHAPTER SEVEN: Awakening Faith.

Becoming aware of the cosmic force of intelligence

Understanding that faith is not belief

Recognising obstacles to faith

Living in the relaxation of faith

CHAPTER EIGHT: Learning from Aloneness and Death

Feeling the presence of death

Facing resistance to aloneness and death

Observing reactions to solitude

Entering the realm of non-verbalisation

CHAPTER NINE: Exploring the Dimension of Silence

Going beyond time and space

Learning to sit quietly

Watching thought with alert sensitivity

Living in the dimension of silence

CHAPTER TEN : Creating a New Society

Recognising that misery is manmade

Educating ourselves for a new society.

Revitalizing society through psychic transformation.

Since 1978 Vimalaji has been holding every summer International gatherings at Dalhousie in India. Young men and women from various countries spend summer in Dalhousie in order to participate in those gatherings.

In the summer of 1982 Vimalaji said that there would be no talks given but classes would be held for serious minded students. We are publishing selected parts of those communications.

We are grateful to Kaiser Jhaveri for transcribing the tapes and equally grateful to Barbara Pennington for editing them.

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CHAPTER ONE

LEARNING TO LIVE

I invite you to join me on a verbal voyage into the deep waters of life, into the meaning and mystery of life from the known to the unknown. One has to be fully awake and sensitively alert to make the journey. One must be open, receptive, for unconditional receptivity allows one's whole being to understand what is being communicated without any inhibition of fear.

Hope you have noticed that communication is a participative activity? If a person is passive, or busy reacting emotionally to what is being said, communication does not take place. If a person postpones understanding and says, "I'll go into it later," or "I'll compare the message with what others have said," he or she misses the point and loses the opportunity for learning. When someone sets a meal for you, you don't say, "I'll take the meal home, and eat it gradually." A person who receives the words, understands the meaning, the truth of the message, examines the facts within the life travels with the speaker. But it's quite hard work, quite an arduous journey.

These communications are for sharing of life, not ideas, theories or philosophies. The speaker has only understanding of life with her; the understanding of the facts of life and the truth behind these facts has filled the being with light of clarity and, therefore, there is an urge to share the light with anyone who is interested in living.

We are taking a journey together in order to learn how to live. Why? Because the purpose of life is living. The most important act of which we are capable, is living. Life is holy, and understanding of living that removes confusion and the darkness of chaos, disorder and anarchy from our being is very sacred.

Spirituality, religiosity, is concerned with the act of living, the art of living. Living is a movement of the totality of the being. It's quite a mysterious thing, this living.

To live is to be related to the cosmos that is within and around us. Life is in relationship and in order to be related we have to be free and in freedom to move harmoniously. But we are not free. Our lives are chains of reactions, based on the past. We react according to the norms and criteria, the values and evaluations of society that have been fed into us since childhood, and whenever we move in relationship, it is the total past contained in us that is moving. Our reactions are fragmentary reactions to the compulsions from outside or from within, and these movements born of friction do not have any life in them. The worn-out, repetitive, mechanical patterns have no warmth, vitality; they have no tenderness of love.

Living does not imply dragging one's body and mind, day after day through patterns of physical and mental behaviour. It does not imply reacting mechanically and repetitively to the challenges of life. But we are chained to our patterns of reactions, patterns of ambitions and desires. We are conditioned by these patterns and our lives are movements of these conditionings. Please observe the fact of what is being said in your own life; please do not receive the words only as ideas. Observe and discover the truth of a very simple fact that from morning to night our physical, verbal, mental activity is spent in repeating the patterns of conditioning which have been fed to us, biologically, psychologically through inheritance, systems of education, socio-economic compulsions.

So this social, rational animal that is a human being spends sixty, seventy years in repeating patterns. He or she may choose patterns from existing ones, perhaps wandering around the world to find patterns that are emotionally, temperamentally agreeable, giving up one pattern after another, choosing, assimilating, collecting, decorating the self with these. In acquisitions of the latest pattern there is neither freedom nor total action. There is only running away from the content of one's life to be something one is not. There is no movement of the total being as long as there is bondage of the conditionings. The conditionings rule, they reign supreme.

In every field of life, we are taught to acquire, own, fight, protect. Years of life are spent in this rat race, all on the animal level. We are human forms filled with animal instincts, attitudes and defense mechanisms which do not benefit a human being. Please look at the life around us, at our own lives and the lives of countries and nations, advanced in science and technology, advanced in religion and culture. Look at the collective and individualistic behavior; it's a frightening, barbaric, nauseating corruption and petty mindedness.

Society and the economic, political structures have been created for the purpose of acquisition, prestige, power, money and these become the foundation for collective living. In society we are out to grab, to grab at money, power, relationships that will become investments for the future. The process of acquiring, possessing, becoming takes you away from the center of your life. It removes you from the attitude of a learner.

Acquiring, grabbing, grasping leads to attachment, chronic attachments result in addictions, and the state of addiction prevents learning. The more you acquire, the more isolated you become in that acquisition. The more you own and possess, the more removed you become from interaction with the innumerable energies that are contained in the cosmos.

An acquisitive mind can never be receptive. There can be no discovering in the process of becoming, acquiring, owning; they close you in. We have to learn to be open and receptive, instead of getting closed in.

The acquisitive tendency and the movement of learning are incompatible. Learning requires an emptiness from within; it requires the humility to receive. So as humans we need to learn how to live without getting chained to objects, human beings, patterns of living.

When one sees that all of life is a movement of reactions to compulsions, predetermined patterns transmitted by society, then a real questioning dawns upon the heart. When one feels concerned about all the silly affairs and stupidity in which one is living, there begins an inner urge to set oneself free of all this and find out if there is another way of living. A serious-minded

person gets bored with this game of pleasure, pain, shallow relationships and turns inward to ask: "What is life? What is living?" Unless that inquiry dawns upon the heart, there is no release from the acquisitive tendency, and one moves from one field to another, from material to intellectual, owning and acquiring knowledge, to the realm of experience, owning experiences, still continuing the game of acquiring. Changing the field of acquisition from material to intellectual or experiential, occult, transcendental, does not result in transformation.

To be blessed with a genuine questioning of the validity of the present way of living cannot come on a superficial level of emotional disturbances, upsets: "I did not get in life what I wanted, and, therefore, I turned to religion." "I loved someone and the person turned to someone; I became frustrated and turned to religion." A genuine questioning requires the soil of personal observation. It comes from the depth of the being.

We recognize that we don't know how to live, and that we must learn a new how to live spontaneously, freely, harmoniously from the totality of our being. But how are we going to learn? Do we have the attitude to learn? Do we have a spontaneous, inner urge to learn, to discover this ourselves? Let us suppose that each of us is interested in learning to live; what are we going to learn? We learn first of all about our lives; it requires being in close contact with the whole of our beings, all of our senses. This process of discovering what prevents us from being free is the beginning of learning how to live spontaneously, harmoniously.

If our minds are full with theoretical knowledge and arrogance of the intellect, can we learn? We use our minds to organize ideas according to ideologies, philosophies, and the intellect becomes arrogant with the feeling that it knows, which means it has organized information about the facts of life. It wants to cling to its established conclusions, its theoretical acquisitions, and to feel secure in knowing, possessing ideas.

The heavier the mind becomes, the more difficult it is to learn, to discover. Learning requires questioning the validity of everything inside and outside, you empty everything that has

been fed into you in order to receive, learn. If a cup is full, you cannot fill it any more, and the cup of our lives have been filled for thousands of years with theories, ideologies, philosophies.

The mind has been fed with methodologies, techniques of interpretation, norms and criteria, so the mind analyses, compares, evaluates and deduces a conclusion. The faculty of reason is capable of doing all this, but deduction of conclusion is not the essence of understanding. Organising the conclusions aesthetically is also not understanding. The blossoming of understanding takes place when there is courage to observe closely the content of one's life, the quality of one's life, and the humility to learn from what one discovers.

We begin with a receptive mind to realize that we don't know how to live. Our lives are full of reactions to compulsions, and struggles towards certain ideals that we have accepted. We live by reactions and impulses. We are carried away by the inner and outer compulsions of life. We feel we are acting, we feel we are moving, but, in fact, we are not; we are being dragged. Getting dragged is not an action, and we go through a lifetime of being dragged by society, dragged by economic, social, religious, theories. This is how we pass through life. There is no joy, no warmth, no energy, no vitality, no passion. We live casually, indifferently, in a benumbed state, in despair, frustration. We must look at human life, the miserable plight in which we are. We are not born for this.

Do find out for yourself which actions in your life are voluntary and which are involuntary. Examine those parts of your life where you drag yourself, willingly or unwillingly, because you are told that is how you should live. Discover areas of habitual patterns, reacting to compulsions, struggling with ideals.

Do you know the difference between voluntary actions free from compulsions inner or outer, free from tension, frictions and involuntary reactions to expectations of society, habit patterns, conditioned attitudes, tendencies? Look at your daily life. When you get up in the morning, is it an action or a reaction? If you are getting up because you must - some work

is waiting for you and there is the tension that you have to do the work; if these pre-determined compulsions make you leave the bed, it's a reaction and not voluntary. If, however, there is no need to move out of the house, and you get up realising the beauty or significance of rising at an early hour, it is a voluntary action. You will observe if you stay in close contact with the facts of your life, that most movements, activities are just reactions which are lifeless, joyless, cold.

Please look at the vicious games that you play with your lives. Become aware of the pollution of compulsions and reactions to compulsions; observe that when you act out of habit - eat, sleep, relate out of habit, there is no spontaneity, vitality to the life. Discover all this in your own life. Watch as you struggle to reach out to ideals and conform to them; notice the tension, the friction in trying to become something which you are not, but which others think you should be.

If you observe your movements throughout the day with openness, honesty you will find out for yourself that there is hardly a movement which is voluntary and free of the pollution of inner friction, conflict, tensions. There is hardly an action which is whole and total. And you see that friction is ugliness; fragmentary actions lack grace, charm, harmony.

Living requires total action. Living requires the movement of our totality with the perception of the totality merging the inner and outer. In order to be capable of total action you have to move voluntarily without using any force of any compulsion and without any sense of despair or frustration. Find out if you can live without creating any compulsions for yourself. Discover whether it's possible to move from the totality of your being with harmony, gentleness, freedom.

When you see clearly that the conditioned mind is incapable of total action, and the movement of the conditioned mind results in fragmentary activity born of tension, conflict, what do you do? When you discover for yourself that the reactions of the conditioned mind do not bring about freedom, what do you do? Don't you consider voluntarily letting go of the authority of the conditioned mind? Don't you ask yourself what

happens if you no longer accept the tyranny of the conditioned mind? It's a very simple thing. You go for a walk, and you meet a person coming across the road, and you ask the person if the road will take you to a certain place, and he says, "No, my dear; you are on the wrong path." Then what do you do? You stop, don't you?

Stopping the movement of the conditioned mind implies not accepting the authority of the mind. As long as you accept the authority of the patterns led by society, you cannot be free. You have accepted the authority of mind and its patterns, and you have measured life by this authority. But now you realize that freedom, harmony, peace will be ideals only until acceptance of the authority of the mind, the past, the conditionings, has come to an end.

It is not easy my friends, because the mind has so many pleasures to offer. As the impulses offer physical, sensual pleasure, the mind offers emotional pleasures, verbal pleasures — the intoxication of words and we are addicted to these pleasures. We are attached to the pleasure of reading books, temporarily getting intoxicated by the dictionary meaning of the words. This intoxication of thought is quite a serious thing. Though intellectually we realise the nature of the conditioned mind, emotionally we are unwilling to forgo the pleasures the mind offers.

The mind gives experiences, and the pleasure of experiences is quite something to forgo. We'd like to say, "We'll have fifty per cent of freedom and fifty per cent of pleasures the conditioned mind offers," but it's not possible. Transformation is a sudden change in the whole of the person, not in a selected part of the person. We want to reserve areas in our life for pleasures that the mind gives, even at the cost of truth and our own understanding. The pleasures are the things we want emotionally; we crave them. Understanding, however, is austere; it gives clarity, peace but not superficial sensations.

The authority of the mind does not come to an end when there is a desire, verbalised or nonverbalised for the pleasures the mind can offer to continue. The human race has become a pleasure-mongering race, a comfort-mongering race. It doesn't

matter if the pleasure-mongering and comfort-mongering leads to assertion, aggression, exploitation, unrest, violence, wars. It doesn't matter; we are competing in pleasure-mongering and comfort-mongering. Even though we understand verbally the nature of the conditioned mind, we are not set free by that understanding, because there is emotional resistance within. Intellectually we want freedom, and emotionally we resist. Each of us becomes a kind of split personality. Then one of us may say, "Well, verbally I understand and nothing happens. "Nothing can happen as long as there is the inner craving for pleasure. Truth can offer joy and peace; understanding can offer freedom and harmony. But we are used to pleasure and comfort, so even the idea of forgoing pleasure stimulates fear, resistance.

The obstructions and obstacles to freedom are within us and not outside us. The world never binds. The body is not a sin. But we create our own bondage by becoming attached to the movement of conditioned patterns and accepting the authority of the mind, the past.

We are clothed in the past, clothed in thoughts and ideas; they exist in us in the form of vibration. They are all engraved in us, in the flesh, the marrow, the sinews, the nerves, the fibres, and as soon as there is sensual contact with an object or mental contact with a word, these vibrations begin to playback as in a tape recorder.

Your thoughts are a response of memory which exists in a vibrational form in the whole of your being. The mind is not like an organ; it is your inner being. The total past is engraved in every particle of your being and with the slightest touch of an object or a word, memory begins its playback and you say, "I feel this and I think this way."

A new movement, new energies not related to the past can come into existence when the authority of the conditioned mind is no more there, and movement of the mind is allowed to go into abeyance. But you have to allow the conditioned mind to go voluntarily into abeyance. If you force it into abeyance, if you use violence against yourself, the scratches and scars against the consciousness will create another problem. You

can't crush the mind, wish it away, or in any way annihilate it, because it is the substance of your being. You can't run away from the mind; you can't reject it. Rejection is a very superficial thing. The thought structure is like the colour of your skin; it cannot be rejected, denied, suppressed or repressed. You can only allow the authority of the mind, the attachment to the mind, to voluntarily loosen its grip in your life and go into abeyance. It's a marvelous thing. The mind is with you, but you are no longer bound or obsessed with it.

Acceptance of authority of the mind is a psychological, emotional attachment; it is not totally an intellectual process that results in change when verbally one explains the futility, meaninglessness of the authority of the mind. If there is ignorance, it can be eliminated; by sharing knowledge, but illusion cannot be eliminated; it has to be seen as illusion by the person himself, herself. One can point out the way, but the other person has to walk; one can cook a meal, but the other person has to eat and digest it.

Are you willing then to be in a state of non-knowing, non-measuring, non-repeating? Are you willing to be in the complete denudation of the past? When the acceptance of the authority of the total past and the conditionings is no more there, and you understand the futility or repeating mechanistic patterns, there will be a new beginning to life. In the cessation of the mental movement of the past, there is a possibility of new energies contained in you getting released and filling your being.

Understanding of what is, is vitally necessary before we begin to talk about what can be. It is the understanding of the facts that liberates, that floods the being with the light of clarity. So instead of running away from what is, let us face the facts as they are, understand them as they are, and explore if we can set ourselves emotionally free of the authority of thought and authority of the mind. If we can be free of the authority of mind, we move through life harmoniously. Harmony brings about gentleness, and in gentleness there is beauty.

CHAPTER TWO

UNDERSTANDING THE MOVEMENT OF THE MIND

If one is interested in freeing oneself from the prison of accepted reactions, conditionings, and exploring other dimensions of consciousness not limited by concepts, then one has to understand thoroughly the dynamics of mind, the anatomy of mind. One sees that the mind is a conditioned energy, conditioned by the total human race through untold centuries. This conditioned consciousness, the mind, contains the thought structure - ideas, knowledge, experience, ways of reacting. The movement of the thought structure is necessary for collective living, but it is of no use whatsoever in exploring other dimensions of consciousness beyond the mind.

The thought structure is tethered to the past; it carries with it the whole paraphernalia of concepts, ideas built up systematically, organised and standardised through centuries. When an event takes place, it is identified, named and evaluated on the authority of the past, and then the event gets converted into an experience. But life, the divinity is not something that can be identified and experienced on the sensual, the mental level. It is beyond identifications and measurements of the past. What can happen is that the individualized, conditioned energy voluntarily, gracefully, willingly without any inhibition of fear goes into abeyance.

It is necessary to explore other dimensions of consciousness because thought has failed. It is the god that has failed mankind. Thoughts, ideologies, codes of conduct and patterns of behaviour - physical and psychological - have failed in transforming humanity. Though human beings have created a highly scientific and technological world, the individual human being is not happy, not at peace, not in harmony with the different layers of the being.

We as human beings have not discovered the mystery of living with one another in love, peace and brotherhood. We are sophisticated barbarians. We may land on the moon but

our minds are not free from the lust of the body, from the lust for money, for power. At the core of our beings we are violent creatures. Animals are not violent; they may kill but there is no motivation of murdering. But we are murderers, plunderers of nature and murderers of our own species.

We have divided the earth into countries and nations; we have divided the human beings among races and religions, and we build our small enclosures around ourselves. We are an aggressive species. Let us see the facts as they are.

In the Middle Ages when the human race in the occidental world came out of credulity, beliefs, and there was a cultural renaissance in Europe, reason, rationality was installed as a new goddess, and human beings were thrilled that they had a new goddess to worship. Reason has contributed a great deal to human evolution; there is no denying the contribution of reason, and there is no retreating from rationality. But reason is not the last word; the cerebral organ is not the last authority.

Have we seen that a human, a person is more than just a body with a brain? If we accept the goddess of intellect, concepts and symbols, as an authority, discovery of the meaning the essence of life cannot take place. The authority of intellect and knowledge has handicapped the human race.

If you have an urge to discover what is beyond intellect, to find out the meaning of life firsthand, not as conveyed to you by traditions and conventions, would you please spend some time in understanding your own mind. Please see for yourself its movements, ways of operating; find out on your own, its limitations and distortions.

We are taking a journey together away from the darkness of blindly accepting cultural conclusions to the lightness of understanding this complex wholeness in which we find ourselves. We live in the totality of life, in the world and are in intricate relationship to all aspects of living; we do not live in isolation. But do we ever question what is this world, and what is the true nature of our relationship to the world? Do we question whether the world, the reality is inside or outside of each of us or whether we are the world ourselves? Or do we

take for granted that the world is out there, and the names given to the objects is the physical reality, their descriptions and definitions, ways of relating to these objects and using them for our purposes is all valid? We perceive a world of physical reality, but do we ever question the validity of our perceptions of this reality?

Learning requires questioning the validity of everything inside and outside. It means not simply swallowing ideas and thoughts of other people, grafting the experiences of others on the psyche and projecting them as if they were expressions of our own understanding. An inquiry into the wholeness of life necessitates looking innocently without the burden of centuries of conditionings at the nature of reality. And with the humility of one who has a genuine desire, an urge to live in peace and harmony with the world, to commune with its wholeness, one questions sensitively, not cynically, all assumptions, accepted ideas about what is reality and what is our relationship to this reality.

We live in the midst of what we call reality; it has many aspects, many shades and nuances, and like a diamond shines from every angle we look at it. We are in relation to an innumerable variety of objects - visible, audible, tangible with many shapes, colours, textures, scents and sounds. The sense organs are either acting upon the objects or being acted upon by the objects; this action and interaction goes on incessantly whether we are aware of it or not. The sense organs bring in sensations through contact with what is outside; the sensations are carried to the brain which coordinates and interprets the sensations. How does brain interpret the sensations? It remains a mystery. Each of us in an unknown way creates a perceptual view of the world based on the interpretation of the data gathered by the senses.

Our view of the world perhaps exists in each of our minds; the mind using the data of the senses and perception, constructs an internal view of the outside world. But the view of the world created by the mind is necessarily limited and distorted, both because we receive biased data from the sense

organs and because the perceptions are by their nature focused on the part and not the whole. We are inattentive, preoccupied most of the time, and therefore the sense data we receive are partial, fragmentary, lopsided. The perceptions, also, are distorted by cultural conditionings; they are polluted, not healthy, and informations conveyed by them are inaccurate and imbalanced. Most of the time we are receiving imbalanced data through the senses.

We create an internal representation of the world in our minds full of distortions and impressions, and this representation becomes as real to us as the physical reality it symbolises. We accept the reality of our perception of the world; we cling to the comfort, security it provides and never risk examining closely the distortions, confusions, limitations.

The mind operates on the basis of symbols which represent, describe reality in the outside world. The symbols have no physical reality, but they are crucially significant in terms of how we relate to the outside world, and how we experience our own beings. Most of the symbols we use have been fed to us by society through the conditionings. They are presented to us as if they all have tangible existence, whether they are only theoretical constructions of society or whether they actually represent reality in the external world. The word, the symbol, "tree" for example obviously represents the physical reality of something we can see and feel. But what about the symbols: ego, self, time, space, continuity? Do these have any reality? We accept in our daily life, that these symbols concepts are real; we behave consistently as if they were real, but perhaps this unquestioned acceptance of their reality creates endless confusion and misery in our lives, and severely limits our capacity to relate to the totality, the infinity. Let us explore slowly why this is so.

It is clear to us for example, that the word "horse" is simply a symbol for the physical creature horse. We can easily recognize that the language symbol has no physical reality; it only represents the physical reality. We see a horse, and we describe the horse in terms of concepts. We say the horse is

a certain colour, size, breed and has a particular temperament; we may give a name to the horse. We use the language, symbols, words, to describe a horse, but we recognise that our words, our symbols are not the same thing as the physical reality they describe. The word "horse" is not the creature horse. The word may denote the existence of a creature whom we recognize as horse, but the word "horse" is not the horse.

The difference between the conceptual reality of symbols and the physical reality of objects is very clear when we are dealing with simple representations such as horse, but the difference becomes much more complicated when we consider highly conditioned, intricate concepts such as ego, self, "I" consciousness, time, space, continuity. Yet it's vitally important to penetrate the confusion that surrounds these concepts, if we are to remove the artificial barriers that prevent direct perception of truth. Accepting the ego, for example, as reality prevents communion with the oneness of life.

Let us look carefully, precisely at the concepts of self, ego to clarify our misunderstandings about these concepts. When we delve into these concepts, we are questioning whether our perceptions of ourselves, based on concepts of self, ego, are valid or whether they are inaccurate, burdensome remnants of the past that must drop away in order to discover the truth.

Is it possible that there is nothing at all of ego, self within the being? Perhaps these concepts represent only a collection of identifications, labels given by the family, the society that have nothing to do with the divine life within. The family begins by giving the child a name, appropriate for either a male or female, and establishes the family context, the child has a nationality: Indian, Chinese or American and a religion: Hindu, Muslim, Buddhist, Christian. We label the child according to the colour of the skin: fair, brown or black. But all these identifications are surface level only; the life within is neither male nor female; it has no nationality. Life is a nameless "isness." It is Unnameable, immeasurable! The body is measured; life cannot be measured. The maleness or femaleness of the body has its own quality, but life cannot be imprisoned in and limited by a quality.

As the child grows, he or she begins to accept all the identifications as personal reality. The child hears all the labels, and soon repeats, "I am fair or I am brown, I am dull or I am smart." No one points out to the child that these are surface descriptions significant only in the context of society; no one encourages the child to recognise that there is a life within whose purity is not affected, stained by all the identifications. The family, society encourages the child to accept all the identification as the self, but who helps the child become aware of the inner life unspoiled by identifications, unlimited by concepts of self?

We clothe the being in concepts, and we confuse the concepts for the being. We all wear clothes; we clothe the body but we never confuse the clothes for the body. We understand the purpose for which the clothes are worn, and the distinction between the clothes and body is clear. But we have taken on many concepts about ourselves, we wear these concepts, and readily confuse them with the life within.

We are a credulous race, and we have come to believe deeply and strongly that the self, the ego is real. We fail to recognise that the ego with all its identifications has only conceptual reality and no physical reality whatsoever. When we begin to question the validity of all the identifications fed into each of us, and we recognise that the life within is not contained, not limited by these identifications, then the hold of the ego-consciousness relaxes, and there is the possibility to open the new dimensions of living.

As long as we accept that the "self," the ego-consciousness, defines the inner being, then we are closed to investigating the truth that perhaps the self, ego, is manmade, and perhaps there is an inner being which is not manmade, which has not been conditioned by society, but is divine. We cannot hold onto both views at the same time. The acceptance of the reality of the self, the ego, prevents contact with the unconditioned beingness, the isness of life. We cannot hold onto the false and the true at the same time

But the idea that the identifications of society and the self-made identifications define the inner life is so strong, so heavily conditioned by society, even the intellectual investigation that it may not be so, frightens us. And clearly the ego does not want to undertake an investigation that may prove its utter falsity, its lack of reality. Much of our personal security is tied to our identification with the ego. What would we be without an ego, a self? Perhaps we would be divine.

It's only when we're completely exhausted, bored with the mechanical, repetitive movements of our lives directed by the ego, and when we see what absolute misery the ego creates by dividing the world into the "me" and the "not-me," and by constantly trying to acquire, grab power for the "me," that we're ready to question the reality of the ego and consider whether for all of our lives we choose to be mastered by the tyrant ego.

Just as the misinterpretation of the concept of ego has created endless miseries for the human race, imprecise understanding of the concepts of space, time, sequence and continuity has caused vast distortions in relating to the "isness" of life. All concepts developed by the mind are attempts to contain the immeasurable, limitless reality into categories, measurements, comparisons. These attempts, of course, are necessarily bound to fail.

In order to deal with the variety of objects around us and the vastness of the infinity, we created measurements. We measured infinity and arrived at the concept of space which we describe in kilometers and miles. The concept of space exists only as symbols in the human mind, but because we have created the concept of space, we imagine there is a "here" and a "there," we imagine there is cause and effect. The concepts of measurements and the laws of causation are necessary for the same functioning of the brain; they are necessary for orderly interpretation of sense data, perceptions, but we must recognise their limited utility in relating to the immeasurable totality of life.

There is no sequence, continuity in the world. There is only simultaneity, but because of the concept of time, we imagine the past, present and future, the before and afterwards.

Once we have invented physical time, we use the same conceptual framework to measure psychological time. We see a person and say, "He was a child, then a youth, now he is an old man and next he will die." The body is governed by the law of nature and is susceptible to birth, growth, decay, and death, but does life die? Is it born at all, or is it an "isness" that has ever been and shall be, defying all the measurements that mankind has very skillfully devised, invented and constructed? Can you see along with me that psychological time has only a conceptual reality? There are no yesterdays, todays and tomorrows. There are no minutes, hours, days and centuries. These are only convenient measurements for daily living.

Life is not imprisoned by our concepts and symbols; it is a time-free and space-free reality. Understanding is a time-free and space-free reality. Time and space, sequence continuity, interpretations, evaluations, conclusions are all contained in the mind. They appear as real to us; they appear much more real to us than even the objects, because they are so deep-rooted. But it's important if we are going to understand the totality of life to see them as limited creations of the mind.

If it is clear that the universe is constructed by our minds according to the conditionings fed into us, and that we have invented time and space, sequence and continuity as concepts, then it is possible to consider allowing the thought structure with all its framework of concepts, memories, evaluations to go into nonaction. Then a qualitatively different energy from the wholeness of the being gets activated.

In order to explore other dimensions, you don't have to renounce the world, the society, the mind. All this cannot be renounced anyway. You don't have to kill the mind because it is the substance of your inner being. You simply turn inward, and understand the mind as a conditioned entity. You can't unconditioned or decondition the energy that has been conditioned, but if you allow the conditioned energy to relax into nonaction,

to relax and go into abeyance, then the unconditioned energy, the abundant source of energy, the universal energy which is undifferentiated begins to operate upon you, within you, through you.

It is within the reach of this complex organism through which we function and construct the world for ourselves to understand its own nature, its ways of operation, its limitations. And understanding its limitations it goes back to the center and relaxes at the center in its beingness, without any desire to become, to acquire. The process of becoming, the process of acquiring gets suspended altogether.

When the reality contained in us is denuded of all the conceptual superstructures, a fearless, assertion-free, acquisitive-free human being is born. Then there is a new basis for relationships. With the conditioned mind, we cannot live in peace, love and harmony with one another; therefore there is the urgency to explore the dimension that is free of cerebral movement and conceptual constructions, and there is the urgency to be reborn in the dimension of peace and love.

CHAPTER THREE

LIVING YOUR UNDERSTANDING

Spiritual inquiry into truth, the divinity, requires unlearning imprecise patterns of living, and ordering daily living, relationships on the basis of scientific understanding. It involves discarding the false and unlearning the incorrect, the unscientific ways. This education takes time. Equipping the physical, mental, sensual layers of the organism takes time. Understanding does not require time. Transformation or mutation is not of time; it is a happening which is not the result of your action or my action, but self-education prepares the organism, gives an opportunity for transformation to take.

If you feel that by reading books and listening to talks mutation will take place without putting the life in order, without equipping the body, without educating the sensual, the verbal, the mental layers of your being, I for one feel you are harbouring an illusion.

For self-education to be successful, it is essential that as soon as you understand the truth of a fact, you live that understanding without a time lag. Our way of living today is very strange and unfulfilling. We acquire knowledge, store it in memory but in our daily relationships and activities we don't live our understanding. We follow the conventions, traditions, norms and evaluations of this aggressive, violent and mad society around us. Do observe please our daily life and living. Intellectually we understand that the society is rotten and sick, and in daily life, in relationship we follow the accepted patterns, conventions, priorities of society. Intellectually we want to get rid of all authority, and in relationship we follow the authority. Many an inquirer suffers from this inner split; the person doesn't live as a whole but lives fragmentarily, partially. The person lives a divided life, a double life; if I may say, I will call it a life of hypocrisy.

Though verbally the mind says it has understood the truth, it may be busy denying the implications of the understanding

and in a clandestine way running away from the truth pointed out by the understanding. The mind may feel comfortable accepting the truth intellectually, but may be quite unwilling to accept the consequences of living fully the understanding. Or the mind may be willing to put part of the understanding in action and keep other parts of the understanding at the verbal level.

As an inquirer you must have the fearlessness and humility to live your understanding come what may. It is easy to talk about the unconditioned mind and freedom from the known, but very difficult to live it, because the society does not accept you, does not acknowledge you. You are not respected, you are not needed by such a society, and you want to be accepted; you require prestige, status, praise by people. Therefore in actual relationship you accept the authority of every silly thing the society has created. You are afraid of being alone with your understanding and yet you want to discover the truth.

Do you notice how the mind resents the objectivity of understanding, the mind resents the impartiality of the truth? It wants to modify, adjust the understanding to its own wishes and desires and interpret the understanding according to its likes and dislikes. You do not respect your understanding. You would like to store the understanding like knowledge in memory. But you can't store understanding in memory; either it is lived or it escapes you.

If you live your understanding, then it becomes the substance of your being, the essence of your being and never leaves you. But tragically modern life encourages you to arrive at scientific, intellectual understanding of truth, but discourages you from living that understanding. In daily living, your understanding is not allowed to grow spontaneously in relationship; it is prevented by internal, external factors. You present excuses to your understanding and intelligence. You say to yourself, "Please we can't live according to our understanding because..." and you give reasons and excuses. And in the time lag between understanding and action you ferment discontent, misery and suffering.

To be an inquirer means living one's understanding, however little that may be, without any thought given to the possible consequences. It implies that one is loyal and faithful to one's understanding, insuring that there is no time lag between understanding and action.

Living is a movement of relationship and each relationship provides an opportunity for action out of understanding. But we do not act; we only react. We react to compulsions, to memories, to the conditionings fed into us, so there is no scope in our lives for putting understanding into action. We are either involved in passivity or the struggle of confrontation, and there is no vitality for living our understanding.

Instead of talking about meditation and higher states of consciousness, come back to where you stand, to the facts of your life. Come in close contact with the quality of life that you are living and find out if you can educate yourself to live according to your understanding. If you talk about investigating, exploring the nature of freedom, and yet can't free yourself of a petty little habit like smoking, drinking or any other habit, even after seeing it as a form of slavery, the desire for freedom is merely intellectual. You must decide if you would rather have the pleasure of indulging in comfortable habits or you are prepared to undertake the austere exploration into the truth of life.

If you are serious about inquiry into truth, you must enter into self-education which involves bringing discipline, order into your life voluntarily without the sense of imposition, but with the clear understanding that disorderly, unclean lives are not capable of any investigation and exploration in the nonverbal, invisible, intangible reality. You can study books and gather ideas, you can wander around the world and make a collection of ideologies, patterns of behaviour, but if you lead any kind of life you choose, the understanding won't touch the core of your being. You will be the same violent, barbarian, lustful person in spite of all the knowledge, scholarship and erudition. Religion requires total commitment and total commitment begins with the physical and the verbal discipline.

Discipline cannot be forced; it cannot be grafted from another's life. The choice to live an orderly way of life comes from understanding that recision and accuracy are absolutely necessary for investigation and exploration of the science of life.

One who is interested in discovering the meaning of life and death firsthand, in exploring beyond the dimensions of the known, personally will have to educate one's body, speech and mind to behave in an orderly way. If one behaves on the physical level without accuracy and precision, without cleanliness and tidiness, the behaviour of the speech will be untidy, unclean and the movement of the mind will be chaotic, disorderly and ugly.

The discipline to remove chaos, disorder from every aspect of daily living comes from a non-subjective attitude to the science of living. This non-subjective attitude is motivated not by whims, likes, dislikes, moods, indulgences, but by the clarity of insight into what the body and the mind need to be sensitive, fresh, ready for the challenges of religious inquiry. The non-subjective attitude permits a harmonious rhythmic life to replace the jerky, complicated, exhausting life of modern society.

Discipline simplifies life and that simplicity is absolutely necessary. Simplicity gives a sharpness to the personality, to the being. There is nothing as elegant as simplicity. The body is nourished on healthy food that agrees with it and is helped to remain sensitive, supple, sharp. Every sense organ is then in a state of sharp attentiveness, intense alertness. The receptivity is not only a word, it is a state of being. If the physical organism is not helped by proper food, nutrition, sleep and exercise, the senses do not have the alert sensitivity to receive what the objects have to give. Then your eyes are open and yet you cannot see, and you have ears and yet you cannot hear, because they are blocked with mental worries, brooding, preoccupations, laziness and suffer from imprecision and inaccuracy. I wonder if you have looked at all these aspects of life.

You cannot afford to believe that in the privacy of your room, in the privacy of your wardrobe, your suitcase, you can be casual, untidy, unclean. There is no privacy in life. You are

exposed to the cosmos wherever you move. You cannot afford to think that you can eat anything, at anytime, in anyway you like or cook your food according to your whims. You can't be a victim of the lust for food and greed for eating. The lust or the greed of the uncleanness will affect every blood cell, every brain cell; it will pollute every fibre of your being. And in such pollution, sensitivity cannot breathe or blossom.

There is nothing mysterious or difficult about what I am saying about discipline, orderliness, but I hardly come across inquirers who are careful about physical behaviour. Such cleanliness and tidiness, accuracy and precision make your life very simple and free from unnecessary complications.

As an inquirer, you observe and discover how you can live in simplicity. You cannot divide or fragment life, imagining there is a material level separate and different from the spiritual level. Life is a wholeness. The inquiry into spirituality affects every act in which you are involved. There is no part of your life that you can maintain apart from the flame of inquiry.

You begin with bringing order to the physical level and proceed to the verbal, the mental. You observe that the verbal level is contaminated, polluted with exaggerations, understatements, overstatements, half-truths and untruths have you not come across all these in your daily living? For petty little ego-centered motivations, you can plunge yourself into lies, falsehoods, cheatings; you indulge in all this. You cheat yourself and others and yet hope that the quality of spirituality, that beautiful word, will descend in your life.

With all these lies, falsehoods, and half-truths, you complicate relationships and are always worried that the other person will find out that you've told a lie or cheated the person. Relationships are not battlefields but you convert relationships into battlefields but you convert relationships into battlefields. You cannot indulge in lies, falsehoods, cheating and expect your life to have the fragrance of the sacred, divine.

You cannot discover what the truth is with an unclean body, unclean mind, unclean speech, but that is what you try

to do. Isn't that rather stupid? Be simple, be clean, be accurate and precise. When you create such order in your life, then you have the strength, the courage to live your own understanding.

During the period of self-education for bringing order to the life, one lives a quiet life and minimises the area of socialisation. One frees oneself of all the etiquettes, the social calls and formal relationships. One puts the requirements of the day, food, clothes, shelter, finances on a basis of scientific understanding so that one does not have to worry about the basics of living. Then one begins to organize every day as it comes. If the day is orderly, life will take care of itself, and one doesn't have to worry about the tomorrow. Organising the day implies not wasting time, not a single minute, in idleness and laziness, because they bring about sluggishness in the whole neurological and chemical system. The nervous, chemical systems need to be well-equipped, sensitive to receive the universal energy, the tremendous momentum, the depth of the energy. One has to see that the sensitivity is not damaged in any way; that's why one must organise the day.

Find out for yourself how many hours of sleep the body requires, and once you have decided on, say seven hours, do not allow it to become seven-and-a-half hours. Find out how many times a day it is necessary to take meals, but once you decide, stay with the schedule and don't budge an inch.

Organise the day, the diet, the hours of sleep, the quality and quantity of food, and minimise the areas where verbalisation is necessary. Spend as much time as possible in the total relaxation of the mind. Minimise the areas of contact with objects and people where the past is likely to come into momentum and carry itself through you. To rid yourself of the imbalances that have been caused by excessive use of the conditioned mind, spend as much time as possible in solitude and silence.

Are we aware how often during the day we are leaking vital energies by becoming emotionally upset? We are reacting continuously; we have the habit of reacting on the basis of the past or the future to everything under the skies. These

reactions create friction and wastage of energy and the momentum of the past overwhelms us because we have been using the past, we have been under its influence all the time.

We need to educate ourselves to be aware of everything that is happening around us but not reacting, not taking initiative. We have the habit of involving ourselves with superfluous things and crowding our inner psychological world, and that's how we invite misery and suffering. The line of demarcation between taking initiative and asserting ourselves and between asserting and aggressing is very thin. Without our knowing we become assertive and aggressive. We sow the seeds of our own unhappiness. Much of suffering is manmade, stimulated and provoked by the mind.

Intellectual and emotional curiosity obliges us to do all sorts of nonsensical things, intervening, interfering in the lives of other people. We imagine, attribute motivations to others; then we begin to suspect, come to believe that what we had imagined is the fact. The imaginary attributes become facts because we have been repeating them in our minds. We are all the time in the crowd of our own reactions, imaginations, motivations. Isn't that what we do in our relationships? There is no peace, relaxation; there are only conflicts, tensions and wastages of energy.

The wisdom of this ancient land, India, says that each human is born to be a yogi, which implies living from invincible, inner equipoise and unaccessible balance in the mental, verbal, physical behaviour. But we don't have the grace of equipoise, the beauty of balanced lives; we suffer from maladjustments which result in angularities, peculiarities, chaos in our physical, sensual mental behaviours. Yet no matter the present disorder of our lives, we have the potential to grow gracefully into beautifully proportioned, composed individuals worthy of the name human being.

What is required is that whatever understanding we have, we plant that immediately in every field of our lives. We must give the new seeds of understanding an opportunity to grow

by providing a nourishing environment of orderly living. Well-organised, rhythmic days, quiet and solitude.

If we put the new seeds in the rocky bed of chaotic living or if we lock up the seeds in the storehouse of our memories, our lives will stagnate in tired repetitions of the past.

And we do want to give our lives an opportunity to flower. We humans are tired of the anarchy of our lives, aren't we? We're bored with the senseless suffering, the lack of vitality and depth in our beings. So let us give ourselves an opportunity to realize our potential for living as yogis in simple, austere, sensitive, rhythmic lives, which provide strong, resilient, healthy foundations for exploration into absolute unconditional freedom.

CHAPTER FOUR

AVOIDING THE POISONS OF THE MIND

If we have seen thoroughly the necessity for living our understanding in every aspect of our lives, for bringing the clarity of order to every movement, every moment of our days, let us proceed more deeply into the mechanism of mind and discover the dangers, the poisons of the mind which pollute, destroy our efforts at graceful, simple living. We'd like to live harmoniously, at peace with ourselves and fellow human beings; we'd like to be free of conditioned compulsions which cause chaos, friction in our lives, but we find, sadly, that it is not easy to be simple. During all of our lives we have been educated to be complicated, reacting with intricate motivations to every encounter. And when we want to be simple, innocent in the quiet moments of life, we find we cannot. As soon as there is a possibility for quietness, communion, the mind becomes active in unnecessary verbalization: It thinks about the way things should be, the ideal rather than the actual, and it compares the present situation with others, better or worse. These three poisons of the mind - ideation, idealism, comparison - weaken the entire organism, waste vital energy and prevent awareness of the totality, the divine which is beyond the conditioned movement of the mind.

Have you noticed that your mind is always busy converting simple perceptions, for example, the sight of a delicate flower, into an idea or an abstraction? The human brain has been trained to process perceptions, sensations into abstractions, ideas. As soon as this ideation takes place, the communion with what you see or listen to gets arrested. You see a lovely flower, and being aesthetically alive, you say how beautiful it is. This is aesthetic appreciation of what you have perceived which is quite a natural involuntary response of an aesthetically cultivated brain. The perceptual response is to the beauty of the flower, the tree, the person, the house, but you do not feel fulfilled in that response. So the mind creates an image of the beautiful

house or the handsome person and after a second or two you say to yourself, "I wish I had that house; I wish that handsome person were my wife or husband."

If the communion had been fulfilled in the contact of the senses with something lovely, in the simple perception, then the mind would not convert the perception into an idea or an image which stimulates a psychological reaction to the event. If the image were not created, there would be perception, appreciation and the ending of it. But we have not been trained to simply appreciate quiet communion with the events of life; we have been conditioned to create ideas about everything we contact, and to allow these ideas to stimulate wishes or desires related to the ego. The ego then establishes a relationship with the image of the beautiful person, or house or car and carries that psychological response through time so that it affects all future encounters. We rarely are able to free ourselves from the hold of these images that we casually create.

The pure, sheer communion, the beauty and grandeur of an aesthetic response is spoiled, polluted, damaged as soon as thought comes in, reducing communion to an idea and converting the idea to a wish that must be fulfilled. Please do see this in your own lives. It happens in your life every day. When the mind, the ego cherishes the wish - I wish I had it, the desire becomes an ambition, and you say, "I must have him, I must have her," for sexual relationship, for sensual pleasure or company, for psychological relationship or you say, "I must have the car, the house, the dress." The wish stimulates ambition, which is a kind of obsession. And efforts begin to attain what is desired. Circumstances may not be favourable to fulfilling your ambitions, the facts may be otherwise, but the mind like a spoiled and pampered child says, "I must have it," and creates its own misery and suffering.

There is very little suffering in life, that is not manmade. But we can't accept the facts of our lives as they are and learn to deal with them to the best of our capacity. We create ideas, we compare the facts with the ideas, we stimulate ambitions and try to twist and distort, shape and mold facts into our

ambitions. Misery consists in the effort to twist and distort the unchangeable facts of life according to our ideas, wishes and ambitions. Please do see this; we create our own suffering to a very great extent.

We have to learn to listen, to perceive, to touch objects existing in the world, to see and listen to human beings that we meet without reducing the beauty of the communion to ideation and ambition. In the shadow of ambition, frustrations, miseries are nourished.

We must learn to be in relationship without bringing in the screen of likes and dislikes. If we arrive at a judgement about someone, we have built an image of the person. The judgement will block the path of relationship, and we will not be able to meet the other person. In between ourselves and others will be the images that we have built. And we say, "That person is like this, he has done this towards me; how can I pay him back?"

The moment we see the other person we close in. We have been pretending to be something we are not, and in the intimate contact we are afraid the others will see through our images. We may pretend to be learned and the others may notice our ignorance; we pretend to be very calm and we're afraid that if others visit our homes they will notice how we behave with our children, our servants. In the privacy of our homes we feel we can afford to behave any way we want, and in public we can project a respectable image. Pretending to be what we are not and trying to conceal what we are, is living as a double face and according to a double standard. In pretense there is no vitality, no opportunity for joy. There is only the fear that someone will see through our carefully presented images and see us directly as we are.

When you look at another, do you see the person, or do you look at the images you have created? Do you respond to others or do you project an image that you feel the other person would like? If every meeting with another results in a new image and every response is only a movement of projecting an agreeable image, relationships remain at a superficial level and there is no inter-penetration. When you project an image or

react on the basis of images, you don't expose yourself; you hide behind the screen of the image. You are safe behind the image you are projecting, and the other person feels safe by projecting an image he or she feels you would like, and the images meet like shields in the hands.

The hypocrisy of hiding behind a shield of images, and the stupidity of carrying a basket full of images in memory and presenting a different image to each person has to come to an end. When relationships are reduced to a game of hide-and-seek, living does not take place. There is only the illusion of living. Acquisition of verbal knowledge may be there, psychological experience through many techniques, methodologies may be there, but if you continue to relate on the basis of ideas and images, the inner quality of life will remain poor, and every other moment you lose balance and spontaneous equipoise.

Mankind has not grown, is not mature inspite of inhabiting the globe for thousands of years. We are all immature as far as relationships are concerned. To mature in relationship, to grow in communion with all the fellow beings, it's essential to let go of the tendencies to form ideas, images, and to allow simple perceptions, meetings to take place. In the simplicity of perception you look at the other person and you listen to the other persons as you look at the rainbow. You look at the ugliness or charm of another's behavior, the arrogance or warmth, as you look at the clouds, the lighting, the sudden bursting of rains. When you look at them with the same innocence and the same objectivity, without your subjectivity getting mixed up in perception, then you will be able to learn and to respond correctly.

The poison of ideation prevents us from being vital, fully alive human beings who move elegantly in relationships. Ideation leads to formation of images which we pretend to ourselves and others are real. The images create desires, wishes which we must fulfill whether they are healthy to the organism or not. We do not act from the simplicity of our beings, because we have lost the art of innocent perception. We complicate all our contacts, meetings and the bliss of communion has no opportunity to emerge in the mental chaos.

We move away from the simplicity of our beings when we indulge in ideation, images; we also abandon the simplicity of our beings when we yield to the poison of ideation, when we live according to the ideals established by society.

The huge, the vast past is before us. The books we read, the parents, the school, the society, the so-called religious teachers, tell us that Christ, Buddha, Krishna is like this, and you must become like him. They depict the lives, and out of the communion with the description given in the books, out of the communion with the past, an ideal, a goal is constructed. Brick by brick we construct ideals social, political, religious, spiritual.

Really I don't know why there should be any aims and ideals in life. Life is for living. Life is for relating ourselves to the understanding around us and within us. But ideals are constructed, and the parents hammer the ideals and goals into the ears and brains of the children. At schools we are taught the social aims and goals; the mind gets polluted with the formation of ideals, aims and goals, and the child learns to approximate everything that he or she does to the lives of those great people living or dead.

The facts are ignored. The personal, physical, psychological limitations, strengths are all forgotten and the process of becoming sets in. "What shall I do to become like a Buddha, a Christ," the child asks, and I get tears of blood in my heart when such questions are asked of me. Why must you become someone else? Why don't you discover what you are and be what you are? In the simplicity of your being are the blossoms of reality.

The brains are filled with ideals, so one doesn't begin with oneself, one doesn't see what is under one's own feet, one doesn't love oneself. There is no respect for oneself or love for what one is. There is no opportunity to get acquainted with oneself, to investigate and discover what one is and to let that being uncover and unwind slowly and gradually every moment in every movement and in every relationship. That which is, is neglected, ignored criminally, and that which is not there,

is sought after. The seeking and searching begin to stimulate ambition, and efforts in the process of attaining become the content of life. You are split between what you are and what you seek.

This seeking after ideals is again the source of misery and suffering. You get neglected; your factual contents are neglected, ignored and instead of eliminating violence and lust of sensual pleasure in yourself, you find out some silly, stupid technique, method for becoming non-violent and celibate. There is a split, a tension, and a contradiction. You are what you are, and what you are throws its intimations in your behaviour, but you neglect all that. You never deal with what you are and find out what to do with yourself. You are running after the ideals, always running after the ideals and away from your center, trying to impose upon yourself forcibly, violently sometimes, what is not there. You are trying to graft upon your psyche and life the behavioral patterns of others and strangle the facts. Strangulation of what is, is the content of running after ideals. You never live with yourself; you live with those images that the ideals have created and you are trying to become that.

There are two persons living in you: one which you are and one which you are not. That which you are can never be eliminated because you never investigate, you never get acquainted with it, never discover it.

It is there with all its crookedness, distortion, beauties, ugliness. It is there but you are trying to cover it up, with your effort to become something else. And that which is not, that which is sought after, hardly becomes a reality. So instead of running after aims and ideals, instead of struggling with the process of becoming, or with indulgence, suppression, just be what you are. Understand what you are. With that understanding might develop a discipline, an inner order and a humility which relaxes you. Nothing relaxes you as humility does. There is not tension in that relaxation, no conflict, no contradiction. Relaxation stimulates intelligence, and you can deal with the challenges of life as they come. If you take them one by one, deal with them without conflict then you have energy. Tensions, conflicts and inner contradictions eat up all your energy. You can be fresh

every moment intellectually and psychologically, though the body at times may get tired, if you finish with striving for ideals, and relax in the humility of understanding who are you. But unfortunately the infinite source of energy is neglected.

Comparison like idealism takes you away from the center of your being; its form of poison is to keep you constantly imbalanced, worried, frustrated that your life is not as fortunate, worthy, exciting as others. Comparison breeds endless discontent with the content of your own being, and encourages constant attempts to acquire what others have, whether it is John living around the corner or Christ or Buddha. The process of having what others have, of becoming like someone else, has much more importance than the act of learning about your own life.

You compare yourself, don't you? you say, "He has it, I don't; she's beautiful, I'm not." All the time this comparison with others goes on. It goes on while you meet with others, and it continues in the privacy of your own room. You look into the mirror, but you don't see yourself; you compare your nose, eyes, hair with someone else's. Even when you are alone, you never look at yourself non-comparatively; therefore you can never be simply, innocently with yourself. You are dreaming about what another person is, and wondering whether you can be like that. You are feeling frustration, dissatisfaction that you cannot mold your life to be a collection of what you admire in others.

Never compare yourself with anyone else in the world, be they a Christ, a Buddha or a Krishna. Why? Because you lose your self-respect. You are as holy as the holiest that has ever lived. But the holiness contained in you has no chance to express or manifest itself because you are busy with the struggle of running away from yourself.

You are what you are; you have to accept the contents of your being, the facts of your life. But you have neither reverence for the cosmic life and no respect for yourself; you never find out what the "I" is, the "me" is. You never watch, observe the behaviour of the body, the speech, the mind; as soon as there is an opportunity to observe, you run away from

your own life to the lives of others, and try to beg, borrow, graft, imitate. Because you are always running away from the center of your being, growth doesn't take place.

Never compare yourself with anyone else living or dead, but turn inward respectfully, with care and concern and launch on the voyage of self-discovery, self-understanding. The journey begins with love with tender respect for yourself as a manifestation of the divine. It cannot begin with negativity towards yourself; it cannot begin with frustration that your life is not what you would intellectually choose it to be. The journey goes inward to the center of your being, and if you don't run away to take a look at someone else's life, then the tender shoot of self-understanding will emerge, and your life will begin to express its own beauty.

Brushing aside all the aims and ideals created by the total human past, by all the races and religions, and learning to commune with life without converting communion into ideation, leading to wish, ambition and struggle is vitally necessary. Then one can live effortlessly, always relaxed, having abundant energy born of intelligence, capable of dealing with challenges and situations as they arise—pleasant or painful, humiliating or honorable. Life being totality is a mystery which defies ideation and nobody can predict what is going to happen next moment, next hour, next day. The beauty and grandeur consists in this mysteriousness of life. It is a mystery and one has to be on one's toes, alert and attentive to meet the challenges as they come, not to measure them and compare them with the challenges in the lives of other people, but to understand them firsthand, personally. One deals simply with them as they come. One may fail in dealing but one learns through failures and tries again.

The act of living is its own fulfillment. The language of success and failure is stupid and juvenile. We are here to live; we are here to learn to live. And to live is a total action. And in that total action is meditation.

CHAPTER FIVE

MOVING FROM FEAR TO LOVE

Life has lost its charm, grace and nobility because we relate to the world on the basis of fear and not love. Please do see that the human race frightened and desperate is losing all the sense of decency, magnanimity, whether in society, politics, religion or family life. The awareness of our miserable plight, of the deep sorrow and agony of the human race all the world over, in the advanced or advancing countries, in the democratic or capitalistic countries, creates an urgency to bring about a radical revolution in the psyche, in the consciousness of the individual.

We have been investigating the hidden corners of the mind, revealing the conditioned patterns, psychological tendencies, perversions and deceptions of which the mind is capable, laying the foundation for setting ourselves, unconditionally free from the compulsions, disharmony, chaos which is the content of our lives. The movement toward freedom begins with understanding the mind, because our bondages are illusions of the mind. We are bound by incorrect, unscientific, imprecise use of the mental energy; we have accepted the mental movement as the guiding authority in our lives, and now we are confused about why it is so difficult to love, to commune, to live in peace with ourselves.

Love, joy, bliss is the nature of life. Fear is not the nature of man; fear is perversion, distortion which has been fed into us through education and through socio-economic ways of living. Love is our essential nature, but fear dominates, motivates, compels our lives, and the tenderness of love has no scope to manifest its bright light.

Instead of theoretically and academically exploring what love is, let us look at fear and investigate if we can be free of fear of all sorts; then love doesn't have to be created. As the scent of a flower is concealed in the petals of the tiny

bud, the fragrance of love, truth and beauty is concealed within this body of flesh and bone. We only need to provide an opportunity for love to blossom, flower and express itself in all of our lives.

Love and fear are incompatible. When fear is present, when the whole being is saturated with fear, the energy of love does not get activated; it remains only a potential of the human nature. We suffer from chronic fear, physical and psychological; we are victims of fear throughout our lives, and we long for the warm vitality of love. But the dimension of love will not be a reality in our lives until we understand thoroughly, intimately the control, mastery that fear of all kinds has taken over our beings. When we are aware of how thoroughly we are dominated by the movement of fear, how captivated we are by the abundant fears that direct our behaviour throughout every activity, every relationship, how exhausted we are by the frantic impulses of the forces of fear, we may have an urge to relax the grip of fear and invite love to flow into our tired, worn-out beings.

What is fear? Is fear an instinct? Is it an instinct that we share with the animal world? Even before we know the word fear, we may be suffering from fear as part of our inheritance.

If we watch, observe the behaviour of animals, we will notice that two instincts are predominant in their behaviour. One is the instinct of self-preservation, and the other is the instinct of fear. Animals are endowed with a defense mechanism which is incorporated in their biological structure. They have to defend themselves with their bodies, their organs, and also their brains. We share the self-preservation instinct with the animal kingdom; perhaps it's a residue of the animality in us.

The instinct of self-preservation compels or obliges the creature to acquire, to obtain food for the body. The instinct of self-preservation is interwoven with the sex impulse and stimulates the desire for procreation. Both are creative energies, but fear which puts the animal on the defensive implies anticipation of being hurt; anticipation of aggression by others. So the

animals and birds, look hither and thither to see if somebody is there to hurt them, to wound them, and they have every reason to be afraid because they are surrounded by humans who are barbarians. The animals are not barbarians. The lion or tiger kills the prey for food; they are not murderers like we are. Their killings are not violent because there is no motivation. They do not kill for pleasure; they do not go hunting like the human animals who kill for pleasure, and who kill the animals because they like meat not because they lack nutrition. Humans have grains and vegetables and even milk products, but they must kill birds, sheep, goats, chickens and convert their stomachs into graveyards of these animals. This is not cynicism. It is only breath of agony that man must kill, and now the homeosapiens are killing themselves. When they kill one another, they are killing themselves. The homeosapiens as a species will become extinct on this globe just because of their capacity for annihilation.

The animal is on the defensive and anticipates aggression; therefore, its alertness is always mixed with the feeling of fear. The instinct of fear in the animal kingdom does not develop into aggression, hatred, sophistication of defence mechanism. It does not enable them to develop armaments and a science of killing. They have a grandeur of innocence and a majesty of that innocence.

Let us look back to the human race, and what we have done to ourselves and to the planet which we inhabit recklessly, thoughtlessly. We perhaps suffer from instinctive fear which means we anticipate hurts, wounds, aggressions, exploitation. The motivation of self-defence predominates chemically the whole being much more than the desire for living together with others, more than the urge for freedom and sharing.

The instinct for self-preservation has made the human race explore and investigate on the material level arts like agriculture, horticulture, means and methods of storing what they produce and so on. The whole beauty of human civilization and culture is due to this instinct of self-preservation and the development of science and technology is an extension of that instinct. Out

of the animal instinct of self-preservation the human race has created something very beautiful. But when the human race proceeds from the point of providing for the needs, proceeds towards acquiring and obtaining out of greed, then the perversion and distortion begins. With the cooperation of nature we can satisfy our physical needs of food, clothing and shelter without plundering, looting and murdering the nature around us—the forests, the oceans, the rivers. We have made them ugly.

The instinct of fear has gone deep into the psychological structure; from the physical and material level it gets transferred to the psychological. We cannot be in the presence of an animal or even a bird, leave aside other human beings, without shrinking in the skin. Because we are afraid we cannot relate to anything without being on the defensive, and those who anticipate being hurt always manage to be hurt. We cannot meet human beings without anticipating hurts and wounds from them, without doubting whether we will be accepted, respected. We meet other persons with expectations of being hurt, wounded, insulted by others and these expectations and doubts have their own chemistry; they stimulate chemical disorders and create imbalances. Please do see this. Freedom consists in understanding what bondage is. Freedom is not independent of bondage. In the understanding of the nature of bondage is the beginning of freedom or liberation or enlightenment.

Why can't we meet other people, whosoever they are, without anticipating that they might hurt us, they might exploit us? The chemistry of these expectations and doubts put us on the defensive and we withdraw, enter into psychological isolation. We are then in no position to respond spontaneously, easily and gracefully. We respond in relationships out of the strain and stress of the inner disorder and imbalance. Love cannot breathe under the pressure of such stress and strain.

Fear which contains anticipations, doubts, puts us on the defensive and throws us into psychological isolation; but it does more harm, more damage. It stimulates impatience; we would like to assert before the other person asserts. We are

expecting the other person to assert so we are in a hurry to assert first. In assertion there is no sensitivity. The psychological assertion, the psychological aggression expresses itself in verbal indifference, hardness and harshness in behaviour, abruptness in behaviour. Please do see this; this is our lives. It does happen. Let us not create a world of make-believe or wishful thinking around ourselves and feel we are free of fear; we are not. Cheating ourselves or creating a world of make-believe is a sin as far as such serious enquiries are concerned.

Anticipation of hurt stimulates impatience. You are in a hurry to go through a relationship before you get hurt. You might not get hurt but still you are anticipating. You are in a hurry of asserting, dominating the situation. You want to go through it quickly, hurriedly and get rid of it. So relationships become battlefields instead of being fields for interaction of two expressions of life, for singing songs of harmony.

Those who are less impatient, have less vitality, less energy, become passive, and those who are more impatient become assertive. Being aggressive and passive are the obverse and converse of the same thing, because when we shrink with fear, withdraw into passivity, we can't look at the other person, we can't listen. There is no receptivity in the passivity of withdrawal. So every moment, and every relationship is polluted by this attitude of fear.

Life is in relationship. We can't live in isolation; in isolation there is no life. Living is relating, but we do not get related to people easily, spontaneously. We create many inhibitions in the name of defence mechanisms. We create these obstacles so that the other can't enter, and then we try to dodge the obstacles and make efforts to meet one another, turning relationships into an obstacle race. How can we possibly meet one another with such complications? We turn relationships into juvenile games; we have been playing these games with one another for thousands of years. Our growth is lopsided; in some areas the human race has grown fast and created a fantastic world of science and technology, art, sculpture, music and dance, but in the emotional areas, we are immature.

There is a way of living in which one is neither aggressive nor passive. One is alert, attentive, sharp, supple. Free from anticipation of hurt, one is totally present; one pours one's being into every relationship, lives through it and dies to pleasure and pain created in the relationship. One is free to move into another relationship, meet the situation as virgin as in the first movement and first relationship. This is the content of freedom.

When you are free from anticipations, fears, you can relax. Then relationships are movements of relaxation; you are as relaxed while you are with people as when you are alone. Your inner awareness doesn't get disturbed by being in the midst of people. You are with them and still you are with yourself. You are at the center of your being totally relaxed. In this relaxation there is an equipoise. You are not absentminded; you are not preoccupied, distracted. When you open your eyes and look at others, when you see others, you are totally there, and therefore you can act. In the relaxation, in the movement of the energy of intelligence, the scent of love, the perfume of love is there. It is the essence of your being that comes out. The bud opens up into a flower and the scent is there. You open up in the relaxed state and the scent of love is there. Fearlessness and love go together.

The love that blossoms in the relaxation of fear, in the abeyance of all authority of the past is something we do not know at all. We know many feelings, conditioned emotions that we call love; we know a kind of affection of parents for their children, of friends for one another, but these are centered in ego-consciousness, rooted in the conditioned mind.

A culturally-educated person, functioning from the center of the "me," may relate to the "non-me" with an energy of affection. The center of the "me" projects a sense of myness around the things and objects it uses, persons it lives with, house that it lives in, with a kind of affection, a tenderness; the ego-centered activity takes into its field, the interests of the others, the interest of the family. A kind of enlightened self-interest operates; the ego doesn't put its interest in opposition to the interest and welfare of those close to it.

A person has a child and says, "It is my child," and takes care of the child. The circle may be enlarged to include my caste, my community, my country, but it is always the center of the "me" travelling to the objects of interest. The center of the "me" moves to objects where relatedness is compulsory, covers them in the interest of "myness," and extends the energy of affection. Or the ego is attracted to people who have the same interest. A music lover comes across a musician and immediately something clicks; there is attraction which leads to friendship, and the friendship leads to affection. But the movement of the ego, even as enlightened self-interest has none of the energy, the quality of love which is beyond ego-consciousness.

The ego is always sex-conscious. It is the sex-consciousness of the ego that results in the tension when a person is in the presence of the opposite sex. If the ego is purified of all sex-consciousness, then the person may be in the presence of any person, and there will not be tension. But we are obsessed with sex-consciousness. The ego is interwoven with it, it is so deep-rooted that in the presence of the opposite sex, there is always a kind of attraction.

You like the person, you are attracted towards the person; then your norms and criteria come in and, you make a judgement; you love that person, you are mad after that person, you get obsessed. Contact, attraction, infatuation, obsession - we know all these, but they are not love. You may be obsessed with one person today, and next year you may be obsessed equally with another person. It may be centered around the sex-consciousness; it may be based on some intellectual affinity or the same interests, habits, hobbies, but always the center is the "me."

One should be very clear what love is not. The sex energy has a very significant role to play in one's life. One is not decrying the importance of the sex energy; it has its relevance, but it is not love.

Love is not of the mind or of the body. It is an energy activated in the egoless state of the being. When the mind moves not, a new energy, untapped, unexplored and unnamed,

perhaps the energy of intelligence gets activated and fills the being. The operation of that energy, is not born of thought, of the conditioned mind, of the inheritance. It is not a conditioned energy at all. when the 'I' consciousness goes voluntarily into total abeyance, complete nonaction, then the energy of love comes into being. In love there is only the awareness of the wholeness of life. Everything and every being is seen in the context of that wholeness. Everything and every being is seen as an organic part of the whole, and therefore likes and dislikes, preferences and prejudices, wither away. Only the awareness of the wholeness shines bright, and that awareness moves even at the sensual level in every relationship. Therefore people feel a new light of love in the eyes of the person, in the touch of the person, in the behaviour of the person

In order to awaken to the dimension of love, we must free ourselves from the tiresome prisons we have created in our minds. We must free ourselves from the bondage of fear, from all ego-centered activity. The release of our essential beings from the unnecessary burden, confinement of impulses, compulsions which drag us, pull us, push us, as mechanical creatures, miserable, pathetic in our desperation for love, begins with self-education, observation, awareness of the movement of every fibre of our beings. When we are no longer self-deceived, when the content of our beings is fully exposed, and we see the facts of our unhappy lives, we may be ready to give up the authority of the inheritance, the conditioned patterns of living, to give up the darkness of fear and invite into our lives the brightness of love.

CHAPTER SIX

RELATING TO THE WHOLENESS OF LIFE

We are born to learn and to grow. Learn from whom? Learn from the universe in the midst of which we are born. The reverence for life, the universal cosmic life around ourselves, is absolutely necessary to lay the foundation for the act of learning. We have lost the elegance of that reverence for life. We feel that the universe is created to serve the greeds of mankind, and we use the language of conquering nature.

Science and technology are not enriching the inward spirituality of human life. The research attitudes and methodologies, on which science and technology are based, are not harmonious with reverence for life; they are founded on comparison, acquisition, mastery and therefore do not help humanity live in spiritual attunement to the universe, the wholeness of life.

Life is not for conquering; conquest is not the purpose of life. We are not the masters of life, and the universe is not an object for our subjective pleasure. The universe is not ours for grabbing, acquiring, plundering. The myth that human beings are a superior race to all other non-human species has created a sick and rotten civilization.

The universe is not created to serve the human race, to be dominated and conquered, to be plundered and looted. But we are murderers of nature, looters and plunderers. We have created a sorry affair. We are living in misery and chaos today because the organic relationship with the non-human existence has not been realised, experienced, understood. Our ignorance is taking its toll today in the form of confusion, violence, wars and the starvation of millions in many parts of the world. It is just ignorance and arrogance born of the ignorance.

Through observation, communion we can enter into personal acquaintance with nature, responding to nature, receiving from nature only those things that are vitally necessary. But we must end the madness of exploiting nature to increase

the needs and wants of human life. We must stop murdering the forests, scorching the earth, killing the animals and birds, to have places, palatial buildings and a nauseating variety of consumer goods. All of nature must be looking upon this unfortunate human race as enemy. We have behaved that way.

The understanding of the organic relationship, the inter-relatedness that we have with the rest of the universe will change the quality of our lives. It will change our relationship qualitatively with everything: articles of personal use, nutrition, clothes, houses that we build. But we must understand intimately our oneness with all the beings of the universe. The tree is a being, the plant is a being. We recognise that the bird is a being, but do we realise the water is a being, and the mountain has beingness? All are equal, one is not superior, inferior to the other. We are one of the beings, born to live and share life with all the non-human beings.

Each being in the wholeness is related to every other being. The earth is related with the water, the water with the fire, the fire with the wind, and the wind with the sky. Even the mountains and the oceans are interrelated. All the parts of the body, the inner organs contained in the body are inter-related. Wholeness of life, inter-relatedness of all beings, human and non-human, is not an abstraction, not an idea, but a reality.

When we are aware of the wholeness of life, the inter-relatedness of all beings, not as an intellectual abstraction, but as the substance of our being, then we are receptive to learning from the wholeness, the interrelatedness. When we have dropped the stupidity of arrogance that we as humans are superior, then we are open to learn from the wisdom of the universe.

The universal life is the master and teacher supreme. If we have reverence for life and harmonious relationship with every being, everything that exists in the universe, then the mountains, the oceans, the trees, the animals, the stars, the seasons through which we move, all become our teachers. The attitude of learning from life opens our sensitivity, and the sensitivity blossoms in relationship to flowers, plants, birds, the soil.

You don't trade with life as the master; that you are not, obviously. The manifestations of life are your companions; they are fellow beings, even the stone, the particle of dust. You don't know what quantum of energy the particle contains; you don't know how it is moving. All are beings contributing to the harmony and richness of life as you are contributing, or rather are meant to contribute, to the song of harmony and the dance of harmony that is going on in the cosmos, the cosmic dance of life.

We learn in the relationship with the earth, water, fire, skies. We learn from them and behave with them receptively, gently, decently. We have forgotten the magnificence of decency, and the grace and gentleness that arrives with decency. We learn from the cycle of seasons; from spring, summer, rain, autumn, winter. They have a language of presence. Their presence, their movement is eloquent; they have something to tell us, to give us. We learn how to live with the heat of the summer, the wetness of the rainy season, and the crispness of the winter. We learn from the behaviour of the plant world and the trees; we learn from the behaviour of animals, the waters, the rivers. But instead of learning we are interested in acquiring and grabbing. We go on hunting for teachers when the master and the teacher supreme is everywhere within us and around us.

In order to learn from nature, you must move out of the house, the apartment and go outside, sit under trees or visit a farm or a field, being with the space uncluttered by objects purchased and owned by you, so the sense of "me" and "mine" has no scope to enter into your perception. The perception is freed from the sense of the "me" and the "not-me," from "yours" and the "mine." Spending as much time as possible with nature, with the emptiness of space is vitally necessary to free the consciousness from the sense of ownership, acquisition and from ego-centered activities.

The way we live today, the style of our living obliges us to spend our time inside the house or office with objects, gadgets, machines. We are always surrounded by the four walls of a building and manmade objects, created with a purpose.

We are dealing with objects most of the day. The more advanced a country is scientifically and technologically the more time is spent with machines and gadgets and the less time with human beings and nature. And this we call progress. We surround ourselves with all kinds of machines, use them, live with them, we give in to compulsions that the machines create for us and our sensitivity becomes benumbed.

When you are always surrounded by objects and dealing with objects, you are not aware of the space surrounding you. The so-called emptiness that surrounds you, is a part of your organic being, and you are an organic part of that emptiness, that space. When you open your eyes, you see the objects, move in relation to them, use the space, but you never look at the space, the emptiness. You have no time to look at the skies, the sun, the moon, the trees, the birds.

One says to inquirers who are interested in discovering a different way of life and consciousness, please spend some time in personal acquaintance with nature, with the totality. Observe the behaviour of the mountains, the river, the skies, the sun, the moon, the planets and their interdependence, their action and interaction, their responses to each others' movements. Watch the interrelatedness of the earth and skies and the trees. Become acquainted with the movement of the seasons, the cycle of the seasons and how they affect each of the creatures, the elements of nature. Notice the behaviour of the earth in producing fruits and vegetables, the crops. Become personally aware of how the interrelatedness, the wholeness affects your being, what it does to each layer of your being.

We are not outside the universe, seeing the universe from a distance, but we are right in the midst of it. We belong to this totality. Do we see the grandeur of our inheritance? Do we appreciate the beauty in this unity of life? We are born into the wholeness, and it is our responsibility to live in it, with it. We have to live in cooperation with one another as expressions of the total, indivisible, non-fragmentary, homogeneous wholeness of life. Do we see the implications of this awareness? If we see the interrelatedness as a fact, if we see the unity and the

oneness of life as a fact and not a theory, then we can no longer create enclosures around ourselves; we can no longer allow the center of the "I" the separative, divisive ego, to isolate the being from its true relationship to the totality.

We do not live in awareness of the totality, the inter-relatedness of all life; we live in experience of divisions, boundaries, isolation. We use acquisition of material goods, knowledge and experience to make separations, divisions, between the "mine" and the "not-mine." The ego, and not the totality is the master of our lives, the regulating and governing agency. The ego would not like to give up this mastery. It wants to hold on to its small pleasures, its acquisitions, ambitions, desires, images. It has become callous, because of acquisitive tendencies and ambitions, and is indifferent to everything that cannot be collected. Ego-consciousness has no reverence for life. It would like to conquer, plunder, loot the natural world, and the idea of having reverence for a stone, a blade of grass, drops of water seems absurd to the ego.

When awareness of the oneness of life dawns upon the heart, there is a different quality to the being; there is relaxation of the tight hold of the ego-consciousness. If one sees the divinity, the mysterious divinity of the interrelatedness, the constant action and interaction between everything that exists and lives and moves around us, then obviously that awareness will become the governing agency of our lives, not the ego. The separative, divisive ego, tortured by the urge for securing, enclosing itself in the walls of its own knowledge, experience and conditioning will no longer be at the center. All the knowledge, experience, inheritance will no longer have the authority over behaviour, and this the ego doesn't like. By tradition, by convention, it has been the master; now it will be pushed into a corner.

If the awareness of the oneness, the totality, the unity of life is accepted unconditionally, and the ego does not resist, something beautiful happens to the being. The awareness has a marvelous effect upon a human being. Have you noticed the organic intelligence contained in your bodies? Have you noticed

the movement of the intelligence? Every cell has intelligence. The awareness of the totality and the unity of life acts upon all the cells of your body, on every drop of plasma, on the marrow of your bones. And the organic intelligence expresses itself in all of daily living, daily relationships. The dimension of your life changes. Instead of the separative, devisive, closing in activities of the 'I' - consciousness, there is opening and receptivity. If the body is not too pampered or too tortured, if you have been careful with the body, then the body begins to respond to the care and concern. It has its own intelligence which operates. It tells you what is agreeable to it. It brings you in choiceless relationship with food, with sleep. It tells you what kind of clothes will be comfortable and convenient for it; you form a choiceless relationship with your clothes. All of daily living which was once controlled by the ego, is now guided by the organic intelligence.

There is a potential within each of us to move from the psycho-physical to the non-psychological level. There is a potential to transcend the self-conscious energy. It is the birthright of every human being. The self-conscious energy is the dimension in which we live, but through understanding we are transported into another dimension where the energy is not self-conscious, it is all-conscious. We move from the realm of knowledge to the realm of awareness, from the realm of assertion and effort to the realm of effortless faith.

When there is the awareness of the totality of life, the divine interrelatedness of everything, the psyche is in the realm of non-duality. On the mental level we are in the field of duality. The moment we open our eyes there is the "me" and the "not-me." We divide life, that is how we have been trained to operate. The duality conceived and constructed by the mind is supposed to be the essence of life. We do not look upon this division, this duality, and the tension of duality as something constructed by the mind; we feel that there is duality in life. The myth explodes when we are in the realm of awareness and understanding, and we perceive the non-duality.

Awareness does not divide life into the "I" and the "thou," the "me" and the "non-me." When we live in awareness we

perceive life as a whole, and everything, everyone as organic parts of the whole. When we see that life is one, there can't be any selfishness, there can't be any urge for security, because there is no fear. Our perception changes, and therefore, the quality of our behaviour with other people changes. In reverence for all life, we relate to others with care, concern, gentleness.

The awareness makes the person a harmonious whole within, and what you call love and compassion flow from the life of such a person. The human race has been dreaming of such human beings, who have equipoise within and equilibrium outside, and a society created by such fearless, harmonious members. A society created out of such individuals will be harmonious because society is an extension of our beings. The fibre, the texture of society is woven out of our actions, interactions, relationships. Because there is tension, conflict, disorder within, because our relationships are only efforts at mental level trying to dominate one another or cling to one another, there is misery, chaos and anarchy in society.

But when the mind has no power to dictate, regulate, mold, we are in harmony with ourselves, and in peace and communion with others. And that's what we want, we need desperately, new human beings for a humane society. We must replace the barbaric society we have today with a society in which human beings live in reverence for life, in awareness of the totality, the divinity; and love and compassion for all the creatures, the beings - instead of ego-centered exploitation - become the reality.

CHAPTER SEVEN

AWAKENING FAITH

Life is a vast complexity around us. Everything that exists is intricately, inexplicably interrelated with everything else. When we expose ourselves to the mystery of the totality, when we are aware of the grandeur and magnificence of the wholeness full of life, something significant happens to all the layers of our being. The grandeur, the magnificence of the oneness melts away all our pride of knowledge, scholarship and erudition. The wholeness, having no center and no periphery, soaks our beings, and all the pride of the ego and the acquisitions melts away without our effort. We become aware that the infinity, totality of life is a mystery which words shall never uncover, explain or interpret. Like the mystery of love, the oneness of life cannot be interpreted, cannot be explained.

The intuitive perception of the beautiful wholeness in which we live results in an understanding which is qualitatively different than rationality based on collection of conclusions, theories. Reason is very helpful in analysing, organising, deducing conclusions, but intuitive perception transcends this rationality. When a person is not only a storehouse of organised information, systematised into knowledge, but a person is sensitive and with the sensitivity correlates the expressions of life and arrives at the perception of the whole, then an understanding dawns. This understanding is based not on knowledge but on intuitive perception of the wholeness. The uninhibited, total acceptance of this understanding of the oneness results in faith.

Please do not convert faith into something mysterious. It is simply understanding that life is one, that all expressions of life are related to each other, not in a disorderly, haphazard way, not according to blind whims but with a beauty of intelligent order. When a person has an intuitive perception, a profound understanding of the cosmic intelligence manifest in the intricate interrelatedness of all beings, then the person relaxes in the understanding, and humility fills the being. If there is no resistance, no fear of the understanding, then faith awakens.

If we have the grace of simplicity, we can relax into faith effortlessly, but, unfortunately we are complicated beings who like to spin webs of confusion, resistance, subjective responses to all of our interactions with the divine. We are much more comfortable with the complications of intellectual belief, credulity, the movement of motives than we are with the pure innocent simplicity of faith.

In some field or another we suffer from credulity, that is, for a variety of reasons, we are ready to believe something without firsthand investigation, experiencing verification. As soon as we come across some person or teachings that appeal to the emotions, we feel attracted, and the attraction leads to credulity, belief. We would not like to look deeply into the attraction; we would rather have the emotional satisfaction, the security, the intoxication which the belief offers. The attraction, the belief, takes a firm hold in the ego, and there it is concealed from view, free from undesirable analysis.

Credulity is not faith, because credulity, easiness to believe is anti-rational. Faith transcends reason and rationality, but it is not against reason. Beliefs wither away when reason begins to analyse them, test them scientifically. But we must test our beliefs; we are living in an era of science, and the scientific approach has to apply to our inner life and inner investigations, examinations. We are no longer willing to accept what has been written and handed down to us through traditions. We have seen what accepting the authority of all these beliefs, theories has done to the quality of our collective living. We must have seen that acceptance of traditions, teachings, ideologies without personal verification will lead us further into darkness, despair, away from freedom.

Faith results from intuitive perception, personal understanding, not from the blind acceptance, the credulity of belief. Faith comes into being when we have investigated, observed, seen and understood that we are not exposed to the whims of some blind force, but we are related to a universal intelligence, a sensitivity that exists outside and inside of us. We see that the intelligent force exists throughout all of the totality, and that it is far vaster, much more subtle, more all-encompassing than our rational

minds can comprehend. When we see that we cannot reach out to the universal intelligence with our egocentric, conditioned minds, what do we do? Either we resist our understanding or we relax in the humility that all of our physical and psychological efforts, all the movements of the mind with its enormous inheritance of conditionings, knowledge, experience of the human race, is irrelevant for communing with the cosmic intelligence.

Faith brings about a total relaxation, and in this relaxation you are a whole person. When you were thinking, feeling or willing, you were moving fragmentarily, partially, and, therefore, energy was divided. But in relaxation of ego-consciousness, in abeyance of the mind, there is no division in the energy, no fragmentation whatsoever. Here in the state of the wholeness of the being, the flame of reaction-free alertness, attentiveness burns bright. The flame is not directed to any specific object, subject; it creates no subject-object division and no tension of fragmentation. The flame has no motivation, exclusive direction for movement.

Movement for us requires a motivation, a direction and a point of destination. Whether the movement is physical or psychological, we expect it to go somewhere. Our ideas of movement or motion are limited to the framework of time and space. We expect motion to be from "here" to "there" from "now" to "then." We are thoroughly unfamiliar with movement which has no motive and no direction.

The alert sensitivity that comes with relaxation into faith is beyond time and space; these are left behind because they were created by the mind. The moment the mind ceases to move, the whole framework that has been constructed as the basis of time and space is no longer there; there is no more time and space. One is then intimately immersed in the mystery of life which defies capture in concepts.

As soon as the ego-consciousness relaxes into nonaction, goes into abeyance, all the concepts stop moving. They are not destroyed, but are irrelevant to the exploration of other dimensions of consciousness. When the conditioned energies stop moving, when the brain with its framework of concepts,

experiences, patterns of behaviour relaxes into nonaction, a qualitatively different energy than the energy of the cerebral organ gets activated. The energy is of the wholeness and not of a fragment. This energy born of the wholeness of our beings has no content except the emptiness of space. It is unconditioned, it is unlimited. As air and also the energy of prana can move inward and outward through the body, the energy contained in the cosmos moves in and out of your body, mind. There is no more division of the inner and the outer that existed on the physical, psychological levels. I'm trying to put into words the substance of the unconditioned dimension of silence, but because the substance of silence is emptiness, all words fail. Words are poor in any language, they serve as indicators but they are not the thing themselves.

What happens to the brain cells, how the brain cells get activated in the healing wholeness of silence is something I will not be able to express in scientific terminology, but it is something I have seen. In the silence, the inner space, parts of the brain having nothing to do with memory get activated. That is the best I can communicate.

The abundant energy, the unlimited vigor and vitality, saturates and permeates your whole body, mind, brain. You are born anew of the womb, a fresh person whose psyche has no center, even in the body, whose consciousness can perceive without dividing life into the "me" and the "not-me."

At best, movement of such a person is like the movement of ripples on the breast of waters. The ripple contains water; the water is not separate from and independent of the ocean, but the shape of the ripple creates an illusion as if the waters are separate from the ocean. The individuality of such a person is like a wave on the breast of the ocean. It is always connected with the ocean; it is born of the ocean, moves with and in the ocean and subsides into the ocean. The wholeness in the form of an individual is like a ripple, a wave on and with the wholeness of the cosmos.

When we relax in awareness of the oneness of life, we do not expect anything to happen because expectations will be

based on the past. But at a subtle level we may want the past to continue through the present in some qualified or modified form and manifest itself. This is not relaxation. There is the tension of trying to relax while we suffer from chronic expectation about the future, about the unknown. If subconsciously we are calculating, measuring, hoping for something, then there is no relaxation; there is only effort to retain the past while exploring the unknown.

Relaxation in faith is not only physical, muscular, neurological relaxation; it goes much deeper in the psyche. At a profound level one understands when effort is required, and when it is not required. On the physical and psychological levels one requires effort of the body, the mind, the brain to take care of daily living and one has to learn how to make these efforts comfortably, precisely. But in the relaxation of faith, effort has no relevance; it only continues the conditioned movement of the mind and nothing new is permitted to happen. One says: "I can't make any effort now; whatever is to happen will happen through the movement of the universal intelligence." So gracefully one opens all the doors and windows of the being and frees oneself of all calculations and expectations. Then the cosmic intelligence has an opportunity to operate upon the whole being.

Our efforts to interpret the unknowable, the unknown in any terms at all, in any form of verbalisation will create a screen of conditionings and prevent communion. But as products of civilisation and culture, we have glorified efforts. We are not acquainted with this dimension of being in which we are relaxed in faith and have no expectations, no prescriptions about what will happen. We must know in advance what the universal intelligence is going to do, how it is going to shape each of our lives. We dislike having some force operating upon us without knowing logically, methodically what it is going to do. We are afraid of being vulnerable, even the word "vulnerability" stimulates fear. We imagine danger unknown or unknowable to us, and as much as we would like the freshness of new energy to emerge in our lives, we would like to be in control.

Our lives are testaments to our lack of faith, our unwillingness to allow the grace of the unknowable to descend in our lives. We see the movement of the universe around us, and we deduce elaborate theories or compose beautiful hymns or poems. But we do not arrive at the intuitive perception that a dynamic, intelligent force is operating all the time on everything that exists, and it is bound to operate in us as well. Our tendencies to isolations, separatedness, divisiveness prevent us from recognising fully that we are intimately related to all expressions of the universe and from becoming aware at a profound level that we cannot dictate to the cosmic force of intelligence.

In so many subtle ways we try to maintain mastery. We try to formulate schedules, time-tables, images of how the divine should manifest itself in our lives. Even as spiritual inquiries dedicated to the discovery of truth, we have subconscious desires, expectations, of how cosmic intelligence will operate upon us. We avoid in many clever ways becoming fully vulnerable. Yet vulnerability to the cosmic force of intelligence is its own security. Because the cosmic force is intelligent and not blind, chaotic, there is beauty, grace in allowing it to operate on every fibre of our beings.

If we can relax in faith, we are born into a new dimension of life where all the inheritance of knowledge, experience, all the conditioned movements of the past become irrelevant and go into abeyance. The inheritance of the conditioned mind doesn't get destroyed; it simply becomes irrelevant. As the toys with which we played in childhood become irrelevant in youth or adulthood, the past becomes irrelevant when we find ourselves on the frontiers of the unknown. The toys like the conditionings are not meaningless; they simply have lost relevance to the movement of life in us, and they no longer give the same pleasure. Yet they are real, they are there. Intellectually, psychologically we don't have to give them up or renounce them; they are simply irrelevant to the context, the focus of our present life.

I do not know what there is to renounce in life, and what there is to attain and acquire. In reality we are organically related to all of life; we are merged into the oneness. When we have

an intuitive perception of the wholeness, the totality, the absolute reality, we easily renounce our false perceptions of the relative reality. We have not grown up or lost anything. We have precisely seen the true as the true and the false as the false.

When we have an intuitive perception of the oneness of life, there is no need for renunciation of anything. We simply relax in faith and allow the cosmic force of intelligence to operate on our beings. If the cosmic intelligence causes the growth in the seed that you plant deep down in the earth, helping it to sprout; if it helps the wood to contain fire in it; If it helps the waters to break the hardest rock in a mountain, the intelligence force contained in the universe can also cause the transcendence of the known in human beings. But we must have the fearlessness, humility, faith to allow mutation to happen. As we enter the transrational transpsychological words of silence, let it not be in the arrogance of superiority, but in the vulnerability, the relaxation of faith.

CHAPTER EIGHT

LEARNING FROM ALONENESS AND DEATH

An inquirer who is interested in a personal discovery of dimensions of consciousness beyond the known will find essential, developing awareness of the presence of death and personally exploring aloneness. This education lays the foundation, ensures that the person will have no fear, no resistance to entering the dimension of silence, the state of meditation. As long as there is psychological resistance to the presence of death and the fact of dying through which everyone of us has to pass, there will be a fear of aloneness, and there will be fear of silence. As long as there is the fear of being unconditionally and absolutely alone, there will be resistance to allowing the mind to go into nonaction, to go into abeyance.

Death is ever with us. As we move in society, watch and observe the movement in nature, we come across the phenomenon of individuals getting born, growing, decaying and dying; trees, birds, animals, human beings, all are born, grow, decay and die. Manifestations of a form has a beginning, it has a continuity in psychological time and it shows symptoms of decay and deterioration. These are built into the biological organism and a day comes, a moment comes when the organism is rendered incapable of further functioning, and we call it death.

Have you watched your own growth, have you watched and observed how every hour or perhaps every day, thousands of cells die in the body and are created anew? That's how we grow from childhood into youth and from youth into adulthood and from adulthood into old age. Dying takes place every minute. Really speaking life is a dance of birth and death intertwined in growth and decay. It's very simple fact. Dying is not something strange, it is taking place here and now. You are watching your own dying every hour, every minute, every day. Though you like to ignore the presence of death and imagine that you are deathless, you are confronted with the phenomenon of dying every minute.

We see death happening around, yet there is a resistance to the fact of dying and death as far as we ourselves are concerned. Psychologically there is a resistance to death which snaps away all our connections with the world around us. It snaps away our connection with whatever we have earned, owned, possessed and obliges each of us to depart alone.

In the dimension of silence as in death, we are completely denuded of all we've acquired and possessed. The content of silence is emptiness; the mental movement goes into abeyance and the world construct based on concepts of time and space disappears. The measurement scale on which the world was constructed by us disappears instantaneously, and we are transported into a dimension where there are no forms, no objects, no ideas, no symbols, no concepts. Each of us is entirely alone with the unconditioned energy within and around the being.

If in the deep recesses of mind there is a resistance to be alone, obviously the subconscious will prevent the abeyance of the mind and the mental movement by some trick or other. So you have to question yourself whether you have seen, observed death. Have you seen that dying is organically related to the mystery of totality, have you accepted that you will drop dead someday, somewhere, in some way, alone? Nobody is going to accompany you, when you enact the last role in this whole drama of life, the role of dying. So it's no use sitting down in silence for hours or indulging in wishful thinking or creating a world of make-believe around yourself, if inwardly there is a fear of aloneness and dying. If there is no resistance to death and dying, if there is inward willingness, resistance-free awareness, which has no inhibition of any manner whatsoever, then you begin to educate yourself.

You educate yourself to live in aloneness at the physical level and at the verbal level. You begin the education of the senses. The senses have to be educated, they have to learn to be in solitude, away from the lure of the process of becoming which tempt you every moment, attract you towards them and entrap you ultimately.

In self-education you begin by educating yourself on the physical level. Out of the twelve months you spend some months quite alone, not for going into isolation but for the purpose of education. You spend some time where no one belongs to you and you belong to no one. But you may not like that. You may crave for belonging to someone, to some community, to some organisation, to some ashram, to some guru, if not to the husband, the wife, the friend, the child. Find out if you are afraid of freedom, if you are used to relationships that restrict freedom. Discover for yourself if you must have relationships or experiences into which you can escape from yourself and from the present. Explore whether you are psychologically attached to having people living around you and providing a network of activity in which you find security. You must go slowly, step-by-step in examining the facts of your life. And then decide if aloneness even for a few months or a few weeks is bearable.

So you move into a place or a situation where there is no network of escapes from yourself, no network of the process of becoming, where you can ride upon your wishes, ambitions and run away from the center of your being. Aloneness becomes difficult to live and go through because while you are alone the total human past contained in you the patterns of reactions, judgements, conclusions, theories of your own or of others living or dead—lose relevance. There is nothing to react to, nothing to compare, evaluate, nothing to accept or to reject. The austerity of aloneness may frighten you, scare you. If this happens at the physical level, it is bound to happen at the psychological level. Then the subconscious, without your knowing, will try to retain the company of the thought movement, words that construct the thoughts, ideas and their meanings, and the sounds that are stimulated. When the movement of thought is stimulated, there will be tension in the neurological system. So even though you are alone, there will be no peace.

Going into retreat provides an opportunity to unlearn the fears, distorted views about aloneness and death. Society has taught you to be afraid of death, to consider aloneness as something unnatural, undesirable. Now in the quietness of retreat

you may discover that joy, bliss, not fear, is the nature of life.

The period of going into retreat is necessary to educate the senses not to run constantly towards objects, and to educate the mind not to indulge in memories of the past, or dreams of the future. You need a period of time in which you have no responsibility, no commitments, no claims on you from society, country, or family. Why? Because for untold centuries you have been told that the purpose of life is to become something different than that you are, to become someone, something important. Through the power of money, knowledge, experiences you have been influenced to acquire, become, excel. You have been compared, evaluated, and given various labels that you believe to be true. As soon as you continue in society, all of the becoming, acquiring, comparing is activated, and there is no scope for looking at yourself in freedom and discovering the quality of your inner life.

In the aloneness you observe what is happening to yourself. As you observe the outside world from the study of objective science or natural sciences, you now turn inwards. In the aloneness you are not idle, but you are watching, observing and examining what happens in the absence of the process of becoming. When all the network of limitations and conditionings are brushed aside what remains with you in that aloneness? What are you when you are not busy becoming, acquiring, owning but living? In the same way you examine the quality of life if you are not exposed to the verbalisation by others and you do not indulge in verbalisation yourself. In the quiet, you examine what is happening to yourself inwardly. You see what happens to the nerves, to the chemistry of the body, what happens to the perception, to the quality of the perception.

Abstaining from verbalisation is not a negative thing, it is giving yourself the opportunity to be free of the process of verbalisation, to be free of the action and interaction of the sound waves to which you are constantly exposed in daily living. It is something fantastic when words and verbosity recede into sound from which they were created, and the sound merges itself into silence. It is a dimension of life. It is not a

vacuum, emptiness or void into which you get lost, but rather you find yourself.

Aloneness implies freedom from the process of verbalisation. As long as you are chattering with yourself inwardly, even though you are not verbalising audibly, you are not alone, you are wandering in the past with words and the pictures the words create as companions. You wander into the past, indulge in daydreaming, and try to create the future.

While in this aloneness the feeling of loneliness may grip you. If you feel starved in the absence of company, in the absence of verbalisation, if the feeling of starvation grips the psyche and frightens it, you have to probe into the feeling of loneliness. Why is it that you feel lonely? Because after all you may live in the midst of hundreds of people yet inwardly you are always alone. You may be engaged in all the hectic activities of daily living: exchange of material goods, participation in sensual pleasures, involvement in caring for the family, but psychologically you are alone with the totality of life. You have not been educated to appreciate aloneness, and therefore, you are in a hurry to cling to objects or human beings, to become addicted to some ideology, theory, celebrity, or to become emotionally attached to situations or persons.

The addiction to objects concepts, persons, situations is natural, because we have been addicted for generations. We don't know any other way of functioning. That is why we must begin as learners to educate ourselves for another way of living free from the bondage, the addictions, the attachments.

The mind addicted to words, symbols, verbalisation is comfortable only when exposed to the chattering of another person or its own chattering. If the mind is removed from the company of people, it begins to talk to itself. And soon, tired of even this inward chatter, becomes bored and starts to complain.

The mind when alone, is starved of its addiction to verbalisation; it begins a boredom reaction which causes the person to run to someone for company or to seek some other form of verbal distraction. Getting bored is a reaction of the "I" consciousness, the conditioned ego. Boredom has no reality, it is

only a reaction of the mind, but we pay so much importance to this reaction, we are unable to free ourselves from the addition to verbalisation, from the inward or outward chatter that goes on incessantly.

The reactions of the ego, the mind are treated as problems, but if they are treated as challenges, then you can meet the challenges. If you are alone, and the mind reacts: "Oh, I feel lonely," don't run away to some distraction. If you feel lonely, eat your loneliness and drink your loneliness, digest the loneliness thoroughly. If you run away, escape, you are giving too much importance to the reactions of the ego. If you believe the reactions of the mind to have physical reality, symptoms of the mind's reactions may appear on the physical level. You may get headaches and aches in various parts of the body. All this comes from identifying with the "I" consciousness and accepting its reactions, movements as reality, the only reality.

The reactions of the mind are understandable but if you get carried away by those reactions then learning comes to an end, investigation and exploration come to an end. If the fear of aloneness is too acute and too deep, it is better to turn back from the path of meditation, from the path of self-education and the exploration of the new. The new will be new, it can't be compared with the old. The new dimension will bring its own way of living, but with fear hidden and concealed in the subconscious it is not desirable that you proceed further. For education you give yourself a chance. You create an opportunity, and if you find you cannot stand and bare the austerity of solitude and silence or the departure from the orbit of thought, time and space, you go back and live comfortably the way the world is living. Or you follow other paths that enrich, strengthen the mind, develop the mental powers, give you an opportunity to get new experiences at the sensory and nonsensory level. You must find out what you really want to do.

If you are not overwhelmed by fear and boredom, and if you have the urge to explore new dimensions of consciousness, then you stick it out. The mind may react, it may say, "I am afraid," and it cries and you let it cry. Never suppress the reactions because suppression and repression of reactions will take

their toll later on. Every suppression, repression results in a scratch on the psyche. So you watch the reactions, you let the mind cry, let the mind grumble, let the 'I' consciousness complain, "Why have you brought me to this situation?" The complaints, the tears, the misery, the suffering are also a part of life. So you observe. The observation does not imply giving in to it or surrendering to it, it implies a nonreactional attentiveness. So you don't condemn yourself, "Oh this is my weakness." It is not a personal weakness, it is the weakness of the human mind. Remember that you have been brought up to be addicted to objects, to be dependent on individuals, to identify yourselves with ideologies. You notice the reactions without condemnation, without self-pity. And if the urge to examine and explore is deep, intense and vital enough then you stick it out, you don't run away.

There will be a period of feeling weak physically because the resistance in the mind affects the body. You feel miserable, you feel sick, you feel depressed, all these are the tricks, reactions of the mind, affecting the body in psychosomatic symptoms. Perhaps if you relax in those moments of weakness, instead of becoming stiff and fighting the weakness or suppressing or repressing it, if you just watch the reactions, then the moments of weakness disappear. Life is not all smiles and all smoothness, all favourable circumstances.

An inquirer who is psychologically out to examine and explore new dimensions, one who is willing to leave behind the classical, organised, standardized paths of inquiry, and is willing to allow the whole 'I' consciousness to go into abeyance, is bound to come across all such odds inwardly, as one comes across odds and many unpleasant things when one is in a foreign country, not used to the lifestyle. One feels lost because there is no blueprint for how to relate to the people, the surroundings. One has to give oneself some time to absorb the shock of the difference.

If you force the system, instead of giving it time to absorb and tune into the new, you will be unfair to the system, out of fear you will run away from it. Then the opportunity of

discovering something new, discovering the meaning of life personally is lost. Please do see this.

By living in the physical and psychological aloneness you educate your biological organism, you educate the conditioned mind. In solitude many things are unlearned and many things are learned. I have gone into all these details because many an inquirer launches into observation, comes to the frontiers of the unknown and gets stuck there. On the frontiers of the unknown many an inquirer stands put; the person doesn't like to go back to the realm of the conditioned mind and is afraid to let go of the 'I' consciousness and identification with the ego. The inquirer neither plunges into the unknown nor goes back to the known; he or she is suspended in between. That should not be the case with anyone of us, that is why I am mentioning laying the right foundation and if one accepts the fact of death - eliminates all the inhibitions and resistances to death and dying—then living in aloneness and solitude would just be fun, no problem.

Death need not be equated with destruction, solitude is not something negative, lifeless. I wish I would put into words, convey to you through words that solitude, silence nonaction is a very positive and tremendously creative state. It has its own energy that is qualitatively different from the energy of ego conscious movement. We'll have to learn from nonmotion, silence, solitude and the energies contained in them.

Meditation, exploration into silence is a psychic adventure. As physically you go out of your house and go to the forest and mountains, you move out of the psychological house, psychological nest. You may have to go back to it and use, play with the cultural toys of symbols and concepts. You will not be able to relate and live in society without them. But your home is no longer in the psychological house. You cannot be in the security of the house and walk into the deep forest, exposed to the newness of the forest. After all it is an adventure; your time in solitude, your period of self-education prepares you to be an adventurer into the unknown.

CHAPTER NINE

EXPLORING THE DIMENSION OF SILENCE

The divinity is not something that can be identified and experienced on the sensual level, on the mental level. What can happen is that the individualised, conditioned energy voluntarily, gracefully, willingly without any inhibition of fear goes into non-action. The conditioned mind understands its limitations, goes back to the center and relaxes in its beingness without any desire to become, to acquire. When the conditioned mind relaxes, there is silence.

The conditioned mind goes into non-action in profound sleep. The mind is not conscious, if one is not dreaming all the time, the mind is in abeyance. There is an awareness in profound sleep, but no movement of the conditioned mind. There is an energy independent of the conditioned energy. We move into the realm of the unconditioned energy in profound sleep.

In profound sleep the ego does not function, yet we do not die; the time-space framework that the mind has constructed ceases, yet we are not afraid. We have gone into a different dimension of consciousness easily, peacefully, and we emerge refreshed totally. The brain, the nerves, the chemistry are all rested and refreshed, the toxins of exhaustion are washed out of the system, and the wear and tear on the body is healed at least to some extent.

Have you watched how the feeling of time in dreams is different than the feeling of time while you are awake? You may have a dream that lasts ten minutes by your watch, but in those ten minutes in dream consciousness you have been through two days and many lands. The relation to time and space in dream consciousness is quite different than in waking consciousness. When there are no dreams and you are in profound sleep, the concepts of time-space and the whole world view based on them disappear completely. Profound sleep is evidence

that there is a different dimension of consciousness, timeless and spaceless, that is contained in us.

What will happen if time comes to a standstill, the realm of space disappears, and you are neither sleeping nor dreaming but you are awake? Meditation is a state of being where there are no dreams, no sleep, and yet time and space have disappeared completely as the framework of the consciousness. In the new dimension are untapped, unconditioned, unknown energies. How many? We do not know. We are acquainted with a very few energies and their patterns of operation, which we have tapped, explored and used for our purposes. But That's not all there is to life.

To explore other dimensions of consciousness you sit down quietly to be with yourself in silence. You have understood, the mind has understood that it must relax into abeyance. If the mind while you are sitting is waiting for something to happen that it can acquire, possess, enjoy, then there is no silence because the tension of waiting is there. If the ego goes into a corner of consciousness expecting something interesting to happen you are not with the content of silence which is emptiness.

As people enact roles in a drama, we enact the role of withdrawing into silence, but in a clandestine way we deceive our own intelligence by waiting patiently or impatiently for something to happen. Well something may happen. We may have all sorts of strange experiences, which perhaps may be satisfying to the mind. These experiences may bring about changes in the quality of the mind, but it is all on the mental level, the total being does not grow.

Let us not deceive ourselves. If we are in a hurry to change and not anxious to grow, if you are impatient to have experiences, you may do so, but changes, experiences do not imply growth. Growth is something that takes place in the totality of your being, not in a part of a fragment.

The ego cannot bring about a transformation, the mind cannot achieve liberation. But when the ego-consciousness relaxes into non-action, and there is silence, the unconditional,

universal energy operates on the being, fills the being with an entirely new vigor and vitality, and functions through it.

If the mind is willing to give up expectations, desires for experiences, then you spend some time sitting in silence. How do you sit? You sit down comfortably in a yogic posture, the spinal cord and head erect, breathing properly, not strenuously but just easily, gracefully, breathing deeply. When you sit down with your spine erect and your body related to the earth, then you begin to notice that parts of your body are stiff and rigid. You want to sit quietly, and the experiment in sitting has taught you a lesson. Life is the master and to the willing, the beloved life begins to teach gently, competently and effectively. So it has taught you that the body is not in good shape, that there are points of rigidity. You begin to treat the body yourself, giving it proper exercises, proper food. If you take a diet that is spice-free and especially salt-free, then the stiffness and rigidity in the joints disappears completely. Not that eating spices is unholy, but with a spice-free and salt-free diet, there will be less fermentation, less toxins in the body, and flow of blood, movement of breath, and the psychical movement will take place more freely.

You want the body to sit down quietly, to cooperate without complaints, but that takes time. Educating the body to sit properly, stand properly, walk properly is a science and an art. This education of the body takes time. You needn't be discouraged if the first time you sit in silence in a yogic posture, the body complains. Find out why the body complains, enter into a more cooperative relationship with the body and gently work through the rigidity, stiffness.

How long should you be able to sit in relaxed alertness? At least for forty-five minutes. The body should not be stiff, rigid or passive, lethargic, sluggish but every fibre should be alert, tingling with freshness and alert sensitivity.

Sitting quietly you then close your eyes. Why is it suggested to close your eyes? Because you have not learned to keep your eyes open and yet not see anything. Normally your gaze travels through space and feels comfortable when it

reaches an object, perceives and registers the object. As soon as the object is registered and recorded, the mind reacts to it with associations of ideas and emotions and attentiveness is polluted by a terrifically quick process of reactions. In a fraction of a second this is what happens when the eyes are open.

It is possible to look at space, to have the eyes open and yet be with the emptiness of space. It is within human capability to have thousands of objects around you and look into space without registering a single object, but you have not been to be with space, to have the eyes open and yet be with the emptiness of space. Until such time as you can have your eyes open without registering anything it is suggested to keep the eyes closed, as an aid to the investigation.

You sit in silence in a quiet place where no sounds are addressed to you. The world has no claims on you for a period of time. Civically you are dead for that time or you won't be able to relax. A part of your mind will be tense with the idea that there may be a telephone call, somebody may make a social call, or in some other way you may be required. When there is subconscious tension, you won't be able to relax into the dimension of silence. You won't make contact with the dimension of silence, because you are divided between the known and the unknown. Find a time, a place, where you have full assurance that the demands of being a member of society, a member of a family, will not intrude on your quiet interlude.

Once you have entered silence, what do you do? You do nothing. You are now entering into a realm of non-doing, non-experiencing, non-reacting, non-knowing. You are now really with yourself. you are going home.

When your eyes are closed, you notice the movement of breath going in and coming out. You feel on the nostrils, in the chest the inhaling and exhaling of breath which perhaps you have not noticed before. Though this movement of breath takes place all the time, you may not have been interested in becoming aware of it. You begin to notice many sounds in the body. These sounds do not require any interpretation; therefore the past, the conditioned mind doesn't come into play. You

just notice the sounds, you don't create a problem out of that noticing. If you try to interpret the sounds, or perhaps the lights you see, you will go back to the conditioned mind and the conventional meaning attached to the sounds and lights.

The conditioned mind may be very keen to know what is happening in the sphere of the unknown, but how is it going to know? The ego is going to refer to the past, refer to concepts from the past, and feel gratified, "Yes, this is happening to me." The trap of the mind is always interpreting the new in terms of the old. If you do not fall a victim to that trap, then the sounds and lights, uninterpreted, unevaluated, uncomparing are noticed for sometime and after a while observed no more. The mind has not created the sounds, lights; they have their own movement. When you have become familiar with the movement of sounds, lights within the body, when you are no more conscious of them, you go to a different level of your being.

You now begin to notice the movement of thought. The whole human past, experience, knowledge comes up. Where is it and why does it come up? It comes up because it is a substance of your being. The past is engraved in you. The whole human thought is incorporated in your skin, bones, plasma and it has its own momentum.

The verbal level is a vast level contained in you. It is contained in you in the form of vibrations - thoughts and emotions which have vibrational existence. You have seen the outer, the so-called gross body, but you have never seen the inner body, the vibrational thought body. But now when you are quiet, in the mirror of quietness, in the dimension of observation, you see your inner body. You may notice that the subtler inner body has far more power than the grosser outer body.

The past, moving in the form of thought is exposed in your alert sensitivity. You look at the thoughts, as you listened to the sounds, innocently without reacting. You notice the thoughts as you look at the clouds of an evening sky, as you look at the birds on wing. You won't be able to look at the thoughts with non-reactional attentiveness if you feel this is my thought, my emotion, my sensual urge. If the movement of

"myness" is there, the ego will see the movement of the lust, the anger, the violence, which is part of the movement of the total human past in us and become hurt or depressed.

If you have investigated previously, if you see as a fact, that the mind is the product of the collected, organised concepts of society - religious, political, ethical, economic - fed into you and contained in you, then the sense of "myness" disappears completely. But if this recognition is only an idea, then with every perception there will be excitement over impressions judged as good and depression over impressions judged bad.

You cannot decide to explore other dimensions of consciousness and yet keep the authority of the past, keep the criteria of society. You cannot be in silence and judge what comes up using the criteria of the past, alternately getting depressed or excited. This is not investigation. You are spending time alone with yourself, but you are still on the verbal level. If you want to continue the voyage into the unknown, you take no action tethered to the past. You observe the movement of the thoughts like the movement of your breathing in and out, without comparison or judgement. The conditionings of the whole human race move within you as forms moving through space, but they don't interfere, they are no more the governing agents of your life. The mind which before would make you dance to its own tune, would give orders to your senses for gratifying its feelings, urges, greeds, loses its tyranny, and you notice that the whole vibrational thought structure loses its grip on you.

When the thought structure loses its grip, you are no more there. Previously, you were there as an observer, you sat before the mirror and observed the movements of the body, of the mind, but now you enter into a different dimension. The observing comes to an end, and there is the dimension of silence, uncluttered by any movement at all. You are then merged, immersed in the inner space of emptiness. From the orbit of conditioned, channelised energies and their ways of operation, you now move into your own being. You are immersed in consciousness where nothing has ever been conditioned.

just notice the sounds, you don't create a problem out of that noticing. If you try to interpret the sounds, or perhaps the lights you see, you will go back to the conditioned mind and the conventional meaning attached to the sounds and lights.

The conditioned mind may be very keen to know what is happening in the sphere of the unknown, but how is it going to know? The ego is going to refer to the past, refer to concepts from the past, and feel gratified, "Yes, this is happening to me." The trap of the mind is always interpreting the new in terms of the old. If you do not fall a victim to that trap, then the sounds and lights, uninterpreted, unevaluated, uncomparing are noticed for sometime and after a while observed no more. The mind has not created the sounds, lights; they have their own movement. When you have become familiar with the movement of sounds, lights within the body, when you are no more conscious of them, you go to a different level of your being.

You now begin to notice the movement of thought. The whole human past, experience, knowledge comes up. Where is it and why does it come up? It comes up because it is a substance of your being. The past is engraved in you. The whole human thought is incorporated in your skin, bones, plasma and it has its own momentum.

The verbal level is a vast level contained in you. It is contained in you in the form of vibrations - thoughts and emotions which have vibrational existence. You have seen the outer, the so-called gross body, but you have never seen the inner body, the vibrational thought body. But now when you are quiet, in the mirror of quietness, in the dimension of observation, you see your inner body. You may notice that the subtler inner body has far more power than the grosser outer body.

The past, moving in the form of thought is exposed in your alert sensitivity. You look at the thoughts, as you listened to the sounds, innocently without reacting. You notice the thoughts as you look at the clouds of an evening sky, as you look at the birds on wing. You won't be able to look at the thoughts with non-reactional attentiveness if you feel this is my thought, my emotion, my sensual urge. If the movement of

"myness" is there, the ego will see the movement of the lust, the anger, the violence, which is part of the movement of the total human past in us and become hurt or depressed.

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There is no more "there" or "you." There is only the totality of being free from all pressure, tension of a thought, memory, reaction. The cessation of all identifications opens up vistas of silence.

If all the mystery and meaning of life is to uncover itself unto us, it takes place in the innocent communion with silence, when the ego does not assert, when the acquisitive tendency is no more there.

But who has the time! Either we are still under the impression that the mental movement or some trick of mind will give us the experience of the divine, or we want to have the experience transmitted through 'Shaktipaata.' We are much more after experiencing the god or the divine than growing totally. For all we know God cannot be experienced. The divine is the totality which can be understood but not experienced. Totality can be felt, not seen with the physical eyes. The mortal eyes cannot even see the totality of the oceans; they are limited. God cannot be experienced physically or psychologically; the divinity is beyond all that. So if we free ourselves from all these stupid and silly ideas of realising God, meeting God, experiencing God, then we will have the fearlessness to go to the frontiers of verbalisation and take a leap into the inner space of silence.

CHAPTER TEN

CREATING A NEW SOCIETY

Scientists have helped us to explore the energies contained in the movement part of our life; they have probed the motion and energy in a drop of water, in the breeze, in the fire, the sun. And they are trying to utilise these energies for making our life more comfortable. I have nothing against comfort; it is a very decent thing. But luxury is an ugly thing. Why do I say luxury is an ugly thing? Because there are millions and millions starving on this planet; how can we ever think of living in luxury? The cultural distortions and perversions get born of the starvation, the anger. Discontent is stimulated by the starving people who witness others living in luxury. There shall never, never be peace on this planet unless the starving millions are provided with means of production and enabled to live on a humane level decently, comfortably. All the politicians and all religious heads can get together but they are not going to reach anywhere, there shall be no moral values as the basis of human relationships as long as there is starvation. The flame of hunger consumes all the values and turns them to ashes.

The desire to acquire, collect, possess beyond the level of decent, comfortable living is unholy. The impulse to glorify the outer life while leaving the inner life polluted with lust, anger, greed is ugly. These desires and impulses are the content of our lives, and yet we are surprised that there is so much misery, suffering, unrest in each of our lives, in the world we have created.

We crave for love, understanding, peace, freedom, but society does not educate us for any of these; instead it teaches men to be competitive, violent, compulsive slaves living with the accepted norms, values, criteria fed into us as part of our heritage. Society educates us to continue the movement of the past, to enact roles in the drama of life according to established patterns prescribed by the inheritance of conditionings. We have lost the sensitivity, the joy in relating to the vast universe, the

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oneness with all its intricate fascinating manifestations, with all its dimensions of energy, consciousness yet unexplored.

We educate young members of society to store into memory the symbols, concepts, ideas, theories which have been developed, organised, systematised by society, but we do not educate the children to be receptive to the beautiful mysteries, to be in personal acquaintance with the marvelous interrelatedness, wholeness into which each is born. We do not teach the children to have reverence for the inner being, the divinity within. We do not encourage children to understand the movement of mind; we do not help them to use the mind appropriately, precisely, scientifically, and recognise its limitations.

No one educates the child to relate to silence, which is free of all conditioned concepts. No school introduces the child to the silence out of which sound is born, or helps the child relate to sound, the primary cause of creation, or to the sound waves contained in the words—just for the fun of it. No teacher educates a child to discover the beauty and grandeur of the sound, sound waves, or silence. Instead society educates the child to repeat words, sentences which are nearly dead because the words are cut away from the sound and the source of sound which is silence.

It must be very clear to us now that the world as we have created it, and the world we pass on to children through education, does not satisfy the deep, inner needs of human beings who are expressions of the divine. The modern world mad after science and technology, has provided comforts, conveniences, has displayed amazing feats of scientific capability, has created a world family by linking all countries in networks of communication, travel, but it has not lessened the greediness, violence, barbarianism, destructiveness in the human psyche.

The fibre, texture of our present structures of society is deteriorating, but where will we look to create a new society? If we look to the past, accept the authority of the past with all its values, norms, structures of knowledge, we'll repeat endlessly essentially the same mistakes, perhaps in a more sophisticated, technologically refined form. As long as we build society

on the basis of the conditioned mind, it will have the same limitations of divisiveness, acquisitive tendencies personal ambitions, competitiveness, and will have the same fragmentary quality.

We must accept at a deep level that we do not know how to live, how to be at peace with ourselves and others, how to create a humane society worthy of the name. We must begin with the humility, the innocence of non-knowing, leaving behind the arrogance, sense of superiority of knowing, possessing; after all, to whom can we feel superior considering the misery, chaos we have made for our lives individually and collectively? We need to drop the prejudices, preferences, and become receptive, open, vibrating with willingness to learn, and, then we allow life, the supreme master, to teach us how to live.

We begin as learners to discover personally whether harmony, peace, love, joy have any reality or are simply romantic concepts. We accept that society is born out of our actions and interactions, and if there is tension, conflict, disharmony within, there must be also in society. We recognise that each of us is a microcosm of society, and that if there is to be change in society, it must begin in each of our lives. If each of us has to courage to educate ourselves to become a harmonious whole, a fearless, secure, compassionate person with equipoise within and equilibrium outside, the society must necessarily reflect the balance, harmony, love. The journey we take through self-education is not a self-centered activity, but is a revolutionary activity affecting all of relationships and society.

We ignore the established patterns of education; they won't be of any help to undertake self-education. We move from intellectual activity, verbal investigation to personal acquaintance with the movement of life within and without.

We become aware as we observe closely the movement of life, that all beings are related to one another in an intricate dance of the universe, and we realize that we are fully a part of the dance. We no longer view the universe, the wholeness, as "out there" but we recognise we are one with the wholeness, and a humility, a receptivity dawns on us. We recognise the futility of making divisions among peoples, of separating

people into categories according to superficial characteristics. We become aware of the indivisible oneness of all beings.

You see relationships from the perspective of the wholeness, and you become aware of the need to live in cooperative harmony with each other. It is as if you move among human beings as you move in a garden. The patterns of behaviour are like flowers, you look at the conditionings and see the beauty, appreciate the design: the Hindu, the Muslim, the Christian, the Communist, the Socialist pattern. You see the patterns, the designs of culture and civilisation, recognise the beauty and hard work that has gone into developing the cultures. You see the patterns as part of the wholeness.

You watch carefully all the interrelatedness, the order in the universe, and you become aware that the cosmic force is not chaotic, haphazard, confused, but is intelligent. You're aware that all beings are related in an intelligent way within the oneness, and the awareness of the intelligent cosmic force helps you to relax in faith. Because you are relaxed, all your movements, relationships, become more harmonious, less jerky, impatient, confused.

You see as you observe the rhythms of nature that life manifests itself both as motion and non-motion, both as sound and silence. You discover that in order to enter into the dimension of non-motion, of silence, you must drop all the authority of the past which moves through the thought structure. If the past moves at all, if the thoughts move, there will, of course, be no opportunity to enter into nonaction, silence.

You leave behind the attachment to the past, the sense "me" and "mine," the movement of the ego. You are not renouncing society to become isolated, you are not crushing the mind, annihilating the inheritance; that you cannot do anyway. You are simply allowing the being to move into another dimension of consciousness.

When you stand on the banks of a river, in the midst of a deep forest, in the presence of the majestic, magnificent Himalayas, or under the skies of a starlit night, what happens to you? If the mind is not busy comparing, evaluating the

experience, the movement of the ego without any effort will go into abeyance. When you are in the state of non-moving, relaxed and receptive to the creation, the cosmos begins to operate on you. And then the real inter-action between you and the universe takes place. Because there is space within, the universe, the divinity has scope to operate within you, through you, and the quality of your life has the fragrance of the divine.

The society as we know it, is composed of individuals, operating on the basis of ego-centered motives; each wants to have more power, more pleasure, more possessions than the other. This is the way of the ego. What if humans relate not on the basis of ego-centered impulses, but from a different dimension entirely, the dimension of silence, the dimension of love?

Each of us considers oneself to be a separate entity in dualistic relationship to the rest of the world, each believes that there is a "me" and a "not-me." We all enter easily into confrontation, aggression, wars because we readily accept the illusion of duality. What if all members of society become aware that duality is illusion and oneness is reality?

We as members of society are too worn-out by the lives we are living to create a new society. We drag ourselves through each day, exhausted by reacting to compulsions, impulses, ambitions and by feelings of frustration, despair when our ambitions are not realised. But what if members of society were born anew in the dimension of silence, were refreshed, healed, revitalised by communion with the totality?

Inquirers who make the inward journey, the revolutionary journey into the unknown, carry all of humanity with them. The flame of inquiry helps humanity to evolve, to mature. If one cell of an organism goes through a radical transformation, it will surely affect all of the being.

Humankind is in desperate need of psyche revolutionaries who thoroughly discouraged by the mad, chaotic society want passionately to set themselves unconditionally free of the limitations of thought and ego. If humanity is to survive as a species, then transcending the conceptual super-structures, exploring into the dimension of love, peace and harmony is urgently needed; it is imperative.

