

*Science
And
Spirituality*



VIMALA THAKAR

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Science and Spirituality

Science

Let us find out if there can be a new perspective of life based on the synthesis of spirituality and science. First we will have to see what the word "science" implies. It seems to me since the very inception of the human race on this planet, there has been a very deep aspiration in the hearts of human beings to find out what life is, what this business of living is, what the nature of the universe is by which they are surrounded and what is going on within them. A kind of healthy, all inclusive curiosity to understand the nature of life, which includes matter, energy and mind. This curiosity must have motivated some to turn their attention to matter and to investigate it, analyze it, and examine it, enabling them to come to an understanding of the nature of the Ultimate Reality.

The science of physics must have grown through analysing properties of matter into particulars and then further sub-analysing the particulars into minute particles, studying their mechanisms, studying their actions and interactions and from such study establishing the relations of the behaviour of those particles to the whole of life. The science of chemistry must have developed by examining and inquiring into the chemical systems, right from the mineral world to the Homo Sapiens. One after another

subjects must have been chosen for areas of exploration, experimentation and that is how even social sciences may have developed - economics taking one aspect of activity and politics another.

Spirituality

The word "spirituality" for me is a science that treats the whole of life - the macrocosm the cosmos and the individual - as its field of investigation, experimentation and exploration.

Second point I would like to submit is that the science of spirituality begins with the Wholeness or the Totality. The other sciences begin with the particular, analysing the minutest particle in the hope of finding out the secret of life hidden in the particle, but the science of spirituality does not begin with the particular. The starting point is different. It begins with the awareness of the whole - the wholeness or the totality, it proceeds from the awareness of wholeness to analyse the particular as organically related to the whole. The particular separated from the total has really no meaning for the spiritual inquirer.

This seems to be the difference between spirituality and the natural sciences as we know them. There need not be dichotomy between them or a sense that one is more important than the other but let us recognise the difference between the fields or areas of inquiry and examination. It is a basic difference as far as I can see, but even that point of difference is now vanishing away. Leading scientists such as David Bohm have started writing

in their books that the science of physics will have to turn around and take cognizance of the totality, of the wholeness of Life before it starts to analyse the particular. When he talks about the implicate order and the explicate order in the universe he is referring to this composite or homogeneous wholeness which gives meaning to everything that we see.

Differences in Approach

In spirituality we proceed from the total and with the awareness of the total we observe the particular. If we have to study matter we observe the unit of perception - the material world. In spirituality we ask the questions: Who is going to observe? What is that "who" who is observing matter? Is it entirely separate from matter? Or, if you say "matter" is no more "matter," it is solidified energy or a quantum of energy, is the observer of that energy moving and living in what you call a neutron or proton of matter?" We have to find out Who is observing, Who is going to investigate, what is the quality consciousness in which he is going to examine and explore.

The unit of perception, the particle of matter gets affected by the state of consciousness in which I am when I am observing. Supposing my mind is not steady, it is preoccupied with some work, it is inhibited by certain motivations of fear and ambition, then may be the very act of looking gets affected and it affects the movement of energy in matter. So the science of spirituality starts with the question: "What are your instruments of perception?" Because unlike the natural sciences, the spiritual inquirer does not engage any material instruments or implements.

He would not use a telescope or microscope for supplementing his powers. He will try to find out an instrument of perception which could be independent of matter, in order to look at it.

Though the methods of investigation may be the same, and even the motivation behind science and spirituality may be the same, I think the starting point may be different. That is why the question: Who is the "I" becomes of utmost importance to spiritual inquiry. Whereas the nature of the ego, the anatomy or chemistry of the thought structure, of the psychological structure from which we function, is not of much importance to an economist or to a political philosopher or even perhaps to a physicist or chemist. In spiritual science the emphasis is upon the act of perception, it is upon the quality of the human instruments employed for perception and it is upon the quality of consciousness behind the perception. That is where we part ways.

Question of Verification

Because of this parting of ways, there comes about a more vital difference which has not yet been reconciled, perhaps it may be reconciled in the future, perhaps if not in this century then the next. When we talk about a scientific exploration, you are very much concerned about the verification after the experimentation, arriving at some general laws or principles or even universal principles - that is the concern, and rightly so, for the scientists of physical or social sciences. The difficulty with the science of spirituality begins here. How do you verify? Description of experience is really the result of subjectivity, of the

conditions of the subject, the upbringing, the motivational structure of the experimenter. Personal experience cannot be a point of verification. Because of this difficulty there have been illusions and delusions in this area.

Persons who investigated, instead of communicating in a non-assertive way, with the pliability of a tentative approach of the scientific student or researcher were inclined to assume that their experience was a proof of the absolute truth. People around them even started organising the truth of that experience, propagating about it, and that is how organized or institutionalized religions seem to have come into existence.

Truth cannot be organized. A person who is concerned with finding out the nature of Reality or the Ultimate Truth never makes it his concern to organise and propagate the Truth. The desire, the yearning, the craving is for the personal discovery of the Truth. The nature of the truth is more important than the one who finds it out.

The science of spirituality gradually became obscured and organised and institutionalized religions took its place in each country with practically an authoritarian approach. Science of spirituality is a method of investigating the nature of Reality, you cannot accept any authority at the point of beginning.

Difference between Spirituality and Religion

One has to understand very clearly this difference between religion and spirituality. Religions are not very much concerned about the essence of spirituality, about the essence of freedom that must be there for every individual.

They, like the politicians, economists and rulers of states are concerned with organizing, standardizing even regimenting the behaviour of people. They dish out patterns of physical and psychological behaviour, ethical norms, standards and criteria and human relationships become viliated, because it is through the value structure that we look at each other. Our perceptions are contaminated by the value judgments that we make on the basis of political ideology or racial bias or religious dogma; So our perceptions become a process of evaluations and comparisons.

This is the misery of the modern world. That is why I would like to attract the attention of people from organised religions and institutions that have outlived their day, to the science of spirituality where you cannot begin an investigation with the acceptance of authority. For example if you say : "God is, God exists, God has created the world," and you add certain definitions and descriptions to this God of yours, then you are denying scientific investigation of the nature of Reality, you are denying the possibility of the personal discovery of that Truth. If you say, "God does not exist," and you make a theory out of that, then also the authority of that theory will prevent the investigation and examination. It seems to me the acceptance of authority which is necessary for religion, is very detrimental and devastating for spiritual inquiry.

Scientific Spirituality

We have to appreciate that the essence of spirituality is scientific, it is a realm of complete, unconditional freedom for those who are concerned with

finding out what the nature of life is within themselves and around themselves. In this non-authoritarian approach I find a similarity between spirituality and science. It is an approach not conditioned by any authority of the past. You may have to presume and you may have to make small presumptions like they do in geometry with a point or in mathematics with numbers but the approach will be one of tentativeness.

I would like to proceed and say that the students of science are never afraid by failures. They learn from their failures as much as they learn from success. In the realm of spirituality, failure in discovering the Truth is attributed to the ego. The person gets disturbed, feels depressed, ashamed to admit to himself or to others that the experiment has failed or that the investigation is incomplete. This attributing a kind of personal, private, emotional content to the findings of spiritual inquiry is an obstacle, a hangover of the religious world. Those who are in the realm of spirituality, those who call themselves spiritual inquirers have to learn from the field of science - physical and social - that it is not necessary only to succeed. What is necessary is the act of investigation, experimentation, exploration that you conduct on behalf of the whole human race.

When a scientist finds out that sodium is sodium or salt is salty, he does not say, "It is my experience that salt is salty or sodium is sodium" he just says in an impersonal way, "Salt is salty" and that is so for anyone living in any corner of the world. In the same way supposing a spiritual inquirer finds out that there is an energy beyond the energy of thought, of sentiments and

emotions, that there is an energy concealed in the emptiness of thought or silence of the mind - that need not be looked upon as his or her personal achievement or as something very extraordinary requiring the person to be admired or put upon a pedestal. I think it cannot be done, otherwise it will arrest progress in this marvelous aspiration of the human race to find out what the Truth is, what the facts are, what the Reality is behind the truth.

As you cannot say that the last word in any science is as yet said, whether it is psychology, philosophy, sociology or physics, in the same way nobody can say that the last word in spirituality has been said either by the Vedas, the Upanishads, by the words of Buddha, Jesus or Mohammed. The last words cannot be said because the potential in the human race is infinite as Life is infinite. I think the potential contained in human beings to peel off layer after layer of untruth and reach the core of Truth is infinite. How can we say that this is the last word. I think there also the realm of science and spirituality meet.

Unfortunately there are so many illusions and misunderstandings about the word "Spirituality" that those who are rational minded, emphasizing on the reason, generally feel prejudiced about the word. They say, "Oh, spirituality - please keep away, there is something mystical about it, something personal and authoritarian about it," so they reject it. Maybe they also keep away because they feel that the intellect is the final or supreme instrument of finding out the Truth. Maybe they feel that reasoning out logically with the help of time and space is the ultimate way of relating to the Reality. If we say that the cerebral organ and the faculties contained in the cerebral organ or the

activity of cerebration is the only instrument, we again deny the potentialities concealed in the human beings. As the spiritualists have done on the one hand, if the scientists if they do the same thing, then I think they will be sailing in the same boat.

The tendency of believing everything, the naivete to accept everything emotionally, sentimentally was replaced by the sharp faculty of intellect and reasoning which has given much to the world. It has given not only the science of logic but it has created the beautiful civilization based on the super structure of concepts, ideas, measurements and symbols on the perceptual reality. Without the help of reasoning you could not have reduced the concrete event to abstract concept or idea. The magnificent thing of converting an event into an experience, creating measurements in order to relate to the immensity of life, was possible due to the movement of reason and intellect. But maybe this faculty of reasoning, this cerebral organ also has some built-in limitation, as the instincts and impulses, which ruled the primitive races, had their own limitations and excellencies.

I think, man is not only a rational animal, there is something more to man - there may be a point discriminating him from non-human species. Perhaps there is much more to the human being than the body and brain and the movement in which the brain is trained to move. I think the science students and research scholars could keep their minds open about a possibility of a potential energy concealed in the human being, which could be independent of even rationality. It need not be irrational -

I am not even suggesting it. We as a race cannot go back from this dimension of rationality to the primitivity of irrationality and impulsiveness, that would be a cultural and psychological regression.

What one is pointing out is, just as we built up a conceptual super-structure of magnificent ideas and symbols that made social life and communication possible for us, the day has now come to see the limitations and limited utility and relevance of that activity as far as total life is concerned, and as far as the exploration of the meaning of life is concerned.

We have created parallel brains - what you call the electronic brain or the computer, and we have succeeded in transferring so many cerebral movements to the electronic brain like reception of information, permutation, combination and processing of information, deducing conclusions that we need not look to a spiritual teacher to learn or find out that the cerebral activity is a mechanistic and a repetitive activity, which may be very useful in dealing with matter or certain forms of energy but which may not be relevant at all, when it comes to the exploration of that which cannot be measured, which is behind or beyond the visible and invisible. The reason and the intellect cannot work without measurement, it requires the yardstick of psychological time, of space in order to conduct its investigation. Though it may admit that psychological time is a concept, the brain cannot work without it.

There is a possibility of sciences like physics and metaphysics joining hands together to find out if there is anything beyond brain, to find out what is beyond brain, to find out there is anything beyond time and space

concealed in the emptiness of inner consciousness, to find out if there is any other energy - non-cerebral energy, through which we could operate, through which we could function.

The physicist and even the psychologist finds himself in great difficulty today. The physicist started with the intention of analysing matter and arrived at the quantum of energy. Now he finds or senses that behind the incessant movement of these innumerable energies there seems to be some absolute ground from which these energies get activated and mobilized and function. He started with matter and stumbled across energy and now is proceeding towards the nothingness beyond the energy which seems to have a quality of absoluteness - not the relateness of the movement of energy.

Psychologists started dealing with the mind and while they were analysing the mind they stumbled across various structures of behavioural patterns - the patterns of physical behaviour, the patterns of reaction, the patterns of value structure. One after another they stumbled across structures and they find that all these together have been organised and standardised by the human race collectively. What he calls the "mind," the "me" is only layer after layer of these structures and their patterns. So there is no such thing as "mind" as an entity, or the "ego," as an entity having a separate identity from the rest of the human beings or from the rest of the world.

Now the psychologists find that these structures are common to the whole human race. As the instincts are common, as the emotions are common, the movement of

thought structure seems to be common. The psychologist is nearly on the point of saying that there is nothing like "your" thought or "my" thought, nothing like personal emotion or personal sentiment - they are all cerebral or chemical ways of behaviour, fed into us systematically by society, by culture through socio-economic pressure and compulsions.

So psychologists have lost the "mind", physicists have lost "matter" and spiritualists have lost 'soul', because he doesn't find anything which he could call 'soul' or a finite being located somewhere, which he can ask the human race to proceed to or arrive at.

It is a very interesting time this twentieth century and end of twentieth century when all the age-old theories in the natural and social sciences, organised religions and so-called science of spirituality are all collapsing. The structures are collapsing, theories are getting out of date and are losing their relevance to the very life context that science and technology have created for us. It is a very thrilling time to live in, you have to begin from scratch, you have to begin from nothing and again start inquiring, again start investigating.

New Ethos for Science

If I may I would like to approach the subject of spirituality and science from rather a different angle. Why do we, the human beings need science and spirituality? What is it that the physical or social sciences along with spirituality could give to us? What is it that they have not given up to now, inspite of all the spiritual claims of the Orient and the magnificent results of science, technology, nuclear physics and social science in the Occidental world? Why is it that the human race is on the brink of a third world war? Why is there such a tension, a fear of nuclear warfare in the minds of all people? Why is it that there is so much psychological suffering in the lives of individuals in the affluent as well as the non-affluent countries, in the scientifically and technologically developed countries and non-developed countries? Why? Why so much psychological suffering and why is there so much starvation and poverty?

What is the relevance of all these sciences and also of the science of spirituality? What is their responsibility? Have they any responsibility towards common people like you and me? Is there any connection between the search for the nature of Ultimate Reality and the daily travail of your life and my life? Is there any relationship at all? If there is not, then the sublimest possible experience of spiritually elevated, enlightened people on the one hand and the marvellous findings of physics, chemistry or

psychology on the other will have no value, no meaning, no significance as far as human beings and their relationships are concerned. So surely there is something missing. What that missing point is, has to be found out.

Let us look at what could be the missing points which perhaps have not been taken up fundamentally or basically by the science of spirituality as well as the physical and social sciences.

Though there is psychological suffering and misery, though there has been violence, hatred and war in human history, we also see an under-current in the cultural history of the human race indicating a deeper layer to our being - deeper than the psychological being, deeper than the existence of the "I" consciousness and its structure, movement and demands. I would not call this deeper layer "super-ego," "Atman," or by any of those terms used in the Orient. One could go into that, but right now one would just like to attract your attention that there seems to be a deeper layer that has its own demands - the trans-psychological dimension of consciousness. A dimension that transcends the centre of the "I" and all of its experiences, inheritance, knowledge etc.

Basic Need For Freedom

There seems to be a basic demand for freedom. As human beings cannot live without air, water or food it seems to me that inwardly a human being cannot live unless there is freedom. Freedom for the inner being in its relationship to other human beings and freedom outwardly - freedom to earn a livelihood and to work somewhere.

What have the spiritualists and scientists given to mankind as far as this basic need of freedom is concerned? It is as basic as the need for truth. It is as

basic, if not more as the need for love. Why is man not free today, in any country under any political or economic system? That is the question to which we must address our energies, whether we are interested in spirituality or any other branch of science.

Responsibility of Scientists

When a physicist or nuclear physicist works for his government or employer or goes on investigating at the insistence of his own curiosity, is there any responsibility on the scientist at all? Or when he indulges in research into atomic power and then proceeds to find out or allows others to find out how atomic weapons can be utilised, how atomic energy can be utilised for constructing atomic or nuclear weapons, is there any responsibility on the scientist at all? It is a question I am raising.

When we conduct our research leading towards an industry of war, using all our inventions for the destruction of our fellow human beings, is there any responsibility on the scientists at all? Why is it that the scientist does not stop to think about the implications of his inventions in relationship to human life, to its survival, to its freedom? Is there or is there not a responsibility? For example, during the industrial revolution when scientists and technologists found out the method of having gigantic machines that produce things on a mass scale, did they wail to think of what would happen if these machines were in the hands of individuals or groups or nations with great lust for economic power? Had they no responsibility for their inventions?

Responsibility of Industrialists

When the possibility of centralized production of consumer goods, foods and other necessary capital goods

was created through those inventions and through those technologies, through those machines, it resulted in the centralization of industrial and economic power. Centralisation of industrialised and economic power has become the life style today, right from capitalist to communist countries, and that has become a structure which has also sheltered a system of exploitation. Would there be starvation and poverty, if there were not such methods and techniques of large scale, centralized production? The centralisation of the power of distribution, of trade and commerce, the sophisticated international economic mafia - the multi-nationals who are working in each country today, they have not just dropped from the skies. They have emerged from something we have been doing to ourselves. What are the economists and the technologists doing? Do they not have any responsibility for their actions?

Responsibility of Politicians

I would refer now to the political side. What have the politicians been doing? They have been developing political systems and structures. Is the freedom of an individual to be subservient to a economic and political system? Is it going to be subservient and always put at stake by theology, philosophy, spirituality and science?

Everywhere we find the human being is in fetters and chained. It seems to me that we are strangled by the inventions, not only of physics and nuclear physics but by the whole high technology - the high technology that is coming, the computer that has come, the robotism that is coming. The initiative, the creative energy of individuals has been taken away. The self-confidence, the dignity of manual work that they had before the industrial revolution has evaporated, has been taken away.

Ethics of Scientists

So, it seems a valid question to ask, whether the spiritualists and the scientists of any branch of science have to have some kind of ethics or not? The ethics of the 19th century or first half of the 20th century has become out of date. It is now necessary that we have a new ethics in the nuclear age - in economy, in politics, in science and also in the science of spirituality.

Let us come to the second point, which is the trans-psychological need of love. Why is it that after having inhabited the globe for millions of years and having an inner non-verbal, non-rational urge for love, we have not developed into that maturity. Love is the spontaneous tenderness of care and concern for fellow human beings, it is a sense of belonging with our fellow human and non-human beings - we have not developed into that maturity. Why is there not any love in our relationships with one another, right from the family situation to organisations, to institutions and nations? If at all we know anything as a reality, as a substance of our psychological life, it is attachment, infatuation, obsession, jealousy, envy, anger, hatred, violence. This is really the stuff of which our psychological relationships are made. On the one hand is the marvellous development of social sciences and physical sciences and on the other hand there is the psychological immaturity of the whole human race and the immense misery and suffering that it has caused.

How can the science of spirituality and the other branches help the human being? As they have to help the human race to find out structures and systems in which individual freedom can be intact and not be invaded upon and attacked, I think they also have to find out how the human race can be helped to grow into the maturity of

love. And here I think we have to come to a very basic point : whether there can be the maturity of love if our minds are obsessed with this space-time construct?

This space-time structure which has been created by human beings and used by all sciences right up to religion. I would not mention spirituality there, but right from religion to all the other sciences, this space-time structure or the frame-work has been used and is used today. What I mean is the invention of the concept of psychological time as a measurement or even space as a measurement for relating ourselves to the outer world. Psychological time has no factual reality. It is just a concept, very necessary in order to relate to the immensity of life. What would we do with that vast "Isness," what would we do with that Reality which is immeasurable? How would we live in it? In order to enable ourselves to live with that Eternity or immeasurable, unnamable Reality we found out this concept of time, measuring in days, months, years and centuries. It has no factual reality as the chronological time, which is quite different. All of us, at least those who study sciences and deal with scientific research are aware that the Reality is time-free that birth and death of the physical frame, of the physical structure, are like waves on the breast of the ocean, on that "isness" of life.

Co-relation of discovered Truth with Daily Living

Now we cannot question that any scientist would not understand this very preliminary psychological fact that time is a creation of the human mind, a measurement, a symbol. But do the scientists and the spiritualists relate it to their daily lives, to their behaviour in society? Don't we find scientists haunted by the fear of tomorrow, by the worries and anxieties of their future careers, about money, about power? I think the responsibility of a scientist -

whether he is a spiritual scientist or from any other branch of science is to co-relate the discovered truth with the daily life, so that it becomes a psychological force, a psychological motivation behind human action. But in spite of having understood that time has no reality, they are still haunted by that, they mistaken that in their daily life, for Reality. Not only do they use time but they are really prisoners of it. You may have travelled in the East, as I have done, and observed yogis and sanyasis. You too may have seen yogis, sanyasis and their Ashrams and one has seen the duality of behaviour in the texture of their being - the same idea of tomorrow, the same ambition, the same competition, the same jealousy, the same fear. If Reality is time-free how can they indulge in all these psychological mal-adjustments? But they themselves do it. And if you turn to a economist, a politician, a scientist, a physicist or a psychologist you find the same thing.

What I am trying to say is that, the human suffering and misery that we find today is to a very great extent due to the behaviour of those who, on the one hand have assiduously investigated, examined and discovered the truth but have not related the truth to their daily living, to their relationships, to their behaviour. It remains locked up at the cerebral level, at the level of written books, but it does not become a social force. If Mahatma Gandhi had not lived truth that he understood is his daily life or if he had not lived the essence of peaceful resistance that he understood in his daily life, I do not think that he could have converted that peaceful resistance into a social force for 20 or 30 long years, in the Indian war of Independence.

I am putting all this with a sense of hesitation, but I am questioning the validity of all scientists looking upon themselves as having no moral or ethical responsibility for

their findings, their verbalisations, their publications, their books - as if it is not going to affect human psychology.

Love which blossoms in freedom from this illusion of time, love which blossoms in the egolessness of consciousness has not come about because people, though they understand the illusion of this ego-structure that is created, live their daily lives as if the ego is a reality. Though they understand the time-freeness of Reality they live under the pressure and tension of the time concept. As long as there is no ending of these two illusions: one of the ego as a separate entity, necessary to be protected all the time by defense mechanisms, and the second of the reality of the time-space construct, there can be neither love nor freedom in our lives today. After all science and spirituality are really for investigating the nature of Ultimate Reality and its relationship to our daily life, and to the dynamics of human relationships. These two things I feel have been neglected by us and therefore there is neither love nor freedom in our lives today. ***It is a challenge which is waiting to be taken up by scientists and spiritualists.***

These points are brought up because there is nothing like absolute values in the modern civilisation. There is nothing like absolute values in this consumerist culture. It is a pleasure-mongering human race that we have created. It is a time haunted human race that we have created. Neither is Peace an absolute value, for which one would like to die and for one which one would like to explore the psychological, economic and political dimensions nor is Love an absolute value nor is Freedom an absolute value. It has become become a game of convenience, of competition, of confrontation. Why is politics so much criminalised today? Why is consciousness

so brutalised today? We have seen democracies suffering from corruption and collapsing. Like cancer in the human body, it has spread to the administrative set-up, to the political leaders, to the masses, to even the poorest, because having MORE and MORE of money, pleasure and power has become the direction of human psychology. Psychology has not given the direction for living Truth or Freedom or Love. One says this with sorrow and pain.

Qualitative Change in Consciousness

This pleasure-mongering, power-mongering, brutalisation and criminalisation of consciousness and life cannot be ended by finding out new systems and new structures. It can be ended only if there comes about a qualitative change in our consciousness. It is necessary for human beings to learn that they have a potential inside them. We do not know what that is. We are not going to say that they have, a 'super-ego', an "Atman," that it is immortal, that they are not bodies, that this world is an illusion. We are not going to enter into all that rubbish. But we are going to suggest that if the ego structure has not worked, that if this time-bound reality which we created for ourselves has not provided us with a dimension of love, freedom and peace, let us probe further. Let us not look upon these as the last word, as the last authority. Maybe there are built-in limitations in these structures, maybe they are relevant on some levels - on the material level dealing with finite products, maybe they are only relatively useful. Pointing out the limitations honestly, I think will stimulate the human imagination. There will be an urge among the young people to probe and find out what is beyond the brain, the "I" structure, the time-space consciousness.

This exploration has not ended in the science of spirituality. There is a long way to go and I do not think

there ever will be a point where the human race will say: "Now this is the final reality that we have arrived at, now this is the last word." We cannot say it, because Life is infinite and the examination, the investigation and the findings will, I think, be endless. That is the beauty of Life that the last word in Spirituality cannot be said and the last word in Science cannot be said.

Developing New Ethos for Science

We can develop a new ethos for Science if we keep three absolute values before us as criteria for finding out the utility of our investigations to human life:

The three criteria being :

1. Are we adding to peace in human relationships?
2. Are we helping human psychology to grow into the maturity of the dimension of love?
3. Are we helping the human race to develop the dynamics of relationships in social, political and economic life where the individual will not be deprived of his freedom and initiative?

Meeting Ground Between Science and Spirituality

Generally in the minds of people there is a misunderstanding about the roles of science and spirituality - may be not in the minds of the experts on both sides, but generally even at the end of the twentieth century people have very wrong notions. When somebody talks about physics, chemistry, biology, antropology or social sciences like economics and politics those who are inclined towards spirituality look upon all these fields of activities as materialistic - as if matter is not of any importance to their daily living or their relationships. On the other hand the word "spiritual" is not very pleasant to the ears of many scientists. They feel that "spiritual" is something to do with credulity, with belief, with some ethereal mystical things that are not very rational. The primary intention of such a seminar was to show that science and spirituality are supplementary and complimentary to each other.

The second point was to bring to the notice of the common people that the motivation behind all the physical sciences and spirituality are the same. For instance there is curiosity to find out what the nature of the planet on which we are living is, what the meaning of the sun, the moon, the solar system that we see is. There is curiosity to find out what life and death is, what is this matter by

which we are surrounded, what is Reality? I think there are common motives behind the scientific pursuits and the pursuits of spirituality.

Discovering the tentative approach

The third point, was to remind ourselves, that in spiritual inquiry we are trying to find out if there is anything like God, like Divinity. We are trying to find out what this mysterious inter-relatedness is on the cosmic level. If we have really to find it out, we shall have to adopt the scientific approach of a non-authoritarian, skeptical and tentative attitude towards our findings. That is something that the spiritual inquirers could learn from the students of science. And what could the students of science learn from the spiritual realm? Perhaps the awareness, that Life is a mystery, that it is an "Isness" that it is unindividuated, unparticularised, that it is the emptiness of space out of which form emerges, out of which the movement of energy emerges and into which all the movement of energies, all the forms after growing, blossoming and decaying go back. In the pursuit of natural science, there has to be this awareness of the mystery of the ground of existence, which we call nothingness or formlessness.

Awareness of the wholeness

While the scientists are busy and engrossed with the analysis of the part and in search of the beginning of the process of individuation, which has developed out of this huge nothingness of unindividuated creative energy, let them be aware of the totality. Then the grip on the part, the process of individuation, the analysis of energies, the

tapping of energies for utilising them in the service of mankind will not make them oblivious of the cosmic mystery of which they are a part.

Science gives us the particularization which is necessary for communication and dealing effectively with the world. We may generalise after the analysis, after finding out the inter-relationship and interaction of the particulars, but if that process is severed from or snatched away from the awareness of the totality (which is the perfume of spirituality, which is the essence of spirituality) then there becomes a dichotomy. The part seen out of context of the total or in isolation from the total can become quite a problem for us. And I think that in the pursuit of science we forgot this, we lost the elegance of that basic awareness of the Absolute. So there also they can meet and have a dialogue.

I will not refer here to Spinoza, Socrates, Plato, Aristotle right upto Sartre but I will go back to the Orient where I was born and brought up, where the history of spirituality and the science of life goes back to at least 10,000 years. In the orient there has been a pursuit for last 10,000 years of this science of life in its totality. They try to understand it, not exactly through the sense organs, not through external implements or tools but in an extra-sensory way, even leaving the mind and brain behind. They explored the energies in the inner emptiness of silence, they explored the energies which were undivided from the energy outside the body. They explored and experimented with the fusion of the inner and the outer, with the individual and the cosmic and then they had an access to what we call the Divine, the sacred. Not the concept of

sacredness and sanctity that we have created but that which is beyond the reach of human thought, that which is beyond the reach of human measurements, symbols, ideals, and concepts. There is 'something,' you may call it in the language of physical sciences - "the absolute ground of existence" out of which energies emerge, a spiritualist would call it the Divine - there the difference comes in of language or terminology.

Though we may try to construct a concept of that absolute sacredness, the wholeness of life remains unfragmented and undivided, do what you will. You may even try to fragment or divide the wholeness of life into the atom or electron or proton or you may even go further, but you will find that the totality of that energy - the essence of creativity exists in the neutron too. In the part you find the total, and it is the total that takes the form of the particular, as if it is an emanation of the wholeness. I do not wish to sound poetical or mystical, but I am very helpless, the essence of life is so poetic that all your efforts to put it into simple prose sometimes become futile.

It seems to me that this awareness of the wholeness is not an abstraction. The Divine or Divinity is not the man-made gods. They may have been necessary for the human race in the evolution of consciousness and psychological growth, they have served their purpose for millions and millions in the East and West, so I am not here to deny or negate, I am just here to point out the limitations. Whatever is touched by human thought and verbalised into human language represents the limited reality that man has constructed for his own purpose, out

of the limitless reality of existence. Divinity is the essence of existence, not an attribute, not a quality.

By Divinity I imply that it is non-fragmentable, it is indivisible, it is a homogeneous wholeness. In a drop of water, in a particle of matter, in a blade of grass the totality of Life is there. And spirituality teaches us to feel it when you touch it. If you have to use a blade of grass or you have to walk upon the earth or you have to use water and sunshine, spirituality says let us be aware that these are not man-made things. We are not the masters of this creation; it is a self-generated creation, self-sustained, self-creating, it has the immense power of renewal. The dawn of tomorrow will not be a repetition of the dawn of today. There is no repetition, there is renewal and there cannot be this renewal for billions and millions of years on all levels of existence from mineral to human, unless there is behind the visible and the invisible, behind the sensual and the occult, an Infinite.

One has to use some words, but when I use the word "infinity" or "eternity" it is not a category against the temporary or against the finite. Words are used just to indicate the existence of "something" that is beyond the reach of human mind and its measures or whatsoever can be created by human hand. When there is an awareness of that, then one can use the part given to us by physical science and even technology with a sense of reverence. Spirituality confers the sense of reverence for life, for living and science gives you the precision and the accuracy with which you can relate to the particular and use them for your needs, to provide your needs.

The inventions of science and technology were not meant to gratify the human greed. Those who engaged themselves in investigations and examinations of natural science were as noble as the Sages and Rishis in the Orient who were inquiring and examining through meditation. The scientists were doing the same, whether in medicine, biology, physics, chemistry - the quality of mind of a person working in a laboratory and a person sitting in an ashram is not different. So for me both are very noble attempts of the human mind to reach out towards Reality, though their implements are different, though their methodology is different.

Areas of Cooperation

The question arises whether a spiritualist on one hand and a physicist on the other hand, can come together to cooperate with one another? I do not know how far the cooperation would go. Would there be an insistence for verification on the material and the sensual level? Would the physicist or other scientists ever accept the verification by perceptive sensitivity of Intelligence? Can the awareness as the movement of Intelligence be looked upon as a scientific proof or not? This is an humble effort to find out where the areas of dialogue are possible, at least for dispelling the misunderstanding, that they are antagonistic to each other.

If the brain or the faculty of reasoning is not used as far as it can go, there can never be spiritual inquiry and examination. People who indulge in something emotional, sentimental, withdrawing from life, withdrawing from relationship are creating a comfortable escape for

themselves. It has nothing to do with an austere and scientific effort to find out if there is anything beyond the entity of the 'I', the 'me' through which I live, if there is anything more to my existence than the identity of my ego. It is hard work to learn how to observe yourself, you have to have the quality of reaction-free perception, you have to purge the act of perception of all the crowdings of subjective and emotional reactions, value structures, patterns of judgement and conclusions. Unless all that is washed away there cannot be a pure perception or a bare cognition. Bare cognition or pure perception is very necessary even to understand what we are looking at.

As the scientist needs the laboratory and the purification of all the instruments he is going to use, the spiritual inquirer has to purify his physical and verbal system, his psychological structure and wash out all impurities. By the word 'impurities' I do not imply anything moral or ethical or religious. I mean that which is unscientific is impure, that which causes imbalance of perception is impure. Our psychological structures, our way of living on the physical level, our ways of using speech are full of imbalances. Just watch it for a day. With such impurities, with such toxins in the psyche, with so many imbalances incorporated into the sensual, verbal, the psychological structure, you cannot possibly find out if there is anything beyond mind and brain.

The purification of instruments, the integrity of motivation, the openness and receptivity for the Truth you are going to find out, the courage, fearlessness to proceed

towards the unknown and leave the areas of the known behind, these are common equipments for both - for the pursuit of science and for the pursuit of what we call spiritual inquiry.

Finding out the Truth, the Reality is not something you do casually, carrying on all the unhealthy ways of living at all levels of being, and then sitting down somewhere in meditation for ten or twelve hours, chanting certain things or doing some acts of worship, accepting somebody's authority coming from the Orient and feeling that you are spiritual. Please do see that Life cannot be divided into spiritual and material, it is indivisible wholeness. It is the quality of your relationships that has the perfume of spirituality or has not the perfume of spirituality. It is the motivation that can stink of ego centered motivations or it can be an urge to learn, to discover the Truth, which has nothing to do with acquisitive movement of the ego, the me, the Self. I do not know how to communicate with you, how to tell you, that there is a possibility of a dialogue between the two.

Challenges to be faced

Those who are engaged in the pursuit of science today are connected some way either with governments or with the multinationals. They engage, they employ the scientists for their inventions and discoveries, which are used for political and economic purposes - for gratifying the ambition of super powers or developing powers. So the real moral challenge is whether the scientists can get themselves free of the clutches of their personal ambitions

and personal egos, whether they can set themselves free of all the temptations given to them by the multinationals or the governments of the states, whether they can transcend the identification with the nation, with the race, with the political ideologies. This is all a part of the man-made world, beautiful in its own place, but in his pursuit of Truth, the scientist cannot belong to a country, a religion, a race or a creed just as a spiritual inquirer can never afford to belong to a race or a religion or a nation.

Transcending the man-made barriers, the man-made structures is necessary in the very act of your search, in the very act of your discovery. Unless these barriers are transcended, not theoretically, nor verbally, not academically but factually, how can the scientist have the feeling of the all-pervading wholeness and inter-relatedness of Life? We have forgotten that, and therefore we have violated the principle of inter-relatedness, that is why we have ecological problems, that is why we have starvation and misery, that is why we have imperialism of every manner : political, economic, ideological, religious. So these man-made structures have to be transcended factually. I think it is a challenge for both.

Direct Perception

Now let us look at the relationship of the absolute to the relative. The absolute is what I call the sacred, the absolute ground of existence or the Divinity. The relative is the relative things, the objects that have come into the focus of space and time. They have their own value, they have their own utility, though they are the manifestation of

the other, they have their own independence, i.e. relative independence from the Absolute.

I think spiritual inquiry has neglected the realm of the physical, the sensual, the material world, whether it was spiritualists in India or China or among the Hindus, Muslims or Buddhists. They called it an illusion. It is not illusion in the sense that it is something false. It is not something like an optical illusion. Shankara was the first propounder of the philosophy of Vedanta and he used the word 'maya' to describe it. Vedanta means the ending of knowledge and the beginning of direct perception, beginning of a spontaneous, all pervading awareness. Shankara, the young man used the word 'maya' to describe the relative which is translated in English language as illusion. It is not an illusion in the sense that it is something false. He talked about a hierarchy of realities, he defines how every hierarchy is a relative reality and how the absolute Reality is beyond the reach of the senses. It is beyond the reach of the mind, the brain, the thoughts and words. That is what Shankara means by - "the ending of knowledge," and unless the authority of knowledge ends in your mind there will not be the sensitivity to perceive that which is beyond the reach of words and the reach of thought.

I think the ending of knowledge is a necessity, a kind of necessary equipment for the direct perception of the Absolute. I am using the term "perception" because in Sanskrit language the feel of a thing is perception. They say you perceive through the ears, you see through the skin. We do not have different verbs in Sanskrit language

for hearing and seeing, they are not different activities, they are the movement of the same sensitivity. So they call it perception through the eyes, perception through the ears.

Spirituality gives you a science which is a direction for search, examination, exploration and experimentation. It has no method, because Truth is a pathless land; there cannot be discipline and technique. Truth cannot be systematized. You can systematize things if you have to use the senses or the physical structure, then you can have methods and training system. You can systematize things if you have to use the mind, there also you can create structures, patterns and you can have a method, a technique. But when you have to allow the mind with all its conditionings to go into voluntary abeyance, how can there be any system? In silence how can there be any system? In that emptiness which is full of creative energies that are unknown, how are you going to control them? Are you going to control the unknown energies? Are you going to dictate terms to the Divine that it should reveal itself unto you at a certain time, by a certain method, and only with a certain measure of intensity which your nerves can stand?

I think there comes a time when the realm of all effort comes to an end and there is that realm of effortlessness or relaxation. It is a beautiful tension-free and pressure-free state of your sensual and psychological being. It is a dimension in which energies get activated and mobilized and perception takes place. It is a happening. When I say "I see" and "I perceive" there is an illusion

that it is "my" activity. Even on the sensual level, I'm doubtful if it is really an activity, but we cannot go into it now, suffice to mention at this stage, the perception takes place when the mind with all its conditionings and structures led into it goes into non-action, when the idea of the ego and the identification with it, which has been nurtured, which has been helped to flower and blossom for the sake of social life - when all that has gone into non-action, perception takes place. The ego is then inactive, it is not destroyed, it cannot be destroyed. Why should we destroy the beautiful conditionings which are the content of human civilization and culture? The symbols, concepts and structures they have their beauty - only we have to see the built-in limitations of those structures.

The awareness of the Life beyond, the awareness of the limitlessness and measurelessness does something to the brain, it operates upon the brain. The intelligence and the energy of silence operates upon the intellect, upon the whole cerebral organ, it does something to the brain cells and therefore our relationship with the known also changes.

I think there is much scope for a dialogue between genuine science students and genuine spiritual inquirers. Such dialogues and seminars if they could be organised and held in different parts of the world, in different countries they will help to save the young generation that is running away into a network of escapes which are offered to them in the name of spirituality. The cream of young intelligence in the world, whether it is U.S.A. Canada, Australia or

Europe is turning away, disgusted. They are questioning. they say if you cannot help solve the crisis we don't need all your social sciences, your physical sciences, your religions, your spirituality. They are losing trust in Life itself, they are losing confidence in themselves. It is a kind of nihilism that is coming back, not as a philosophy but as a result of psychological desperation. So if such dialogues and seminars are held, then there will be a clarity of perception. When there is clarity of perception and awareness of Truth then there can be motivation for action.

Some one has asked the question : What is the use of talking and discussing on such themes here, what are you going to do tomorrow about the starving millions? We are not here to discuss that problem, that problem can be discussed. My friends, the real crux of the issue is that the world needs today a United Peoples' Organisation not the United Nations Organisation. We need a United Peoples' Organisation where the representatives of the people will come together to share their problems, to find out how to share the resources of the earth. Now these representatives of nations are full of ambitions and prejudices - racial, regional and national. Those who come together in the United Nations, they have not shed all their prejudices and preferences. United Nations has nearly lost its dynamism and what ever dynamism is left, it is losing very fast. Before a vacuum is created, let there be a platform on a world basis where people share, then I think the people when they come face to face will understand the misery and suffering of one another. They have the sensitivity to see it, otherwise the people will not be sending;

help to Ethiopia as soon as there is a famine, to India and Pakistan when there are floods. People are eager to help, to respond as people to people. People to people diplomacy. It is necessary to have a United People's Organisation as a cultural platform of meeting.

These are the things that are necessary, but that is not the subject of this seminar, that is why I did not bring it up yesterday, and I was not intending to bring it up today, but somebody mentioned that there are people who are suffering from the challenges they see around. And I'm glad we suffer so, because we have to meet those challenges. The old answers are inadequate, the old structures are collapsing and the governments are proving ineffective in every country, so we as people will have to act.

My friends, we were here to discuss if there is any meeting ground between the different sciences - social sciences, physical sciences and spirituality. We did not even use the word 'religion' because we were aware that religion is different, it has some authoritarian patterns, we need not discuss them and disturb them, let us find out, let us proceed dodging these barriers, let us proceed in a constructive way.

Exploring the Unknown

Somebody has asked about God. Spirituality has nothing do with the concept of God what so ever. We have created a conceptual structure as a psychological necessity and in the conceptual structure all the religions have indulged in this concept of God or Godhood. But spirituality does not begin with the assumption that there is a God - personal or impersonal - that created the universe. A creator apart from whatever creation is before us, within us, surrounding us, has nothing to do with spirituality.

I had mentioned to you yesterday about the Vedas. The first verse in the first Veda written some thousands of years ago, and which is the foundation of spirituality as a science in the oriental world, says that : "In the beginning of the world there was a majestic nothingness, there was neither truth or untruth, there was neither birth or death." This is the cosmogenesis of creation that the ancient spirituality of India gives. In the Veda someone asks the Sage:

Questioner : "Who created the universe?"

He says : "There is no creator apart from the creation."

The questioner persists, "What was the cause of creation?"

He says : "It is a causeless cause, it is its own

cause, it is its own effect."

Questioner : "But there must be some creator to the universe?"

And the answer is : "Where is the universe? The universe is within you, in your mind".

I'm just giving you a brief glimpse of the approach of spirituality towards God and the universe.

Second thing I would like to mention is that we construct realities according to our emotional states, our upbringings, our conditionings. They are related to the make up of the observer himself. Realities which appear to us and about whose objectivity we are convinced are according to the science of spirituality the extension of the content of our being. Therefore, different races have constructed different realities.

I hope we are capable of differentiating between Reality and Truth. Truth is that which is beyond knowledge. What can you know about "Nothingness"? How can you know about the emptiness which is or which may be full of innumerable energies, some of which are unknown and some of which may be even unknowable? We don't know. So we have to appreciate the difference between the reality that we have psychologically created for ourselves and live in and the Truth which is beyond the reach of human mind. The Truth may be nothingness, it may be an emptiness, out of which creation has emerged as an extension of that nothingness. As a point which you put on the paper with a pencil and then you draw a line - the line is an extension of the point, that line was concealed in the point, though you say it is without length and

breadth. So whatever you call the "universe", which appears real to you and me, is an extension of our own being.

What happens to the inquirer in spirituality who has ended the process of knowing, who has seen the game of duality that the activity of knowing creates, who has seen the game of separation of life into the "me" and the "not me" that this activity obliges or compels him to accept? What happens to a person who has ended that myth of separation? After such an experience can you and I say that it is "my" experience or "your" experience? The differences in experiences, the differences in perception and the patterns in verbal and psychological behaviour are related to the realm of conceptual structure from which we function, i.e. the concept of the "me," the "I," the "ego." We are so convinced that the concept is a reality that we have built up an entity around it. We have developed an identity, polished, sophisticated and refined it for the purpose of social life and we have mistaken that for the absolute truth.

I think we have to understand that knowledge and the activity of knowing is a cerebral activity having many built-in limitations. Your relationship with the objective is through knowledge, it is through the movement of knowing which is based on the division of subject and object as independent entities. And secondly you try to understand what you call the objective with the help of measurements created by the human mind, like words, languages, norms, criteria, definitions and value structures. Thus the process of knowing is the process of relating ourselves to what is surrounding us in a limited way.

The activity of knowing is not the act of

understanding. Knowledge has its relevance for the physical, the verbal and psychological levels but there is a realm of understanding where this cerebral activity has to go into abeyance, into voluntary abeyance. Understanding its own limitations it has to go into a beautiful state of non-action. It is not inertia, not passivity, not a lethargic passivity or inactivity, it is a most positive action. When understanding its own limitations, it goes into non-action it is a positive action. How can it understand its own limitations? It can do so because it is a self-conscious energy. The whole human civilization and culture has been possible because we are born with a quality of consciousness which is different from that of the non-human species. Consciousness exists and operates even in the mineral world, it exists and operates even in the smallest particle of matter - there is no doubt about it. But the human being seems to be born with the faculty of self-awareness and understanding. That understanding which is not knowing has a perceptive sensitivity.

Let me plead with you - not as a theory but just as a perception, just as an understanding open to correction at any time - my plea is that the movement of understanding is different than the movement of knowing. It is not a cerebral movement. When the knower, the experiencer, the observer seeing the built-in limitations in its own structure relaxes completely, then in that relaxation the whole being is entirely free. There is nothing transcendental or occult or mysterious about it. It is a physical fact. In that dimension of total relaxation, energies concealed in the emptiness, the energies concealed in silence get activated, they mobilize themselves. They do not need any cause, they do not need any reason, they begin

to operate. It is the movement of those energies with which the being is permeated, which causes a communion with whatever reality is outside of you. Through knowledge communion is not possible, through knowledge communication is possible but not communion. We cannot limit the totality of Life to the verbal level, to the psychological level, to the visible or invisible level.

In the dimension of total relaxation there is the communion between the so-called person and that energy. Please do see that there is no observer sitting in the biological frame looking at something, trying to know about it with the help of a word and then interpreting and reacting to the word emotionally. There is no centre from which the so-called activity takes place. It is just the movement of the whole being. I do not know if I should use the word "movement", it is something of a vibration that happens in the being of the person and the so-called object that is being looked at. You know what we call the emptiness of space is not a void. The emptiness of space does not separate you from me. But this is not the time to talk about how the myth of emptiness of space being a void has been exploded recently by the scientists.

When there is this total relaxation from the whole conceptual structure, from the whole human past which is called karma, then the energy in the so-called observer and that which is being observed (they not being separated) are in communion. You know the "inner" and the "outer" these words also are not adequate to talk about the level of understanding. But we are not here this evening to go into the fundamentals of the approach of spirituality to what is perception or to find out what is the observer or to inquire whether the observer is at all independent of or

separate from the observed or whether whatever is observed from the center of the me is just the reflection of the observer himself. I would just mention that actually the observed is the observer and the observer is the observed. This is not semantics, this is not rhetoric, but that is what happens. It is such a complex phenomena, though we talk about it in simple words. It is something marvelously complex.

This evening it was necessary to differentiate between the field of science and perhaps the field of spirituality. Therefore one referred to this phenomenon or the happening of communion and understanding where you become "aware," but where you do not become a scholar. Emptiness has no content, there is no scholarship, no erudition, no verbalization there, but there is an awareness. There is understanding and awareness. Awareness of the wholeness around you and wholeness without you. There is no other word to describe it, because there is no fragmentation, there is no individuation.

We were talking yesterday about the process of individuation occurring in the universe or the multiverse out of the non individualised energy. We had proceeded to see what is the absolute ground of existence, even beyond the action and interaction of the innumerable energies operating in the cosmos. We are not going back to that issue, suffice it is to say this evening that there is neither a creator nor an universe which can be captured in a framework of an experience. That which is captured in a framework of an experience, that which is captured, obtained or achieved in the framework of knowledge is "my" creation - an individual creation or it can be a group creation, but these are all constructs. My friends, if we go a little further we can find

out that the notion of time is a construct, the notion of space is a construct and we look at the universe through this construct of space and time. Without the help of that, can we see anything? Can we talk about knowledge without this concept or construct of time and space?

The purpose of the seminar was to open up avenues for those who are interested in spiritual inquiry and those who are interested in the pursuit of social and natural sciences, so that they could come together and find out if there is any area, any ground where they can meet and have a dialogue and thus help this humanity that is passing through a very great cultural crisis. The ideologies, the theories, the patterns of behaviour, in the name of religion, politics, economics - so beautifully sophisticated, organised and standardised in the nineteenth century and the first half of twentieth century - are all collapsing. There is nothing to feel sorry about, it is a process of growth - human growth. The whole of history, is the history of the evolution of consciousness, so these things were bound to happen sometime. Science and technology have created an absolutely radical context for us. Nuclear physics, the genetic engineering and even the science of physics talking about the absolute ground of existence beyond energy or talking about the implicate and explicate order, have created new challenges for us.

I think it is a very thrilling time for intelligent, sensitive human beings to be living in and it is an opportunity to create a ground for dialogue, to join hands. Otherwise, I do not think there will be a way out of this cultural crisis, because we have become attached to our conceptual structures. We are attached and have identified

ourselves with the patterns of behavior that have evolved through centuries, and through that identification we have inflated our tribal, national and racial egos. We have developed a psychology of confrontation rather than that of cooperation. We have not been moving in the direction of togetherness or of the attitude of living together and inhabiting the planet together. Instead we have the attitude of either you or me.

How do we create this atmosphere of dialogue? Perhaps spirituality disassociating itself from the authoritarian approaches of organised and institutionalised religions can help by standing in its beautiful nudity where it does not talk about God or patterns of behaviour, making no claims that it understands the whole and the absolute truth. The best it can say is that Truth is a pathless land. Nobody can claim that he has understood Truth. Truth cannot be experienced. For how can the Whole be experienced? How can the emptiness of silence ever be experienced? There is Life which is beyond experiencing and knowing. Spirituality can clarify this and the physical sciences can clarify to us the relationship between the observer and that which is observed and help us to understand the real meaning of subjectivity and objectivity - terms which are used by physical science and by the science of psychology. This clarification by science on one hand and spirituality on the other, is necessary and will help create the atmosphere for dialogue. That is one of the points I am submitting to you this evening.

May I proceed a little further and refer to the social sciences like economics and politics. I think that the philosophy and theories of economics and politics of the last century and half have also lost their relevance to the

context through which humanity is passing. We are living today in the post-industrial revolution period. In the book "The Third Wave" the author points out that the industrial revolution and whatever it had to contribute to the world has outlived its day, now it is the post-industrial revolution.

E. F. Schumacher in his book "Guide to the Perplexed Humanity" talks about the necessity of a new approach to economics and politics. To these political and economic philosophers, what would a humble person like myself say? I would only say : Has not the human history shown that materialism cannot provide an incentive to goodness? I am not talking about "goodness" as opposed to "evil," not "good" as opposed to "bad," but I am talking about goodness as an urge to be True, as an urge to live in Love, to live in harmony, in cooperation, in friendship, and in peace together. Now has not human history shown that materialism cannot provide that incentive? In 1952 the founder of the Indian socialist movement, Sri Jai Prakash Narayan wrote a small booklet in which he developed the theme that materialism cannot provide the incentive for goodness or for love.

Love and goodness are needed in this world. There is an arrogance of political and military power, there is an arrogance of knowledge and of so-called occult and transcendental experiences, there is an arrogance of religious and racial fundamentalism. We are suffering from all that, but there is nothing like culture. So what we need is to persuade human beings to grow into the maturity of love, friendship and peace.

The efforts to reach the universal through the particular has its own relevance but all particular efforts in

the different fields of social science have to be co-related with the awareness that the man made world - physical, conceptual, verbal - is a tiny fragment of the totality in which we exist. The earth, the planets, the galaxy of stars, the mineral world, the mountains, the oceans, the rivers they are all our fellow beings with whom we have to live. We have to shed our arrogance. There has to be the awareness that, that which is not man made, which is self generated is much vaster, much more immense than the man-made world. It is free of all conceptual structures which we have imposed upon it. On the perceptual reality you have grafted conceptual structures, now it is necessary to transcend the conceptual structure, perhaps even to transcend and penetrate the ego structure - and to find out what is beyond that. Is there anything beyond the brain, is there anything beyond time and space and the "I" consciousness? (Even the word 'anything' is not adequate). We have to find out if there are any energies, if there is any life beyond it.

We cannot sit here and expect to find the answers with the worn out patternistic mind and thought structures, with all its repetitive and mechanistic behaviour, which has failed the human race. Thought has not given us the maturity to put an end to psychological suffering. It has not helped us to grow mature in the dimension of love where there is the spontaneous humility to say "maybe the other person is right, maybe I have half truth and he has half truth." If the word "maybe" can arise in our hearts, all this rigidity of insistence and verbal aggression - verbal aggression being the beginning of physical violence - can come to an end.

Life is not an abstraction nor is it a construct of your mind. There is the awareness of totality but not as an abstraction. There is the awareness of the totality and there is the grip on the particular. There is awareness of the time-freeness of eternity and there is the grip on the concept of time, on the symbol of time that we have created. If the grip on the particular and awareness of the whole can go hand in hand, then there will be a new equanimity in the heart and a new balance at the sensual level. Do we not need an inner equanimity in the midst of human relationship? Not an artificially imposed dead peace creating a self-hypnosis out of ideas about God and authority and creating patterns of behaviour and disciplines which create a terrible conflict and a struggle within us, which makes us run away from the facts of our being. Not that, but a spontaneous equanimity which makes us aware that sound is an extension of silence, which makes us aware that silences is as much the substance of Life as sound is, or the words you have manipulated and engineered out of sound are. When you see the beauty of motionlessness then you can move into movement very elegantly, competently, and efficiently.

I wanted to share my approach, as a lay person of science but as a person who has dedicated her life to the science of spirituality, to finding out if there is a common ground between the two. It seems to me the motivation is the same behind science and spirituality - curiosity to find out what is life, what is death, what is the universe. They have common motivation without the acquisitive psychology. It is the religions that have created an acquisitive psychology : 'I must see God, I must experience God, I must have liberation' - they have created concepts and

have made the human race run after them like herds of animals. This is not spirituality. Politicians have created theories and also their conceptual world and the human race runs after them, in economics it is the same.

We must see that there is a structural crisis in the world - inside and outside - and if there is a dialogue between science and spirituality maybe we can get over the inner structural crisis, maybe we can get over the misery, suffering and violence generated by this identification with the concept of "me". The whole misery is based on concept of the "me," of the "ego" and the identification with the concept. The whole structure has continued for thousands of years - that is inner structural crisis.

If we say that we are all doomed to live as prisoners of this thought structure and there is nothing more to us than this repetitive, mechanistic movement of thought, knowledge and inheritance fed into us, then there is the end of inquiry. But if we say that this is a structural crisis, let us explore if there is anything beyond it, let us explore and see if there is anything beyond the inner rigid, crystallized structures that we have equated with the wholeness of our being, then we have a chance and can begin the journey into the unknown.

Science And Spirituality

When scientists conduct their research leading towards an industry of war, using all their inventions for the destruction of their fellow human beings is there any responsibility on the scientists at all? It is a question I am raising. Why is it that the scientist does not stop to think about the implications of his inventions in relationship to human life, its survival and its freedom?

The real moral challenge is whether the spiritualists and scientists can get themselves free of the clutches of their personal ambitions and egos? It seems a valid question to ask whether the spiritualists and the scientists have some kind of ethics or not? Can we develop a new ethos for science?