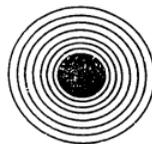


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The Urgency for Self - Discovery



Vimala Thakar





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FIRST TALK. JUNE 1st 1974

Man has become so much used to knowledge, that he does not feel disturbed about the state of ignorance in which he lives. He has become so much addicted to the activity of acquiring information and organizing it systematically, owning it and possessing it in memory very skilfully, that he does not feel concerned whenever in his daily life he comes across his own ignorance.

Ignorance is a lack of understanding. I'm not using ignorance as an opposition to the word knowledge. I would rather like to use the term as a lack of personal understanding. Man has become so much addicted to the activity of acquiring experiences-physical, cerebral, psychological, or even psychic-that he does not feel concerned when he notices that there is a lack of innocence in his behaviour in day-to-day life. He has become used to living absent-mindedly, distractedly, half-heartedly, in a dull mediocre way, that he does not feel disturbed, when he notices that there is a lack of intensity and the depth of passion in his day-to-day relationships. You and I as human beings have become so accustomed to having conflicts and contradictions, the tensions thereof, carrying them from day to day over years, from youth to old age, that it does not much upset us, perturb us when we notice that we hardly ever live in the state of relaxation. This is not being said about the people in Europe, America or Australia; man the world over is living in such a miserable state, whether he lives in an affluent stricken country or a starvation stricken country, whether he lives in a country where there is economic inflation or where it is extremely difficult to have two meals a day.

The relationship of man to knowledge, lack of understanding to experiences, lack of innocency to conflicts, contradictions, lack of the state of relaxation to a distracted, half-hearted way of living and the lack of depth and intensity of passion is just the same the world over.

It is the day-to-day life where you can meet eternity, infinity, or you miss it. There is no other life, but what is before you and me, moving through innumerable forms, shapes and colours around us, moving

through the movements of thoughts and feelings, instincts and impulses, biological urges and psychological compulsions within us. That is life. Life is not something abstract.

I was wondering, if you would like to go into the issue of why man has become so addicted to knowledge and experiences, and why is it, that he does not feel very much concerned; concerned to the extent, that he would like to bring a total radical change in his relationship to knowledge, to understanding, to innocence, to experience.

We have become so accustomed to seeing man die and being born, that we forget our own death, that we forget that the body that is born, that is growing, that is passing from childhood to youth, to old age, is going to die one day. It functions, it operates within the framework of time and space. It is the forgetfulness of man about death, about the beauty and elegance of innocence and relaxation, that does not stimulate a sense of urgency in him at all: a sense of urgency to discover the meaning of life himself, to uncover the secret of living and dying, to probe into the mystery of total relaxation, to explore the dimension of consciousness that is beyond this conditioned mind, which is capable only of knowing or experiencing, remembering, recollecting, reinvoking and reproducing.

We do feel interested in a way, in these matters: what is beyond the mind, what is beyond time, was there life before birth, is there life after death? We have a kind of intellectual curiosity. An intellectual curiosity, being rather shallow, can be satisfied with ideas, with words, with organized information, which we call knowledge. It is not very difficult to gratify intellectual curiosity in the modern days with books, radios, televisions, means of transport within the reach of people. One can travel around, study philosophy, meet the so-called learned people and stuff an innumerable variety of ideas and ideologies into one's brain. That's not difficult. It is comparatively easy to satisfy the emotional need of experiencing, experiencing something unusual, that which is not available in daily relationship, in the place where one is; the family, society, the country where one lives. That does not require much intensity or the dimension of depth. And when intellectual curio-

sity or an emotional impatience for having unusual, rare, extraordinary experiences on the sensual or extrasensory, the occult or astral plane prevail, then one hardly has time to sustain the sense of urgency of personal discovery. For personal discovery, for personal understanding, for a first-hand communion with life as it is, with oneself as one is, a sustained seriousness, a quality of depth is absolutely necessary.

Whenever people feel surprised why there is not the sense of urgency and they talk about it, saying: "Well, we understand these things; the conditioned and unconditioned mind, what knowledge is and its difference from understanding, what innocency is and the elegance of humility is, we understand all that intellectually; it does not bring about a change, it does not result in discovery, it does not have any value, any relative use as far as our daily life is concerned: earning a livelihood, maintaining a family, working at home. As far as all these things are concerned we don't see the relevance of self-discovery, and intellectually understanding facts and things does not carry us very far."

One travels from country to country, one listens to speeches, follows disciplines, makes experiments and yet the bliss of personal discovery, the fragrance of freedom unconditional, the infinity of love - that flower blossoming in the soil of non-duality - is not there.

I hope these days we will look into this issue: why one does not feel the urgency first of all, how does one feel that urgency, and what has self-discovery to do with daily life? You know, instead of talking about abstract things, going into describing and defining what meditation, samadhi, satori, nirwana, and other things are, let us look at our lives as they are, where we are. It's not big words that nourish us, it's not borrowed ideas that give nutrition and it's not the sensation of experiencing something momentarily; may be a vision, may be a glimpse of light, may be a vibration or a wave of sound. The sensation of a momentary experience does not radically change the quality of inner life. Do I feel the urgency, is it something urgent, you know, pressing from inside, from within upon me, and not a sense of urgency being stimulated by circumstan-

ces around me only?

If the sense of urgency is the result of socio-economic or political context only, if it is the result of an outer compulsion one will find out ways of escaping from that external or outer compulsion. One will say: "Well, if I feel that compulsion very much in my country, let me go to another country; if life is too boring in my country, let me fly away to a far distant country, break away from the context of my life, break away from the patterns of relationship that I have in the family, in society". You grow into new patterns. The outer compulsion stimulated by circumstances which are beyond oneself never stimulates the sense of urgency; one can run away from it, one can dodge it, one can ignore it, one can become callous to it or shrink away from it. But when there is an inner compulsion, having a different quality, a different texture, born of the totality of your being, when it moves the body, the mind, the brain and the rest of you very intensely, then you can neither dodge it, nor can you shrink away from it.

I would like to request you to look at the word "urgency" very seriously; the pressing need having much more momentum than the appetite, the thirst, the sleep or the sex urge. Do I feel the urgency to understand what I am, what life is, so that I can move through life around me and the life within me smoothly, harmoniously? Not integrating different fragments and patches of myself, created by conflicting ambitions and mutually exclusive values of life, not integrating those patches, putting them together and standing up pretending to be a total human being; but finding out the inner homogeneity and indivisibility of life which you call the life around you, and the life you call "yourself", the "me", the "I". Understanding what I am, the nature of the complexity of this life, that I call "myself", the relationship of the body to the mind, to the state of being awake and the state of profound sleep; finding out what this is. Is this something that interests me? Is this something that is felt as a primary basic fundamental need?

If I don't know what all this is; the physical, the verbal, the psychological structure that I use, how it functions, how it operates; if I don't know my own

breath, if I have not felt the breathing in and the breathing out, the sound-waves that flow within me and float around me when I speak or listen to other people speaking, if I have not discovered all this, then how is it going to be possible to get related with nature, the animals, the fellow trees and the human beings?

To live is to be related. Relationship is the essence, is the content of life and living. Apart from relationship there can be existence, but not life. In isolation, in withdrawing, in retirement one can exist; but surely existing is not living. You can exist by exploiting nature wrecklessly, thoughtlessly, you can look upon the whole world as a means to keep you alive, but there is no relationship in that state. You are existing by exploiting everything that comes in your way; whether it is nature, the plants, or the human beings, the country, the races, it does not matter. Existence is one thing, which has nothing whatsoever to do with the marvellous phenomenon of relationship.

But life is for living, not only for survival and existence, but for living; the most beautiful, the most simple and therefore, apparently, the most difficult thing. Life is for living, and to live is to be related harmoniously with the things, the situations, the challenges, the human beings with whom you come across, with whom you find yourself.

For being related to others you have to understand what you are. I hope you have seen that we do not understand ourselves. You do not understand the cerebral ways of behaviour that you manifest from morning till night: one minute you are related, excited, another minute you are annoyed, irritated. In the morning you are quiet and peaceful, then something happens and within a fraction of a second there is the wave of anger enveloping you into its momentum and making you do things that are ugly, of which you could feel ashamed the next moment. You have not seen these cerebral waves of behaviour, why they are there, why they have become your habit. You haven't looked at your physical habits also, so you don't know. You go for a walk and you get a headache and you say: "I don't know why there is a headache, why there is a pain in the body", because you have not looked at yourself, not loved

yourself enough to look at all the aspects and understand them as they are; good or bad, pure or impure, clean or unclean, ugly or beautiful, that is immaterial.

But to see it as it is and to be aware of what it is and how it is, that is the foundation for relationships to take place. We have neither relationship with our own bodies and minds, nor even relationship with the words that we speak, and therefore we are not capable of being related to other people. It is self-discovery that first brings about a state of harmony in you, in all the complexity of your being. I wonder if you have noticed this and if you are feeling disturbed about it, or you feel this is the way people live: suspicion, impatience, arrogance, imposing one's judgement upon others, hurting someone by a glance, by a gesture, feeling jealous, comparing oneself incessantly with others and feeling either proud or depressed.

If you look on all this as a way of life and living, then surely you are not entitled to feel disturbed about the violence and bitterness, the fights, the wars, the exploitation and the injustices that take place in the social, economic or political life collectively.

What happens in the economic, the political, the social, what happens on the fringes of the collective life, is only an extension of what is happening in your and my life; individuals are the concrete reality and society, the nation, the race, the country, the community are conceptual extensions of that reality.

Those of us, who see what is happening the world over and who have the sensitivity and alertness, see that this is not the way to live; man does not know how to live, he has not discovered how to live and therefore how to die.

One surely feels the urgency to discover how to live in one's own daily life. To look at the problem academically, theoretically or intellectually is an escape from the responsibility of facing it actually in one's life. When you theorize about a problem, when you rationalize an issue, talk about it academically in the language of philosophy, of science of psychology or parapsychology or what not, then you are escaping from the responsibility of facing

it here and now. Discovery is a direct confrontation and encounter, where academic and theoretical knowledge is only an indirect indulgence in the activity of knowing.

Let us not enter into theories and ideologies; there are wars, fights and battles because man is violent, is aggressive. There are postponements of wars, fights and battles, postponements of crises in global human life, because each individually likes to postpone. Whenever one comes across a crisis within, one likes to cover it up, brush it aside, push it, so that one doesn't have to look at it again. There is exploitation, because you and I individually are greedy. We do not face it as it is. The individual human being carries within himself the total human race in his psyche, in the conditionings that he carries within himself, he is carrying the residue of total human experience and knowledge. He is condensed cosmos himself.

"How will the conflicts and the tensions in the world get eliminated" is a wrong question, unless you are leading a country politically, sitting as a member of parliament or of the cabinet. For you and me, the common human beings, not involved directly into national, international political issues, it will be a wrong question and a wrong approach to the question, to say: "How will there be peace, equality and fraternity in the world?"

Let me find out in myself if there is freedom from violence, from exploitation, from disharmony, from conflicts, from contradictions, all of which result in antisocial behaviour, in doing some damage to my fellow human beings. It requires a tremendous humility to face the questions actually, to face them practically in one's own life. That is the difference between a genuine inquirer and a person who is only intellectually curious to know theories and ideologies. An inquirer has the humility to face the global problems in his own life, in his own being, in his relationships with others to face them there. So, I take it for granted we have come here together to face the problems in our own lives.

That inquiry begins with an unconditional confession to oneself, that I don't know what I am. I really do not understand what I am. I use the word "I", the me the self, the ego. I don't know what profound sleep,

what love, what relaxation is; to say without feeling self-pity, after having lived for forty, sixty or eighty years I have not seen the beauty of love and harmony, humility and innocence - to say this to oneself and to listen to it; not statistically, not in a self-criticizing or self-condemning way, but just as a simple fact. To look at this lack of understanding, lack of wisdom, lack of innocency and relaxation, without a tension of self-pity and frustration, is the beginning. When I say it to myself honestly, not in a melodramatic way, but I have seen it as a simple truth, I have not noticed it before. I thought I knew, because I've read about Hinduism, about Christianity, about Zen-Buddhism, about psychology. And goodness me, I realize I know very much, but I understand little, I progress, I live little. I talk about it but I haven't got the substance. I use the words love, joy and peace, but I don't know. I have only heard about them, I have read about them and I have been imagining, imposing those states imaginatively upon myself. You know, to come face to face with this truth, this penetrating fact, is absolutely necessary, because it transfers the inquirer into the state of not-knowing, not - understanding. Knowledge has not given me understanding, acceptance of the authority of traditions has not given me that understanding; I simply do not understand. To say that, and to be in that state of not-understanding, of not having discovered personally, firsthand, the meaning, is a tremendous event in life.

My friends, you have known me sufficiently for quite a few years in Holland, I come to you as a friend, speaking to you as I have seen life, understood it, and I tell you, after having gone through it, that to be in that state of not-understanding, saying that I don't understand, is a tremendous event. Gone is the tension of the ego that wants to pretend to understand. Gone is the tension of ambition to acquire knowledge. Knowledge can be acquired, understanding cannot be acquired, obtained through ideas, through experiences. There is no currency of experiencing or knowing, that can bring you understanding. It is something that gets born. In the act of communion understanding is born. So, I say to myself "I don't understand". When I say: "I don't

know", my ambitious, vain, proud ego will say: "Come on, I will take you from Holland to India, Nepal, Japan or somewhere and I'll give you a new formula, a new technique, a new thought, a new pattern." But I will say, knowledge has no relevance to personal discovery, and I haven't discovered the meaning. Knowledge has no relevance to understanding, and I don't understand.

First there will be quietening down within oneself, not shrinking, but coming together with one's whole being. Without a tension of expectation and without a tension of depression or pity, one just calms down into the state of not-understanding. It's a beautiful state, because it has no frontiers. One does not rush out to say, how am I going to understand? One just says, let me first look at this state, let me look at my own state of not-understanding. What are the things that I have not understood, what are the things that I have taken for granted, what are the things that I have been wishing, and indulging in wishful thinking, imposing upon myself? What are the things that I've been imitating, and conforming to, without understanding?

One looks at that whole panorama in a relaxed way, because that is going to release the being, release the brain and the body from a number of tensions. The state of knowing, the ambition to know, waiting for more knowledge and more experience, doesn't give me any relaxation. I'm looking out for something, for someone who will give me the ready-made formula, who will give me the theory, the method, the technique. I will wait, I will expect, I will look out, and perhaps I will wander around. When there is a tension of expectation, that expectation can drag you from one corner to the other. It's the mischief of the ego. But to say to oneself that I neither know nor do I understand, I was under an illusion that I understood what Life is. The foundation of inquiry is this intimate encounter with the state of not-understanding, lack of understanding; to look at it, to be with it, to be in it. The second thing that can result is the awareness that when knowledge and experience do not help in understanding the meaning of life or death, the nature of beauty or humility, then obviously there is no one, no other person than myself, who can help

me. Please, do see the significance of this. Other people can help me when there is something to be done physically, when there is something to be done mentally, cerebrally, where knowledge and experiencing have relevance, one can go out and learn. In the realm where knowledge and experience have no relevance whatsoever obviously no one else, living or dead, can bring me to understanding. This is the second invisible chain that breaks down, of which one is set free, when one sees that there is no authority, there is no one outside, independent of me, separate from me, that could work it out for me, that could give it to me. The tendency to look out of oneself, to look at others, to look up to others, that ancient habit of depending upon someone to do something for me, that fades away. It is only when this illusion that someone else could hand it over to me, breaks or shatters, then only the sense of urgency is born. Not till then.

You see, if I would like to develop the physical powers, I can turn to people in the East, or the West, to learn physical culture, occidental or oriental: the Tibetan Yoga, the Caucasian Yoga, the Indian system of Yoga, the Anthroposophical way, a. s. o. there are so many ways of sophisticating the physical structure, making it more and more sensitive, supple, alert. If one has to develop physical powers, stimulate the energy, the glandular, the muscular, the nervous energy, a. s. o. one can find out teachers and learn if one would like to develop the mental powers, the power of the brain, make it more sharp, sharpen the memory, enrich the sensitivity, enable the mind to experience more, to heighten the capacity to experience. One can learn it. One can find out teachers, schools, institutions, organizations and cultivate the physical or the mental powers, that's a different issue altogether. We are talking about understanding. Books can help to know, individuals can help, out of their experience, tradition, to cultivate powers. Can anyone teach me what love is? Can beauty ever be taught, can innocence ever be taught? Life is worth living; there are so many things, that cannot be taught, that cannot be cultivated. You cannot train yourself for that. That cannot be bought with experiences, cannot be borrowed.

This evening we have looked at the fundamentals of the sense of urgency about self-discovery. Why do we not feel the sense of urgency and when one does not feel that sense, how does one set about it? We have to come back to ourselves in love and faith. In humility and relaxation one has to come back to oneself, instead of going away from oneself looking out or looking up to someone else. So, the immediacy of death, the awareness of the immediacy of death, the awareness that one hardly lives one moment without tension or contradiction, the awareness that no one else can give me the beauty of understanding, may stimulate the sense of urgency, the intensity, the depth. Without this intensity and depth the inquiry cannot be conducted. It's not something casual. About theoretical knowledge one can go around, lightly, casually, doing a little to-day and a little next week. It cannot be done piecemeal. It is something into which one has to plunge totally.

About the other aspects we shall talk to-morrow morning. If this evening I could communicate to you, that radical revolution or an inner mutation, or a total transformation are not difficult to come by, but what is difficult, is to have that sustained intensity of inquiry, that passion for self-discovery. We haven't got it because we get satisfied with knowledge, with knowing, with experiencing, with the sensation, we feel satisfied emotionally and intellectually. We feel satisfied by postponing, by brushing aside, by covering up the mess within, and pretending as if it is not something special - that is the way all people live and also I have my share of it. It's taken to be the way of living. We do miss the beauty of living. To live is to be related, and for getting related the awareness of what one is is absolutely necessary. Thank you.

SECOND TALK. JUNE 2nd 1974

I wonder if you have noticed, that knowing is an intellectual activity. To acquire an idea about things, about objects, to acquire an idea about situations, challenges facing the human society, is a cerebral activity.

As you walk, it is really the whole physical structure that walks, but preeminently it is the feet that move and enable you to walk. When you are swimming, it is the movement of the hands and the feet together that enables the whole body to have a relationship with the water and to swim.

In the same way to acquire an idea, a thought, a piece of information, a conclusion, an ideology, is a cerebral activity. It is the brain that moves, the cerebral organ that moves first. It has certain ways of behaviour, certain ways of moving and through making that movement the brain takes the whole physical structure of the human being along with it. The feet carry you over the ground, the movement of the hands and the feet together carry you over the waters, and the cerebral organ carries you over the concepts, ideas, conclusions, theories, ideologies. It enables you to swim in the conceptual or ideational world, to swim across the lake of various symbols that human culture and civilization have evolved the world over. The cerebral organ is the most important instrument for living in the conceptual world, in the world of ideas and of symbols, where you and I are living, living in the civilized world, industrialized, highly technological world. Knowledge is the result of the movements of the brain, the mind. The cerebral organ, located in the head, is connected very intimately with the whole physical structure, it is interwoven glandularly, muscularly and neurologically, it is beautifully woven into the whole physical structure. Ideas, thoughts are more subtle than the objects that you see and touch around you; they are matter, all the same: thought, idea is matter, but it is a very subtle matter. Thought has a form and so have the emotions, the sentiments, the feelings. Thoughts and ideas have words. You haven't come across a thought, which had no word, and every word has a sound. It's a very rich world. The conceptual,

ideational world in which you move with the help of the brain is a very rich subtle and complex world. Living in a highly cultured, civilized, sophisticated, scientifically and technologically advanced society, we do need a very efficient, sound and robust brain, that can take in information, handle it promptly and competently. The activity of knowing, storing that knowledge in memory, and using it when necessary, is an important part of life, from which there cannot be any escape.

We are living in a world to a very great extent made by man. Now we are sitting in this building which is located in these woods, but we have created an enclosure in the space. By these walls and the roof we have manipulated the space and created these rooms, we sit here, we live there. In the same way, the brain creates enclosures of ideas, thoughts, ideologies, values, standards, norms, criteria, opinions, judgements, you know, it creates an enclosure in the infinite space of life. As the concept of time creates an enclosure in eternity, in the immeasurability of life, ideas and thoughts create an enclosure, and man lives in it.

There is the life outside, as there is the space outside. There is space outside and here is the space enclosed with walls. Man through culture and civilization has created a society enclosed with the idea of a race, a nation, a country, colour, creed, sex, philosophy, the idea of psychology, of religion, various enclosures on the conceptual level, and within these enclosures of ideas, concepts and symbols lives the human race.

Look at the responsibility that we have to understand this man-made world - the conceptual, the ideational - through the exercise of the brain. It's a marvellous capacity to deduce a conclusion from an event, to react to an event emotionally and convert the event into an experience.

But we must be aware that we have to live on two levels: the conceptual, ideational level in the man-made society, and in the non-conceptual, non-ideational reality that is outside the conceptual. As outside the enclosure of our houses and homes there is the immeasurable space - the skies, the earth, the animals, they are as real as our houses, although they are outside, and without them life would be

meaningless. It would not have any richness, it would be very poor, if we had to live only in the house; that's the difference between a prison and a house.

If we only open the windows here and there, and look out, then we will miss the beauty of living. In the same way, if we look out on life only through the windows of our opinions and judgements and never move out of the cerebral world, the world of symbols, out of these conceptual ideational decorations, however beautiful and elegant they may be, then we will miss the beauty of living.

This morning, I don't know how far I will be able to share it with you, but I would like to share with you this simple fact, that we have to live in a very complex way. First, in the immediate physical world that we have; the biological organism, most evolved and most complex form of life - the beauty of the human body - we have to live in it and with it the most intimately. We cannot rely upon knowledge or information, and handle the body according to this information. We have to listen to the body, watch it, be with it, look at it. Not only as a means of sensual pleasure, of acquiring occult, astral, spiritual or, God knows what, experiences, but as the most intimate manifestation of life with which we have to live, till one day we drop away in death.

It is not information or the cerebral movement that will give us acquaintance or friendship with our body. We'll have to watch it sensitively, alertly, listen to it, so that the body could hold dialogues with us; asking for food when hungry, refusing it if the food is forced upon it, asking for water, demanding sleep, or relaxation, or rest. See the intelligence of the body: it can talk to us, it can ask for things, it can become our companion (not a slave, a servant, a boss, an idol to be worshipped, not only the outer form and the beauty - though there is nothing wrong in developing a symmetrically proportioned, aesthetically elegant, and beautiful body; that is up to the cultural taste of the individual). One has to get acquainted with this physical structure, to find out its behaviour in waking hours as well as in sleeping hours, to find out its behaviour when the brain moves and goes through emotions, sentiments, feelings, the reaction of the body to thoughts, to sentiments and

feelings.

It's a great romance to watch and get acquainted with the behaviour of your own outer form, the physical. It is not less divine than the inner only because it is visible and tangible, it doesn't happen to be less sacred than the so-called immeasurable and the unnamable. It is the manifestation of the immeasurable, the unnamable in a form, that is going to be with you for twenty, forty, sixty, eighty years. It is the responsibility to learn about the ways of behaviour of the body; it may have idiosyncrasies, inherited from the parents - various ways of behaviour, absorbed from society. One has to watch them, so that one can be aware of those ways of behaviour, one can be aware of the needs of the body.

You know, awareness is the movement of intelligence. It is not a movement of the intellect, not of the brain. It is a response of the whole being to the communion with a fact. Let us go one step further. It is a response of the whole being to the event of understanding that takes place in the communion. That is one aspect; to get acquainted with the physical, to get friendly with it, so that there is a harmony on the physical level. The body co-operates when we listen to it and we take care of it; not pampering it, not neglecting nor ignoring it. It can be ignored just as much in the name of sensual pleasure, as it can be neglected in the name of austerity and self-denial. The cult of indulgence is as dangerous and damaging as the cult of denial and suppression or repression. Let there be no mistake about it. Being friendly with the body, with the physical form, having concern, affection, a kind of respect, then the intelligence contained in the body, in the nerves, the fibres, your muscles, your glands, everything co-operates with you. It does not let you down if you do not insult and humiliate it. The second aspect is to find out the movement of the brain. We are coming to the realm of knowledge before we proceed to the realm of "transknowing" or "transconceptual" life, the "isness" of life. We'll come to that. So the second responsibility as we grow from childhood upward is to get acquainted with the man-made, conceptual and ideational world. I, for one, would never look down upon the content

of civilization and culture, upon the conditionings that man has developed through centuries.

You get conditioned by the socio-economic context, the climate, the weather, by the occupation that you have for earning a livelihood, by the nature of your relationships; marriage, not-marriage, celibacy, too much indulgence in sensual or sexual pleasure, fastings, or too much indulgence in food, self-denial or a greedy, jealous life out of constant comparison of oneself with others.

One has to find out the conceptual and ideational, or this enclosure made with symbols in which the brain has to live.

Do what you will, you cannot eliminate the conditionings from the mind. You cannot strip the mind of knowledge, you cannot peel it off. I get acquainted with the content of my conditionings, but not as a problem. For heaven's sake let us not look upon the conditionings as problems and condemn them by calling them problems, calling them bondage.

Conditionings are not the content of bondage, but accepting the authority of conditioning is the beginning of bondage. If we call conditioning the bondage, then man will turn away from culture and civilization. He will turn away from the wealth of symbols that he has created through centuries.

It is the ignorance about the nature of conditionings that can do harm, or accepting the authority of the conditionings that can damage the harmony, that can close you in and isolate you from the rest of life.

Because after all the conditionings, the patterns of behaviour, the ways of behaviour that different races, religions and cultures developed, were meant to give more convenience to man in collective life. For the convenience of communication languages have come into existence. For the convenience of communication the science and the art of music, of sculpture, of poems, was developed. Communication would be impossible if there were no symbols. So, symbols are nothing to be worshipped and nothing to be afraid of. Conditionings are nothing to worship or to be frightened of. They are there. You cannot kill the mind. There is nothing wrong with the mind. knowledge, or experience, provided one has seen the content of knowledge, the content of experience and has seen the limitations, has seen the relative use,

utility, and has seen how it is a man-made enclosure. Now what do we mean by accepting the authority of conditionings? We are coming back to the point where we were last evening. We accept the authority of knowledge, not only for enabling us to deal with the man-made world, but to deal with the whole of life. Acceptance of the authority of knowledge and experience as a measurement, to measure the whole of life, is the beginning of misery and sorrow. Knowledge is relevant to the man-made world. Knowledge and experience is relevant to the collective relationships as far as they are concerned with time and space. You need knowledge to build houses, roads. You need the help of science and technology to travel around, to produce more, to eliminate the starvation from the face of the earth, to help the illiterate to become literate, to help the uninformed to acquire information, and organize it systematically.

Acquiring information, storing it into memory, going through experiences and being able to deduce conclusions from those experiences, all this is vitally necessary for living in the conceptual and ideational world, for communication with human beings. Mind you, I have not said "communion"; verbal communication, physical communication, we are still on that level, communication through words, communication through gestures.

But knowledge or knowing, experiencing, being a partial, fragmentary activity, being the movement of the brain first, stimulate a sympathetic movement in the chemical and neurological system; the feelings or the sentiments evoked, stimulated, by a thought, by a word, by an idea, are sympathetic movements of the chemicals in the body. They come a second after a thought, an emotion has come, then the nerves join in, the chemicals contained in various organs of the body, the kidneys, the liver, the intestines, pancreas gland, various glands, muscles, all of them join the brain in that movement: either stimulating a tension or stimulating fear and shrinking within or suspending activity altogether. It follows the brain, it follows the thought, the idea, the word, the sound; the whole being then follows. It is not a homogeneous movement of the whole, it is not the response of your total being, but it is the brain leading the rest of the body.

is a disorder within me, if I go on collecting information without ever translating it into my daily life, then the collection of ideas, thoughts, ideologies, information stored in memory, becomes like undigested food in the body, it can poison me. So I'll be very careful when I go on reading books or attending lectures. I will see if I am interested in it. If what I read has a relevance to my practical day to day life. What happens to the knowledge after I have read a book? Does it rust in the memory, do I want to keep it as a decoration of the memory, just to be shown off to people, never to be translated into my life, never being experimented upon, never to be explored as to its validity? Then knowledge is a very dangerous thing to play with.

It is undigested food that creates more sicknesses than starvation or lack of food does. It can release its toxins, you know, poisons, gradually affecting the whole body. In the same way, if I am very ambitiously travelling from book to book, author to author; teacher to teacher, wandering around in search of ideas and just keeping them without ever experimenting with them, then that knowledge is bound to become a bondage, because it is a possession of the ego. It is acquired out of ambition, stored in memory out of greediness. Such undigested knowledge hardly results in wisdom or even in developing the capacity of intuition. I acquire information where it is necessary. When the information is acquired I test the validity by experimenting, by exploring, by translating it into action.

If I allow any incentives to be forced upon me between knowledge and its implementation, then I am adding a complication. I hope you see my point. We store knowledge and then we say we require incentive to implement that knowledge into action. I read all the philosophies, the scriptures of all the religions, the lives of all the prophets and the mystics, Christian and Hindu and Buddhist and what not. I read all that. I feel very nice, sublimated, elevated, when I read those, and I keep those books on the shelves saying: "They were prophets, and philosophers. Here I am, I will live my life as I was living before". Then I require incentives, economic incentives for productive labour, incentives for political behaviour, incentives of astral or occult power for learning

Knowledge and experience stimulating emotions, sentiments and feelings, should not be mistaken for the total response born of intelligence, that is not divided into intellectual and emotional reactions; it is not divided by time through a fraction of a moment; it is not divided in time like the thought first and the feeling afterwards; or the feeling first and the thought afterwards, the word first and the fear coming after it. You know, on the intellectual level the movement is in sequence, though it is very quick and you find it difficult to feel the sequence or the time lag between the word and the emotion, the thought and the emotional reaction. Unless you watch it carefully, you do not catch the time lag between the two. Through culture and civilization man has acquired the skill to react quickly; the cerebral, the neurological, the chemical movement, that goes in such fast succession. Knowing and experiencing is a fragmentary and partial movement, creating its own tensions, shrinking, suspensions of movements, a. s. o.

But one has to have a sound and robust brain to be able to live in this mad society, to be able to cope with the changing situations in our life, the economic and the political; the situations that are changing so very fast, that the very change is a burden. The technological advances are so quick, so fast: man landing on the moon, going to Mars, trying to make connections with other planets, the nuclear age. Man is surrounded with situations, challenges, consumer goods, the patterns of which change very quickly. And if you have a weak brain, not properly taken care of, not kept robust and healthy and sound, then there are chances that we break down while moving in relationships. How and when to acquire an idea, how to store it in memory and to invoke it, reinvolve it and use it skillfully, that has to be learned. How to use the brain, the physical and cerebral organs carefully, skillfully and efficiently, I think, that is one of the purposes of education. Before I proceed to the non-cerebral area, or the area of understanding, may I share with you one more point. It seems to me two things are very badly needed: to keep the brain in health and robustness, to keep it in soundness, and the brain requires order, it cannot function in disorder. If there

techniques of Tantra Yoga, concentration, Mantra, a. s. o., moral incentives, ethical incentives for a clean or pure life, a religious fear or compulsion to keep me in innocence a. s. o.

Between knowledge and my daily life I add a complication of incentives, and a class, who interprets the incentives, the class of priests, everywhere, in every religion, whether the priests are political or religious, whether they talk in the name of theology or political science or economic philosophy, just the same. They come in between the human beings and their lives. So you create an authority of specialization, you create the authority of experts in the name of psychology, theology, economy a. s. o. Knowledge, implementation, in between the incentive and those who will codify the incentive, determine the order of priorities in the incentive, dictate them unto us, impose them upon us, you know, the whole game. Exploitation of individuals in the name of economic, political, religious, spiritual life begins, and I invite that exploitation by authorities when I go on storing knowledge without ever caring to see whether I am interested in living it.

Life is for living, not only for acquiring. Acquisition has a relevance, utility, and beauty where it is for living. You have to acquire a livelihood - food, clothing, housing - but have finished with it. When you know the way of doing it, you don't create an issue and go on with bothering, worrying, brooding, feeling anxious about it. When your life long you only think about food, clothes, new fashion in clothes, new cars, new houses, new television-sets, then it will eat into the vital energy and won't allow you to do anything else at all.

If they are given undue importance, disproportionate importance, and disproportionate energy, time and vitality is consumed for the acquisition and ownership of those, then one day we depart from the world empty-handed and empty-hearted, not having the satisfaction of having lived in love, in communion with things or beings around us. And there are no things, there are all the beings, you know, even the minutest particle of matter is a being. It has a movement of energy in it. There is no matter without energy. And man, who has various forms of energy working in his body and mind, has to live

with all the beings outside his body. You have the physical energy, you have the verbal energy of sound of the word. It's an energy, the sound energy that you produce, you have the thought energy, you have the energy from emotions, feelings. Man has to live with all these various movements of energy.

One acquires knowledge in relevance to his action of living, then knowledge does never become a burden. You read, you learn, you assimilate the essence and that assimilation converts the knowledge into your substance of being. Don't you know, you buy rice or wheat or mais or corn, you bring it home and then you have to cook it. In the same way, when you acquire information and bring it home, it has no nutrition by itself, but when you begin to live it, then the very act of living brings out the validity, the life, the meaning in that word. The meaning is the essence, the substance of the word; the letters, the accents, the intonations, the vibrational range of the sound is the outer form; the meaning is the inner life. Every word has got it. So when you begin to live it, then only you have a communion with the meaning. Otherwise you have knowledge like a packet of rice bought from a shop and kept in your house.

The disorder that we have - and most of us do live in a disorderly way: intellectual disorder and emotional disorder, emotional chaos and anarchy among the various thoughts that we have gathered - it is the disorder that makes the cerebral movement a bondage. It can become a curse when there is disorder. There is fear of the thought when there is inner disorder.

We were saying, that to let the brain remain, live, in sound health, vital energy and alert sensitivity, one has to have an order in the very act of acquiring knowledge. And when you refer it back to memory, not putting it as you put things in a lumber-room, in a basement, one has to find out what is the relation of this piece of information that I have acquired with the whole of my life, to correlate it with the whole of my life, to the needs and the ways of my whole being. It is the action of correlating that results in an inner order.

When we do not correlate what we acquire to the total of our own life, to the requirements of the

total being, then there will be disproportionate acquisition. Greed in acquisition, whether it is on the physical plane or psychological plane is bound to result in fear, in anxiety: "have my ideas become out of date, are they worn out, have they become out of fashion, are there better ideas, who is the latest thinker, philosopher or spiritual leader in fashion, shall I go and listen to him?", as we are afraid that the fashion or the hairdo, the clothes, will become out of date and we are on the look out, watching. The relation of the clothes to my physical needs becomes secondary, but the desire and greed for acquiring the latest, the most fashionable - and you know the fashionable when you begin to compare what you have with others and what they have - it's a comparative approach that feeds the jealousy and the greed, that leads to aggression, fear, violence or cowardice. Please do see it. See it with me as a comparative approach stimulating ambition, feeding jealousy, anger, causing aggression or cowardice. These are not theories, this is how I have seen it. If one is very casual about knowing and experiencing, then there will be such a heavy burden of not understood information, undigested information, un-lived emotions, un-tasted feelings and sentiments. One would become attached to novels, fictions, television, where one can live those emotions and sentiments second-hand, vicariously. That's why people like suspense fiction. They live their desire for violence through the characters that are shown in the television film. To live that violence, that aggression, that bloodshed in one's own life, hurts the aesthetic sensitivity. Somewhere there is the violence, somewhere there is the aggression, one cannot live it, one doesn't dare to live it. One is living a very sophisticated life. One sits in the room, watches the films on television, the bloodshed, the aggression, the terror, the suspense, the fiction and somewhere, some aspect of the being feels gratified, a kind of release. Un-lived feelings, un-tasted emotions and sentiments will always keep the person on the look-out to live them vicariously, to live them second-hand, to feel gratified by seeing them being lived by others.

If violence, aggression, terror, suspense had not gratified some parts of your or my being, there

would not be so much bloodshed, aggression and violence in the world. It is we, individually, who keep it alive - whether it is in the Middle-East or between India-Pakistan or in Vietnam or among the negroes and the whites in the United States of America. If you and I individually had succeeded in relating ourselves to sex, to the sex-instinct, to the sex urge - sex in relation to total life - then there would not be such an obsession with sex to-day. If the whole of civilization was allowed to grow sex-centred, instead of sex orientated, then it would be converted into a civilization or a culture centred only on the sex instinct and the sex urge. It is the lack of our harmony with that instinct, with that urge, our ignorance, our dodging sex either condemning it too strongly or giving in to it too casually - that creates the complications.

Disorder is not a problem, it is a result of greedy, ambitious acquisition of knowledge and experience. It is a result of storing everything in memory without ever correlating the one thing to the other. Unless you correlate and find out what is relevant and what is irrelevant - not what is bad and good, not what is good and evil - to the totality of one's life, what is relevant to the harmony of one's being, and what is otherwise, unless one finds that out there cannot be order.

If you will excuse me I may require a few minutes more than the scheduled time, as I'm not looking upon these talks as formal talks. These are very intimate communications with friends, who have taken the trouble of coming here and spending the week-end.

So the second factor necessary for helping the brain to remain in health is the sensitivity and alertness not to postpone action. I read a book, I listen to a talk, I participate in a discussion, I know something, I understand something and then I say: "Well, I understand, but this is not the time yet - when I retire, then I will live according to my understanding." We allow a time lag between the understanding and the action, the knowledge and implementation. Between knowledge and implementation we had brought incentives, between understanding and action we bring various considerations, various justifications, in the name of responsibilities. We

don't feel committed to live, to life. We feel committed to society, to the country, to the ambitions that one has created, the acquisitions one has stored. One who is committed to live, committed to life, one who loves life and has an urge to live, he will not allow considerations to come between understanding and action. He will let the understanding flow into the daily relationships without worrying about the consequences.

There is disorder when I understand things and not let the understanding flow into my daily life. I want to protect daily life from my own understanding and I calculate when I should implement the understanding into actual life without putting fences around me from my own understanding.

When there is no postponement of action, when one has the humility to let the understanding flow into action, come what may, then living becomes a movement of understanding action, action enriching understanding a. s. o. Then there is no disorder, then the brain is not sluggish. You need tremendous innocence to let the understanding result in immediate action, instantaneous action. The understanding wants to burst open into action immediately, but we say: "no, not yet."

Let us be mercilessly honest to ourselves and find out how much we have been postponing. Disorder is due to the time lag between the understanding and action, knowledge and implementation; on the cerebral plane knowledge and implementation, on the non-cerebral plane understanding and action. We resist the understanding. Look at the tragedy of human life; spending much time and energy to understand and when it creates its own compulsion, its own momentum, then we try to resist it in the name of family, in the name of society, in the name of God knows what.

Let the brain be in health and sound robust condition to acquire ideas precisely, to store them in an orderly way and be able to recollect and use them accurately.

When accuracy and precision in reception, retention and reinvention are taken care of, then we turn to the third portion; that knowledge is relevant to the man-made world. Knowledge is relevant to the world of concepts, ideas and symbols, but life is much

vaster than all the concepts and ideas, than all the knowledge and experiences of the total human race. Life is much vaster than your ideas about the ancients days or your ideas about the future.

Time is a symbol that you have created, to measure eternity: with your days and years and centuries.

Man is trying to measure infinity, but the yard-stick is not the piece of cloth. When you measure a piece of cloth and you say that it is two yards or five yards or metres, the cloth is not the measurement, the eternity of life is not the measurement of eternity. Eternity is the immeasurable, indivisible "isness" of life. Eternity is not an abstract idea somewhere out there, it is here between you and me, the "isness" of life, indivisible. It explodes in what you call the present moment.

I hesitate to use the word "present", because the present is in relation to the past or the future. Again it's a man-made conceptual word: the present, the past, the future, the yesterdays, the to-morrows. We have to use them very carefully. When you know the false as the false, then the false cannot bind you. When you know the symbols as conditionings and use them in their relative field of utility, then they do not constitute a bondage. But when you mistake time for the timeless, symbols for reality, the conditionings for freedom, then the misery, the sorrow begins.

Life is much vaster. The death of the physical is not the end of the whole of life and the birth of a physical form is not the beginning of life. As the waters of the ocean are always there, sometimes they express themselves in the form of waves, sometimes in tiny delicate ripples, sometimes into furious storms. The "isness" of life sometimes manifests itself into the event of a birth or a death, they are events. Look at that vast life; beyond the concepts, beyond the symbols, beyond the enclosures created by the total human race: the Vedas, the Upanishads, the Dhammapadas, the Koran, the Bible, the Zend-Avesta, all the scriptures put together, the Chinese, the Japanese, the Brown, the White, the Black, everything put together.

We have to come now to the third aspect, Man's relation to the non-conceptual or transconceptual world. When you accept the authority of knowledge,

you feel that knowledge can measure the infinity of life, you feel that sensual activity or occult activity can measure the infinity of life, then the trouble begins.

We have been busy with knowledge and experiencing and to-morrow morning we will go into the realm of the non-cerebral energy operating within us, around us, to live in the non-cerebral, in the transconceptual, transideational realm of life, to be with the vastness of life, to be with the infinity of life, as we are with the self-consciousness to-day on the cerebral plane, we live in the centre of the "I", the "me", the "ego". It is possible to be in the space of life where there is no centre as the "me", the "ego", where there is no centre and therefore no periphery, no circumference, there is no centre and therefore no enclosure. Life has no enclosures. Enclosures with the urge for security is an invention of the human mind.

DISCUSSION, JUNE 2nd 1974

Q. Can you say some words about the use of Hatha-Yoga in the process of getting acquainted with the body? Or is Hatha-Yoga only a purification of the body.

V. Hatha-Yoga happens to be one of the ancient sciences, developed and sophisticated through centuries in India. It is not an easy or a simple science. It is related to astronomy, it is related to Ayur-Veda the science of the herbal medicinal system, it is related to Atharva-Veda, the basic science of music, classical music, related of course to the Vedas and the Upanishads as regards the comprehensive perspective of life a. s. o. It's a very complex science. It helps a person to get acquainted not only with the body, the physical structure, but also with the mind. Patanjali Yoga, the authentic book on Hatha-Yoga, codified in 553 B. C. is the foundation of Indian psychology.

One who studies Hatha-Yoga, theory and practical together, gets acquainted with the body as well as the mind: the conscious, the subconscious, the unconscious, included in the term mind. When one learns the practical aspect of Hatha-Yoga, the very learning is an education in purifying the whole being. It's a very interesting way of education, while you educate, purification results as a by-product of that learning. A logical and a necessary by-product, whether you learn the Asanas or you learn Pranayama or whether you go into the issue of Nada, sound and its metaphysics of sound-waves, sound-energy and light-energy in relation to profound sleep and the state of being awake a. s. o. So, acquaintance, purification, and education are not separate aspects. The moment you begin to learn about Hatha-Yoga, all these take place as a homogeneous process of education. I think this is sufficient as far as the question goes.

Q. The educational programme to-day is based on acquiring knowledge. Don't you think, that this is wrong for young people?

V. Education as a hand-made of the governments the world over has the purpose, the goal, the objective of producing citizens on a large scale, equipped to maintain the status quo of society - the social,

the economical, the political, the cultural - to equip them in such a way. that they will satisfy the needs of the state.

It is not so only here in Europe, it is the same perhaps in the developing countries of Asia and Africa or the Middle-East. They are doing it with vengeance. The word education has been narrowed down to such an extent.

Acquisition of information has a role to play in life, acquisition of knowledge is not a curse, it is not something evil. It is necessary, but that is not the end, that is not the totality, that is only one part of education - to learn languages, geography, ecology, biology, different sciences, natural and applied sciences. Haven't they got their beauty - music, art, dance, sculpture? Hasn't technology a role to play in life? Acquisition of knowledge has a relative utility, but that is not the essence of education. That's the minor part.

Education is not for stuffing in information, feeding it into the brain - physical or psychological ways of behaviour, organized and standardized cerebral ways of behaviour - education is not meant only for that. That is the misery of to-day that the governments, the educationists and we the parents, the citizens, do not see what is at stake when we allow such educational systems to continue and when we do not create a decent and peaceful compulsion in the situation, so that a radical change takes place in the whole educational approach. Unless we do this the world over, I don't see how a real human being will develop as a whole, not-divided, not-fragmented, human being.

There is another aspect, the missing link, that in the present educational systems, the world over, we do not introduce the children to what the mind is, to what a thought is. We do not introduce them to the anatomy of the mind and brain or the chemistry of emotions and thoughts. to the modus operandi of their own minds, not introducing them right from childhood to the nature of thoughts and emotions and feelings, not introducing them to silence as well as to speech.

After all speech is an extension. the substance of speech is silence, the substance of movement is the inner peace. If there is no inner peace and unity.

then the movements have no life, they are lifeless, they are mechanical. Movement is an extension of the inner unity, while speech and music are an extension of silence. We must introduce the children to silence as well as to speech, to sound as well as to the soundless, to time as well as to the timeless.

To-day it is a lop-sided growth, because children are not introduced to solitude, to silence, to humility to the awareness of the unity of life a. s. o. There are so many things to be done.

When somebody asks me "Is it not wrong, are the young people, the young children, not led astray or on a wrong path by the educationists?" then I think, we the elders are attached to our ideologies and we want to transmit those ideologies, those ways of living, to the children, carry them over to them in some way or the other. That is why the urgency for changing the whole educational approach is not felt by us. We see it intellectually, we see the necessity.

There are young men and women practically in every country who are turning away from the present approach to education, they are groping, experimenting a. s. o. Is it what the questioner had wanted to ask?

I am responding to the formulation and the wording of the question and I can't do anything more.

Q. When one looks at the world and people around us and at ourselves, we know we must change and yet I perceive within myself no urgency. I seem to postpone and I'm a prisoner of my way of thinking. I seem to make it a kind of stimulation.

V. Now we have to look at this question very carefully, because it does not seem to be a question of one particular individual, perhaps it is the case with most of us.

We see the conditions around us. We look at the way people are living around us, the societies in our countries or in the other. We see the violence, the anger, the bitterness, the wars, the craving for having more and more of money or power, security, though insecurity erupts every other day in every other field of activity.

We do not feel the urgency for total transformation. We do not feel the urgency to let it happen to me in

my life. Why is it so? We have to look at this question, because maybe it is so with you or with me. Could it be, that we have read in books and have been told by people that such transformations, such revolutions or mutations take place in the lives of a chosen few? Do we look upon such transformations that have happened in the lives of people, living or dead, as the personal achievement or attainment of that individual?

Or do we look upon the mutation and the dimension of new consciousness as the consummation of human growth within the reach of all of us?

I hope we see, we appreciate the difference. If we look upon the state of samadhi or meditation in the lives of some - Aurobindo, Ramana, Ramakrishna, Buddha, Krishnamurti - do we look upon the state of liberation, the state of freedom as a personal achievement, attainment of an individual, or do we look upon it as a dimension of consciousness which is only a consummation of human growth?

If we look upon that as a personal acquisition, achievement or attainment, we will begin to look up to those individuals, saying that they are exceptional people, it could happen to them through the grace of God and we, the poor people, are not the choicer, the privileged. It cannot happen to us. At best we can look up to those in whose lives it has happened, accept their authority. We can see the validity of what a person is saying. We can see the authenticity of the words, words that are born of the person's life, they are really true.

Authority is quite a different thing. Then I identify the individual with the total reality and I say: "that is the only way, there is no other way". The moment I look upon freedom, liberation, mutation, transformation as an acquisition of individuals, I have excluded myself from those extraordinary, chosen, special people and say "poor me, I'm just a commoner, it cannot happen to all of us". This has been hammered into the human brain, at least in those parts of the world where I was born and brought up.

To look upon the state of meditation or freedom as a dimension, a new dimension, a non-cerebral dimension, the birthright of every individual, within the reach of every individual, irrespective of what kind of conditionings he has gone through - unless we see

this as a new dimension, there will not be the feeling, the sensitivity for it, we will be looking upon it as something very far away from us. So even when there is an inquiry in our heart it won't have the push behind it, because we feel this is not for us. The sense of urgency may be getting blocked because of this.

Could it be that we have read or heard that for such a transformation one has to give up everything? Have we been told wrongly, incorrectly informed, that one has to turn away from relationships, responsibilities at home, and withdraw into isolation? Have we created a dichotomy between the practical, the daily life - of working at home or in the office, earning a livelihood, doing the shopping, washing and sewing the clothes - and the so-called spiritual life? Have we been told or have we read that we must give up this daily life and create another set of conditions, go into different kinds of circumstances, and that then only transformation can take place? If such a dichotomy has been imposed upon the unity of life, calling a spiritual life as separated from a material life, secular life independent of religious life a. s. o., if that has been the case, then the biological demands - the pressures of the instincts, hunger, thirst, sex, sleep, the need for companionship, the need for communication, all those needs - are very real. They are related to tangible, visible objects and human beings and we feel their demand, we feel their pressure, we feel their momentum. The other demand is in relation to the invisible, the intangible and this demand is not felt. The demand of the physical, the material, the tangible, the visible becomes so strong that it blocks the way of the sense of urgency.

After all, this is a very expensive illusion, to imagine that life can be divided into secular and spiritual, religious and mondain, spiritual and material a. s. o.

Life is one homogeneous whole. It is indivisible. Whether you move a finger or you move verbally and utter a word, or you throw a glance at someone, you are effecting your total life as well as the total life of the other person. Wherever you touch life, you are touching the whole of it. You can't say cooking a meal is a material activity, listening to a talk is a spiritual activity, closing your eyes and sitting

down in some posture is a spiritual activity, and washing and ironing the clothes is a material, secular activity. This is a very expensive illusion, it's a myth and that myth has become so deep-rooted in all of us, that we feel here and now it is the material that is important, the rest can wait till to-morrow, till next year, till old age; and the to-morrow never comes.

One has to learn that life is one homogeneous whole and every movement effects, pollutes and contaminates the whole or it can make the whole more sensitive.

May be the sense of urgency is not there due to a number of myths and illusions that have been handed down by tradition, or could it be due to one more factor? We could look at so many factors, but this is not a discourse upon that. We are taking up various questions this evening, so I can't go into all the details. One could look at it as a sketch, an outlined map. Or could it be that I have been told that unless I accept the authority of some master, a teacher or a guru, the revolution or the transformation cannot take place? "You must have a guru, you must have a master". Is it that we have read about it, that we have heard about it and we have accepted it as a solemn truth? The notions, the myths, the illusions, that have been handed down generation after generation are the psychological inheritance. They are not consciously absorbed, acquired or assimilated by us, but they are there. The sense of urgency does not come up, does not burst out as a song from my heart, or as a flame purifying my whole life, doesn't gush out like a mountain stream, because I have been told "by myself, on my own, it cannot happen to me". So I'm waiting. I wait to meet someone, to find out someone, so that he will lead me by the hand, he will grant it to me, or transfer his own powers to me. He will do something to me.

Are we waiting for that? Is that the expectation subconsciously, unconsciously, lurking somewhere in the mind? Then obviously the sense of urgency cannot come. You'll excuse me for going into a story, but as I said this morning, this is an informal getting together. "A world-known teacher was having a meal with some of his friends and one of his friends said to him: "Sir, we are not free because

of you. We give up all authority: the authority of the scriptures, of the religions, of tradition, everything but on the other hand we are holding very strongly on to you. We are clinging on to you with one hand, but we give up authority with the other. We feel we have you here. We are willing to give up everything, provided there is some assurance that "giving up" will bring us something in return that we want". And the teacher smiled sadly and he said: "Look, high up in the Himalayas there was a Buddhist monk and he had a very beautiful wooden idol of the Buddha. He had carved it out of a piece of wood, polished it, worshipped it for ages. And one winter-night, it so happened, that when he came out of his daily meditations at midnight he found that the cave was extremely cold. There was a biting bitter cold. So he wanted to make a fire, but there was no wood. So the monk started pacing up and down the cave looking at the image of the Buddha. In the end he took the image broke it into pieces, made a fire with it and kept himself alive. And so the teacher continued saying: "If that is the authority, break the authority into pieces".

Unconditional freedom is the birthright of human beings. It is the natural consummation of human growth provided it is not fragmentary, partial, provided it is total.

The urgency may not be there, because acceptance of authority in some form or other is lurking somewhere in the mind. We try to cover it up, hide it, brush it aside, but it is there. You cannot wish away the inheritance that is there. One has to look at it, understand it, it is the understanding that resolves the inheritance. Not knowing about it, but a personal encounter, an understanding of the implications, takes away all the dynamism out of those inheritances, conditionings. They are left there without a sting. They are like dead ashes. They are there, but have no strength to distort the perception or twist the response. The lack of urgency is not a problem. We have to see why the urgency is not there, otherwise we will get involved in finding out technics, methods, formulas, some new way, some new pattern for stimulating urgency. I hope you see my point.

I see. I understand that there is no urgency and I

now say I must create it, I must find out some method, some technics to stimulate it. The sense of urgency is not the result of a physical or a mental activity. It is a natural consequence of understanding the content of our life, of our way of living. Now the person says, and perhaps the questioner is speaking for all of us, "Well, I see this and yet I go on postponing and I get a kind of stimulation out of it".

My dear friends, it is not only the postponement of that critical issue or critical decision or action, but postponement is our habit. We postpone doing things in the right time, in the right manner, putting things in their right places, at the right moment. We do them later on, we look at them later on, we read about them later on. So this idea of "later on" and habit of postponement are like cancer in the blood. This habit of postponement is a fertile soil for many complications.

Why do I have this habit of postponement? Is it because I believe that there is a to-morrow? Haven't I looked at what psychological time is? Have I looked at what time is - by the watch, by the mind, by the notion, by the concept? What is this time? The seconds, the minutes, the days, the weeks that I count, have they reality outside the human mind? Is there any time outside the human mind at all, or is time and the measurement of todays, yesterdays or centuries, pasts and futures, like a painting on the canvas of eternity? They are there. In the psychological structure of man it is there as an idea, it has a conceptual reality, and it's a beautiful thing. You can use it: by the watch it is eight o'clock, therefore I am here.

Awareness of the timeless gives an edge to the competence and efficiency in using that which is within the framework of time and space. The awareness of the infinite and eternity makes you extremely sensitive in your relation to the moment that is here and now. The awareness of the total puts you in correct perspective of the particular, that's the beauty of it. Otherwise who would talk about the timeless, the immeasurable, the unnamable? The awareness of the invisible and the formless makes you very sensitive about the forms, the shades, the colours, because you are aware they are

not going to last. The flower that you see this moment is not the flower that you will see this evening. So you look at it totally, you look at it sensitively. The person that is with you may not be alive to-morrow morning, so when you are with the person, you listen to him, you look at him carefully, with concern. Not saying: "I'll see to-morrow, doesn't matter if my words hurt and annoy him or her to-day, we'll make it up to-morrow". The to-morrow never comes. What is, is now and here, what you call the present. The habit of postponement cannot be dealt with directly, saying: "I will take a vow not to postpone, I'll make a time-table and behave according to the time-table". The time-tables and the schedules will be put in the drawers of the table as the children do when they are at school. When they go to a boarding-school or to a university they find out the syllabus. They make a time-table: this study this week, the remainder the next week; everything is written down systematically. If you read those papers you'll be surprised and say: "what a conscientious boy, what a conscientious student". But the student thinks: there are twelve months, it doesn't matter. He is very sensitive about the whole thing for a week, two weeks or perhaps four weeks, and then the habit of postponement steps in: next month, after the vacation, after Whitsun vacation, a. s. o. The habit of postponement cannot be counteracted by rules, regulations, artificially imposed upon oneself. The habit of postponement is the result of a maladjustment with the concept of time. As the lack of urgency is a consequence of something else, if you get busy with tackling the lack of urgency and finding out techniques and methods, the real issue will be neglected. It is like watering the branches of the trees and not watering the roots, and that's exactly what we do. It's easy to water the branches, to sprinkle the flowers and create an appearance as if they are fresh. That freshness doesn't last.

The habit of postponement is related to this myth of time that we have. We forget that time is a notion, it is an idea, it is a concept. It has a utility for human relationship, collective relationship, it's a currency to be used in society. But life cannot be equated with time, the moment one sees that to-morrow is only in the human mind and not factually. Factually life is

only the beauty of pure sheer "is"ness. You cannot say about life that it "was" or it "shall be". You can't say "eternity has been" or "eternity will be", then the word eternity has no meaning. At most one can use the word in the present tense when you talk about infinity, eternity, life, a. s. o. What I have is the present, the now, the here, either to deal with it or not. The habit of postponement withers away when there is a correct relationship to the timeless and the concept of time. Out of the challenges of life, problems are created due to maladjustment with the concepts and reality, the symbols and the life for which the symbol stands. Into more depth or details we won't go this evening.

Q. Are there beings or entities to whom we can pray for guidance, help or protection? Or is the fulfilling of our prayers the result of our own thought forms, vibrations, which come back as a reality? Have prayers any meaning at all?

V. You know, the discussion meetings or the questions and answers in the limited time at our disposal would be more beneficial to all of us, if they were based upon, or in relation to, what I have been trying to communicate with you yesterday and to-day. Do we know what prayer is? This is not asked rhetorically or in arrogance. When we touch the word prayer, what does it mean to us? Is it an attitude towards total life, or is it a physical or a mental activity that I go through because I have been taught to do so? Or is it an activity that I go through when I find myself in difficulty or when I find myself helpless?

What is it? And to whom does one pray? Is the divine outside and away from us? Your body, the body of the listener, is away from the body of the speaker. It at least apparently seems to be independent of this form, this body. The thoughts, that are going on in your minds or the way the brain works - the word, the languages, the thoughts, the ideas - they are neither yours nor mine. They are organized and standardized by collective human effort. So whether they function through you or through me, they are the expressions of a global human mind; thought being more subtle than the form of the body.

If we go a little further, love or beauty, innocence or humility are not conditioned by man, not polluted

or contaminated by human thought at all, not touched by the human mind. It has not been divided as the Hindu love or the Muslim beauty or the Christian humility or the Buddhist compassion. They are all permeating.

In the same way, in the realm of divinity the unconditioned life untouched by the human mind, by the word, permeates everything. It is not divided, it is an undivided wholeness. It is as much in you as it is outside of you. We feel that this wall of flesh and bones can separate life into the outer and the inner. It is not so factually, but we feel it and accept the relative existence of separateness or division as far as the forms, or the conditionings, the patterns of behaviour are concerned; but when it comes to deeper matters they are non-individualized, non-personal, they are a non-conditioned form of energy.

I was wondering whether prayer is a movement that goes out from one point to the other in space. When I walk from here to the door, the moment I walk from here I have taken two steps. I'm not here, but I am proceeding towards that door through space and time. It's a journey between two points, here and there. In infinity there are no two points like "here" and "there". You cannot measure it by numbers, you cannot imprison it into form, it cannot be contained in any human concept whatsoever. Is prayer an activity, words addressed, from here to something out there, or is it an attitude towards the whole of life? I become aware of my limitations, of conditionings inherited by me, accepted by me, created by me. Awareness of limitations, awareness of the frontiers of the mind and the brain, awareness of the human weaknesses, my own petty little prejudices and preferences, stimulate an attitude of prayer. The essence of prayer is humility. I hope you have noticed this. The awareness of limitations and weaknesses, shortcomings and defects, mistakes, that one has committed can either lead you towards self-pity and depression, melancholia or depressive psychosis or they can lead you towards an attitude of prayer, where before you move, before you utter a word, the awareness is there.

Whatever you are going to do - the expression may not be the whole truth, there may be incorrect behaviour, there may be inaccuracy - so not out of

arrogance, not out of dogmatism, not out of the ambition to convince and convert others, but for the expression of the inner being, one acts. The actions are meant to express what is. In the simplicity of one's being one expresses through words, through actions, through relationships, one doesn't pretend to be what one is not, and one doesn't try to hide under the mask of hypocrisy what one is, there is an elegance of simplicity in the behaviour. Isn't that behaviour a prayer?

When you are aware that you do not know the human being before you, that every human being is unique, that he has a conditioned part, but that he also has an unconditioned part, that man is a mystery, then, how can you judge, how can you draw conclusions? You have to learn and find out. When one moves with human beings in this attitude, to learn, to find out, to discover open and vulnerable, that vulnerability, is that not a prayer?

On the physical and the mental plane I can act or speak; the I, the me, the self, the ego, using its knowledge and experience can do certain things; but there is also an area of life where human efforts are not relevant. There is an area of happening as there is an area of doing things.

When I see that my child is doing some harm to her or his life, I see the damage being done, I suggest it to the child, but it doesn't listen - I talk to the child once, twice, but whenever I say it, it still doesn't listen and goes the opposite way - do I suffer, saying: "my son behaving that way, how is that possible?" Do I suffer that way? Do I try to create compulsions, so that the son or the daughter cannot behave the way he or she wants? Do I impose? Or do I have the attitude that I have done what I could in all love and concern and that now I have to let the individual in my son or in my daughter go his or her way and that I have to be at her disposal or his disposal when and if he turns to me; but let me not interfere. Love and sorrow go together. So having the strength and the humility to witness the wrong being done, knowing I have done what I could, that I can't do anything.

The reality that I can't do anything can be converted into a problem. I can suffer and my ego can torture itself in a hundred and one way.

Either I create a problem or I resign myself and say, "thus far and no further". Whatever humanly was possible was done in goodwill and when I say "thus far and no further", do I become indifferent to the person? Then it is not humility, then it is not an attitude of prayer.

Do I become callous, indifferent, do I get angry, irritated, annoyed and the whole relationship with the husband, the wife, the son, the daughter, gets spoiled, it goes sour. Does that happen? Then it's not prayer.

You see, prayer is an attitude of tremendous humility and vulnerability in human relationships.

Nothing can be done, when there is a choiceless awareness that no effort is going to change the situation. No effort is going to bring back the dead or to bring back the grown-up into childhood. The child has to find his own way, has to learn through mistakes, has to learn through sorrow, suffering, a. s. o. I can't hold him back. To resign to this situation, without self-pity, without personal suffering, grudge; in other words surrendering to the irreconcilable facts of life.

So it seems to me that prayer is an attitude of humility, vulnerability, where the finite is always aware of the infinite. That awareness I call the state of surrender. Not the silly little activity "I surrender myself to this person or that person". It can be in relation to total life, nothing less than that. However great the human beings might be or can be, life is greater than all the human beings put together. So it seems to me the awareness of the infinite is the protection, the real protection.

As far as the question of the aspect of the deities and the gods and the goddesses are concerned, they have been formulated, invented as symbols and concepts, not by you and me, but by human beings through untold centuries.

When you look at a form with a particular emotion, you look at it with reverence, with a feeling of worship, with a sense of adoration, admiration, you are affecting that form, that object. It may be a temple, a mosque, a church, a buddhist monastery, a form, a picture, a thing, but when you look at something with lust, doesn't that lust affect the object? When you look at someone with jealousy in your heart or

envy in your heart, though you don't utter a word, but you just look at the person, doesn't that affect the person? The vibrations do have an influence upon the object where the envy, the jealousy or the reverence, the adoration, the admiration, reach out. Now there have been ideas and notions, there have been forms and images upon which generation after generation a relationship of admiration has been attributed, imposed, gone through or lived.

If you go to India you see the worshipping of the idols, the images of Krishna or Shiva or Rama or the goddess Kali or the small deities in villages. The human race through thousands of years in great numbers, has been living a kind of emotional relationship with certain forms, certain images. Now the image of say the goddess Kali or a Krishna doesn't mean anything to a Muslim boy, he hasn't got this conditioning in his blood.

What I'm trying to say is, this psychic relationship with forms and images, concepts and notions is a very deep relationship, so if you utter what you call a prayer and address it to a certain notion of a deity, a goddess, you feel a kind of response coming out of that. It's a relationship that one is living with that form, with that object and because that object or the form has had layers after layers of these vibrations of adoration, worship, identification and what not, the counter vibration appears to be coming back from that form.

For example, among the Hindus in India the sun has been worshipped as the light-giving or the life-giving source, generator of life, manifestation of the compassion of infinity a. s. o. They worship the sun and they stand before the sun every morning, look at him, and say it gives life.

It's a psychic relationship that you build up, and suggestion and auto-suggestion as a therapy on the psychological plane that has been experimented with in Europe. Now when you have a suggestion or an auto-suggestion on a psychic level, naturally the results are deeper. There's nothing mysterious about it, but there is a science behind it, there is an order behind it.

Through so-called prayers (I'm referring to the question, not the way I look at the word "prayer" because I'm not going to throw a single word that man

has created), as the questioner puts it: "when you pray and it is fulfilled is it something that is born of you that comes back to you?", I would say "yes"; adding only one point to it, that thousands or millions have done it before you and I did it.

In the atmosphere around you there are those vibrations. As you live in the ocean of thought, there are oceans of vibrations also, by which man is surrounded. So when you begin to indulge in that activity of suggestion or auto-suggestion through prayer, the waves that are existing in the atmosphere around you add their momentum also to your activity. It is a kind of therapy to pacify the troubled mind, to sooth the tormented nerves, it makes the person aware that he cannot do anything - whatever he could do he has done - nothing can be done by him. Either through awareness one arrives at a choiceless condition, that no effort can be made, that I have to be with it whatever the challenge is - or through prayers one reminds oneself of one's limitations and says: "Thy Will be done".

You remember the last prayer, when Jesus had asked his companions to be awake with him and they went to sleep and he went a few steps away from them and said: "take this cup away from Me" and then suddenly came back to the awareness and said: "Thy Will be done". The whole mystery of prayer is contained in that event.

If "Thy Will be done" is said or gone through with self-pity and frustration, then it is no prayer. If it is said with the vehemence that "Thy Will be done", but "Thy Will" should be what "my will" is, then it is no prayer. That's why I said: "Do we know what prayer is", or do we play around with words?

There was one question handed over to me saying "Why don't realized people unite?"

I do not understand what it means. "Why don't the people who are self-realized or free or enlightened, why don't they unite and do something for the world?" I really do not understand what the questioner implies by that.

Can freedom be organized? If you say: "those who realize the crisis in education and have studied pedagogy or feel concerned about education, they

should come together, discuss the issue, find out if there are any other ways of educating ourselves and our children", then it is something one can understand. If you say: "there is poverty or starvation, why don't those who have studied agriculture, economics, industry, engineering, why don't they come together and find out the ways of eliminating poverty or starvation?", that one can understand, you see.

But when a person goes through an inner transformation, the frontiers of the "I", the "me", and the "you", or the "it", are crossed over.

On the mental plane, on the cerebral plane we act from the centre, the "I", the "me". The perception is an extension of the "I". The "I" looks at an object, or an individual, with the help of its ideas, experiences, knowledge. It's a movement of the I, the me, from the centre to the periphery, and brings back a reaction to the object. The I moves out to the object and comes back with its estimate of the object. That is how our perceptions and responses are born of a centre, not of our whole being; they are cerebral activities.

In the state of self-realization, in the state of freedom, enlightenment or samadhi, or what you will, a person lives in consciousness that has no centre, no enclosures, no circumference. There is no "I" that will make an effort and say: "we will get united and we have to do this or we have to organize that". This perception born of non-duality has no relevance to the perception born of the tension of duality. It is a state of consciousness, where the separation of the "me" and the "not-me" does not exist.

What remains for that person, is to respond to life and whatever life brings - whether the person lives at one place, travels around, speaks or does not speak, remains in silence or communicates with people - all these expressions are relevant to the conditioning of the person before the transformation has taken place. They are not the result of his determination, of his will.

There is the form of the person - you can call the person a man, a woman, and call the person by the name - but in that form, through that brain, through the conditionings, the content is already changed. The I-consciousness, the regulator or the controller, is no more there. It is the "It"-consciousness. It is

Life. Life moves, Life uses the brain, the body. How It will use it, where It will take the person, cannot be calculated in our mathematics and cannot be put into our logic.

THIRD TALK, JUNE 3rd 1974

Before we proceed with the subject that we are to take up this morning, I would like to go into an important issue: relating words and their connotations.

I hope you have looked at the words "suffering" and "sorrow", the words "pleasure" and "joy", "quietness" and "peace", abstaining from "speech" and "silence".

It is vitally necessary to understand the difference between pleasure and joy. Pain and pleasure are sensations that occur as soon as we come into contact with an object through audition, perception, touch, intimate presence, a. s. o.

When we are in contact with objects, then the sense-organs reach out towards the object, touch the object; the eyes (the optical nerves) reach out towards the object, and the capacity to see (sight as we call it) brings back a sensation. The eyes may be there, the retina, the optical nerves, but if there is no sight behind and within the eyes, then you cannot see. With the help of the retina and the optical nerves the sight touches the object, a sensation is generated and brought back. Then that sensation stimulates an impulse in the body, reaching towards the brain, and the brain reacts.

We are not going into the whole of it; but a sensation is stimulated when through sense-organs you come into contact. Proximity or contact with some object, and the sensation reaching the brain stimulates a reaction, saying: this is pleasure, this is pain; recognition of the sensation. The sense-organs, the mind, the brain, the whole past, the conditioned part of our being, is in action when we obtain pleasure, get pleasure, derive pleasure or stumble upon pleasure or pain. The sense-organs, the brain and the whole content of the conditioned psyche, all these are in operation in the event of pleasure. That sensation and the reaction may last for a fraction of a second, for a minute, for a few minutes, not more. By that time the sense-organs have noticed another object - a fraction of a second, a fraction of a minute, and the ears hear some sound - then the auditory nerves reach out, the hearing power reaches out, gets a sensation, it comes back to you. Again it reaches

the brain, the brain interprets and reacts; another sensation of pleasure or pain. As long as man is alive, the involuntary activity of the sense-organs and the involuntary activity of the conditioned psyche, the brain, go on one after another; sensations, their interpretations, and reactions.

An agreeable sensation is called pleasure, and a disagreeable sensation has been recognized as pain; but they don't last. Factually the sensations, the stimulation and the interpretation go on in succession very fast.

But one sensation doesn't last for a very long time. It is not in the nature of the sensation to last, it doesn't have durability. It's a very delicate flower, before you have looked at it, it gets scorched by your reaction and fades away.

It is not so with joy. Joy is a happening that takes place in all the layers of your being, simultaneously. It has a cohesiveness, a wholeness. It may be related to the outer circumstances, surroundings, situations, challenges, communions, separations; it may have to do with them, it may occur without them. It may not be necessarily related to the sense-organs, the brain, the knowledge, the experience. It is an independent event. It is a happening in which you find yourself suddenly and it does something to the whole of your being.

It is like a morsel of food that has gone into the body, getting converted into bones, blood, muscles, tissues, cells, a. s. o. It becomes the substance of your being. It doesn't remain with you on the level of a sensation, and doesn't get reduced to a segment of memory; it enriches. The meal that you have had yesterday or the day before, has gone into building up the inner substance of the body, has become a part of your life.

So, joy or sorrow are happenings that put into action your whole being homogeneously, not partially one after another. It is not an activity in time. Sense-organs reaching out, is an activity in time and space; the stimulation as an impulse reaching the brain, again an activity in time and space; and the brain interpreting according to the conditioning, the knowledge, the upbringing, the culture a. s. o., all these activities, though very fast, also are in time and space.

Joy and sorrow are not within the realm of time and space. Once it visits you, it has become a part of you, whether it is joy or sorrow. Sorrow may give a sharpness and an edge to your personality. It may work like spices in your being. Joy may enrich the being and vitalize it, it generates an energy that is non-physical and non-cerebral. Sorrow stimulates and awakens an energy that is non-physical and non-cerebral. We have looked very briefly towards the distinction between pleasure and joy; let us look at suffering and sorrow. This is not the issue that I want to take up for the whole morning, but for understanding what might come up let us distinguish these two very clearly. Something or someone hurts me; my ambition has not been fulfilled. I feel frustration. I had expectations from someone and those expectations are not fulfilled. I get depressed. I feel frustrated, betrayed. I find that there is some disease in the body, a persisting sickness and I am told it is incurable, then the pain of the body enters the mind and I begin to suffer: "Why has it happened to me?" and I cannot enjoy life anymore. Out of the physical pain, due to the illness, my mind creates a suffering, a grudge, a crystallized annoyance, a crystallized sense of irritation. It goes on pricking at me; whether I take my meals or I am with friends or I'm working; the hurt, the annoyance, the irritation - the mind creates a personal suffering. It is the activity of the ego, the self, the me. The pain is not the issue, the emphasis comes back on the me - "Why has it happened to me, I can't do this and the others are doing that!". The me is the centre on which the attention is focussed; that is suffering - an ego-centred activity. And suffering can result in depression, melancholia, self-pity, in a martyr complex and the person gets isolated. And you can go on suffering, because it is related to a sensation of being hurt; whether the hurt is on the physical level or on the mental level. You get hurt by a person, you feel pain when something is pricking. You can get the sensation of pain and convert it into suffering all the time. Everything that comes around is interpreted, can be interpreted as suffering. Suffering is a personal activity, an

ego-centred activity; not having so much focus upon the pain that has been caused, but upon the me, the I. So man who has got into the habit of suffering, can create grudges out of anyone and anything under the skies. He becomes suspicious and impatient. It is the interpretation of the pain that generates suffering, please do see this, whereas sorrow is an event that takes place in life. I come face to face with death; I see someone dying, the one I have loved, the one I have lived with. Now there is the phenomenon of death, and I am placed face to face with that phenomenon, caused by the departure of a person. The departure of a person, the dying of a person, has caused my encounter with death. I hope we look at it this way, that we see the difference between the two. If I remain with the reaction of the person dying and its effects upon me, then it's a personal suffering. But when I look at death in the event of someone departing, at death as a phenomenon visiting every house and every person, and bound to visit me one day. We don't know, death in relation to the whole human life, then it causes sorrow. But when I see the dying of a person in relation to my personal life - what loss I have had, how lonely I am going to be - then it continues as a personal suffering. It does not enrich life at all, it impoverishes life. It makes me poor. But when sorrow visits and I look at the whole of life and the role of death in the life of the human race, in the life of the whole world, visible and tangible, then I see the truth, that death is as inevitable as birth. That which is born, dies one day. So your perspective of the event is quite different qualitatively from the perspective of the personal suffering. Then that sorrow, if you drink the sorrow, if you eat it and if the sorrow is assimilated without interpreting it according to certain theories or traditions, then that sorrow also vitalizes and energizes the being. We will come to the third distinction, which we had mentioned perhaps the other day; knowledge and understanding. I hope you remember, the first evening we said: "We have become so much used to knowledge, that we are not perturbed when we notice that we do not understand. The lack of understanding does not perturb us, because we have become used

to knowledge". So we come to the third distinction: knowledge and understanding. Knowledge is a cerebral activity, a sensual activity, it has a sensual pleasure. The brain, the cerebral organ, is a sense-organ. You don't see it like your fingers or your eyes, your ears, but it is a sense-organ and it reaches out with ideas, with thoughts, with emotions and brings back a sensation: "I know, my experience, my knowledge, my ideas". How people become proud of their suffering: "My suffering, nobody else in the world has had the sickness that I have had, the suffering that I have seen, the tortures I have gone through". The focus is always upon the me, the I, and what is happening to the I. Knowledge is a sensual activity; knowing, feeling. Yesterday we have seen its relevance, its beauty, its utility; the conceptual world that man has created, and we have to live with it.

Now let us come this morning to the other aspect of our life that is as real as the conceptual world. In fact we should say the conceptual is as real as the other, but because we have started from the conceptual we are talking about the other now in the light of the conceptual. You know, we have started from the physical, proceeding towards the verbal, then the cerebral, and now we are coming to the area of non-cerebral life, non-cerebral energy, non-conditioned energy. And mind you, this is not a theory, I won't waste your time in theories, you can read them in books.

But I would like to share with you in this last meeting what one has seen: the non-conditioned, the non-cerebral, the non-individualized, the non-personalized form of energy, that has a movement within us, the movement of intelligence. Awareness is the movement of intelligence, which has nothing to do with the brain, in the sense that it is not generated in the brain. It does not come from the centre of the brain. Of course if the brain is not in a sound condition, if it's not healthy, then perhaps the intelligence cannot express itself. The expression of intelligence presupposes a minimum health of the brain, a minimum order in the brain.

Understanding is an event that takes place; like sorrow, like joy it is a happening. When you are in the woods you're not conscious, you're not making

an effort to reach out towards the trees: "Ah, here are the beautiful trees, now I shall look at them and let me get an experience of pleasure or joy". You don't look at the skies: "Now I am under the open skies, so let me breathe more freely, more vigorously, so that my blood is oxidized".

If you make a conscious effort, then the joy of being with nature will be lost. When you are doing exercises, you know, and you go through them, that's a different thing.

But supposing you are out for a walk, you're out for being alone with yourself and with the life around you; you are not making a conscious effort to reach out to nature through the sense-organs and bring back an experience. You are with it effortlessly, choicelessly. You are with the woods, with the birds, with the beautiful shades of green freshly bathed with the rains, with the mild sun-rays dancing upon them. You are there without any resistance.

You have to make an effort when there is resistance. When there is no resistance from any part of our being, efforts are not necessary, are they? So when we are with nature, we are totally there, not making an effort.

The moment I have to make an effort I come back to the cerebral level, to the centre of the ego and make a conscious effort, according to the cultural standard of my life, the sophistication or the crudity.

You are there with nature choicelessly, effortlessly, easily with the whole of your being, and being with nature does something to your whole person. It is a happening. You are not seeking, you are not reaching out, you are not acquiring, but something is being bestowed upon you, something enters into you, touches you at all the levels. It does something to you, it operates upon you. Haven't you noticed? May be more things happen to us than we can ever do in our life. It is the happenings of our life that give the quality, the texture to our person, to our being.

The doings are born of resistances. Ambition is a kind of resistance. Comparison is a kind of resistance. Acquisitiveness is a kind of effort, due to some resistance, that fear creates. You see?

Understanding is a happening, the communion takes place when we are with life choicelessly, effortlessly.

You stand on the seashore, perhaps in knee-deep waters, and the ocean, the skies, the openness, the wide horizons; they do something to you. You listen to the birds, they are singing for their own joy, you listen to them and the notes do something to you; it is a happening. The only requirement is I be there in my being without an effort for becoming. In the simplicity of my being I'm there, and the events take place, communion takes place.

In communication there is a voluntary effort. Communications are feeble efforts to create communion. Communion is not born of an effort; it takes place. When there is sensitivity and reciprocity among the speakers and the listeners, communion takes place. It's an event, love takes place.

You are in the vicinity of beautiful paintings, you look at them. It is only the eyes that should be satisfied, but no, you are looking with your whole being, the perceptive capacity of the whole being is in action. So intelligence is the capacity to perceive, contained in the whole being. Intellect is a capacity of the brain. Memory is a faculty or capacity of the brain, but intelligence is the perceptive capacity, the faculty of perception contained in the whole being. It comes into action, and understanding takes place. It is difficult to verbalize the quality of understanding as it is difficult to verbalize the quality of love. You can't describe beauty, can you? You can describe an object, a painting, a poem, a piece of sculpture, and you can call it beautiful. You can say it is beautiful, but beauty as such, the breath of life, cannot be described. Love cannot be defined.

Life as it is, defies verbalization, because for verbalization you have to come back to the level of the brain, the conditionings, the symbols, the language born of duality, and you cannot imprison life into forms and shapes.

All the forms that have been tried to express, and all the forms that shall come, will express the same life. You try to imprison it, but you cannot capture and imprison it there totally.

It may express itself through the form, the piece of sculpture, the poem, the symphonies, the melodies, and yet it transcends. The vastness, the infinity, the eternity implies the immeasurableness of life, implies that in every particular expression it vibra-

tes and yet does not become static in that expression. If you imprison it it must become static there, and it must become an exclusive possession of that expression. But it vibrates in that expression and yet it transcends at the same time. "Transcends" means "goes beyond".

The air is here in the room, the ether is here and may be various notes of music, sound-waves are here floating. You don't see them, unless you learn to look at the sound-energy and the light involved in the sound-waves. Unless you educate your being you can't see them, you can't hear them. But it is possible to hear them, to look at them, to feel the light, the form of thoughts, of musical notes, sound-energy a. s. o. What I'm trying to say is: understanding is a happening that takes place when the being is in communion with the challenge, effortlessly and choicelessly.

We said yesterday that life is much vaster than all the concepts and ideas that man has formulated, coined, constructed for communication. Our first contact with that immeasurable or infinite life, a different form of energy, a different kind of energy and movement, is in profound sleep.

We have a key to the mystery of life and death in profound sleep, because in the phenomenon of profound sleep the brain does not work, the brain is totally relaxed, the body is unconditionally relaxed, the intellect does not function.

While one is dreaming, the brain is moving, functioning; there is a neuro-chemical movement in dream-consciousness.

But in profound sleep the whole physical including the cerebral is unconditionally relaxed; no voluntary movement at all, no resistance, no obstruction. There is a movement of life; an unconditioned energy moves while we are profoundly asleep. The movement of that unconditioned energy sustains the body, nourishes it, revitalizes it, rejuvenates it.

If we cannot sleep profoundly for a couple of days, see what happens to our activity in waking hours.

When one talks about a different kind of energy and its movement one is not theorizing, there is a clue hidden in what you call profound sleep. The hours spent in sleep are as important as in waking hours; that is life. Whatever amount of sleep you take, it is

life. The movement is not paralyzed in profound sleep, but it is a non-cerebral movement. If somebody asks: "What happened in profound sleep?" one has to say: "I don't know, I was fast asleep". The male, the female, the Hindu, the Indian, the Christian, the Dutch, all these layers of identification drop away.

The consciousness is completely denuded of all conditionings. The psyche, the consciousness is completely naked. The consciousness vibrating in the person is as of the consciousness that surrounds him; call it cosmic, call it universal, call it multiversal, give it any name, but it is an energy that moves, functions. It has a way of operating. It has tremendous resources at its disposal, otherwise it would not revitalize, rejuvenate or refresh the being. It helps the growth as much as what you do in waking hours helps the growth.

So there is a non-cerebral energy. It does not belong to me, it is not inherited, it is not conditioned; but it operates. Maybe it is the nature of energy to move and function. When the conditioned energy goes into non-action or abeyance the unconditioned energy comes into play. And when a person discovers the secret of being in that state of unconditioned relaxation of the physical, including the cerebral while one is awake, then the tremendous source of uncontaminated, unpolluted, unconditioned energy is at the disposal of that person.

That is why one learns to be in silence. Silence is the door through which the avenue of unconditioned energy becomes accessible.

One has to educate oneself into gathering the sense-organs unto oneself, being quietly with oneself, letting the whole physical, the cerebral go into non-action, to relax.

In the west the state of non-action is called relaxation. We do not know this, so we have to learn to spend some time to educate oneself. Education requires time, so that the physical body learns to relax unconditionally, not wanting anything in return, going into non-action voluntarily without resistance, without inhibition.

The first thing is to learn to be with oneself, not because one is depressed or one wants to chew back into memory; not that way, but only for the fun of

being with oneself, in a relaxed way. One first has to learn to be with oneself; whether one sits down, stands up, goes for a walk is immaterial, up to the person and to his taste: not for moving physically or cerebrally, not for doing anything. This state of abeyance of the conditioned is necessary. One has to learn to observe; that is to say to look at things, to look at oneself, to look at thoughts, at feelings; not to analyse, to interpret, to change, to suppress, not to do anything with them. Learn to look at it; a simple perception.

We have lost the elegance of simple perception. We have lost the dimension of innocency. Knowledge is beautiful, but at the cost of innocency it becomes something ugly, you know. Experiences may condition and sophisticate your being your life, but if experiencing is at the cost of humility then it makes life ugly.

We have to educate ourselves first in observation to sustain the state of observation, simple perception, a non-reactional perception. The involuntary activity of the brain will continue. It will tell you: "that is a red colour, that is a square, it's a horse, it's a woodpecker". That's an involuntary cerebral activity of naming.

Then comes the reactional part; "it is good, it is bad, I had it, I didn't have it, I would like to have it". The reactional part contaminates the observation, then you become an experienter.

In observation there is perception, also attention, but a non-reactional attention. I said these few words that no one would be left with the doubt "how does one begin?"

One has to begin to educate oneself. Make the body, the mind sensitive and alert by putting them into order. Having an inner order, eliminating chaos and anarchy and disorder. When you eliminate disorder, order is there. So when there is an inner order - and order is rhythm, you know - life becomes rhythm. Like your inhaling and exhaling, you go from silence into speech. And when there is no necessity, when speaking is not warranted, you relax back into silence; like inhaling and exhaling. You move into activities when they are warranted, and when activities are not warranted you go back to the state of peace.

Speaking, acting, talking to people, being with them, working, becomes a movement of relaxation, you move from one to the other as inhaling and exhaling. So the state of observation sustained, stimulates the movement of intelligence. In the beginning there is the observer observing, aware, that he is observing, but when the observation as a state of consciousness grows and becomes a dimension, then there is no observer consciously making an effort to observe. While you are learning it is a voluntary activity and there is the observer. But once one has learned it, there is no observer but only the state of observation, and that simple perception stimulates the movement of intelligence.

We have to look at this point: why it stimulates the movement of intelligence. A very interesting point. When I am in the state of observation I am not analyzing, comparing, evaluating or judging it; the whole past - my knowledge, my inheritance, my experience - has no role to play.

When I am out to acquire knowledge, then the whole past is in action, it is operating. It coordinates the new piece of information with the rest of what I have known, it puts it under certain categories. While you are out for obtaining and experience: sensual, extrasensual, occult, astral, psychic, what you will, the past, the subconscious, the unconscious, is in action. You feel that you are moving only on the conscious level, but the conscious never moves alone. It carries with it the depth of the subconscious, the unconscious. The whole thing moves. The movement of the conscious is visible and the movement of the rest is underground or under waters, but it is there. In experiencing; in acquiring knowledge the past moves, the inheritance moves. You carry with you the load of the total human experience and knowledge without your knowing. It's quite a tiring business; experiencing, acquiring knowledge. In the state of observation the past has no role to play. You don't want anything back from the unit of perception, the unit of audition. You are just there with it in the simplicity of your being. The movement of the past having no role to play goes into abeyance. It doesn't move anymore, it's only the attention that burns bright. In the state of observation it is the faculty of perception and attention that are alive. They

have nothing to do with the past, nothing to do with the future, because they are not going to give you anything back from the objects being perceived. So one is totally in the present.

In the relaxation of the past, in the relaxation of the knowledge and experience, the sensitivity, the intelligence of the whole being, begins to move. Intelligence is the sensitivity of the whole being. Intellect is the capacity of the brain; as sight is the capacity hidden behind the eyes; hearing is the capacity hidden behind the inner ear.

The sensitivity comes into play and it perceives, the intelligence perceives, it doesn't belong to me, it has not been inherited from the family: it's the nature of consciousness.

Intelligence is unconditioned consciousness, unconditioned psyche. It is non-individualized psyche. It is there out of you, around you, it is within you. "Within" and "around" are the terms one has to use on the mental level, on the physical level; otherwise in life there is nothing outside, inside, inner or outer: it is just one whole.

Don't you see, as the fish are born of water, live and move in water, we are born of energy. Some part of the energy is conditioned, but another part is not conditioned. Because we identify ourselves with the conditioned part, the unconditioned is ignored and understanding doesn't take place.

Humility and innocence cannot manifest themselves, they are there, right there, within you and me - they are not to be acquired, they are not the result of any action.

A very strictly virtuous or a moral person may not have the humility, he may have the pride and vanity of self-righteousness, which is uglier than anything else in the world.

Intelligence is the sensitivity of the whole being and that sensitivity moves. The flavour and the fragrance of that movement is awareness. In the movement of the intelligence awareness of the oneness of life, of the homogeneity of life, blossoms.

One lives in that awareness, as we live to-day in the consciousness that I'm a woman, a man, a Dutchman, an Englishman, a Christian, a Catholic, a communist. In the state of intelligence there is the awareness that life is one, that life is infinite. Behind and

beyond birth and death there is life. Understanding takes place in the realm of awareness. In the realm of knowledge there can be scholarship, erudition. If knowledge is handled properly it may lead to wisdom, it may lead to stimulation of intuition, intuitive perception, which is a very subtle faculty of the brain, but still on the cerebral plane. Intuition and inspiration are not the movements of the whole being, they are movements in the brain, in the mind. In the state of awareness the unconditioned energy permeating the whole universe and the unconditioned energy vibrating in the person, meet together. The person lives there in the state of awareness with the movement of intelligence which is not his own personal property. And yet this is not meditation. A person living in the state of intelligence, pure and simple unconditioned energy, having at his disposal the resources of universal energy, energy permeating everywhere, is still not in the state of meditation, because that energy moves - may be universal energy, may be cosmic energy, may be unconditioned by knowledge; uncontaminated by the touch of the mind, but it has a movement. And as long as there is motion, as long as there is energy - energy being the property of matter - you are still in the realm of matter. From the movement of the conditioned energy, from the realm of knowledge, experience and inheritance, one moves to the realm of intelligence and awareness. In that movement there is a new freshness, a new vigour; tremendous powers begin to manifest through such a person. Ever fresh, ever sharp, the person is capable of handling the brain, the body, in an extraordinarily exquisite way, and yet there is a movement. Meditation is a state where there is no movement at all. It is a state beyond awareness, it is a state beyond intelligence. Awareness is the movement of intelligence. I am aware that life is one. Do you see the difference? It is not a gross duality, like the me and the not-me, but yet there is a very subtle duality, sense of duality. I am aware of the cosmic, the universal, I am aware of the immeasurable, the infinite, the eternal. The "I" is there, there is no sting to that "I" anymore, because it doesn't divide, it doesn't separate, it

has the orientation of unity, it is not an "I" that closes you in on an ego-centred life, but it opens out in all directions towards the whole life. And yet there is a sense of duality: I am aware that life is eternity, it is immeasurable, unnamable. Why do I call it unnamable and immeasurable: because behind the intelligence as the substratum, is the past, is the intellect, is the brain. So the roots are still there. Unless the memory of the measurable and measurements were there, how could I call something immeasurable? Unless the hang-over the memory of the finite is there, could I call something infinite? When I say: "I am aware that life is one", the "I" is there looking at the unity, oneness, homogeneity of life; still I am, as an outsider, looking at life, trying to maintain a very sophisticated, refined, purified and rarefied "I"-ness. It's difficult for me now to get the words that I would like to share with you. I don't know if these are the right words now, but there is still a very rarefied and sophisticated duality. If one does not cling to the experience of unity; the experience, the feel of the oneness of life, if one does not cling to the tremendous powers that are generated in the state of awareness, if one allows the descent of the universal energy flow through one's life without trying to capture it, and say: "this is my experience, this is my vision", then even the movement of the unconditioned energy subsides. But it is extremely difficult, because one feels that it is one's mission to let the unconditioned energy flow through oneself, then one feels it's a mission to channelize it, to change the world, to convert the world, to do something, to bring the other people to that level, one feels it as a crusade, a mission, and gets stuck up in that movement of the unconditioned energy. If the ego, the me, the I does not get stuck up with the idea "it is my mission", if it is allowed to flow through you as you have allowed the experiences, the knowledge to flow through you, then the movement even of the intelligence or awareness can and does go into non-action. This is not a speculative game, this is not a description of any Utopia. From the physical, the realm of

impulses, instincts, we went to concepts, ideas, intellect, knowledge, experience, to intelligence, and before we depart I only beg to submit that beyond this is the realm of meditation; where there is neither awareness nor the movement of the cosmic energy, beyond energy, conditioned and unconditioned, beyond the known and the unknown.

That meditation is also a dimension of life; all motion is contained in that motionless state. The movement of intelligence handling the intellect is also contained in that state of peace, state of samadhi, nirvana, liberation, enlightenment, call it what you will. A person is reduced to nothingness.

It's an emptiness that is not void, but it's an emptiness of space that has all the creative powers hidden in its womb. It's like a drum, the drum is empty within, but whosoever touches it, it gives a tone. So the man is reduced to nothingness, responding with his totality to every touch of a challenge, every touch of the situation. Then I think man will have grown to the maximum potentiality as we can see it to-day.

We cannot say: "That is the last!". Who knows what is the last? The last word in spiritual life has not been said, and shall never be said. Otherwise the human race would become stale. Children are not meant to copy us, to imitate us; but there is tremendous potentiality in life and therefore in man, who is a condensed cosmos by himself.

Well, I'm very thankful to each one of you, who gave me such abundant cooperation in all the four meetings, that we have had together. Without such rapt attention, communication cannot take place. I don't know a word, when I come here, enter the room and sit before you, I can't think of what I'm going to speak about, but in communion things begin to come up, sprout, and I look at them as you look at them, and I listen to them as you listen to them and therefore such communications give me the feed-back, help me to learn, to understand life. My audiences the world over have taught me much more than all the education at the university.

Thank you very much.

PUBLICATIONS BY VIMALA THAKAR

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Meditation-A way of life 1973 2nd printing
A Challenge to Youth 1974 (Youth Camp-Holland 1972)
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1974)
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'... un éternel voyage' (French translation of On an
eternal voyage)
La Méditation. Un mode de vie (French translation of
Meditation-A way of life)
(Both French books are published by Le Courrier du
Livre, 21, rue de Seine, 75006 Paris)
Die Kraft der Stille (German translation of Silence in
action)
Meditation. eine Lebensweise (German translation
of Meditation-A way of life)
Further books in Indian languages

Taken from this book:

"Man has become used to living absent-mindedly, distractedly, half-heartedly, in a dull mediocre way, that he does not feel disturbed, when he notices that there is a lack of intensity and the depth of passion in his day-to-day relationships. You and I as human beings have become so accustomed to having conflicts and contradictions, the tensions thereof, carrying them from day to day over years, from youth to old age, that it does not much upset us, perturb us when we notice that we hardly ever live in the state of relaxation."

"The first thing is to learn to be with oneself, not because one is depressed or one wants to chew back into memory, not that way, but only for the fun of being with oneself, in a relaxed way".

"This state of abeyance of the conditioned is necessary. One has to learn to observe; that is to say to look at things, to look at oneself, to look at thoughts, at feelings; not to analyse, to interpret, to change, to suppress, not to do anything with them. Learn to look at it; a simple perception".

"In the relaxation of the past, in the relaxation of the knowledge and experience, the sensitivity, the intelligence of the whole being, begins to move. Intelligence is the sensitivity of the whole being".

