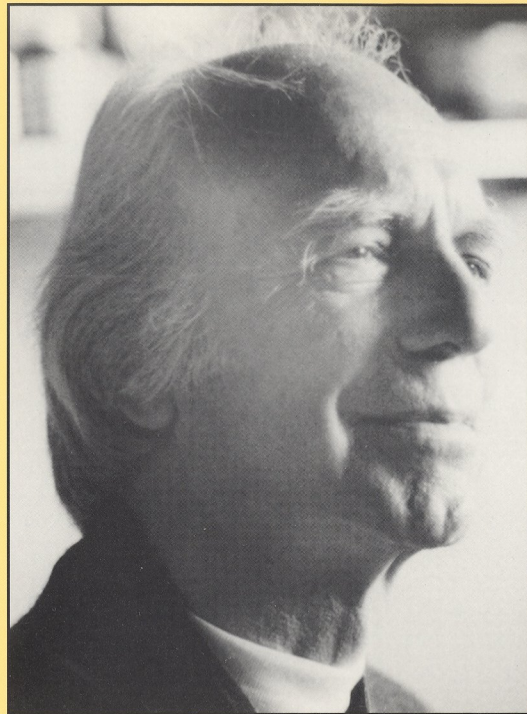


# THE EASE OF BEING

JEAN KLEIN



Jean Klein, a musicologist and doctor, spent several years in India where he met his Guru and was initiated into traditional wisdom. He was eventually sent back to Europe to teach Advaita Vedanta. This teaching employs a "direct approach" beyond any mental activity or striving, pointing straight to the ultimate where all that belongs to the mind, time, and space is integrated. What is sought is a sudden insight, a clear awakening to what we are, what we have been, and what we shall be forever.

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# The Ease of Being

Jean Klein

This, the third book by Jean Klein published in English, is a collection of talks held in England, France and the United States between 1980 and 1985.

Like all non-objective teaching, these dialogues employ the “direct approach” pointing beyond mental striving to that timeless awareness which is our being.

## Other Books by Jean Klein

*L'Ultime Réalité.* Paris: Courier de Livre, 1968; 2nd ed. 1972.

*Soisce que tu es.* Paris: Courier de Livre, 1970; 3rd ed. 1983.

– Chinese translation. Saigon, 1979.

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*La Joie sans Objet.* Paris: Mercur de France (Gallimard), 1972; 2nd ed. 1980.

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*Be Who You Are.* London: Watkins, 1978

*Neither This Nor That I Am.* London: Watkins, 1980.

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## **Meeting My Master**

*Every time I meet you I'm astonished by your happiness. Does this happiness come from outer circumstances?*

It depends on nothing outside. It shines on its own.

*Can you take me there?*

Yes.

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## PROLOGUE

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*What inspired you to go to India?*

An inner need, an urge to find peace, to find the center where you are simply yourself – free from all stimulation. All that I'd read about traditional India, especially ancient India, led me to feel that present-day India might still reflect the ancient wisdom, that it might be a society centered in truth. Of course it's dangerous to think you can adopt another culture, but my going to India was not in search of a new belief, religion or culture. I was aware that I would not find what I was looking for by assuming a new way of living or point of view. From the beginning I was convinced that there is a core of being which is independent of all society, and I felt the urge to explore this conviction.

*So you were not especially looking for a teacher?*

No. I was not looking for anything specific but, arriving in India, in a completely new environment, I was left with no reference to anything in my previous experience. In this suspension of evaluation I was catapulted into an openness, a receptivity to everything. And I was astonished to meet so soon the man who later became my teacher. You can't look for a teacher. The teacher finds you in your awareness.

*This inner need, the eagerness for freedom – must it be very strong?*

The urge to freedom must be tremendous. But it cannot be learned or acquired. It comes through self-inquiry. In self-inquiry there appears a fore-feeling, an intimation of reality, and it is this fore-feeling which brings up a tremendous ardour. It can make you sleepless!

When you inquire, you may first feel a lack. You may not know what kind of lack it is and you will go in many directions in the hope of filling it. As each direction is attained there may be a moment when there's no longer a lack and the desire it brings. For a moment you are in peace. But because you are not aware of this desirelessness, you fix-

ate on the object, the so-called cause of your satisfaction, and of course eventually it loses its charm and once again you are hungry. You will travel down many of these dead-ends, like a hunting dog who cannot find the scent and runs around frantically. But these cul-de-sacs of experience bring you to a kind of maturity, because inevitably you will question more deeply all the happenings and their transience. It's a process of elimination. You must inquire, inquire like a scientist, into your life. Take note that whenever you attain what you want you are in desirelessness itself where the initial object, the supposed cause of your desirelessness, is not present. See that this desirelessness is really causeless and it is you who are attributing causes to it.

At a certain point of maturity you will suddenly be attracted by the scent of reality and your running around in all directions, your dispersion, will cease. Spontaneously, you will be oriented. Your whole perspective will change. The scent lures you and gives you a fore-taste of reality, the fore-feeling, and this brings up the tremendous urge we spoke of.

*Would you speak more about this fore-feeling? Exactly what is it?*

The fore-feeling comes from what is fore-felt. It is the reflection of truth. It is the spontaneous orientation when dispersion becomes one-pointed. The ego becomes more transparent and in this transparency the energy that was fixed by the ego in objects of dispersion is transferred to orientation. When the fore-feeling is there, give your whole heart to it. You must be very alert, very watchful, because the forgetting, which is our conditioning, is very strong.

*Did suffering play any part in propelling you into the path?*

It depends how you understand suffering. Suffering as an idea, a concept, can never bring you to the knowing of yourself. But the direct perception of suffering is, like all objects, a pointer to your Self. What was important for me were those moments when I faced myself and found a lack of fulfillment; this produced the dynamism to explore more deeply. In a certain way when you really feel this lack without conceptualizing it, it is great suffering – but it is not the kind of suffering caused by a robbery, losing a job, a broken marriage, death, and so on. Of course these difficulties lift you out of a kind of complacency, a habitual way of living. They wake you up to interrogate, to inquire, to explore, to question suffering itself.

Make suffering an object. In complete surrender to the perception, light comes up. You must understand that by surrender I don't mean a fatalistic acceptance or a kind of psychological sacrifice. Real surrender is letting go of all ideas and allowing the perception, in this case suffering, to come to you in your openness. You will see that it does not "go away," as is the case with psychological acceptance – where the energy fixed as suffering is merely shifted to another area – but it comes to blossom within your full attention. You will feel it as free energy, energy that was previously crystallized. Thus surrender is not a passive state. It is both passive and active, passive in the sense of letting go as with Meister Eckhart's "Poor Man," and active in that it is a constant alertness.

*Did you practice yoga to come to deeper levels of surrender and alertness?*

The word practice generally means habit. We must use it only in the sense of becoming more and more aware of body and mind. We must see that the body is a field of fear, anxiety, defense and aggression. However, the emphasis must not be on the body but on presence, on listening. What is important is to become acquainted with the field of tensions and see that the constantly interfering I-image is not separate from this field but belongs to it. When this is clear, tension finds no accomplice, the perception is freed, and energy integrates in its totality. The traditional approach is through listening to the body, not mastering it. Dominating the body is violence. But one can sweep the floor or wash the dishes and be in listening. It makes no difference.

Exploring the body brought me to deeper layers of relaxation and this relaxation brought about the cessation of repetitive patterns in the body and mind. In welcoming the body I became more and more aware of the feeling of letting go, so in this way the yoga participated in the fore-feeling of reality. But it only led me to where I no longer emphasized the object, the body, but the ultimate subject. Yoga brings you to a kind of alertness, a tranquility, and a tranquil body reflects a tranquil mind. But of course you can come to the peaceful body-mind without yoga!

*If yoga is not in itself the teaching, what is?*

The teaching points directly to what is not teachable. The words, the actions, are a crutch and this support gradually loses its concreteness until suddenly one day you find yourself in the non-state which can-

not be taught. The formulations are symbols, pointers, and ultimately you do not see the symbol but that to which it points.

*When the teaching lost its concreteness for you and there was this shift in emphasis from the object-symbol to the subject, that to which the symbol points, how did your life change?*

The old patterns of thinking and acting – of false identification with the body – having lost their concreteness, no longer had any hold. It was that reduction from dispersion to orientation we spoke of, a strengthening of the fore-feeling of truth. It became more and more present and less conceptual. This *being* understanding gave a new direction to my life. Everything was perceived in a new way. I became more discerning, and although I made no voluntary changes, many things that had occupied places in my earlier life just dropped away. I had been lured by names and forms as I strove for having and becoming, but with the orientation of energy there came a new order of values. You must not interpret this as adopting a new morality of any kind. Nothing was added or given up. I just became aware of the “clearness,” *sattvas*, and a transformation spontaneously followed from this awareness.

My Master explained to me that this light, which seemed to come from outside, was really light reflected by the Self. In my meditations I was visited by this light and attracted by it and it gave me greater clarity in action, thinking and feeling. My way of listening became unconditional, free from past and future. This unconditional listening brought me to a receptive alertness and as I became familiar with this alertness it became free from all expectation, all volition. I felt an establishing in attention, an unfolding in fullness to awareness.

Then a complete change occurred one evening on Marine Drive in Bombay. I was watching flying birds without thought or interpretation, when I was completely taken by them and felt everything happening in myself. In this moment I knew myself consciously. The next morning I knew, in facing the multiplicity of daily life, that *being* understanding was established. The self-image had completely dissolved and, freed from the conflict and interference of the I-image, all happenings belonged to being awareness, the totality. Life flowed on without the cross-currents of the ego. Psychological memory, like and dislike, attraction and repulsion, had vanished. The constant presence, that we call the Self, was free from repetition, memory, judgment, comparison and appraisal. The center of my being had been

spontaneously ejected from time and space into timeless stillness. In this non-state of being, the separation between “you” and “me” vanished completely. Nothing appeared outside. All things belonged in me but I was no longer in them. There was only oneness.

I knew myself in present happening, not as a concept but as a being without localization in time and space. In this non-state there was freedom, full and objectless joy. There was pure thankfulness, thanking without an object. It was not an affective feeling, but a freedom from all affectivity, a coldness close to warmth. My Master had given me an understanding of all this, but now it had become a bright and integrated truth.

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London April 1980

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*I've come to hear you for the first time so would you tell me about your philosophy of life?*

Let's begin by first looking at why you have come here today. As you search for the reason, you may discover a feeling of inner deficiency in yourself, a kind of hunger which you have come here to try to satisfy. So before going on let's understand that there is really nothing to attain. The moment you are completely convinced of this, there is a halt. All energy previously expended towards some end returns to its origin, and you are brought back to your presence. At first this may be a presence *to* something, because it is in the nature of the eyes to see and the ears to hear. But when seeing and hearing become free from motive, end and intention, they no longer belong only to the eyes and ears. Unqualified attention is multi-dimensional: the whole body hears, and you may feel, although not in a sensorial way, that hearing and seeing appear *in* you, in your global presence. In the end even hearing and seeing dissolve into this presence and you are one with it. Ultimately there is no longer a subject who sees nor an object which is seen. There is only oneness.

This is what I come here to communicate. Identity with this presence, this wholeness, this fullness, is meditation, but there is no mediator nor object upon which to meditate. This, then, does not belong to a philosophy—it is your real nature.

*Doesn't it amount to finding out who we really are?*

Yes, but we can never know who we really are as we know other things because we are the knowing. So we must admit to being knowledge. Anything else is only a concept.

*But we might have a glimpse of it, a glimpse which touches a certainty we can't afterwards forget. So we strive to come to it again.*

*[Long silence]*



*I find it difficult to understand the idea that we "have a glimpse of it," yet return to our habitual way of living. How could that be? It seems that it's still an experience bound by time and concepts.*

An experience belongs to somebody, to an "I." It is understood in reference to the past, to memory, to what we already know. It still has a subject, an experiencer, and an object, something experienced. But what we are fundamentally can never be experienced, can never partake in the subject-object relationship, so we must let go of all desire for experience.

What then does it mean to become more acquainted with yourself? It means you become more informed about what you are *not*, your body, your senses, emotions, mind. This is a movement diametrically opposed to trying to grasp hold of knowledge. It must come to you. You must listen to your body, senses and mind, a listening which demands letting go of all that you think you know, all conditioning, all patterns. As you remain in this listening, perceptions surface from what psychology would call the subconscious and superconscious. But don't give emphasis to these perceptions because to accent the perceived binds you to a subject-object relationship. First, the accent is on the perceiver, and later you'll find the listening itself is emphasized, until finally you find yourself in this listening.

Listening is the background of all that appears. It is stillness. Your body, senses, mind, and all states come and go, but you are this timeless presence.

The idea that there is actually something to attain is deeply rooted, so we continue to live in the becoming process, projecting energy in taking or keeping something. But motiveless listening deepens the conviction that there is really nothing to gain or lose, and conditioning drops from the mind, agitation recedes and there is stillness. You are then like the fisherman who controls neither the fish nor the water. He only watches. And he comes to feel that everything is contained in this looking, in this silence – there is nothing apart from it. At this moment you are at the threshold of your real being, but no amount of willing can take you across. You are seized by Being itself.

*What is it that makes me choose certain things as opposed to other things?*

What is the motive which brings you to a certain choice? Yes, see this very clearly. If the desired change is only superficial, then we go from one compensation to another, through all the various ideas and techniques offered by society. In looking deeply at the motive behind a

certain choice, you may discover a feeling of something missing in yourself. To see what this deficiency requires stillness, an openness free of the past. Don't let ideas, memory, tell you what you need. Be still and you will know the answer to your question.

Looking for something, expecting something, hoping to achieve something, are all movements away from your axis to the periphery, from global consciousness to a point of view.

*At times there is something in me that doesn't want to give up a certain choice.*

But if the choice is very deep, do it, undertake it, follow it. Don't refuse it. Just be aware while doing it.

*Are you saying that when one does not contradict the ego it eventually disappears?*

Of course. But accepting it is very important. Accept your actions, your wishes and desires. Acceptance puts you in a position of intelligence, of spontaneity, wherein the universe is set free. Everything previously restricted by your conceptions regains its natural expression. Only then is real understanding possible, since conclusions appear in you which have nothing to do with the customary process of memory.

*At times an intelligence arises which incites a spontaneous letting-go, without effort or intention. And at other times I may want something to leave me, but the release doesn't happen. Is this because the ego is trying to let it go?*

Any intent to let go arouses anticipation and resistance because you are personally involved in what you wish to drop. Any attempt to force a state or object to leave only serves to reinforce it. You may even try certain psychological techniques, but often these oppose a real letting go because they fix one to the ego.

Therefore you must first accept the state and accept yourself. In genuine acceptance there is no personal involvement in what is accepted, for there is no person. But it is not psychological acceptance. The seer is completely outside what is seen. Only then is there real transformation, a re-orchestration of all energy, because both the seer and the seen now point back to your totality, to global consciousness.

*Has the person any reality?*

It has no reality. What is real exists in itself. This means it is autonomous, having no need of an agent to be known. Since the personality has need of consciousness to be known, it is not real.

*Then the personality is an intellectual superimposition on reality?*

The personality is relative because its existence depends on consciousness. Identification with the personality immediately restricts it and it is no longer functional. The true personality appears in a given situation and subsides the moment that situation ends. There is no fixation for it is completely open to all that is.

Of course in our society human relationship is generally existent between personality and personality, between object and object. With this kind of rapport there is only taking, only a continual search for security.

*What do you mean by "a search for security"?*

The individual, relative "I" needs a situation in order to exist, and a different "I" arises with each situation. If "I" am walking, an "I" appears who is walking. If "I" am thinking, an "I" appears who thinks. But the moment the situation ends, so does this "I." So the relative "I," the ego, continually projects situations in order to secure itself, to find its concreteness.

Every thought is linked to an image, which in turn is bound to the five senses. All thought, even abstract thinking, is always connected to a particular sense perception, with one exception—the ultimate "I." The question "Who am I?" refers to the ultimate subject, which, lacking an image, a projection, dissolves into silence. This is the "I" all living beings have in common: pure I-am-ness.

*What is a concept?*

A concept is a thought, and a thought is a word; a word is a sound, and a sound is a pulsation. What comes before the pulsation? Stillness. Therefore a concept is nothing but an objectifying of stillness. In reality all that appears is an expression of stillness. So in the moment of unity with expression, there is only stillness.

You must accept the possibility of what is said here. In other words, you have to take a scientific attitude. If a scientist is told that a particular formula yields a certain result he may inquire into the steps his fellow-scientist has taken. At this point his knowledge is second-

hand, so he repeats the experiment, following the process, to see if he obtains the same result.

Like the scientist, one gathers information from someone who lives in the non-state. You inquire how he has come to this, and you accept on hearsay the possibility of its existence. Then you live the perspective this person teaches and it becomes first-hand experience.

Everything perceivable is an exteriorization in space-time of your real being, stillness. You must first be receptive to perceptions of your body, mind, and senses so that they will have the opportunity to unfold completely and to blossom in you. Only then are you open to the environment, to the world around you. And in this openness, this acceptance, a time eventually comes, you can be sure, when you will find yourself no longer in the perception or in the world, but in opening itself.



*How can one best allow sensitivity to develop?*

Be more and more intimate with yourself. Begin to listen non-selectively. You may think you are listening while in fact you are only hearing the repetition of your preconceptions. Consequently you don't really know yourself, you don't really know the world. What you call sensitivity only appears when listening is unconditioned, free of anyone being sensitive. Sensitivity is identity.

Regardless of how subtle our perception may become, as long as we remain in the subject-object relationship it is always qualified. So the accent must not be on the perception, but on where it points—awareness itself. Perception is because we *are*. And when perception is given full freedom, it brings us back to global attention, to completeness, to the timeless. In other words, we have a fore-feeling of ultimate stillness.

*What do you mean by "fore-feeling"?*

Ask yourself, "What is the real motive behind everything I do, think, want?" You'll see that your real desire is to be desireless. Your real desire is peace. In all the various situations of your life you are continually seeking desirelessness, but you remain unconvinced of the fact that the desired object never keeps its promise.

Once a desired object is obtained you experience momentary peace. But later this same object leaves you indifferent. After a certain point you reach the conclusion that what you're looking for is not found in any object, in any projection. This insight brings you to a standstill. You become quiet, and listening, stripped of direction, becomes multi-dimensional and totally open. This is the moment the fore-feeling appears, rising out of what you fore-feel. If you let it, it brings you to itself. And then you are completely undressed, free of all attributes; you *are* Silence.

You could call this fore-feeling the original perception, wherein there is neither perceiver nor anything perceived – only identity with perception. You feel (without feeling it) that during all states – waking, dreaming, and sleeping – pure objectless consciousness *is*.

*Are you saying that listening should be free from preconception, without ideation, imagination or knowledge which may impede the perceived?*

Yes. Otherwise you only listen to projections, to the already known. The investigation we're speaking of is an observation of each situation in your life without reference to previous experience, without drawing any conclusions. It is outside the ordinary memory process. Although the situation may spontaneously come to a conclusion, there is nobody who concludes.

*Does age or maturity have any bearing on this?*

Maturity has nothing to do with age. Maturity comes through taking note, through investigation and listening. As you become familiar with pure listening, it brings you to the timeless. To use the psychologist's formulation, in timeless listening the subconscious and super-conscious emerge. Your whole life surfaces.

*What is your opinion of psychoanalysis?*

The psychoanalyst believes in the existence of an ego. He sees the whole situation, all that exists, as belonging to this ego. He wants to help you free the ego from antagonism and contradiction. After many years of analysis the patient may have a clearer sense of identity – but he still remains caught in the idea of being an ego. The ego is just a mental function, an idea appearing in a situation and disappearing with the situation. The moment we knowingly live in consciousness, live knowingly in what we fundamentally are, this reflex to visualize

ourselves as an image ceases.

*Is the teacher an object of perception?*

Try to avoid making him a perception. The teacher, in giving you no hold to grasp, brings you back to yourself, because his self and your self are identical. For him a disciple or pupil does not exist, since he doesn't identify himself as a teacher. He is. Quite simply, he is.

There is no objective relationship between guru and disciple. In a certain way it may appear so, but don't be captured by the spell! The teacher is not taken by the disciple's charm, and the disciple must not be taken by the teacher's charm. Then there is a current – call it love, call it knowledge. This current is very important. It arises the moment you stop qualifying both yourself and the teacher. When you really love someone, there's no longer an "I" or an "other." Love is empty of all such attributes.

*What is the role of the outer guru? Isn't it to lead one back to that one inner guru who is everywhere?*

In reality the outer guru and the inner guru are the same. We might say that what we call the outer guru points you in the direction of what you are. Through his pedagogical gift, he points out that you are not the body, senses, or mind.

*Does a kind of transference occur between the outer guru and the devotee?*

Let's say you are looking at a sculpture from Angkor Buddhism. The smile on the face of the Angkor statue is particularly beautiful. When your attitude is receptive, you may be completely taken by this smile. You may find yourself smiling too, but not in imitation. Rather the smile captures you and you find yourself smiling.

But what you call "transference" is a romantic notion. Through all the arguments he presents, the teacher shows you that what you are can never be perceived objectively. He brings you closer and closer to direct seeing and in the end you are at the threshold of your being. But the teacher can only bring you to the threshold. At this moment you are absorbed into yourself.

*What is it that prevents us from passing the threshold?*

If you look deeply into yourself, you will see you refuse to be taken across. The image of being somebody is very deeply rooted. It stimulates insecurity, but even this insecurity provides a hold for the ego. Let it go.

*What brings about letting go?*

Letting go is a result of understanding, but this has nothing to do with analysis or any reasoning process. It comes through investigation, through taking note. Of course you can take note of one thing after another, but true understanding is instantaneous when all elements comprising a situation in space-time are seen simultaneously. This global seeing brings you back to silence and in silence is the confirmation of the non-existence of the person.

*But I already know this, so what is the problem?*

Conditioning is a reflex. Let's say you play the piano with a certain degree of proficiency but it's hard for you to play pieces requiring more adeptness. You decide to visit a master pianist who shows you the appropriate approach to enable you to play these pieces. You return home quite contented but the next day when you begin to play, you notice you are lapsing back into the old habits. It takes some time. There is the conviction that you are nobody, but moments arise in your daily life when you find yourself reacting. You see the event, you see your neighbor, and you still put an image of an "I" between your neighbor and yourself, between the event and yourself. It's normal. Don't get frustrated. Take note of it and you can be sure a moment will arrive when you no longer revert to the reflex to project an image of yourself.

*How can we recognize our real nature?*

You can know what you are not but you can never know what you are. Do you really know what you are not? Your body changes, your emotions and sensations change. The ideas you held ten years ago are now completely different. Take note of all that is changing in you. There is already peace in silent looking. And as you become familiar with what you are not, you'll feel a distance, a space, between the attitude of observation and the observed, until a moment comes when you feel what you are without feeling it. This is not simply knowing something. It's outside the subject-object relationship. It is *being-knowledge*.

*Would you comment on grace?*

Everything that can be perceived, even your self-image, is only mind. Mind exists in you, in consciousness. So when your listening is innocent, there is openness, openness to the mind functions, to the energy in movement. To be open to openness is grace. It is waiting for you. It can't be obtained through will.

*In reading books on yoga one comes upon words like repression, suppression, discipline and control. What do you think of these expressions?*

If you pursue yoga with the idea of attaining something, you move away from your center to the periphery. Certainly yoga may produce a more relaxed state, a less agitated mind, but there is the inherent danger of getting increasingly stuck in the subject-object relationship. Of course you may experience a state of peaceful relaxation, but this peacefulness is still a state which you enter and leave. It is still an object of perception. And when faced with such a subtle and attractive object it is very difficult to come to consciousness without an object.

We could say yoga works in theory but not in practice, because the aspirant becomes fixated on the object and completely absorbed in its sweetness. It is, in a way, tragic. This happens whenever a way is followed to fulfill a motive. Yoga, or any other technique, should be pursued only with the understanding that there's nothing to attain. The seeker *is* what he is seeking, and the idea of attaining anything is only an evasion.

*What about the attainment of samadhi?*

It's only a sweet given to the disciple.

*Do we need to read sacred books?*

Become acquainted with your own book. Learn how to read it, how to let it tell you its story. Generally we want to tell the book what it should say, so we don't allow it full expression.

*People go through whole lifetimes accepting that they are the ego and it's this mistaken identification that gives a sense of purpose to the relative "I": to attain some ever-elusive perfection of itself.*

The ego desiring perfection is part and parcel of imperfection. The

mind can never change the mind. See the purposelessness of thought. Wait till each thought comes to bankruptcy. We must take it for granted that real change is not a mental process. Only silent awareness, being out of time, can bring about the true transformation.



*In a previous talk you said the realization of who we really are requires no effort. But if we want to learn the piano, we need to practice a lot before it becomes effortless. If effort applies to limited objects, why shouldn't it also apply to infinity?*

We learn to play the piano by observing a representation of the music and attempting to externalize this on the piano. This doesn't require any effort. The first time you play a piece, you notice what happens. Through observing your hand position, the way the music sounds, and so on, you come into contact with the music. In playing it a second time, you begin to discern what may be preventing a perfect execution of the piece. And the third time you play it perfectly.

In the same way you come to realize your real nature. First there is observation, which brings about a discrimination that leads to spontaneous insight. None of this requires effort.

The word "effort" implies intention, the will to achieve some end. But this end is a projection from the past, from memory, and so we miss being present to the moment at hand. It may be accurate to speak of "right attention" in the sense of unconditioned listening, but this attention is diametrically opposed to effort in that it is entirely free from direction, motivation and projection. In right attention our listening is unconditioned; there is no image of a person to impede global hearing. It is not limited to the ear; the whole body hears. It's entirely outside the subject-object relationship. Listening occurs, but nothing is heard and nobody listens. And as unconditioned listening is our real nature, we come to know ourselves in listening.

But we seldom really listen. We live more or less continually in the process of becoming. We project an image of being somebody and identify with this. And as long as we take ourselves to be an independent entity, there is continual hunger, a feeling of incompleteness. The ego is constantly searching for fulfillment and security, hence its perpetual need to become, to achieve, to attain. So we never really contact

life, for this requires openness from moment to moment. In this openness the agitation aroused by trying to fill an absence in yourself comes to an end, and in the remaining stillness you are pointed back to your completeness. Without a self-image you are really one with life and with the movement of intelligence. Only then can we speak of spontaneous action. We all know moments when pure intelligence, freed from psychological interference, arises, but as soon as we return to an image of being somebody we question this intuition by asking if it's right or wrong, good or bad for us, and so on. Whatever we do intentionally belongs to the "ego-I," and though it appears as action, it is really just reaction. Only that which spontaneously arises out of silence is action and this leaves no residue. You can't even remember it. The intentional action of the "ego-I" always leaves a residue which emerges perhaps in the dream state or even as a fixation we might later call illness.

In spontaneity action occurs but nobody acts. There is no strategy, no preparation. There's only awareness free from agitation and memory and in this stillness all action is spontaneous, because every situation belongs to your openness, and itself tells you exactly how to proceed. Real action does not come from reasoning but through receptive observation. For example, when you see a small child run into the street, you don't stop and think, "Shall I shout for help or shall I go and get her, or should I leave her alone?" You act. And even if you have performed this action twenty times, it is new each time. It belongs absolutely to the moment.

*How do you differentiate between spontaneity and impulsiveness?*

An impulse is based on memory, on conditioning. It is a reaction and often emotive. Observe in yourself the difference between reaction and spontaneity. Spontaneous action comes out of the situation and is perfectly in accord with it. It hurts neither yourself nor the surroundings because there is nothing intentional in it.

Whatever we do spontaneously is right. But we must stick to it. Let's say a strong intuition comes up to go to London. How to go, where to stay, etc., are realized as an extension of intuition in space-time. They flow out of your presence to the situation. But the mind may grasp the intuition and give it some direction, some motive or intention. "Perhaps I won't go because I won't find what I hope to. . . . It won't be good for me to be there," and so on.

What is really essential is to come to know yourself and this requires

freedom from projection, from comparison and evaluation. As soon as you see that you are continually feeding an idea of being somebody, you're free from it. What we call spiritual illumination is simply seeing that this projected image is an illusion. In freedom from an image, from projecting any pattern, you set your surroundings free as well.

*Do you see any value in sitting meditation practice?*

Meditation is not a cerebral function. Sitting with the intent to meditate is not meditation. There may be an inner urge to meditate, but this doesn't come from the "ego-I" who expects something. It comes directly from silence, from your real nature.

As long as you haven't realized silence, sitting can help you become acquainted with yourself, and help you see that you are constantly in reaction. This observation alone places you outside reaction—until a moment comes when you find yourself in listening. I say "in listening," but I could also say "in accepting," because acceptance automatically puts you in an attitude of listening. And then you no longer practice meditation, for it *is* at every moment.

*What is memory?*

Consciousness and its object, thought, are one, not two. Duality appears *in* non-duality. But you may ask, "If consciousness and perception are one, how is it I can later say, 'I saw this carpet?'" This is memory speaking but memory is only a way of thinking, a mental device, because the moment I say, "I saw a carpet," I merely label the past, but it is a present thought.

Thought and its object are one. You can never think of a subject and an object simultaneously. The same is true for cause and effect. When you think of an effect, where is the cause? When you think of a cause, where is the effect? Memory imagines it can think of two things at the same time, but in fact consciousness is always one.

We could say the world is because you are with your senses. The world is nothing other than seeing, hearing, smelling, touching and tasting. But after the direct perception you superimpose a concept onto the sensation to qualify the world, sensation ceases, because the percept and the concept cannot occur together. Once conceptualization stops, stillness remains, silence, consciousness, pure perception. All these words point to Being.

There is nothing to attain, nothing to achieve. The moment you admire something you enter a subject-object relationship, for you can

only be an admirer if there is an object to be admired. When you really understand that an admiring subject exists only because an admired object exists, you stop projecting something admired. Producing an object is just a way to localize and secure our egos by fixing energy. So when you stop producing, and all the fixed energy returns to its origin, you will reveal yourself as the admired, as silence.

The seeker *is* what he is seeking.

*It reminds me of the saying: "The moon is in the sky not in the reflection in the water."*

But all you are not is a reflection of what you are. All that you are not is an extension, an expression in space-time of what you really are. When you see the moon's reflection in the water you know if you look up you'll discover the moon.

What is essential here is to become more acquainted with your intimate nature, your sensations, body tensions, feelings and desires, without making any judgment. In innocent looking we are completely outside what we observe. In other words, we take note, and just taking note has its own taste. If I were to ask you what you have in your mouth, you might reply, "Nothing," but really there's the taste of the mouth. Likewise, when I say, "Taking note has its own taste," I mean it is in itself an inner attitude. In assuming this attitude you find yourself spontaneously taking note.

*Does that which takes note have any thought or form?*

You *are* yourself in taking note. The moment form or thought arise you move away from your real being to the periphery. You are primal awareness. Life is only primal awareness. Between two thoughts or two perceptions you are. You know moments in your life when a thought completely disappears into silence, but still you are.

*What causes us to move out of this stillness?*

I would say it's a reflex because up to now you know yourself only in perception, in connection to events and feelings. As long as you don't really know what silence is you feel insecure in silence, because there's no place here for an ego. The ego can only exist in connection to situations and so it is always eager to look for a hold. But if you are acquainted with letting go, if you stop producing and just let things

come to you, you will become completely free. Of course then there is no longer a "you" – only freedom itself.

*Are you free because you no longer pay attention to the mind's movements?*

There's no longer attraction and repulsion for you are completely one with life. All that is the expression, the extension, of life goes on but there is no longer reaction, or concentration, or tension, because these arise only when there is a controlling ego. You really live in the moment itself, because you're out of the becoming process. Everything is accomplished in the moment. You are empty of a past, of memory. Silence is love.

*Would you speak about fear?*

First see that what you call "fear" is not fear. Fear is a sensation in your body and mind, a sensation you prevent yourself from feeling the moment you label it "fear." To arrive at the sensation, you must let go of the concept, the idea of fear, and then the perception will have an opportunity to reveal itself.

The pure sensation of fear is only tension. Tension arises the moment you look at a situation from the point of view of an image, of a man or woman, of a mother or father, of somebody's husband or wife, and the tension stimulates chemical, physical and psychic changes in the body-mind. But this tension can never be eliminated through analysis, through any process of reasoning, for he who undertakes analysis belongs to what is being analyzed. And as we have said before, the mind can never change the mind.

You must live with your fear, even love it. By this I mean you must offer no resistance to its movement. Go with your fear as you would automatically move with a train which has just started leaving, but which you very much want to catch. As it moves all your energy moves with it. There is no opposition. You might even grab the hand-rails and jump on.

So move with fear not against it. Escaping it, rationalizing it or analyzing it, only adds fuel to the fire. As beautiful as your ideas may be, as philosophical as your explanations are, they can't remove the actual tension of fear. They simply shift it to another location.

Fear concerns the person, and the person is a mere fraction of yourself. So the fraction regards a situation from a partial perspective. And as a fraction is never harmonious, all action emerging from the the partial view is inevitably disharmonious.

There must be no opposition. In accepting the sensation there is no longer a place for an image of somebody who reacts. In going with the fear you are outside it, detached, impersonal. We might say that in the moment of acceptance fuel is no longer added and the fire naturally dies out. The perception dissolves into the self, into your opening, and you awaken in this opening where there is no fear.



*How can I step back from my emotions, desires and agitations so that I may keep myself in pure awareness?*

You can't keep awareness because it is what you are. What it is and what you are is the light in all perception. All objects, all perceptions are dependent on this light, your real nature. They can't exist without perceiving light. This light in all perceptions I call the ultimate subject. Be clear that it has nothing to do with the subject, the "I," we take ourselves for in the subject-object relationship. Perception is only because you, light, awareness, ultimate subject, whatever you name it, are. Perception appears and disappears in you.

So be completely aware of the perception. See that it exists in time and space, while you are timeless. Space and time are nothing other than energy in movement. When no volitional subject interferes to crystallize it, perception takes shape and then dissolves back into silence, for silence is continuous while perception is discontinuous. So accent the perceiver, the subject, not the perceived, the object. At first you may experience silent awareness only after the dissolution of perception, but later you will be the silence in both the presence and absence of objects.

As a blank sheet of paper is unaffected by whatever you may write on it, so choiceless awareness is unaffected by the three states of waking, sleeping, and dreaming. These states are superimposed onto pure consciousness.

*It seems paradoxical that we must go through a movement in time to become established in what you call the timeless. Do we become established in it or does it become established in us?*

Be aware of how you function. Become acquainted with your body, your sensations, your feelings, fears, and thoughts. It is then that you may discover that what you call your body, senses and mind are only ideas which you entertain without really knowing what they are. You superimpose a memory-image onto your body and emotions.

So the first step, if we can speak of steps, is to see how rarely you listen because of your constant reactions and anticipation. In innocent observing, what is seen points back to the seeing itself. There is no longer any interference of an ego racing to judge, qualify or conclude. You find yourself in an attention which is free from tension and concentration, where there is no-one attentive nor any object of attention. Live this attention, without reference to something, for it is outside the subject-object relationship. You *are* consciousness, which remains during all the various states we enter and leave. There and then only are the love and joy of living to be found.

*When you entered the room, you sat down and took off your jacket. Where was your mind when you took off your jacket?*

There is no actor, only acting, only taking off the jacket. In reality there is no actor at all. The actor is a superimposition, a form of memory which appears only after the action. In acting itself there is only oneness. You may believe it possible to act, and while acting to think "I am acting," but the two don't occur at the same time. The "I" as an actor is one thought; the action is another thought; and two thoughts can't exist simultaneously. The rapid succession of thoughts gives an impression of simultaneity, but there can only be one thought at a time.

*Are you saying you did not knowingly take off your jacket?*

Look . . . I am sitting here but I am not my body. The body is an object of my perception. This object feels warm and this feeling of warmth removes the jacket, a completely spontaneous action, but there is no one who acts. That "I" removed the jacket appears afterwards as an idea, as an image of myself as an actor. But during the action itself it isn't possible to be in an idea of myself and in the act at the same time.

Let's say you're a violinist. While playing the violin it's not possible to think, "I am playing the violin." At the moment of playing you're completely involved in the movement, so there is no place for the idea of a player. The thought, "I am playing" may quickly pass through

your mind, but at this instant you're in this idea not in the playing. Our language is dualistic. When you say, "I am playing the violin" it means the playing of the violin belongs to an "I." When you identify the "I" with the violin player you have an idea of yourself as playing. But really this "I" has nothing to do with the player.

*Most of us identify with our body, our actions, our thoughts and feelings. This is something we've been taught to do since we were very young. But you seem to be saying this identification process is false. What insight takes us to the position of non-identification?*

Your parents have given you a shape and a name. Your education and environment attribute many qualifications to you and you identify with these. In other words, society has given you an idea of being someone. So when you think of yourself, you think in terms of a man with all the various qualifications that accompany this image. This accumulation has gone through many changes yet *you* are aware of them. You can remember when you were seven. You can recall when you had no beard. This indicates that there's an observer of these changes. The ability to observe change means that the change is in you, you are not in the change, for if you were how could you observe it? So what really belongs to the insight (to use your word) is what is changeless in you. You are the witness of all change but this witness never changes. So the real question is, "How can I become acquainted with the witness?"

*I'm not sure I see what you mean. I understand that changes have occurred which are recorded in my brain and I'm aware of these as memories. I don't see the need to bring in a witness.*

The witness is always present, is always presence. It is that which is not identified with change, with circumstances, and therefore "observes" them. Whenever you take note of a change, you do so from the position of the present. It is a present thought. It is this continual presentness throughout life that we call the witness. One cannot say it was born because birth and death are ideas, second-hand knowledge, something you've been told about. To know the witness, therefore, means to experience presentness in all change. Naming presence "the witness" is only a pedagogical device to show you that you are not the image you have of yourself, and to accent the subject, not the object, in your perceptions. In the end even the witness dissolves in that presence from which it springs.



*When the body dies does consciousness remain?*

What is the body? The body is a thought, a contrivance of the mind. When you look at the sky where is the body? When you look at the sky where is the man? Is there a man? There is only seeing the sky. Without the thought of being a man there's no man. You have an idea of a body but in reality it doesn't exist. The body, the man, are ways of thinking.

You do not wake up in the morning. It is the idea of a body which wakes up in you. What is there before the body wakes up? You are!

*But isn't that just an idea . . . I'm not aware of existing before.*

That's true, but still you are present before the body awakens. You know certain moments when the body is not completely awake but you are.

Once a desire is fulfilled, there's a moment of desirelessness where no one is desireless. There's only being, and in this there's neither idea nor emotion. You may have a beautiful wife. When you are apart from each other, you may visualize her charm, her shape, her intelligence and so on, all the qualifications. But there comes a moment when all qualifications vanish and there is only being. There is no longer any image of a beloved or an image of a lover. There is only love. This is what I mean when I say you are neither the senses nor the mind. You are this love.

*How can I become free of this self-image?*

Become fully aware of the idea you have of yourself. This "I" is still an object you can know. You know your desires, fears and anxieties, but who is the knower? You can never objectify the knower because you are the knower. So be the knower. Don't try to find yourself somewhere in an I-image because you are nowhere. Don't look for yourself!

*Why do we always identify with what we are not?*

Let's rephrase this question. Let's first ask, "What is it we are not?" We are not the body, senses or mind. But to really understand this, we must first accept our physical and mental functions. Real knowledge of something demands total openness.

Perhaps you're aware that your body is heavy or tense, but your body is more than heaviness and tension. Come to know the body through listening to it, for the body is in you, you are not in it. The body is a case history, so one must give it the chance to reveal itself.

And to do this you must be still. Listening has no room for someone who listens. There is only alert, empty listening, which allows the body to express its history. Otherwise you can't ever really get to know your body, because it becomes a projection of your memory. For most of us, it isn't the body that awakens each morning but the pattern, the idea, we have of it. It isn't real. You may ask, "What is real?" That which exists in itself is real. The body needs consciousness to exist. If you aren't conscious of it, the body doesn't exist.

*It exists in other people's consciousness. Isn't this Bishop Berkeley's argument for the existence of God?*

First one must understand what you mean by God. Isn't God more or less an idea? What is God for you except an idea?

*What does not depend on consciousness for its existence?*

Everything that can be perceived has no reality; it has need of an agent to be known. Consciousness alone is real because it needs no agent. The body is just an idea. It appears and disappears in you when you don't think about it. It appears and disappears in consciousness, and what appears and disappears in consciousness is nothing else than consciousness. The body, the whole universe is an expression of consciousness.

*What is the distinction between mind and consciousness?*

You can be aware of your mind. You can be aware of your left and right brain functions. You are the knower of your mind, of your brain. So you are not these.

*Do you mind if I ask you some personal questions?*

There's no person to answer personal questions. I listen to your question and I listen to the answer. The answer comes out of silence.

*Presumably you had contact with a teacher but it has no relevance now?*

It refers only to the present and there is only present. When you speak of the past it is also now. There is no past. Past and future don't exist. What we call the past is a present thought. Time, like space, is just a way of thinking, a state of mind.

*In that case, is there a particular method of practice you would recommend?*

Knowing yourself requires no practice. You don't need to undertake anything. There is nothing to attain, nothing to lose.



*Could you tell us more about what you mean by unconditioned listening?*

Whenever listening is intentional, tension arises because a result is anticipated, and this result is a product, a projection of memory. Unconditioned listening has no end in mind and in this openness all the senses are receptive. Hearing is no longer confined to the ears, instead the whole body listens with an ever-expanding sensitivity until you feel yourself in listening itself. Another way to say this is that you no longer listen because you *are* listening.

Awareness of stillness, of silence, may first arise in the absence of objects, as often happens in sitting meditation. But later, it is sustained in both their presence and absence. This awareness, which is listening, is the background of every appearance, so that even while engaged in activity you are aware of both the activity and being.

Awareness of being is not a perception for being can never be objectified. We can't be aware of two objects at the same time; we can't have two thoughts simultaneously. But we can be simultaneously aware of both our phenomenal existence and our presence, being. This non-state spontaneously appears the instant producing and projecting cease.

Any attempt to produce this non-state actually immerses us deeper in the subject-object relationship. There are times when attaining silence may be of momentary benefit, since a temporary absence of thought produces a relaxed state. But remaining in this subject-object relationship, which is all the absence of thought is, bars you from a more profound silence. The presence of the blank state can even be an obstacle; being energy in movement it cannot be continuously sustained. True silence is neither movement nor energy, but stillness.

*Can one who has reached the non-state ever lose it?*

When you have once realized who you really are, this can never be lost. But up to the "moment" of recognition, your position may be fragile. Although global consciousness is ever-present, you leave it by

identifying with your senses and mind, your reactions and fears. But it brings you back. You are solicited by it.

*Martin Buber once asked his brother, "Tell me where you feel your pain because I want to help." And his brother replied, "If you love me, you will know where my pain is." We are sometimes aware of the pain of those whom we love. What should we do with this pain?*

When you hold an image of your brother as someone who is ill, you're an accomplice to his illness. Only when all projection stops is observation unqualified and awareness complete. Then all that is observed appears in you, in this awareness. You don't merely see your brother's physical aspect, but all the subtler levels as well. And you are no longer an accomplice to his pain.

Every thought is an image and every image stimulates affectivity. In other words, the moment an image arises in the mind it strikes your entire chemical and neurological functioning, and this results in a reaction. So what you think of as pain is a reaction evoked by the image you've created. But it may surprise you to discover that when you face your brother without projecting an image onto him, he can no longer locate himself anywhere, not in his body, nor in his pain, nor in his ideas. You set him free, for he no longer has the chance to create an image of himself. And once this provocation to produce an image drops away, healing follows its natural course.

*And when someone is suffering?*

If you suffer with him, you're an accomplice. The moment you love him, complicity ends. Love is free of all images. But where there's emotivity or sentimentality, when you feel with him and share in his self-image, then you help him feel his pain.

*So having pity for someone makes me an accomplice and actually hinders the healing process?*

Of course one must really understand what is meant by pity.

*Should we then realize that despite the evidence of pain, it is not to be accepted as a reality?*

In a moment of openness you are unconditioned love. And inherent

in this is an intelligence which indicates exactly how to behave towards your brother. But you should also understand that to take away his pain is not of any real benefit to him. Pain points to something. Like an alarm, it awakens you. But don't try to escape by finding some psychological interpretation. One must really see what pain is pointing to.

You can help your brother discover who is the producer of pain. Like every object, like every perception, pain refers us back to consciousness, to the ultimate, for it is the ultimate which illumines the object.

*And into which the pain dissolves?*

In reality there is *only* the ultimate. The moment pain points to the ultimate, put the accent on the ultimate, not on the pain.

*I find it hard to understand how pain points to the ultimate.*

I'm not speaking of pain as a concept, but as a perception, a sensation. Usually we resist the pure sensation by constructing some idea of pain. And this refusal is a reaction which contributes to the pain. But when you allow pain to be pure sensation, devoid of any psychological reaction, all the energy previously localized as pain is liberated and dissolves back into the ultimate.

Another way to express this is to let the body be body. The body has an organic memory of health. You have the proof of this in the fact that when you cut your finger, it heals within a week. The body evidently knows precisely how to heal itself.

*Then the natural state of the body is pure health?*

Yes. There may be some momentary disturbances, but the fundamental state of the body is health. The true physician embodies total health because he *is* health. He helps health heal the body by going with it. Many modern medical techniques or medicines oppose health in viewing the body as an enemy. There must not be any violence. It is important for you to regard your body as a friend who knows perfect health.

*On the path towards non-duality, some authorities urge us to use concentration and effort, while others tell us to be effortless. What is the explanation for this apparent contradiction?*

Effort arises when one projects some goal to be attained, but what

you fundamentally are can never be attained since you already are it. So why the effort? In the beginning relaxation techniques may be useful, since the relaxed state enables you to see that what you are seeking is found the very instant seeking stops.

Inherent in this stopping is the fore-feeling of fundamental unity. This fore-feeling may well stimulate a kind of effort to have it knowingly, but in this case effort is not a process of volition. Issuing from the effortless, it attracts you to its source, to your real nature.

*Are you saying there are two types of effort, a volitional kind and another which transcends the personal will?*

The first type of effort belongs to the "I," the ego. The second flows directly from the effortless, for its origin is Self.

*A kind of effortless effort?*

Yes, because the motive behind all effort is to be effortless. The sole desire is for desirelessness. You see this when you look at what happens the moment a desired object is obtained. There is desirelessness but nobody who is desireless, so at this point there is no object as its cause. You live your real non-dual nature. Later, however, you leave it and the "I" enters, saying, "I was happy because I bought a new house, or met a new friend" and so on. But a time comes when this object no longer suffices. So you begin anew to search for some other object. And this vicious circle continues until you finally see that desirelessness has absolutely nothing to do with any object. It is in you.

*Is it dangerous to try to experience non-duality without a personal guide, a master?*

This question evades a true self-confrontation because it gives validity to the "person," to an appearance in space-time. You must first begin by really facing yourself, your fears, desires and reactions. By this I mean stop superimposing your own projections and accept life as it comes to you. The surest way to discover truth is to stop resisting it.

Self-awareness requires a certain degree of maturity which arises naturally when you question your motives and desires from a stance of receptivity. You await the answer. This stance is a kind of recapitulation of your whole life, without attraction-repulsion, likes and dislikes. You take stock; you look; you take note. In the moment of self-acceptance you are still. You let your perceptions unfold, you let your

pain and desires speak, the ego is absent, but *you* remain still. This is the moment to find a teacher. But the person can never *find* him. He *comes* to you, because he is waiting for you.

*You are saying not to seek a guru?*

The very intention to find someone already prejudices the way you see. Seeking something means you're not open to whatever comes to meet you from moment to moment. But if your attitude is innocent, receptive to the world, empty of reaction, you can be sure you will meet all you need to meet.

*Can one raise a child in freedom from the "I"?*

To free the child from an image, you must first be free, free of all qualifications – particularly from the image of being a father. Preserving the father-image arouses the need to fulfill all that defines a father and, in turn, your child must fulfill all that defines his relationship to you. Then there is a kind of mutual imprisonment.

Only when the contact is no longer between two images, but between being and being, is communion possible. Then we speak of love.

*If there is complete acceptance, one doesn't question?*

If there is acceptance, there is no longer any question. But acceptance is not a passive position. On the contrary, it is highly alert, attentive, active. You are totally aware of all you accept. In accepting things, there is intelligence, and in this intelligence you are completely appropriate to every situation, to every living being. You stop adding fuel to your ego, to your fatherhood. And then your child is free, for your observation remains constantly fresh. In this freedom, he grows.

When you are aware of your child, when you are open to him, you know exactly what he needs, for there is immediate understanding of his way of communicating, of his movements, and so on. In other words, all projecting stops. We can even say this openness *is* love.

*When you speak of projecting, what is doing the projecting?*

See that you project an image of yourself with all its encumbering attributes.

*I project myself?*

Yes, you project this image with the help of society. Society holds certain ideas about you and its behavior towards you is based on these. The reflex to create an image of yourself as an independent, separate identity, gives society a place to grasp. So don't give society a foothold.

What we call "enlightenment" is simply realizing you are not the person, not the image society has impressed on you. Enlightenment is seeing that there is only unqualified nothingness. In this nothingness, you are free, you feel free, you act freely, you think freely. But as long as you live with an image of yourself, there is only fear.

*Do we continue to project an image of ourselves even when we're alone?*

Even then you objectify yourself as an image. What do you really know about yourself? You only know yourself in situations, in all the various qualifications. So you're alone, and you project an idea of a married woman, or a mother with a child, or a woman who is unloved. Already this image stimulates an emotional, chemical, neurological reaction, which in turn generates the feeling of being restricted, located somewhere. This localization arouses tension. And then what happens? You try to escape this feeling of tension. You read a book, you go to a film, you phone a friend. All this activity is compensation.

You must see that what you call "yourself" is only the projection of an image, that exists solely because you see it. *You* are the seer, the knower of this image. You know all its fear and insecurity. The moment you see it, you are outside the projecting process. And as the image is only energy in movement, when you stop feeding it, it dies.

*But the mind is always clinging to something. I don't understand how you can go from this to the freedom of which you speak.*

Accept the mind. Let it be. Don't be against it, don't be violent. Simply accept it. Acceptance will show you that you still want to control it, to give life a certain direction. And so you lose the possibility of really living. Life springs up in letting go.

*What can I do to become more receptive to ultimate reality?*

There is no system, method or technique by which to approach reality. It reveals itself when all technique and systems fail and the futility of volition is seen. Then the mind comes into a state of innocent surrender. Technique only makes the mind more cunning and ingenious. You still remain in its net, and although you may have the impression of transformation, you are in fact still playing the old games. It's a vicious circle.

Freedom, humility and love appear instantaneously, never as an achievement. The mind, the thinking processes, take place in terms of time and space. But silent awareness is not conditioned or qualified by either time or space. So the limited mind cannot reach the absolute by expanding itself. All such effort only results in perpetuating the ego.

If you pay attention while we are talking, then in that very state of attention your mind undergoes transformation. The important thing is the act of listening, of observing your reaction to these words. Real listening involves your whole being, and in it the boundaries of the ego dissolve. The mind then comes into a state of great alertness.

Concerning your question, any method or technique involves specialization or localization. But such focusing on a part can never bring you to the whole. The more you specialize, the more your field of vision narrows, but the basic cause of conflict in the psyche is not removed. Tranquility obtained through techniques is only on the surface, while the deeper source of conflict continues.

*How can I free my mind from conditioning?*

Mind is function, energy in movement. It is a storehouse on different levels of consciousness of individual and collective past experiences. Without memory there is no mind, for thoughts are sounds, words and symbols appearing in memory. Memory is itself conditioned, being based on the pleasure-pain structure: all pleasure is stored and whatever is painful is relegated to the unconscious layers.

The basic function of the human organism is survival. Biological survival is a natural instinct, but psychological survival is the source of conflict since it is simply survival of the psyche with its center the "me." What we generally call learning is appropriation and conditioned by psychological survival. The conditioned mind cannot be changed by its own effort or system.

*Then how does this transformation, this integration, happen?*

The mind must come to a state of silence, completely empty of fear, longing and all images. This cannot be brought about by suppression, but by observing every feeling and thought without qualification, condemnation, judgment, or comparison. If unmotivated alertness is to operate the censor must disappear. There must simply be a quiet looking at what composes the mind. In discovering the facts just as they are, agitation is eliminated, the movement of thoughts becomes slow and we can watch each thought, its cause and content as it occurs. We become aware of every thought in its completeness and in this totality there can be no conflict. Then only alertness remains, only silence in which there is neither observer nor observed. So do not force your mind. Just watch its various movements as you would look at flying birds. In this uncluttered looking, all your experiences surface and unfold. For unmotivated seeing not only generates tremendous energy but frees all tension, all the various layers of inhibitions. You see the whole of yourself.

Observing everything with full attention becomes a way of life, a return to your original and natural meditative being.

*How can I act in a way that doesn't create further reaction, karma?*

Whenever love and kindness are in your heart, you will have the intelligence to know what to do and when and how to act. When the mind sees its limitations, the limitations of the intellect, a humility and innocence arise which are not a matter of cultivation, accumulation or learning, but the result of instantaneous understanding. The moment you see your helplessness, that nothing works, you come to a point of surrender, a stand-still, where you are in communion with silence, ultimate truth. It is this reality which transforms your mind, and not effort or decision.

*I feel I know myself somewhat. I have a certain awareness of my psychologi-*

*cal strengths and weaknesses, but I also feel a lack of perfect satisfaction, otherwise I wouldn't be here. Is there anything I can do now?*

If you take note, you will see that you are violent with your perception. You constantly interfere, by trying to control it, to direct it. The controller belongs to what is controlled; both are objects and one object cannot know another. So you must increasingly let perception unfold, give it complete freedom. If you let perception unfold, it will sooner or later bring you back to yourself. Allow letting go to reveal itself and the dynamism to produce will disappear.

*How can I learn from conflict?*

See that in either accepting or rejecting you are conditioned because there's nothing to accept or reject. In total listening, attention without memory, there's no conflict. There is only seeing. In silent listening what is said, what is heard and what comes up as response and reaction, lie within your own self. This perception of the whole is real attention and in this there are neither problems nor conditioning. There is simply freedom.

*What do you mean when you say there's no actor in doing, speaking or listening?*

In action which springs from completeness there's no actor to act, there's only action. You are functioning and the "I" is absent. The moment the "I"-thought comes up, you become self-conscious and caught in conflict. In the absence of this thought there is no speaker or listener, no subject controlling an object. Only then is there complete harmony and adequacy in every circumstance.

*What is the place of the intellect in unconditioned listening?*

The intellect is a defense against something you reject or accept. Once you have, out of totality, seen the truth of something, there is no escaping it. You live with it. With this complete understanding the mind cannot avoid changing and transformation occurs. When the intellect is absent there is total attention; listening and talking may spontaneously happen but they spring from reality. There is no longer any producing by the mind. In silent attention the mind is completely empty, so what is heard penetrates deeply. In a state of either rejection or acceptance there is merely a playing with words, with memory,

with the intellect. But in a state of silent listening, there's no place for right or wrong, compensation or conclusion. They have, through intuitive understanding, either become knowledge or they have not.

Become aware of the processes of your mind and body and you will begin to understand yourself. There's no difference between this and understanding the whole universe. Your perception completely opens itself to reality in its fullness.

*Can one think a real experience?*

An experience is happening. It cannot be thought. Thinking is not direct experience but the pursuit and attempted repetition of sensation. In the real experience the experiencer is completely absorbed in the experienced – they are one, leaving no memory or identification. It is a non-experience because there's nobody experiencing anything.

In the field of technology the accumulation of experience is necessary and does not lead to conflict. But on the psychological plane, which is driven by like and dislike, the accumulation of experience strengthens the ego and denies the possibility of the real experience: the non-experience.

The mature peak of an experience is the freedom of oneness without subject and object. This is not the unity of the mystical experience which is still a state that is entered and left. The real experience is not a search for pleasure on any level because satisfaction is sensation that has not been fully resorbed. It is the remnant of an incomplete experience, a repetition of memory's projections. The mind then gets bored and seeks new experiences.

In the real non-experience no residue is left. It brings us back at every moment to our timeless nature.

*How can I become free from the boredom I often feel?*

If we live superficially and observe this, we become aware of a deep lack or discomfort which can appear as boredom. We see ourselves going from one compensation to the other. Face these moments of boredom. Really perceive them without justification or conceptualization. You must free perception, let it unfold in your awareness. Then a transformation takes place on every level. All the energy that was dispersed and localized in fixed habits becomes freed and re-orchestrated. Each circumstance calls for a re-harmonizing of energy that is perfectly adequate to the situation.

In the complete re-orchestration that takes place, the energy that was previously dispelled in psychological time "returns" and vanishes in our timeless presence.

*You say that when we live in freedom from the subject-object relationship we live in the timeless. But our bodies come and go, the sun rises and sets, so are we not in the end bound to time?*

Are you clear what you mean by "time"? It is true that man is always creating time. Psychological time is thought based on memory. It is essentially the past and we continually revive the past through it. In fact, what we call the future is only a modified past. Psychological time is never in the now, but like a pendulum is in constant movement from past to future, from future to present, in rapid succession. It exists only on the horizontal plane of having-becoming, pleasure-displeasure, grasping-avoidance, security-insecurity. It is the source of misery and conflict. Understanding psychological time and space is the way to meditation and right living.

Chronological, astronomical time is equally based on memory, but it is a purely functional memory, free from the intervention of the ego, of will. It is essentially present. Events proceed in orderly succession and since there's no movement between a so-called past and future, there is no conflict.

Life is present, but when we think, we think in terms of the past or the future. To live in the now implies a mind free from end-gaining and recapitulation, free from grasping and striving. In the present there is no thought; thoughts are fused into a whole. Life in the moment contains all possible happening so there is no place for time. Everything can be summed up in this: time is thought and thought appears in time. Beauty and joy are only revealed in the now.

*You often say that right action is not a question of morality but springs naturally from spontaneity. How can I come to this spontaneity?*

Spontaneity comes through listening and results in understanding. In unconditioned listening, which is silence, freedom from all agitation and concept, the situation is seen in its entirety and it is from this whole seeing that appropriate spontaneous action springs.

It is obvious that an action which proceeds from conscious thought cannot be spontaneous. It is equally true, but less obvious, that actions springing from habit, inclination or instinct cannot be spontaneous

either. For habit and instinct are conditioned, automatic and mechanical, and actions which come from inclination are motivated by justification, rationalization and conflict. They are all ruled by unconscious thought. In fact, we can call only that which springs from spontaneity, action. Everything else is not free from interference and is therefore reaction.

To uncover spontaneity, conscious and unconscious thought must come to an end. All the projections of the intellect must stop if creative spontaneity is to operate. Intellectual effort and the cultivation of will-power are useless in integrating spontaneity. The mind must become humble and sensitive, free from violence, pride and greed. Then real intelligence can function.

When the intellect becomes silent through observation, through listening, the basic nature of the mind undergoes a transformation. This transformation reaches to the most obscure urges and movements of our animal life. The intellect becomes clear-thinking in the light of all-integrating intelligence and a beautiful human being is born.

Life is living spontaneity, untouched by time.

*What about social and conventional morality?*

When you let the Supreme take you in charge, spontaneity is virtuous and beyond social and conventional morality.

*Can I be active in silence?*

Silence is our natural state. It is the background of everything. No concentration is necessary to be it. As long as we are involved in perception we live in time, that is, we live only on the horizontal plane. But silence is timeless. It is at the center where time and timeless meet, where the horizontal and the vertical come together. This point is the heart.

Usually in our involvement with objects we do not really perceive things as they are but see only the projections of the ego. Unless our perceptions are allowed to blossom in ego-less silence, we cannot really know reality. Do you see this flower? Let it come to you in its fullness without imposing your mind on it. Real observation is multi-dimensional. You see, hear, taste, smell, feel, with your whole being, globally. True seeing is alert receptivity, an alive passivity. In this observation an object may appear but one is not directed to it.

*How should I think of death, and how can I cope with the experience of death?*

Thought appears in silence and vanishes in silence. Something which appears in something and vanishes in something is nothing other than this something.

Likewise, what you believe yourself to be also appears and vanishes in silence. What you understand by death is really nothing other than a pointer to silence, to life itself. Death has no reality. But if you don't see it in this way, it remains a stagnant idea in which you are trapped. As long as you take yourself for an independent entity you are submitted to karma. Let us put it another way: before speaking of death, ask yourself what is life. All perception is, only because you are eternal present beingness. This is the background of waking, dreaming and deep sleep. In living knowledge, in this presentness, the problem of death has no meaning.



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Paris December 1980

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*From my observation it seems that attention gets siphoned out by the objective world, or the so-called objective world, in moments of very high activity when a lot is demanded of you. It's like an engine which gets clogged up if it expends too much energy. Does this excessive consumption of energy cause attention to diminish?*

Yes, attention diminishes because you are involved in the activity. You are still in the subject-object relationship. Pure attention is timeless, and all that is time appears and disappears in this timeless non-state. But you forget the whole to focus on the part, on the appearance. In other words, in looking for a result you're identifying with the subject-object. This outward seeking blocks awareness to awareness itself.

*But it seems activity in an everyday sense is always focused on some result. You go to the bank because you want to draw out money. You don't go there absolutely freely.*

That's true. Thought may be functional, it may be calculated. As long as I must clean my shoes, brush my hair, dress myself, and earn some money to live on, these are intentional actions, and obviously we're seeking some result. But we aren't personally involved or emotionally affected by this. We simply do it.

Essentially there is no division between practical thought, what I must do, and intuitive thought, for intuitive thought encompasses the whole situation. But real spontaneous thinking arises only when we are free from wanting, from expecting and anticipating. This is what Heidegger referred to as "waiting without waiting." Nothing is sought. There is only being, only listening without projecting anything to hear.

*Is the establishment of spontaneous thought something that happens gradually?*

No. Spontaneous thought arises naturally during our daily life and

we come to a kind of understanding or result. But later we confront this thought and evaluate it from the subject-object point of view.

Spontaneous thought, spontaneous action, is aesthetic, ethical and functional. But the ego enters and says, "Let me see if I agree with this kind of thought," and we put it in some structure, some frame. When you observe you will see how often you put into question something you've understood spontaneously.

*You once said where there is effort, there is tension. It seems to me tension is a kind of defense. So when I'm tense, what am I defending myself against?*

You defend your image, nothing else. You habitually objectify yourself. You live with an image you've created which stimulates sensation and emotivity. Otherwise there is no need to defend yourself, because there is nobody to defend. When you are stripped of all qualifications, what is there to defend? You can't defend your nakedness. In an absolutely unqualified state, there is freedom, total freedom.

As long as we maintain the subject-object perspective, we move with intention. But when you realize that what you are can never be objectified, you come to stillness, to awareness, wherein spontaneous thought surfaces. In this moment you can't speak of intentional thought. It may appear intentional, but it comes out of your timeless position.

*Where there is a state of identity—I look at the flower, I am the flower—when name and shape disappear, what is it that makes me come back as a human being rather than as a flower? What is the nature of this link?*

But the human being is still a shape and a name; the flower is still shape and name. Letting go of the shape and name means letting go of your body and mind. What remains is timeless awareness, which is what you have in common with the flower. The human being appears in you just like the flower. When you don't think of yourself as a man, where is the man?

You are one with all living beings, and these appear in this oneness. There is distinction, of course, between human beings and other living beings, but there is no separation. So your body and mind appear in timeless presence, but they appear only as instruments.

Repetition occurs only in the subject-object position. In other words, things seem to maintain the same shape, to follow the same pattern, only because "I" as subject-object look for security. Once this search for security stops, once you are outside the subject-object position, you will see that all repetition is illusory.

*So in this unqualified state all action appears spontaneously with no reference to time and space?*

Yes, it appears spontaneously. There is no recapitulation of the past and no anticipation of the future. But what appears spontaneously needs time and space for its realization. Suppose you have an intuition that you must undertake a certain kind of work. First you have the intuition, and then the realization of this requires time and space, but in the intuition there is an intelligence which indicates precisely how to proceed.

Let's say you're an actor. You read the script for a dramatic piece, and you understand how it works psychologically, intellectually and physically. The moment you decide to play a particular role in this drama, the general psychological background remains in you. You act out the role in time, from moment to moment, but the climate of this background is always present. I would even say the climate of this background is your intuition saying "I must undertake this work."

Intuition is the appearance of a perfect simultaneity of things. It is outside the ordinary process of thought, because ordinary thinking is in time. You can never have more than one thought at a time, but you can intuitively perceive the whole. Afterwards you realize this in the sequence of space and time. It is like a painter who, in a certain moment, sees the whole picture on the canvas. This doesn't mean he sees all the details, but at least the main elements, the proportions. Afterwards he realizes the painting in space-time.

*There is an intuitive, global view of the creation but sometimes it seems the actor gets lost in his role and no longer sees the whole drama. When the view is fragmented how can I come back to the whole?*

You mean he forgets the background? Yes, he leaves the background and so he must come back to it. That is why you mustn't fix this kind of intuition. You mustn't fix it intellectually. Let it remain a global feeling.

But if you lose this global feeling, this totality, and try to compensate with memory, then you go wrong. This sometimes happens to artists. They have an experience of global perception and with this they set to work composing or painting or writing. If they abandon this feeling of the whole and compensate with the intellect, with the past, with memory, their work often becomes confused. They may even drop it.

It is of utmost importance not to analyze intuition. Don't fix it or put it in a frame. Don't put any contours around it. Leave it completely open because it is alive. Of course, the realization of an intuition occurs in

space-time, and requires you to use both your practical brain and body. But the support of all your action, of all your thought, of all the necessary documentation, is this intuition lying behind the appearance.

At the beginning intuition may pertain to your behavior and your activities. But a moment comes when you have an intuition of your whole life, when your whole life, past, present, and future, surfaces. Like the artist, you don't see the details, but you feel the dynamic tension. This tension is not a reaction but something tangible you feel in the same way you feel the proportions of this room.

When you don't identify with an image, when your observation is innocent, you feel life come up. But the instant you leave this – the moment you identify with some image of yourself, as a woman, as a professional, as having so much money, and so on – in this moment you are once again living in the vicious circle of having and becoming.

Let's say you spent a week in Switzerland. If you were present without labelling anything, without drawing any conclusions, then the general impression of the time will come back to you at some point. The general impression will bring you back to the details. In other words, you go from the whole to the details. But if you identify with a detail, you can never return to the whole, for the effort to go back to the whole is just an intellectual construction, a product of your memory.

When you hear music, when you read poetry, listen to it, read it. Then aesthetic joy springs up spontaneously. You must completely avoid the habit of trying to understand it, to affix it. The best position is to be constantly open, without any conclusions. Situations arise and action occurs, but in this openness action is perfectly in tune with the situation. And you may see things you've never seen before.



This current\* is very important, for it is beyond the question and the answer. In fact there's no meaning without this current because you still remain fixated on your own ideas and images.

*And the question arises spontaneously from this current?*

\* The "current" spoken of is the current existing when there is no longer separation between beings. In a dialogue of question-answer we usually assume there is someone who asks the question and another who answers. But as long as we maintain this point of view, as long as the one asking the question feels separate from the one responding, both question and answer stay on the conceptual level.

Yes, but put another way we can say that once we are present to this current, there's no longer any question.

*Then the question is a manifestation of this current, isn't it?*

Yes. it's a reconfirmation on the verbal level that this current exists.

*If we take the case of someone who doesn't have a teacher, or thinks there is no teacher, can this current arise on its own?*

Theoretically yes, but in practice I'd say no. Let's say you notice a fly in your room. As you follow the fly's movements in space your looking is innocent, non-calculative, for you don't draw any conclusions. You simply watch the fly. And as your attention is held for a long time, you may come to feel yourself observing. You may find yourself in observation. This elicits a sense of immense freedom in which one can come to experience the current.

The teacher doesn't point to the absence of the thinking process. He points to what is behind the thinking process, behind thought and perception. He doesn't accent the observed object, the fly in space, but observation itself.

Generally there is much anticipation in our observation. For while observing, a result is projected and attention is focused on this object of thought. But real observation is seeing with no thought of a result and therefore no tension between observer and observed. In the dissolving of all projection you have the original perception that what you observe is *in* you – not outside. And as there is no dynamism between observer and observed, you are no longer taken by what you observe, but by observation itself.

But this kind of experience or current can't be integrated by will. The moment you try to integrate it, it's already projection. As soon as you let all end-gaining fade away you will feel yourself spontaneously still and autonomous.

*I don't see how one keeps from projecting without this being a willful process.*

You must examine *why* you project, take note of it. You still want to obtain something. Wanting to obtain arises out of feeling unfulfilled in yourself.

*Yes, wanting to acquire. And would you say the teacher operates through*

*surprise? Is surprise the emotion felt when suddenly the teacher says, "not here but there" or "neither here nor there"?*

Or when he says, "nowhere." The moment you say "nowhere," you feel yourself in oneness. In the moment of non-projection you are in oneness.

In the beginning, "nowhere" may seem to refer to an empty screen. This happens for many of us. If the accent is on this empty screen we continue to wait for something to occur. But as nothing happens, in the end we're still hungry.

Don't even put the accent on the absence of something. You must say to yourself, "I can see this absence only because I am present." And if you don't objectify this presence as presence, you come to original attention, original silence. The moment you don't put the accent on the absence, there is an opening, and in this there is a magical exchange between guru and disciple.

*Is the nature of this exchange, this current, identity?*

Yes. In this moment there's nobody who talks or teaches, and nobody who is taught. You are completely on the impersonal level. The concept "many" doesn't exist in oneness, but practically speaking, you may feel this current more strongly with a group of people than when you are alone. However, you are entirely taken by this current, so in this moment there is no more or less.

*When this current exists what is the value of words?*

What is a word? It's a sound, a symbol. The word is not the experience, it only points to it. When the word points to an object, it crystallizes. But if it doesn't point to an object there is no possibility for it to crystallize. It's then like a cloud in the blue sky. You are the sky and clouds might appear, but the sky remains unaffected, uninvolved in these appearances. Sometimes a cloud appears as a woman, or a man, or a situation, but still you are always the clear blue sky.

*That takes a special kind of listening, doesn't it?*

It's a listening without any conclusions, without any reference to the already-known. When you listen to an explanation of something objective, in space-time, understanding is in reference to what you already

know. But if you listen to something completely timeless, listening has no reference, for there can't be a reference to the non-objective. So what you hear concludes in you and points back to pure listening.

*Doesn't pure listening require trust? When you hear or even read someone's words, isn't trust necessary?*

Yes, but trust is not a belief. Trust is openness, accepting the possibility. You automatically accept the possibility in a moment of listening. In pure listening there is neither acceptance nor non-acceptance, only listening itself.

*Then what gets in the way of this? Listening would seem to be the natural way to respond to life, but something happens so that when you listen you no longer have that kind of trust. You tend to want to protect your own opinion, so you can't really hear the other person.*

But trusting hasn't a moral touch. It is the same thing as acceptance. You accept something in order to come to understand it for yourself. As in scientific procedures, you ask how your neighbor has arrived at his results and accept the possibility of this second-hand knowledge. Then you go through the same process, and live it first-hand.

*How would you say this happened in your own life? What was the nature of the relationship between the teacher and yourself?*

If one can speak of a step, the first is to inquire into your life. There must be a recapitulation of your life without any intention to improve it or to reach conclusions. Just see it, observe it. I'd say this was the first step that brought me to a teacher, because I hadn't found the answer for myself in this inquiring process. The teacher provides the perspective.

*But you can't really look for a teacher, can you? It seems that the teacher just comes.*

The teacher comes, yes. Through questioning and reviewing your life, you may reach a point where you cannot see how to move in any direction. In this is a ripeness, an openness, a chance for the teacher to appear.

In the moment of interrogation, observation is free from conclusions. You see your life the way you read a Zen or Chinese poem. There is only

observing without putting any emphasis on an eventual reaction.

If your observation is focused on something, then the main emphasis becomes "What is my reaction to this object?" But if your observation has no reference, it remains an inner attitude. Objectless observation is an inner position of awareness wherein, we could say, the observed object recedes more and more, bringing you back to primal wakefulness. And in this original alertness is a kind of fore-feeling which draws you to look for somebody. Or traditionally one would say "Somebody is looking for you."

The teacher provides the perspective, the formulation, or intellectual explanation. Timeless experience and intellectual understanding work together in a parallel way. Otherwise it's as if you are walking in clouds.

*But at some point the intellectual understanding drops away doesn't it?*

The intellectual understanding brings you to the correct attitude to understand what can never be understood. It evokes an inner attitude which helps you see that you can never come to objectless consciousness through the thought process. We could say it takes you to the helplessness of thought.

*Then one grows in awareness. . . .?*

You don't become aware, for you *are* awareness. Awareness of awareness comes from awareness itself. The volitional "I" can never achieve this because the "I" is only thought. So once you see that thought is helpless to elicit the timeless non-state, you stop all producing and projecting, and are still. Stillness is an autonomy wherein awareness is aware of itself being total and complete. It is not a state we enter and leave.

Mind continues to appear, but the moment you know yourself as awareness, you are this throughout all your activities. The non-state is completely unaffected by the thought process, by activity, emotions or desires. These come and go, but you *are*.

We might speak of awareness as a kind of background because at first you may feel it as if behind you. But this image is not really accurate, for it gives a direction to what is directionless. It's like the six surfaces in this room: the ceiling, floor, and four walls. These are stable. Every object in this room can be changed, but these six surfaces won't be affected. So objects in space-time may change as clouds change, as thoughts, feelings and desires change, but awareness, in being multi-dimensional, isn't touched by these changes.

The six surfaces are the original perception of yourself. So the more you remain with this original perception, the less you support the habit of objectifying yourself as a woman or man, as someone with a bank account and so on. Wanting to be a woman, to fulfill all the attributes associated with this image, how to behave, how to appear, how to respond, prevents the real woman from emerging. Once visualization of yourself as a woman stops, all the faculties of the real woman arise the moment a situation calls for it. Since there is no longer an image, a pattern to follow, you are open to the whole, thus totally spontaneous and perfectly adequate to every situation.

In an objective relationship, a contact of one object to another, there is always a tension. This tension arises whenever we desire to be relieved of insecurity, or lack, and it usually manifests as demanding. But when you live in timeless awareness, relationship is of an entirely different order. One could say there is only giving, only radiation. And the rapport is one of profound tranquillity, a stillness which becomes tangible in a certain way.

*Don't many people go through their whole lives without feeling this? Or can you feel it without being conscious of it?*

You know moments in your life when nothing happens, when nothing takes shape in your imagination for you to project or anticipate. You are there and nothing happens. You listen to stillness. You listen to the nothing happening and then a moment comes when this non-happening brings you back to listening itself. In this presence to listening there is freedom and completeness, with nothing to add or subtract. But you must be ripe for it.

When you look for experience, your attention is restricted to a fraction of the whole. Focusing attention in this way puts the brakes on life's movement. So when you stop searching for experience, you're open. Experience is just a mental process. You can see this in moments when what you are experiencing comes to an end. The lack of any object of awareness brings you back to awareness itself.

In reality an object in itself doesn't exist, for it appears only in relation to other already-known objects. But to really know something there must be no reference to anything else, so that it refers directly to awareness itself. For an object is an expression of stillness.

If an image comes up in your mind and arouses a sense of conflict, you should understand this conflict arises because you see the image from a point of view. But if you don't name it, if you don't fix it, and allow it to be completely free, the feeling of conflict drops away. It is no

longer confined to an opinion and is seen in its completeness. As you see this image from the background of the whole, it appears among many others in a perfect simultaneity, and brings you back to silent awareness. In this moment there is transformation.

If you try to eliminate conflict through analyzing it, through comparing this image with other images, it remains a mental process, and the mind can never change the mind. Transformation occurs when the image created by a point of view is freed from this restriction, and is seen in its complete surroundings.

Global seeing has neither subject nor object. You *are* the totality. You are no longer in the ordinary mind process, the habit of thought. You are open to what René Guénon calls the "Toute Possibilité. In other words, what psychologists refer to as the unconscious and super-conscious come up to the surface. Until this takes place, you remain only in the vicious circle of your memory.

For example, in observing your body you first feel the surface level of tension and contraction. As soon as you feel this, you go to a deeper level, to the original body, where there is no longer complicity to hold onto something, or to localize yourself somewhere. Once you give your body the chance to be body, once you stop projecting patterns, the unconditioned nature of the body comes up in your awareness. Heidegger calls this way of seeing, "Waiting without waiting" – objectless waiting.

In waiting without expectation your real life appears, but you cannot come to this through wanting it for then it is merely a repetition of your memory. Awareness is concealed by volition, by remaining in the process of desiring and becoming.

You must lose yourself in objectless waiting. When you do, you give up taking, you give up doing, you give up creating. Then life spontaneously creates in you. You live in a completely different current.

But when this happens, there is nobody to whom it happens. In timeless awareness there is nobody.

*Is pain superimposed on silence?*

Everything arises out of silence.

*So silence is the constant and pain is, in a way, extraneous?*

When you speak of pain, somebody feels this pain, a "somebody" who appears out of silence. Pain is a perception we generally avoid feeling by a very rapid process of conceptualization. As the concept of pain and its perception can't occur simultaneously, we must let go of the idea and feel the pure sensation. In being aware of the sensation, in being the knower of it, we are outside the pain, or more precisely, pain appears in our observation, in our ever-present silence.

There are several ways one can deal with pain. Generally we tend to evade or direct it in some way, but then we are involved in it through an effort of will. When we simply observe and the pain is allowed to express itself, the energy fixed as pain becomes fluid. In pure looking there is nobody, no directing ego, and this energy, finding nowhere to localize, reintegrates with the whole.

It is important for you to learn how to live with pain. Never conceptualize it. I'll give you an example of what I mean. If you feel tired and tell yourself, "I'm tired," you instantly identify with fatigue. This identification makes you an accomplice to this state, and thereby sustains it. But if you lie down and allow the fatigue its liberty to speak, it becomes an object of your observation. And as you are no longer an accomplice to it, the tired feeling quickly dissolves and you are completely refreshed.

*I have a pinched nerve in my leg. If I can detach myself from the pain enough to observe it will this help it to heal?*

This nerve in your leg originates between the fourth and fifth vertebrae of the spinal column. When there is pressure on this part the first

thing is to free the nerve. So the best procedure is to sit with your legs stretched out and allow the pelvic area to relax completely. But you must not be in the movement. Let me explain.

Assume this posture, close your eyes, and let your attention pass through the body. In this way you can feel where tension is localized. But don't anticipate any result. Anticipation means the mind is already somewhere before the feeling has a chance to express itself, so you remain in the idea rather than the sensation. We might call such anticipation "end-gaining." You must not live in end-gaining.

If I close my eyes I cannot tell you exactly where I am because my body is awake in every part, awakened by its preserved sensitivity. In every step the end is achieved.

*When I wake up in the morning, I often feel there is some thick substance I must go through in order to really wake up. Why do I still feel so tired?*

When you awaken in the morning, it's the body that awakens in your awareness. But what we call our body is a pattern inscribed in the brain, a kind of reflex imprinted there at some moment of our life. At first this reflex was occasional, then more frequent, until finally it became fixed. You adopted this pattern and think of your body in terms of it. It's the same with psychic states. We may awaken and immediately feel depressed.

*Is it also conditioning that makes us think we need eight hours sleep each night?*

As you become more aware, you face daily events and situations in a non-reactive way and totally live the event as it is happening. Nothing is postponed so no residue remains in your mind. Because there is no carry-over of reaction and tension, your body is completely relaxed when you sleep and in this state four and a half to five hours is sufficient.

*So you need more sleep if you don't live consciously during the day?*

Yes. Sometimes what you have postponed during the day comes out in the form of a dream.

*Are dreams necessary?*

What we generally call a dream is an elimination of what hasn't been resolved during the waking state. But if it appears as what in French is

called *songe*, then it is not elimination. You may see your past or future come up in a perfect simultaneity, for the idea of living in time and space is only due to our being trained to think in such terms. Actually, events and situations appear simultaneously. What you will do tomorrow or in four weeks or in four years, is already present. But your mind has been organized to pick up perceptions successively, so time appears. It exists only in the human mind. In reality there is no time.

*Spiritual teachers often say the world of phenomena appears and disappears and there is nothing the person need do. But most of us feel the need to control our lives.*

Why control life? It has no need of control. Life takes itself in charge. Trying to control life means living in memory, in repetition, in the continual process of having and becoming. But once you drop this urge to control you are without conflict and you are one with the current of life. Be a spectator to the spectacle. The play goes on but you are in the audience watching. If you go up on the stage and become involved in the play, you're lost.

*I've never pursued meditation for fear of discovering all I've suppressed. Is this reaction a sign I should look more deeply into it, or does it mean I'm not yet mature enough?*

What surfaces during meditation are residues of the past. These residues are energy localized through association of ideas, energy mobilized into fear and insecurity. Remain a witness to all this. In being the choiceless observer, attention is motiveless, and all conditioning subsides. You may find that the conscious, unconscious and super-conscious come up, but these are not new, they are the past. Let them emerge, but remain the observer.

Initially the observer is also an object of perception. But later even this observer dissolves into silence. Then you are this silence, timelessness, in both the presence and absence of time.

*Why am I sometimes afraid of silence?*

Who is this "I" who is afraid? It is the ego, the image we have of ourselves. It dissolves the moment you let it go, the moment you observe it. Pure observation has no place for the "I" image. So let it go. Be completely free of all situations.

*It is difficult for me to observe fear when I'm totally caught up in it.*

Look at the mechanism of fear. See what is before this fear, what associations have brought you to this state. You feel a sensation and label it "fear." You project an image of an "I" who feels afraid, then place this image in a dark forest before a huge lion.

The projection of yourself as a man, as a personality, arouses fear because the personality needs a situation to exist. Many of us prefer to suffer, prefer prolonging a hopeless condition because this gives the "I" a place to cling. If the "I" has nothing to grasp, it dies. But we must become accustomed to dying!

See each situation afresh without referring to a past image of yourself. When you stop projecting a person, an image of yourself as a man, as intelligent, as a certain kind of personality, as having so many lovers, and so on, what happens? You are still and alert, but not alert to something. Then the situation doesn't belong to an image but to global consciousness.

When you are afraid, the "I" is involved in this fear and cannot intentionally let it go. This I-image drops away the moment fear becomes perception. And as fear needs stimulation from an image to exist, when there is no image, there is no fear.

The idea of being an individual and separate identity is incorrect. An independent identity doesn't exist. You are one with the stars, with the moon, with animals, plants and stones and with society. You have no existence independent of the whole.

*If the individual doesn't exist, what does?*

Thoughts, emotions, and perceptions exist, but there is nothing personal in these. The "I" is a convention in human relationship. It exists as a concept but has no reality.

Accept life. Let it happen. You are not your life, only an observer sitting in the audience regarding your actor onstage. The actor may play a hero, or husband, or someone in pain, but he knows he is acting. He is not identified with the role. It is the same thing in your life.

*Then there is nothing to do?*

There is nothing to do. When you look deeply you will see that most "doing" is reaction. Pure motiveless observation alone is empty of reaction for there is nobody to react. Then every action is spontaneous from moment to moment.

*[Long silence]*

You must not come to any conclusions in this kind of meeting. The speaking is more or less a pretext. The real perfume is in the silence.

*I don't understand why I feel so uncomfortable in silence.*

If you *try* to be silent, you can't be. Silence is your original nature. There's no need to try to be what you naturally are. Just notice when you aren't silent. We can only really speak of communication when we remain silent. Life's beauty lies in communication, but not the kind occurring between two objects, two personalities, two images. There's no meaning, no play, left in a relationship between two images, between the idea of being a man and the idea of being a woman.

In silence there's no man or woman, there's only love. Then communication is communion.

*It's so easy to play the role, but . . .*

Don't play the role at all. Taking yourself as a man means you must fulfill so many qualifications: how to present yourself, how to give yourself, how to speak, how to act, etc. You've even been educated to think in terms of being a man, confined by all these labels. The same holds true when you take yourself for a father or mother. There is no man or woman, no father or mother. Stop projecting into your surroundings and let each moment capture you in a fresh way without memory. Look at things as if for the first time. Be completely undressed, shapeless, nameless. You are just a beautiful being, nothing more, and this requires no education. Simply be the beautiful being you naturally are.

*If I were to behave that way, I'd feel as if I had no protection, as if I were defenseless.*

Whom would you like to protect? There is nobody to defend.



To come to the insight that you are not the body you first need to find out what the body really is. The body must become an object of per-



ception rather than just an idea. In most cases when you refer to your body, you are referring to an image constructed at some time in your life, a pattern you're accustomed to assuming is your body. But when you stop projecting this pattern and allow the real body to speak, you feel all its tension and heaviness. In the very act of clearly seeing the habitual ideas you have taken to be real, you stand removed from them, and cease to be an accomplice with the old patterns. You come to the original body sensation: an emptiness without border or circumference. You feel the body to be completely extended in space.

But the body itself isn't a problem. Feeling the real body, the body as it is, helps you discover a way of looking without projecting. It takes you beyond the body and a moment comes when localization ends and the energy previously fixed as "body" dissolves into listening itself. In other words, because there is no longer a fixed listener or something heard, the subject-object relationship drops away. There is only oneness.

*When I listen to my body and feel a slight imbalance or tension, should I just listen to this or should I take steps to correct it?*

Tension arises when you focus on a specific part of the body. This is functional tension where the global body sensation is concealed by an idea, by what we refer to as localization. You can never go from this fractional part to perception of the whole.

As you allow body sensation to emerge, you will feel certain areas contracted and tense. But if you sustain global sensation, these become de-localized and re-integrate into the whole. Then the body appears in its true nature, as energy devoid of tension and memory, and since there is no restriction, it assumes correct posture effortlessly.

This is the only way to come to the right posture. If you try to achieve this through effort, if you tell yourself, "I must sit up straight," the natural posture is blocked by a muscular reaction to this idea. Your body knows its real position and will invite you back. So let it come to you.

*If the body already knows its true position, why do we practice yoga or meditation to try to find it?*

First, accept the possibility that you are perfect. Your body lives in you, in your original perfection, and of course there's nothing to add to perfection. But you identify with imperfection. The moment you see how you constantly feed an image of imperfection, you're outside this process.

There is nothing to do in the way of perfection, nothing to attain,

nothing to hold onto, nothing to achieve. Trying to achieve something indicates that you're seeing from the wrong perspective, from the erroneous point of view of having left perfection, your original nature.

*I would like to understand what pranayama is and why one does this type of breathing exercise.*

Thinking and breathing are in very close connection. When our breathing is tense and agitated, thought is as well. Pranayama serves to calm the breathing process which in turn calms the mind.

Usually inhalation is a volitional process, arousing tension in the brain and in the shoulder area. So pranayama should be performed in a relaxed position, without any effort or strain. Let inhalation happen, but don't inhale.

Even though this breathing technique may be a beautiful exercise, any attempt to quiet one's thought is purely artificial. Rather than trying to prevent thoughts from arising, we should take note of those times when thought naturally comes to a stop.

For instance, when a desired object is obtained, we live a moment of desirelessness. The dynamism that impels the mind to function ceases, for there is no longer motivation to think. When thought is momentarily peaceful, we return to our original nature, silence. It's the same with regard to the deep sleep state. "I"-consciousness is no longer present, so there is absolute silence. Or let us say you are in the presence of a work of art. In the aesthetic experience the impulse to think comes to an end, but it stops in a natural way, not through discipline or will power.

Thinking follows the same functional emergence as walking with the legs or making use of the arms. When there is no reason to use your arms, where are your arms? When you have no need to walk, where are your legs? Equally, the brain begins to function the moment it is needed, but when there is nothing to think about there is no thought. Why continue to think? Silence underlies all mental functioning just as it does the three states of waking, sleeping and dreaming. These are superimposed on silence. They are in time while silence is timeless.

*I'd like to hear about the experience in your life that made it possible for you to be here, sharing this joy.*

If I were to tell you how I have realized the real being it would only be a kind of distraction for you because you couldn't do anything with this

information. Your question is mere curiosity. But if you take a good look at your motive for asking this you will see the root is insecurity.

*When the spiritual master I'm studying with shared his experiences with me, I was affected by the fact that there wasn't an experience that made any difference. And this opened many doors for me.*

But you touch something more profound the moment you ask, "What is my motive for asking this?" Behind the question is an image you have of yourself, an image characterized by insecurity and fear. Observing this fear places you outside. So the question is a distraction, a way to escape yourself.

*But who is trying to escape?*

The person, the "ego," always looking for distraction, asks the question. So make this "I"-image an object of observation. The person is merely energy projected in space-time; it is discontinuous. Observation, in being outside space-time, is continuous. You feel the object, the person, appear in your awareness and then the desire to identify with a projected image drops away.

*Sometimes I have the impression that to communicate with another, I have to go through the personality, and I'd like to put this personality aside.*

You are the knower of this personality as you are the knower of all your faculties, and yet you identify with the personality rather than with the knower. Such identification based on pre-conceived ideas stifles the personality. It becomes unspontaneous, inflexible, and uncreative.

Don't localize yourself in the idea of a personality. It's nothing but memory. When you live from moment to moment without memory, the real personality has the opportunity to emerge. It appears in emptiness, is perfectly appropriate to each situation and the moment the situation ends it dissolves back into emptiness.

For example, if you locate yourself in the image of a woman you begin to try to meet all that this image implies. But it's only when the image is dropped that the real woman lives. So situations occur where the woman in you appears, but you are not the woman.

There is only consciousness, which you have in common with all living beings. In this silent awareness, distinctions certainly arise but there is no separation.

*We may understand what you are saying right now, but after some time we forget. Is it helpful to read books or is it better to find things out by ourselves? Can books help us see the possibility of truths we haven't yet lived?*

Books can only be second-hand knowledge, whereas what is essential is to come to knowledge first-hand.

*Then what can we do to prepare ourselves? Should we meditate on something?*

Meditation is not *on* something, that's not an appropriate formulation. Meditation means being fully alert and allowing the body-mind sensation to come to your attention. For example, as you sit here you may notice certain parts of your body are tense. These parts feel heavy and tense because other parts are light and relaxed. But concentration on the tension, on the rigid areas, leads to fixation. So how to proceed? Become aware of an area that feels light and empty, and like water, let this sensation expand to include the denser areas.

*Are there certain times of the day that are particularly good for observation of this kind?*

Yes, there may be times you are more available. The best time is in the morning – just upon awakening. It is not you who awaken but the body that awakens in your awareness. So when you are very alert, you see the body re-enter its old patterns. The more frequently the global body becomes a sensation for you, the more organic memory takes over. During the day, whenever you enter your habitual patterns of contraction, the organic memory of wholeness brings you back to the global sensation, and a time comes when you no longer return to the fractional body image.

*You have said we can't accomplish anything through will or effort. Yet if we let go of effort we may find that nothing happens, that we don't do anything.*

But nothing ever happens when you try to make it happen. The very intention to make an event occur blocks its spontaneous expression. Intention has its roots in fear and insecurity. So all this conditioned energy must come to a stop. The mind must go into abeyance. Only an attitude of non-interference can bring the mechanical memory process and all its accompanying conditioning to an end. Then original unconditioned energy surfaces.

Generally we know only concepts but we don't know silence. The value of meditation practice is to help us become familiar with letting go, with being still. When the mind no longer interferes there is only silence, and out of this springs creativity. But as long as we stay under the spell of the will, there is only repetition. When we look at our friends and our surroundings, we see only our projections, our superimpositions, but we don't see the world as it is. So the first step is to notice that we don't really see, that we project our fears and hopes onto things. To see this you must be still. When one lives this silence nothing is repetitive and you will be surprised by what emerges.

*What motivates us to even begin to look at percepts and concepts as objects?*

We are in a constant search for freedom, for some way to transcend insecurity. This feeling of insecurity or fear is itself the motive to go beyond it, a process demanding investigation and inquiry. Take note that in obtaining a desired object there may be momentary freedom from fear, but the desired object is not really the cause of this. The security experienced at such times has no place for an image of an object or of someone who obtains it. There is only happiness. After you leave this happiness the ego wants to attribute it to some cause so it says, "I was happy because I met such and such a person . . . I was happy because I heard some beautiful music . . ." and so on.

When you follow this investigation to the end you discover you *are* this happiness. You see that in reality we can't speak in terms of cause and effect, for happiness is causeless. From this moment you spontaneously drop volition and effort. You remain constantly open. There is no longer a sense of separation and consequently no insecurity or fear.

*What do you suggest I do with the observation that the basic context of my life is anger? I'm aware that I'm angry but that doesn't stop it. Sometimes I substitute some other state, and it goes away momentarily but later on it returns.*

When you say, "I'm angry," this anger is a concept and you can't do anything with an idea of anger. So don't get involved in the concept. Anger is a perception, a sensation in the body and mind. Remain with the perception, by which I mean, totally accept the sensation of being angry. In the moment of acceptance there's no place for someone who accepts, so complicity with anger automatically stops.

Anger is really only energy localized as a state, an idea. At first it is localized occasionally, then more frequently until it is constantly present and you're identified with it.

*It would be the same with fear?*

Exactly the same. When you wake up in the morning and find yourself in a certain frame of mind, a state of tension for example, make it an object of observation. Feel it, accept it. It requires very little to accept something but our acceptance is usually only psychological. I'm speaking here of accepting the actual function, the sensation of the tension. More often than not we try to escape our sensations. We say, "I feel afraid," and escape in this idea. Or we phone a friend or read a book. But when you accept a perception it is no longer fixed, and it blossoms and dissolves back into your awareness, your acceptance. When you accept something totally without judging or qualifying, acceptance is awareness, and in this, you are completely free. Completely. It's beautiful, this feeling of freedom that comes in accepting life, accepting what you are.

*Is there effort required on this path? Personally I find I have less and less energy to make an effort in any direction.*

You can't make an effort without tension. But why do you make an effort? Only because you're looking for some result, for something outside yourself. Once you really know that what you're looking for is your real nature you lose the impetus to strive. So first see how you are constantly making an effort. As soon as you are aware of this process you are already outside it. And it may come as an original perception that you are really stillness.

*But doesn't even seeing this require some effort?*

No. This seeing is your natural state. Just be aware that you *don't* see. Become more aware that you constantly react. Seeing requires no effort because your nature is seeing, is being stillness. The moment you're not looking for a result, not looking to criticize, to evaluate or conclude, just looking, then you can perceive this reacting and you're no longer an accomplice to it.

*In the course of sitting, as the process of emptying out goes on, there comes this thought, "This is only a thought." But the thought, "This is only a thought" is a thought too, isn't it?*

Absolutely. Seeing itself is not a thought, but at first we only know this seeing as limited to perceived objects. Later you come to pure seeing without an object. Then there's the insight that you are this pure seeing and all that is seen appears in you. At this moment seeing is no longer affected by what it sees.

Focusing attention on something arouses tension. Although there may be moments of detachment, most of the time you're involved with what you're seeing. But through the process of looking at something you can come to pure seeing without an object. Give the seen

total freedom without attempting to control it. And as the seen is energy projected onto an appearance in the seer, the moment the seen is free from localization it dissolves back into the seer, since the seen is discontinuous while the seer is continuous. The ultimate perceiver is first found through this relationship between the seer and the seen.

We usually only know the seer through the seen. In moments of pure seeing we say there is nothing, for we only know ourselves in the subject-object relationship. But once we are convinced that behind the seen is the seer and that the seen appears *in* the seer, then we no longer put the accent on the seen but on the seer.

*Doesn't this set up a goal for someone who's never experienced it? I've never seen without an object or without projecting my own images onto an object, yet I know there is a way to see in which I'm not seeing only the images created by the mind. . . . And then how . . .*

To move behind? But you know moments in your life where there is only pure seeing without anything seen. Let's say you have a problem. As you go into it, a moment comes when it is completely resolved. There is complete satisfaction, without any desire to add or subtract anything. When a desire is realized, you come to a completely desireless state in which neither the desiring subject nor the desired object are present. You can't even say there is happiness, for you *are* happiness. But after living this, see how the ego steps in to reclaim and objectify the moment, turning it into a kind of caricature like the clown in a circus who claims the public's ovation although he wasn't the main performer.

*Would you say more about thinking as a defense?*

Of course when I say that, I say it very carefully. There is a moment when you can see that before thought there's a pulsation and the potentiality of thought is already present in this. The pulsation strikes the brain and you instinctively look for the symbol, for the formulation.

*Can this pulsation still itself before it becomes thought?*

Yes, if you're very alert, you can stop at the pulsation. Perceiving this before it becomes thought reduces the brain's vibrations and thereby quiets mental and physical agitation.

We should see that both doing and not doing are still doing. This process of having and becoming only stops when we listen, because our real nature is listening. The waking state, the dreaming state and

the state of the sleeper are superimpositions on pure listening, which has no reference to a listener or to something heard. All states appear *in* listening. So the more you are present in listening, the more there's a letting go of doing or not-doing.

Usually when we speak of listening we mean attention to something in particular. But when I speak of it, I mean listening which refers only to itself. It's like someone asking, "What do you have in your mouth?" You say, "Nothing," but really you have the taste of your mouth. There may be no salt, sugar, or acid in it, but the taste of your mouth is present. Pure listening has its own taste.

*Sometimes I listen to a talk of yours and afterwards find I can't remember a thing you've said.*

When you listen without evaluating or concluding, you can't memorize it. It comes back to you, but not through the ordinary process of memory. If you try to retain it, what are you keeping? Only the words, the formulation, and then you listen through a veil of the already known, through comparison with the past. You must become innocent in your listening.

When you listen without drawing any conclusions, what has been behind the listening springs up in a certain moment, perhaps the next day or in one month or in six months, but this upcoming is not due to any effort to hold onto it. The real flavor is lost in the memorizing process.

*Every so often there are things you say which particularly strike me and stick in my mind. For example, a few days ago you said, "Stop eliminating. See that you're constructing all the time." It keeps coming back.*

But you've made no effort to remember it. It comes to you.

We can really remember so little in a conscious way. Think about all the experiences you've had during your life and how few of these you actually recall. You've even forgotten the feeling you woke up with this morning, or what you ate yesterday, or what you were thinking at three o'clock today.

As the brain vibration decreases it's possible to remember things which have been forgotten by the ordinary memory. At a very low frequency, the individual can even return to a previous incarnation. But these kinds of experiences are more or less distractions, ways of giving sustenance to the idea of the person. For despite a reduction in brain frequency we continue to identify with the ego. On the other hand,

tension still arises when one has realized the Self. But someone who knowingly lives in the Self is out of the becoming process, so his brain and body functions are quite different from those of a person who hasn't realized the Self.

*And do his senses function differently?*

Generally, all our senses function through grasping. The mind projects something outside to be seized by the senses. In reality there is nothing outside our awareness.

When we first see a bird, there's pure perception, but afterwards we conceptualize it. The moment there's conceptualization the perception is no longer present, because a concept and a percept cannot exist simultaneously. If you drop the concept, what remains? Your identity with the bird. But this identity is not a mental image of oneness. It is a global experience.

*But in the moment of unity you're one with everything, aren't you? Or can you just be one with the bird and not one with everything else?*

You are only being. When you let go of the shape and name of the man that you see, what remains? The real man appears, and in this there's oneness. The instant you let go of the shape, you let go of the body. When you let go of the name, you let go of your mind. So only being remains, and being is indivisible. It's the current we spoke of before. When this current is present, there's no longer fixation or repetition, only the ebb and flow of creativity.

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When we speak of silent observation we refer to a way of listening, a way of seeing, which allows the observed its full, unqualified expression. In the process of listening, you may discover that the observer is forever judging, criticizing, comparing and evaluating. This insight alone takes you to a position where you are uninvolved in the perceived. Then a feeling of space opens out between your observing and the observed, eliciting the understanding that the perceived arises *in* you but you are not limited to anything perceivable. Silence is our real nature.

*Then is thought itself the root of the problem?*

Generally we only know ourselves in perceptions, in states. We only know consciousness *of* something, listening *to* something, and so on. We don't know pure consciousness without an object.

Thoughts, feelings and sensations are objects of consciousness, and have no existence without the observing subject. Since the perceiver can never be perceived, the moment a thought or perception points back to the perceiver it brings you to silence, to pure being, to consciousness without an object.

*Then what is the perceiver?*

The perceiver is a faculty, a qualification, which exists the moment there's a perception in space-time. Without the perception, there is no perceiver either. Both are movements of energy in space-time, and both arise out of and dissolve back into consciousness, which alone is timeless.

The perceiver and the perceived are more or less tools, instruments of consciousness. All that appears is an expression of consciousness.

*I find really, if I look closely, that in desiring realization I am looking for fundamental unity or security, peace if you like, euphoria if I'm lucky. . . . Does the pure consciousness you speak of have any of these qualities?*

No. What you are looking for is only memory, something you already know about and evaluate as desirable. All these things you name are attributes, superimpositions on pure consciousness. There is a deeper understanding to be gained when you see that in the moment of obtaining the desired quality, there is neither a quality-object nor an experiencing-subject. In this moment there is only unqualified oneness. It's only after leaving this unity that you look for a cause and say, "The cause of this joy was this quality I have achieved." But in the moment of living oneness, there is no place for any quality, for any object whatsoever.

*And this oneness is our real desire?*

It is our real desire. All other desires appear more or less through lack of discrimination. Desire is a striving for compensation, a search for a way to fill a sense of emptiness in yourself. So when, for a moment, this striving ends and the desired object is obtained, there is an instant when you live in oneness, in ultimate contentment, but this contentment is without a cause. And this instant can't even be called an instant because it is timeless.

*What then is karma, which is produced by cause and effect?*

The moment you live without any programming, without an image or an idea of being someone, there is no karma. To whom would the karma belong? Put away the problem of karma. Completely let go of it. This idea gives you a hold on the existence of a somebody who doesn't exist. When you are completely still, where is the image of being somebody? When the reflex to identify with an image goes away there is the certainty that a personal entity doesn't exist. There is only oneness. Then you are free from karma because karma belongs to somebody. But when you add an image of a personality, of a man, of being this or that, in this moment you are bound to karma.

*Could you give a concrete example of what it means to identify with an image?*

Take note that from morning to night you search constantly for localization. You have a need to localize yourself somewhere, whether in a body sensation, an emotion, or in an idea. But when you accept that you can't find yourself, your real Self, within any perception, the production process ceases. You stop creating ideas, images and situations.

You must live in openness without any memory. This means you are

completely open to life, to whatever comes. And since in this openness, there is no memory, no reaction, you are completely alert at each moment to the freshness and newness of life. There is no more repetition.

*Is the closest experience to the silence you speak of the feeling and contentment of love?*

Silence is the background of all that happens, all that appears and disappears. It is unqualified love, love that has no need of any stimulation. It stimulates itself by itself.

The moment you live knowingly in oneness, there are no "others." There's only Self. This is love. But when you take yourself for somebody, all relationships are from object to object, man to woman, mother to son, personality to personality. And there is no communion, no possibility for love.

*You say we must accept ourselves, our bodies, capacities, personality and so on. What happens after that?*

When you have really accepted yourself – and I mean accepted in a functional, not a psychological way – you will feel a space between your accepting position and whatever you accept. This sensation of space between your real nature and your projected image is very important. In accepting all that appears, you are free from it. At first you feel free from what you accept. But later you'll find yourself in acceptance itself.

*In acceptance is there any notion of good or bad?*

Good and bad are projections from pre-conceived ideas, from memory. Stop projecting your desires and fears onto the seen. Take things as they are. You must accept something in order to really know it. In accepting, the accent is not on what you accept but on the accepting position itself. You will come to find you are one with accepting.

The acceptor is not an object. It is an inner reality. Acceptance gives freedom to whatever is accepted. What you accept really becomes alive and has its own story to tell you. But the problem here is not just to accept your personality, your "landscape." This is simply a preliminary way to get through to the essential experience, the attitude of acceptance itself.

*But in life it's necessary to make decisions. How can we do this if we don't discriminate?*

You can really only make decisions when you accept the situation. In acceptance the situation belongs to your wholeness, your completeness, and the decision comes out of this global perspective. There's nothing passive about this accepting. It is ultimate alertness. And the decision that results is an action, not a reaction.

The moment you live in openness and let every situation come to you, you flow with the real current of life. If you impose the ego on every happening in order to somehow control it, you find that you are not in accord with this life-current. Reaction and struggle set in; you say, "I have this and I'd like that." This is a state of conflict. In acceptance you simply live *here* where you are.



*You said the other day that first one knows objectified silence and later one comes to real silence which is not within the subject-object relationship. How does one go beyond objectified silence?*

By objectified silence you mean an absence of thought, what we call the "blank state"? Yes, an absence of thought is still an object, but you, as the ultimate subject, are the knower of the absence of thought. So you ask how to go beyond any subject-object relationship, how to come to the absence of the absence.

Let us say you are aware of a particular body sensation. You feel your body is warm or cold, or you feel a certain emotional state. The moment you are conscious of a perception, you are automatically outside it, meaning there is no longer any involvement or identification with the perceived. In this sense of non-involvement or "letting-be," you may become aware of silence. But this blank state, this absence of thought, is still an object of which you are aware.

So the question may arise, "To whom does this blank state belong?" When this question comes up, there is a stop. And there comes a spontaneous switch-over from accenting the blank state, the object, to accenting the perceiver, the subject. And as the perceiver is without an image, as the perceiver can never be perceived, you find nothing to

refer to. You are totally open, open for a response. You are now at the threshold of being.

The accent is on awareness itself and the object, the blank state, dissolves into awareness. There is no longer a subject, an observer, and an object, the state observed.

For this to happen there must be unqualified observation, an observation free from all reaction. Up to now you know only observation of something. But you may come to really live an observation without anything observed. Then what we call the observer loses its attribute as observer, and is pure being.

We are very accustomed to maintaining this relationship of subject-object; observer and things observed. But we must accept the possibility that there can be observation without any observed object, that there is an alert stillness without any perception. You may first come to this in meditation.

In meditation you are first aware of something, of your thoughts, your emotions, or of your body. You may notice you are not really in touch with your body, that, instead, you are contacting a projection, a schema inscribed in your mind. And you also note that you are the producer of this schema. With this insight, production stops.

We can speak of meditation as a moment of non-interference wherein we see how attached we are to producing sensations just to give the "I" a foothold. In granting the perception full expression, the body takes itself in charge. It reveals the conditioning, it tells you its real nature. In other words, you give it the opportunity to be a body because previously it was a defense, a habit. And you'll observe a new body sensation you have never known before, the original perception of your body.

The body, like every object, is an expression of awareness in space-time. So in the moment free from interference, all energy previously localized in a body sensation returns to its origin, dissolves back into awareness, and there is only stillness.

*How do I remain conscious in deep sleep when I feel simply unconscious?*

The image is no longer there, but you are. We are unconscious of objects because there are no objects, but deep sleep is a state like any other state we enter and leave. When we are immersed in these states we forget the ultimate perceiver—consciousness. Deep sleep refers only to the body and mental faculties. Consciousness never sleeps.

*If consciousness never sleeps, how is it that we're not aware of deep sleep as a perception in the same way we're aware of the blank state?*



In the waking and dreaming states we are aware of objects. In deep sleep there is no object. But still, in all three states we are not aware of our awareness. It's a forgetting.

*But I would like to be conscious or aware . . .*

In the non-state? Yes, you will become conscious in the non-state.

*Yes . . . when?*

Don't ask when. It is the only obstacle between you and awakening. You know the story about King Ashoka and his guru? One day King Ashoka said to his Guru Vasishtha, "Last night I dreamt I was a beggar. Now tell me, am I King Ashoka dreaming I am a beggar or am I really a beggar dreaming I am King Ashoka?" Vasishtha replied, "You are neither this nor that. You are the Self." King Ashoka cried for joy, "I am the Self!" But Vasishtha replied, "That is your only obstacle."

*Is the desire to move into the non-state an obstacle?*

That desire itself proceeds directly from the non-state. So how to become convinced the desire comes only from the non-state and not from any outside stimulus. Is that your question?

Desire arises when you feel yourself in restriction. So we should investigate some moment when you feel unrestricted, desireless, completely free. In this moment of desirelessness, there is fullness, and this fullness has no room for an image of a person or a desired object. It is beyond the limits of the subject-object relationship. But after leaving this silence, the "I" jumps in and claims this "experience" for himself. He says, "I have had an experience of happiness and the cause of it was my new car . . . my new situation . . . my new wife." But later on the new wife or car may leave you completely indifferent. Isn't this the proof that the non-state without desire is not really linked to any object? And then you come to the conviction that desirelessness is your real nature, that nothing "outside" can bring you to the non-state. This is a very important understanding.

In contact with one who lives in the non-state and is wholly autonomous, you may feel this autonomy as a state of quietness, of non-agitation, which triggers off a re-orchestration of your energy. And as your habitual state of agitation conceals the non-state, this brief period of non-agitation may give you a fore-taste of your own autonomy.

*Isn't any attempt to remove agitation only adding to it?*

Agitation occurs when we look for something. And the more intense this search, the further we go from what we are really seeking. That you must see. You go away . . . because there is nothing to find. Don't try to be in the non-state. Don't try to be the ultimate perceiver. Don't try to be the witness of what is perceived. You are that already. Free yourself from trying.

*You speak of a feeling of restriction as the origin of desire. Could you talk a little more about this feeling of restricted-being?*

We have a habit of wanting to feel ourselves, to locate ourselves somewhere. So we create a certain schema. We identify with a body sensation or an emotional state or an idea. This need for localization keeps us in restriction, and all our actions and reactions are according to a kind of self-programming. See how this functions in your daily life.

The very awareness of this habit, the reflex to seek a support, to locate yourself somewhere, is already a distancing, a "stepping back" from the perception. We might say you step back into stillness, the original perception of completion.

The desire, provoked by what you call "restricted being," by identifying with what you are not, springs directly from what you most long for: to be free and harmonious, to no longer feel separate, to be one with life. So lose yourself in this longing, and it will take you to what you really desire, oneness.

You may lose the relative support, but the real support will find you.

*Sometimes I am drawn to localization in the body by a physical sensation of a vibration that never stops. Should I surrender to it?*

No, for in surrendering you become passive. You must remain completely alert. You can distinguish between times when you are involved in a sensation and times when you are the observer, when you stand outside. In being aware of the sensation, you may notice a space between your observation and what is observed. This space arises when there is no attempt to intervene and control the seen, or in other words, when the sensation is totally accepted. In accepting the perception without the interference of the ego you may feel the perception lives in you.

When you wake up in the morning, it's the body which awakens in your awareness, in global consciousness. Sleep refers to a sleeper, and

from the sleeper's point of view, of course, there's sleep. But in reality, consciousness never sleeps. Many of our modern psychologists believe the moment a perception appears, consciousness appears. And the moment the perception dies, consciousness also dies. They ignore the reality continually present between two perceptions. Instead they think consciousness has blanked out. But to speak of a blank state demands something be present to take note of it. So *who* takes note? What we call consciousness without an object, oneness, doesn't exist for modern psychology.

*As a child I was always watching myself think. But that kind of observation seems different from what you are speaking of because it was always accompanied by a feeling of loneliness.*

Don't go back to the past. See how you function *now*. Just see there is fear in you, but don't try to explain or analyze it. Bring it back to the original perception, to its localization in the body, and give it total freedom. Don't direct it, or refuse it or escape it. Give the perception full opportunity to be perception.

There are so many parts of your body you don't feel. You may be surprised to discover you don't feel the area of your shoulders or neck. Allow these areas to expand, to become only sensation. And then the area where fear was localized is no longer confined to a fractional part but re-integrates into the global body sensation.

*If the body we see is not our real body, what is?*

The body is only energy. The moment there is tension, the moment there is reaction, this energy becomes static, fixed as a form of defense. Awareness dissolves this fixation.

*Isn't it necessary to have a concept of the non-state in order to recognize it when it is experienced?*

First, accept the possibility of the existence of a non-state. Next, listen to someone who lives this. Then go through the perspective he teaches so that what has been heard second-hand becomes first-hand.

If we are speaking in terms of knowledge of objects, we proceed through comparison. For example, I mention a mango and if you've never had a mango, you may ask, "What does it taste like?" I might say, "It tastes like a combination of a peach and a plum." So, fusing these two ideas, you hit, more or less, upon the taste of a mango. This is

possible in the case of objective knowledge, knowledge of experiences.

But here we are speaking of what is essentially beyond any experience, because it is not in time and space so comparison with anything previously known is not possible. Your listening must be unconditioned, innocent, in order to accept what is said here and make it your own.

When you leave today, don't try to remember or understand anything. The very attempt to understand confines you to the memory process, and impedes the manifesting of the unknown. Take what I tell you and live with it, like you live with your children or your favorite dog.

A time will come when there is an understanding of the perspective: that what you are can never be an object of perception and that this non-state is not found through any state. This understanding is instantaneous. It generates a re-orchestration of all your energies, and provokes the fore-feeling of that which you really desire. Inherent in this presentiment is the understanding that there is simply nothing to do. Whatever you would like to achieve is already achieved. Then agitation stops, and what had been concealed by agitation comes to light: stillness. You find yourself in a completely new dimension.

*What does that really mean?*

Even when we understand the functioning of all this, we may not act according to this understanding in our daily life. Think about how you live your life. You live your life, your doings and relationships the way you live around your furniture, not seeing it anymore because you've grown used to it. It's very interesting to really see what is meant by acting according to your understanding.

Be awake, attentive without tension, free of any strategy or intention. When you aren't living from memory, there is no repetition. Your seeing is completely new. Stillness never leaves us. We leave it.



*What do you mean by "multi-dimensional awareness"? Is this when one is simultaneously aware of what is going on inside and outside oneself?*

Awareness, in not belonging to space-time, is neither inside nor outside. Your body, mind and senses, like all your surroundings, appear in you.

You must see how involved you are in perception. Notice the difference between these moments of involvement and other times when you are detached. When you look *at* something or listen *to* something, attention is directed, motivated and limited. Our brain has been conditioned to instantly label whatever comes to its attention so that we see only the name and form. When we are free of conditioned responses our receptivity is multi-dimensional, global, and the perception is freed to dissolve in this totality.

*So the naming process limits perception?*

As soon as you qualify an object with a name and form, you're involved in it. But when your attention is open, the object appears in your awareness. You feel a space between silent observation and the observed and this spatial relationship frees the energy hitherto localized by the conceptualizing process. So you are simultaneously aware of the object, which lives in you, and of your own awareness.

The first step is to become aware of yourself in everyday life. Get acquainted with seeing and living without qualifying, without putting labels on the seen. Once the reflex to interfere in the observed drops away and perception is no longer directed or confined, it becomes alive, borderless, multi-dimensional. In this openness there is no personal identity, no image of somebody, only total freedom. It can never be sought or achieved, for it is your very nature, to which all perception points.

*In one of your talks you said there is unity of selfhood among all living beings. I find this difficult to understand, for it is my experience to see the forms and appearances of separate selves.*

We could say when you first meet someone you really meet yourself, for the emptiness in you is the emptiness of all living beings. Objects appear in this space, but the space itself is unaffected. When you leave the awareness of being, all relationship, if we can still speak of relationship, is between object and object. But an object needs an agent, consciousness, to exist. As it has no autonomous existence, an object always lives in insecurity. So in such a relationship each object seeks to feel secure, to feel loved. There is only prehension, only self-interest. Each is looking for something to take from the other.

*So the personality, in being an image, has no independent existence?*

What we generally call our "personality" is actually memory, a localization for the "I"-image, a shelter to preserve the ego. The moment you identify with the personality, it becomes static, crystallized, and loses all flexibility. But in stepping out of this identification, you take your position in spaceless awareness and the real personality emerges. It appears in the moment of facing a situation and disappears the moment the situation ends. It's a tool, nothing else.

*What exactly is memory?*

Memory is a way of thinking. It is a thought. When you really go into it, you'll see thought is always in the present. You may label it as "three years ago," but the labelling is in the present. There is no yesterday. We might say memory is a state of mind.

In living silent awareness you no longer try to retain or remember anything. You're open to universal mind, to what we call universal memory.

*So that's how one can speak out of silence, without referring to thought or memory. But we must wait for silence to come to us?*

I would say live with the perspective of silent observation. Let it be the background of all your life. It's like the creative artist. A painter is always a painter from moment to moment. He lives in the painter. He sees the painter. The musician hears the musician from moment to moment. So you must live constantly with this silence as your background.

*A musician uses his instrument as a tool to help him create. Is there no tool we can use to awaken us to silent awareness?*

A musician sees life through music, a painter through painting, and a poet views life through poetry. The art reflects the artist's silent observation. So we use the objects at our disposal to point us back to silence. And these are our body, senses and mind. We use them as the musician uses his instrument, to help us become aware of our awareness.

Be the explorer of your body, your feelings and desires, your moods and psychic states. Drop all ideas about what you are. Live without knowing anything, like an explorer, for the adventure of discovery, from moment to moment.

In this exploration you'll see that you don't really observe, that you

project your fears and desires and superimpose these onto the world. So all you see is your own conditioning, not the world as it really is. The awareness, the understanding of how you really function, not just psychologically but on every level, is itself transformation. If you try to make any voluntary changes all you are doing is shifting energy around a little and making things momentarily more comfortable for yourself. In the attitude of openness and exploration you automatically become silent.

*Can yoga be a help in self-awakening?*

When you tune a musical instrument it is the listening that brings you to the perfect tuning and to the perfect playing. In the same way only listening brings you to the perfect posture and to the re-harmonization of all your dispersed energies. This listening already places you in the frame of silent awareness.

If you practice yoga to achieve something, you leave this frame. Then yoga can become an obstacle, for it may generate the belief that what you fundamentally are is a goal you can attain through some system of progress. And this belief in progress takes you further away from yourself. Let go of this need to find security through an image. When all production stops, you come to know what you are not. Reference to the past and to all preconceptions comes to an end, and you're brought back to the frame of silent listening.

*I sometimes think my mind is still, although it's evidently a thought that thinks this. How can this game come to an end?*

You are not the mind. Mind is function. It appears in you. It may have moments of quiet, but its nature is movement. You must distinguish between movement and agitation. Then notice how you constantly feed this agitation.

Rather than trying to quiet the mind, it might be easier to start from the body sensation. A calm body has a stilling effect on the mind, for body and mind are one. Investigating the body familiarizes you with its contractions and defenses. In making these objects of observation, you become detached, and the original body sensation has an opportunity to emerge.

But observation of the body is just a pretext to bring you to the frame of pure observation. The emphasis must not be on the object of per-

ception, but on the perceiver. As we've said before, the object points back to the perceiver, and as the perceiver can never be perceived, you find yourself *in* observation. You feel yourself in emptiness, without center or periphery.

*Why does the body become sleepy when the mind is quiet?*

Your silent awareness is not wholly realized. You are still involved in the body and in your perceptions. Only in absolute autonomy do you remain continually clear and awake, for consciousness never sleeps.

*What do you mean by the word "intuition"?*

Generally what we call intuition or intelligence or insight is still a faculty of the mind, still influenced by the fractional point of view of an "I," hence not a global vision.

Real intelligence or insight issues from the Self. In other words, action springs directly out of silence without the intervention of mind or ego, thought or memory. Intelligence belongs to the totality, to silent awareness. It comes from taking note in a non-judgmental way of the various circumstances of your life. Taking note brings you to a stop, and in this stopping there is no longer any reference to your surroundings. You are completely still, so all out-going energy returns to its origin and silent awareness knows itself by itself. Knowing oneself by oneself is intuition.

*How does scientific knowledge relate to this? Is there any place for this type of knowledge?*

Scientific knowledge pertains to objects. It is very interesting to see what happens before you think that you know an object. Before you say, "I know it," you are really one with the object. Afterwards you say, "I know it," and at this moment the knowledge is objectified.

A scientific thinker has moments of oneness just like a person seeking truth, but the truth-seeker remains in truth, while the scientist objectifies it.

*When you live in silent awareness, does the aggressive survival instinct leave? For example, if you are in a concentration camp, you might not fight for a piece of bread because you would see that giving up the body is of no importance?*

You don't have any strategy. You haven't any one way of behaving.

So you don't predict behavior. Action occurs from moment to moment, according to the situation, and it is always appropriate.

*So depending on circumstances, you might give up your life or you might not?*

There is no repetition. Only the mind, memory, the ego, looks for repetition, for security, and this security is found in the past. But there is no image of an "I" in silent awareness, so there is no repetition.

In reality there is no actor. There is action, but nobody who acts. After the action, the mind enters and says, "I have done it," but this is completely wrong. So after something has been done, don't say "I have done it." You could say instead, "I have been a witness to the doing, but I am not the doer."

*What if you are the witness to yourself killing someone? How are you responsible for the action? I have no experience with killing, but what if I'm watching myself being unkind? If I say, "There has been an action that has hurt someone, but I am not the actor," don't I deny all responsibility for this action?*

Notice that you're unkind. The moment there is observation that you are unkind, you'll feel completely impersonal. In this impersonal moment, action spontaneously arises. But what form the action may take, I can't say.



*Is awareness the Self or a function of Self?*

It is not a function for it doesn't belong to the brain. When I speak of awareness, I mean an openness void of memory, spaceless, non-localizable, without an object. It is perception with continuity, and it is unobtainable.

*[Long pause]*

*What is intentional thinking as opposed to what you call spontaneous thinking?*

Intentional thinking is motivated and the motive is to find yourself somewhere else. You feel insecure, so you switch to another image, to

another place which appears more secure. Intentional thinking is always looking for security in projection, in imagination. Imagination arouses feeling in you which stimulates a process of chemical change. But don't try to evade it. See it, because the moment you see it you are completely outside it, and this brings you to a standstill. The instant you experience this standstill, all your perception refers back to it for it is fullness. Only then can transformation occur.

But you must understand how this works very clearly. Don't be deceived. Sometimes you may feel detached from something but the detachment is a kind of fixation. It is an idea. Pure seeing is motiveless, without concentration and tension. It is truly multi-dimensional. In seeing which is free from all conceptualization the cage dissolves and the yellow bird is freed. What is seen comes into its own and finds its real significance in the seer because the seen is contained within the seer, while the seer is free of the seen.

*Is knowledge an object?*

Being knowledge is not an object. In reality there is no object. It's a name we give to an expression of consciousness in space-time. Form and name make the object. If you put away the name and shape there's only consciousness.

*Then is this being knowledge an experience?*

If we take the word in its philosophical significance, no, it is not an experience. It is life. Experience belongs to memory, to the known, to time. Experience is discontinuous – otherwise how could we call it an experience? Living consciousness is outside space and time and therefore continuous. Being knowledge is not an experience, but since our language is dualistic we often speak of the non-experience as an experience.

*Do you feel this technique of asking questions and receiving answers about the nature of consciousness, that is, using words, is the best way to come to the non-experience?*

The question is heard in silence and the answer comes out of silence. If you put the emphasis on the words, on the syntax, you lose the real flavor. It's not a technique. All non-objective teaching proceeds in this way.

But what is important is learning how to listen. If you listen only to the words, you remain in the mental realm. When you stop putting

the accent on what is said, when you stop seeking some result, listening is stillness. It is all-encompassing. The moment you stop emphasizing the words, what is heard strikes your real nature.

*Are you telling us to listen without using our ears?*

When I speak of listening I don't mean listening with the ears, just as when I speak of seeing I don't mean with the eyes. Listening has no such restriction. You hear with the ears, of course, but what you take in through the ears goes immediately to your awareness. As there's no projection of a result, you're completely open. So when you hear music, for example, you hear it with your whole body.

*Does understanding come automatically with listening?*

One must become accustomed to listening. At first you'll see that you don't listen. You may think you're listening, but it's similar to coming into this room and only seeing the edge of the carpet. You think you're seeing the whole carpet, but actually you only see the edge, and complete the rest with memory.

A child sees a fraction of a table and asks his father, "What is that?" His father replies, "It's a table," so the child learns the name of this object. As he can't see the whole object immediately, he goes from edge to edge, in short glances. The experience of the whole table might require twelve glances, with each glance, each fractional point of view, merging with the next. The child learns about objects in this way. But as an adult, when you enter this room and see a portion of the carpet, you instantly assume it's a carpet.

*What can I do to listen more deeply? I try but keep getting distracted.*

There's no fixation in listening, only completeness. Nothing is outside the listening. If this listening is sustained, and you recall your body sensation, you won't find the sensation because the body is completely expanded in space. You feel yourself unfurnished, free from all objects. And what you're listening to finds its significance in your listening because listening is totality, fullness. You come to direct perception. There's no longer an agent.

*There's nothing to know then, because we're already there but we forget, and play around in objects.*

Objects are too attractive to us. But sometimes you remember and come back. It demands a kind of maturity. When you take a child to a market at Christmas he's attracted to all the toys and forgets about his mother. But a moment comes when he suddenly remembers his mother. It's the same with you.

*What do you mean by maturity?*

In your life circumstances may arise which are unusual for you, and for which you have no past reference. As you question these events, you hear a response that doesn't come from your memory. Questioning your life, your actions, your fears and desires brings you to a certain ripeness. But there must be maturity for understanding. You must be ready to receive it. The solicitation is always present from moment to moment, but it passes you by because it requires a certain readiness to capture it.

*Once you awaken to ultimate reality, are you permanently there? Do you ever return to the dream state which is the world most of us live in? Do you ever go back into any states?*

States appear in you. The three states of waking, dreaming and sleeping live in you, while you are completely free.

*So the experience of the world through sensory and conceptual perception continues, but despite its attractiveness nothing dislodges you from reality?*

Every object points to the ultimate. If we speak of reasons, we can say the only reason for the objective world is to point to the ultimate. While every object points to the ultimate, there are some which point especially such as those found in art, music, painting, sculpture, poetry, and so on. Art or beauty is a jubilation of the ultimate to itself.

*In true love is there any emotion?*

The word "emotion" for me, belongs to the Self, whereas emotivity and affectivity are states belonging to the ego. Emotivity and affectivity are always taking, while emotion and affection are giving.

*But giving implies receiving, doesn't it? Giving to whom?*

There's nobody, only affection, only love.



*Does a person living in the timeless dimension have a sense of purpose?*

One who lives in silence is purposeless. He accomplishes whatever must be accomplished. One could say there is spontaneous purposeless activity.

*Why is it so difficult to allow silence into our lives?*

It's difficult because you project a notion of easiness.

As you become familiar with silent observation, you see that you seldom observe without judging or evaluating. Just seeing this puts you outside the process. Be increasingly aware of this moment of being "outside," of non-involvement. Cease to be an accomplice to the mechanisms of comparison, evaluation and judgment and they will diminish through lack of fuel. Finally, a certain standstill will occur and this stopping brings you back to your true nature, to silence, for it belongs to silence. Here is the real transformation when you live in the moment itself.

*I can listen to you here, but my problem is the lack of motivation to apply this understanding.*

Ask yourself what brought you here tonight. What was your motive for coming here? It could be that in your room you felt something missing. Perhaps you felt a lack of freedom, a desire for peace. But isn't coming here an escape? Aren't you putting off what could be done at any moment, namely facing this lack?

Look at it, but look without searching for compensation, without attempting to control it, without wanting to change anything. Go to meet this lack without trying to justify it. In the moment of seeing, projection stops. The memory process comes to a halt. You find yourself in silence, in freedom, in peace.

You have postponed what could have occurred in your room. Don't find reasons to postpone what you can be now.

*Is it postponement to think in terms of following a practice?*

Looking into yourself is practice. Seeing precisely the various kinds

of images you live with each day is practice. Seeing your body in defense, in reaction, is practice.

*Does any benefit come from being with a group of people observing silence?*

It's true being with others in silence brings a certain encouragement. In any case, it's beautiful to share silence. It's a completely new way of communicating. I would even say it's the only real communication, because in silence there are not many, there is only one.

*Doesn't the reasoning process disturb silence?*

When you stop looking for a result, you come to the end of reasoning. The thought process comes to a moment of helplessness and drops away. What remains is silence.

*Is there a right work or livelihood for each person?*

When you observe, you'll notice how large a part compulsion and affectivity play in the way you act and react. You are always wanting to find yourself, to locate yourself somewhere. But awareness itself already creates space between you and action. This space is detachment, lack of personal involvement. It brings you back to your center, and then relationship with your environment is entirely different. You continue to work, but you are no longer involved. If you clean houses, or work on cars, if you're a doctor or lawyer, there is no difference. You do things because they must be done.

*Can a spontaneous course involve voluntary effort at certain times? For instance, I may spontaneously decide to build a house. Then I have to compose a program as to how to carry out this project. What are the signs of departing from spontaneity?*

Of course there's a technical, practical part to building a house, but this too belongs to spontaneity. In other words, there isn't separate technical, calculative and functional thinking. There's just thinking, and this thinking belongs to spontaneous action, to silence.

We can really speak of right action when observation is entirely impartial. In a disinterested attitude, you remain impersonal, and all action flows from the whole, from the Self.

*What if there is a spontaneous decision to buy a certain house, but you haven't the money for it?*

Unconditioned observation encompasses the global situation. This means you are aware of your capital, your capital as energy, as personality, as intelligence, as money. And you're also a perfect administrator of this capital because you know its precise nature. You would never buy a house which costs more than your capital.

*Do moral questions arise when one lives this silent awareness? Supposing one finds oneself working in an armaments factory?*

Let's approach your question indirectly. To realize who you really are requires self-acceptance, but this acceptance has nothing to do with psychological reasoning. Get acquainted with your personality, your intelligence, your body tensions. Notice your pattern of emotivity, how cyclical are your states of mind. Such unbiased observation demands an open acceptance in which you feel yourself completely free. Then all your actions are in accord with your capital.

*Then following from what you're saying, this person may decide to leave the armaments factory? Acceptance doesn't prevent him from taking action?*

The accent is on the accepting position itself, not on what is accepted. Then there is identity with the situation, so your understanding is complete, impersonal, devoid of confusion and tension. In fact, there is no longer a "you," only acceptance, what we could call unrestricted-being.

*[Long silence]*

*Is it true that when one lives silence, one is in constant bliss?*

*[Big smile] Yes.*

*You say that when a man takes himself for a man and a woman takes herself for a woman there can be no unfolding. What is this unfolding?*

When you take yourself for a man it is a concept. You have an idea of what a man should be and you conform to it. The full unfolding of the man is only possible when the mind is completely free of all representation. Then when you are called upon to be a man spontaneously you are a man but if you think of yourself as a man you live in restriction. It is a fraction. You have reduced yourself to the male. All representation is a reduction. One should take oneself for nothing. When you take yourself for something you feel in constant insecurity because you are isolated from the whole. The person is always searching for a security it can never find. In living in becoming you are like a pendulum swinging from past to future, from future to past. Moreover, what is the future? It is nothing but the projected past, so you spend your whole life living only in the past. See in the moment it occurs that you take yourself for an image. Seeing it brings a revolution, a stopping of all energy dispersed in patterns and projections. In the space in the stop you feel what you fundamentally are. What you are can never be represented. It cannot be thought. You can only be it. Then there is real love. When there is nobody there is love. The somebody which then appears in this emptiness is not a fixed personality. It is flexible. It appears when called for and disappears the moment the situation is finished.

Biologically speaking there is a man and a woman but this biology appears in consciousness. All existence is in consciousness. The temporary personality which appears in this wholeness is full of life. It is a genuinely intelligent personality because it draws on its full capacities without anticipation and limitation. So see that it is pure nonsense to take yourself for somebody...especially for a male. *(laughter)*

*Recently it struck me how often you use the word "center" and I notice that it's really true that everything is projected, fixed by and referred to a center. I*



*notice too how much fear there is in me to let go completely of this reflex of centering. I keep thinking of a story I heard about a guru whose disciples were constantly pestering him: "Enlighten me! Give me peace! I want happiness! Etc." So finally he said, "Fine. I'll give you a minute and anyone who wants to can come up." No one moved. When I first heard the story my mind said, "What idiots! Here is a golden opportunity!" Yet later when one time I felt what I call "myself" dissolving and a feeling of global awareness taking over, I suddenly became very afraid and shrank away from what was happening. This is the fundamental fear and my question is: How can I face it?*

This fear is the original perception. It is the fear of the "me", the "I", disappearing, the fear of no longer having a hold. It is the fear of "going out of your mind". But you should allow this fear to be felt. In letting it be felt you automatically objectify it and feel yourself as its contemplator. You are the perceiver of the fear, a perceiver which is free from all expectation, all interfering. If you face the fear in this way you will feel a tremendous release of energy in you. At first you'll be conscious of fear after the fact. Then you will be aware of it during the state. And finally you will feel it when it is still only a pulsation before it is completely concretized. You can be sure in this way you will become free even of this reflex.

*Recently I have felt a great deal of anxiety coming up after years of relative peace of mind. There seem to be two ways suggested to deal with it--your way which is to observe it, and the other way which is to go right into it. Neither seems right to me.*

Observation does not mean creating a psychological gap between you and your fear. You are undoubtedly fixing the perception when you observe. Your looking may still be conditioned because you may still be trying to find something. Observation must be completely empty. Learning how to face a perception means standing back and letting it come to you. It is not a passive, fatalistic surrender to the perception but an alert welcoming just as you step aside and hold the door open to let a welcome guest walk into your home. So step aside without turning away.

When you feel tension or fear see where it is localized in your body. Do not face this area directly but face those parts which are healthy, which are not furnished with fear. The healthy parts feel light, empty and expanded, so let this empty sensation invade the parts where fear is localized. If you proceed like this the fixed energy, which is all fear

is, will intergrate in your totality. When you have decentralized this fixed energy you will be full of vitality.

The first step is to be aware of the localization. Once you are clearly aware of it you will already feel yourself somewhat at a distance from it. You will no longer be glued to the fear-state but will feel the observer and observed articulated. When this dualism is in turn objectified you find yourself in perceiving without a perceiver. Cease to be an accomplice with fear and it vanishes in your totality.

*Is the personality basically nothing other than fear?*

The driving force to take yourself for an individual entity is fear. The mind must really see that. When I say the mind must see it I don't mean you must understand in an abstract way and nod in agreement. Understanding that remains intellectual can never bring transformation. Really live it in the moment itself. Real seeing stops you in the middle of whatever you are doing--without concern for whether you are allowed to stop. Catch the reaction or reflex as it actually happens.

*To really see something then I must not name it but let it remain as perception. Is this right?*

When you name fear it becomes a concept. A concept and percept cannot exist together, so sustain only the perception. Let the fear come up completely. When you let this happen and listen to it, watch it, you will feel it taking place in your observation. It is in you but you are no longer in it. There is no more unconscious identification. You are outside the process. Seeing clearly how you function calls for living very intimately with yourself. Let perceptions come to their complete articulation without the slightest idea to escape, manipulate or dominate what appears. This means you must be free from all judgement, all appraisal. This may take time in the beginning.

*I find that I keep sensation at a distance by thinking about it.*

Yes. The "me" constantly appropriates the perception for its survival. Be the listener, the perceiver, and you'll spontaneously find yourself in a space-relation with the object. It unfolds in this space. This is the fore-feeling of your true nature which is autonomous, free from all states.

I would say, become familiar with your mechanism. You know very

little about how you function. Learn to take your body as an instrument, a tool, a vehicle. Explore, inquire how you wake up in the morning and, very importantly, how you go to sleep in the evening. At night systematically let go of all qualifications. Live a moment of complete nakedness. Do this for some time and you will notice how you wake up. When you have the profound perception of the nakedness of the mind, you feel that the body appears in this emptiness. You have a completely different relation with yourself. The body is in you but are not in the body.

*Once I have clearly seen the mechanism of one reflex, fear, for example, will seeing be clear on all levels of my life?*

The faculty of transposing understanding in other areas proves to yourself that you have really understood. Otherwise understanding remains superficial. In many circumstances in life the approach is exactly the same as the approach to fear. It is important that the mind understands and that you then *act* according to the understanding. There is no moral effort in this acting; it means simply seeing the principle in other circumstances. Daily life--living in our society--is the only mirror that you can have. There is no other mirror. Anyone who acts Hamlet in his kitchen can be a perfect Hamlet. The thing is to be Hamlet on the stage. *(laughter)*

*In order for understanding to take place in daily life must there not first be a total giving up, so that when we get out of the kitchen and into the world this understanding lives our lives?*

Objective knowledge is possible because you refer to the already known. But when we ask, "What really is my nature? How can I face each moment in daily life in a way that I am convinced is appropriate?" we cannot find the answer through the mind. Here, understanding means being the understanding. The answer lies in living the question. In learning how to live the question you must accept certain things at second-hand. Like all scientific procedure, this second-hand information should give you all the elements to make it first-hand, to make it your own. Understanding as being appears when non-understanding has completely vanished, when there is nothing left to understand. That means real understanding is not in a subject-object relationship. There is nobody who says he knows anything. There is only knowing. It is a feeling of oneness.

When I say "live with the question" what question do I mean? It is

not any question that comes from reading books, what you have heard, so-called common sense or any other question founded on second-hand information. Questions that come from hearsay are to satisfy the mind. There are plenty of opportunities in society to ask these kinds of questions. Questions that interest me, that belong to our meeting here, are those that come up in you from elsewhere than the intellect. Listen to what appears, be open to the unknown, the unexpected in you. When you ask mental questions you are asleep to yourself. You cannot be in the mind, in concept, and in perception at the same time. So remain open to the perception. Sustain a letting go of anything to do with hearsay and you will find yourself living the question. This openness itself brings you to the living answer.

*Why does it seem so difficult to live with the question? There is a strong urge to want the answer now.*

The person, out of habit, looks outside for an answer. Questions come from taking yourself to be a separate individual. When you see that there is no outside, that all is in you, you come to a stopping of wanting second-hand information. Let the original question "Who am I?" live in you, in the stopping, in your alertness, your global listening which appears spontaneously when mental interference dies away.

*Presumably you answer questions because the answer has some effect. How should I listen to the answer so that it can be effective?*

The answer comes out of silence, out of being, and brings the perfume of silence with it. Therefore it is important that you don't immediately try to grasp the answer mentally. Don't make any effort to understand it. Sustain the non-concluding. You can only interpret through memory, the already known. Don't emphasize the formulation but let the stillness, the presence in which the formulation is found, come to you. This presence is your real nature.

*If I do not try to understand what you say it seems to go in one ear and out of the other. That is why I have heard you say the same thing over and over again and there has not been any real transformation in me.*

Listening is not a passive acceptance. It is active, alert. Listening must be bipolar. You hear the formulation and you hear also how it acts in you, how you react to it. Listen to your agitation, boredom, the

repetition, the way you interpret, judge, analyze, criticize. Listen to your restlessness, your curiosity, your anxiety, fear, frustration. Listen to your emotivity, your feelings, states, desires, wants, likes and dislikes. There are so many things to listen to. Become acquainted with your functioning. In listening you will feel how all these take place in you. Listening brings you to a distance from all that you have accepted second-hand as your real nature. In this space relation, this listening, you will have the fore-feeling of what you really are.

*What kind of formulation do questions have that do not come from mental curiosity?*

The question may come to you several times, dressed in a different way each time. There comes a day when it is not dressed at all. That is really being understanding. What we are fundamentally can never be objectified. It is emptiness of all representation. What is empty of all representation is fullness.

Don't try to change any activities in your life. When you try to change something you remain in old cliches. See only that all your activities refer to a center, to a "me" who compares, concludes, appraises. Simply see the mechanism. See how you are not related to your activities but to your likes and dislikes. See this in the moment itself and postpone all conclusion, postpone all action. When you postpone concluding the situation new elements appear in the space you allow it. It may appear completely differently. When you see how all situations are related to a center of opinions you will see also that this is a relation between one "seen" and another, an object seen and a so-called subject seen. This subject is also an object.

*What is this "you" who sees the subject?*

Unless one speaks poetry the language does not easily allow for speaking which is not in the subject-object frame. Really there is only consciousness in which the so-called subject and object appear. There is no agent who knows consciousness. It is autonomous. Though it is sometimes called the ultimate subject there is nothing subjective in it. It is simply being, global awareness.

*When you say to postpone a decision, do you mean not to identify with the feeling that anything has to be done?*

When you postpone a conclusion there is automatically a giving up.

In this giving up you feel effectively open. In seeing the situation from your openness it becomes much richer. Spontaneously openness is emphasized rather than the situation itself. We could say you switch identification from the object to the subject aspect.

Every situation has a solution. It is only the person, the mind, which finds no solution. It finds no solution which suits it. A fraction can never find a solution. The solution appears in your totality. It does not come from the discriminating mind, through analysis. Magically it appears out of intelligence which arises when you are open to all possibilities. Then you really act appropriately. You are not psychologically involved in the situation and all your capacities are freed to function. When you are not a doer you are a most efficient channel for doing, a channel for functioning. There is no actor, doer, thinker. There is only acting, doing, thinking. In this openness you find peace and joy in living. There is real relationship. There is love.

*So postponing has nothing to do with putting it off until Friday or next week.*

When you live free from the identity you think you are, there is space in you. There is no longer any going to the past and from there projecting a future. When you are open, at a certain point all the elements of a situation appear simultaneously in you. The situation concludes in you and brings its own action to be realized in space and time. This realization is completely free from authorship. You don't need a strategy. You know that tomorrow you have to go to Los Angeles because that is a fact, it is an element of the situation. But how you go, by train, car or bus, belongs to the moment. You remain completely open. You meet the situation empty-minded. Often in moments of empty-mindedness the reflex of the person appears because the ego feels insecure. You must experience for yourself that in this emptiness you are completely adequate to every situation. Find out for yourself how the person only gets in the way of efficient functioning. Of course there must be workmanship. Being open to all the facts of a situation means knowing the instruments, your capacities, the law with which you have to deal. But for the rest, it is completely in the field of the unknown.



*How can we find ourselves in the expansion you talk about? I feel locked into my body.*

Let this body be an object of observation. Let it become feeling. At first you'll feel only the superficial surface of the body but as you sustain the observation you'll become aware of different layers of sensation. Become accustomed in your observation to let the observed come to you, you do not go to it. This means you are completely receptive. In the beginning the body will appear to you in fractions but when the looking is sustained there comes a moment when there is a fusion of all the parts and you come to a global feeling of the body. You feel the object-body become more and more subtle and expanded beyond the frontiers of the physical body. In this process there is no naming. When there is no conceptualization at a certain point observer and observed disappear and there is only pure perception, direct perception.

Be aware how you exclude your head from body-sensation. The head belongs to the body but it is as if you work *from* the head. Don't make the head the center of observation. If you do the observer remains fixed on the observed like a donkey in a stall. When there is fusion of the observer and the feeling body, you are no longer fixed in front of you but are brought in a way behind you. The perception is then completely homogenous. Every part of the body is transparent.

*Where is the mind when you are in the feeling?*

The mind is a function. Observation is the natural function of the brain when there is no intention in looking. Intention limits observation, it gives it a direction. But pure observation is multidimensional. So leave aside all intention to manipulate, direct or escape body sensation. When you see simply the facts there is already a great release of tension. In complete giving up of all interference, the body appears in its vacant state. Then you feel as if the perception of the body is in you,

in your observation. This is pure perception, the disappearance of observer and observed. See that when you emphasize the observed you fix it. The moment observation is welcoming, the observed vanishes in the faculty of observing. It is a kind of oneness feeling.

*When we once have the feeling of the subtlety of the body does it remain or go away?*

When you have once or a few times explored the body and found it to be a palette of subtle sensitivity, some organic memory of it remains. You will then become aware that when you work or walk or do anything at all you expend far too much energy. The organic memory, the echo, of the body in its natural light state will remind you that generally you use your body in a conditioned way. Once you see the patterns you can free yourself from them and the global body feeling will become more permanent. This brings you to a real economy of doing. It is a new way of living. This transformation occurs when the body is allowed to find its organic state free from mental and mechanical interference. Transformation happens because you remain in choiceless observation.

*What part does the breathing play?*

When you become more sensitive to the body you have the impression that inhalation-exhalation is no longer localized. It is all around you. It is important to see how we live mainly in our heads. Think with your whole body, feel with the whole body. In the whole feeling, the global sensation, you go into your room and touch your whole room. You go outside and touch the clouds, the trees, the water. You do not live in isolation. In your radiation you are in communion with all things. In this expansion there's no place for the ego because the ego is a contraction. Love is expansion, a feeling of spaciousness. The feeling of expansion in space is very important. When you see beautiful architecture you go in the space, touch it, go all around it. Or when you go into a house what makes you say you like it or don't like it? It is the feeling of space. It may not be appropriate to you the moment you walk in the door, or you may spontaneously go in and touch the walls, the ceiling, and feel yourself in expansion.

Don't remain in verbal understanding. Have the real feeling of what I say. All this is not something to be discussed only. You must come to the living experience of it.

*Listening to you just now I feel some doubts about my practice of kriya yoga in the past few years. In kriya yoga you move the vital energy in the subtle body from chakra to chakra and you are not supposed to follow it or watch it but imagine moving it as you breathe from one energy center to another. What do you think about this?*

The rising of energy, the meeting of shakti and shakta, the dissolving of shakti in shakta is the result of discernment. It is the result of understanding. There are several techniques to bring energy upwards but to me these are completely artificial. When there is real understanding there is a natural integration of the energy in the ultimate. If the release of energy does not happen spontaneously but is made the object of one's intention it not only keeps you in the becoming process, the subject-object dichotomy, it can also cause an imbalance of the body-mind. The level of energy must correspond to the whole behaviour in daily life. It must be harmoniously integrated into your completeness, otherwise you may behave in certain ways which don't belong to the level of energy. It happens often in mad people. Freeing of energy comes out of understanding, out of your whole intelligence. intelligence.

*So artificially raising energy can actually cause damage and you don't suggest activating it at all?*

In real understanding energy becomes global, not fixed. The technique of kriya is a process through steps. In my teaching one points directly to consciousness, the natural state, becomes established in it and then moves down, so to speak, to the transforming of the relative nature. There are no steps to come to awareness. There are no steps in reality. When you proceed by steps you may say to yourself, "I have made progress." What do you mean by progress? The mind can never understand what is beyond it. So why act on the mind or body? In this action you emphasize the object of perception. You may perceive many subtleties but these are still part of the subject-object relationship. In so-called progressing you may eventually come to a crisis point, the most subtle of all objects, the blank state. The blank state is the absence of objects but it itself is still an object of perception. When you have trained your body-mind through the subject-object way of progression it is virtually impossible to be able to know yourself without objects. The blank state is as far as you can go.

Therefore don't emphasize the object, any object. All states, feelings and sensations are objects which keep you bound, no matter how sub-

tle and pleasant they are. They are delectation for the "me", sweets for the ego, that's all. The body is there, the mind is there, but when you are the perceiver they unfold and point directly to your reality, their origin.

*There are said to be sounds which can activate the energy. Would this practice also lead to the same problem?*

We can say that our whole structure is built out of sounds. Every organ in our body has its sound. So in pronouncing or hearing sounds different organs are automatically affected, are stimulated. When you speak of illness it is only that the organ has lost its real sound. So through sounds you can bring it to life. When there is no disturbance and only simple functioning you have a fore-feeling of your real nature.

*So is there a value in mantras in coming to the non-dual state?*

Yes, but few know how to pronounce a sound correctly and without the correct pronunciation the sound cannot be effective. In any case, it is only to come to the quietness of your phenomenal being. It can never bring you to your non-dual presence. You remain bound in subject-object relationship. The quietness is still an object. Such practice belongs only to the progressive way and brings you nearer to the blank state.

There are moments of quiet when there is nothing to do, nothing to fear, nothing to escape. Become more attuned to these moments, beyond energy and function. Do not emphasize the energy, the object, body, senses and mind. These are perceived. So the question arises: Who is the perceiver? And since you can never perceive the perceiver the mind comes to a stop. To live what you are you must know clearly what you are not. You can never know what you are because you are it, just as the eye can never see itself.



*Why am I here? Why am I born? Why will I die? Why is there love, and why is there hate?*

Free yourself from the why. When you are free of the why you'll have the living answer. In the space before, during and after the question is the answer. You look for the motive only in action--outside yourself. But when you look deeply, the motive for asking is to be in completeness related to all living beings. You will only find this underlying motive when you get rid of the why, the where and the when.

You talk about dying. But you can only speak of dying because you take for granted that you are born. What gives you the right to say you are born? Do you so easily accept second-hand information?

*Of course I am born. I'm here, aren't I? I know Africa exists though I have never been there.*

Your physical appearance is the accidental result of two people and these two people are the accidental result of two other people. The birth with which you identify is completely accidental. The real birth is when you are free from the image which thinks it is born.

*When I am angry I feel very vital. I feel good in this vitality. How can I deal with anger when I feel this way?*

Anger is a reaction which destroys all beauty in you. See the mechanism, otherwise you remain in a chain of reactions where there is no exit. Then you are like a fly who bangs against the window a thousand times. Before you can look at the mechanism you must accept that there is something to look at, psychological resistance. Contemplate it. Even love it. It is compressed energy. When you look at it, objectify it, you are no longer an accomplice with the reaction. So accept your anger, welcome it. This is not a psychological acceptance which is the person making a kind of sacrifice. It is a functional acceptance, an openness to the facts. In this acceptance there comes a distancing between observer and observed. In this position you already feel the breath of your real nature. And the fixed energy dissolves in you. So be aware not only of your surroundings but especially of your nearest surroundings, body, senses and mind. Of course reaction belongs to being human but come out of being bound to reactions, to biology and psychology. In your language you say you must come out of the *teufelskreis*--the circle of the devil.

*What is the best way to break habits?*

First see that you act habitually. This seeing is not an intellectual taking note. It is a clear perception that the mechanism of habit comes from memory. For example, see that all situations which come to you are immediately apprehended by a subject which interprets, judges, compares, etc. You take this subject as yourself. This subject is itself only a habit, a way of thinking. When this first habit is seen you are outside the field of all habits. You see life no longer from a point of view but from your totality. Any other superficial means to try to break habits only reinforces the original habit.

When you project habits you are not open to life. Life presents itself in constant variation in you. When you see that life never repeats you will automatically leave the projection of patterns of security, which is all habits are. You will be open to all life offers. When life refers directly to your emptiness of all representation, to your wholeness, there is right understanding of every situation.

*Does not a certain amount of habit belong to our biological survival, for example, eating, sleeping and exercising at certain times?*

Feeling the rhythm of our body vehicle is not the same as habit. The organism looks to feel itself in a rhythm harmonious with the universe. Biological survival belongs to the rhythm of the universe. Habit belongs to psychological survival.

*Isn't the personality also a part of biological survival?*

You bring with you into the world certain characteristics that belong to your biological survival in this existence. But what we call the personality is acquired early in life. It is an accumulation of experiences and information born from your interaction with society. We are the result of our surroundings. We have believed what we have been told, crystallized it and identified with it. But the apparent continuity of the personality is only memory reinforced by society. See that the personality can be perceived like anything else. The perceiver is your wholeness, consciousness. The personality is only a fraction of what we really are. A fraction can only see a fraction. It can never be harmonious. All acting which comes out of the fractional point of view is reaction. The moment you see this mechanism, the moment you are the seer of the personality, you are out of the process. Forget all you have read or heard about wholeness. It is all mystification. Have no representations. Be scientific. Simply see how life functions. When

you are out of the process you are open to your completeness. This is not an experience because there is no one who experiences and therefore nothing objectified into an experience. It is non-experience, a non-state, because it is free from all subject-object relationship. It is simply being present. When the "I" is relinquished you are taken by this presence. It is not a process of will. It is grace.

*How does the personality function in wholeness?*

It is no longer stiff but adapts to the moment. Once the situation is over your personality dissolves again in non-representation, its home-ground. The personality functions but it is no longer personal.

*If the continuous personality is an idea is it localized in the mind?*

Yes. But mind and body cannot be separated. The personality is also expressed in the body. In a certain way it is kept in the prison of the body-mind. But the mind can never free itself from itself because the attempt to free the mind belongs to the mind. It is a vicious circle. When you accept the personality, the contents of mind and body, they no longer have any hold. You feel yourself spontaneously free. But never try to free yourself. Don't change your opinions or take up a new way of living. Simply welcome all that appears and you will feel free in this welcoming. But first see that you do not welcome.

*Must the mind come to stillness, to quietness, first in order to see its contents?*

The mind is an object of perception. It does not need to be still to be perceived. First see that there is agitation in the body-mind. Don't get involved in controlling, escaping or changing this situation. Just listen to it. You will discover then that you can't listen, that the reflex to discipline, dominate, manipulate is very strong. I repeat that it is a waste of energy to try to still the mind. The nature of the mind is movement. But you are not in the movement. It is in you. When the body-mind functions in you, in your wholeness, it will come spontaneously to its inherent rhythm without agitation. Then it is a perfect tool.

*Presumably then energy is orchestrated differently?*

Absolutely. Nothing is wasted. Actions are perfectly efficient.

*When the psycho-physiological structure comes to quietness and a reorchestration of energy takes place, are there noticeable biological changes?*

Certainly. There is no more fractional functioning. In total intelligence all the senses are engaged. In relaxation all our structure is receiving. This is contrary to the so-called normal state where all the senses are in a grasping position. When you live in your completeness your whole body is a hand open to all that appears in life.

*Doesn't this make living very passive? Often, enlightened beings find the world too harsh and live quietly on the fringes of society.*

When all anticipation, ambition, manipulation, achieving are gone one may appear passive from the point of view of these things. But surrender is not passive in a fatalistic way. It is only passive in that the fractional person, the will, doesn't interfere. It is active in the sense that it is alert, welcoming all the facts of life. The one who lives in receiving never sleeps.

It is a misunderstanding to think that a sage leaves society. Many things in society are no longer appropriate to the wise one, it is true. But it depends on the residues of one's existence--*prarabdha karma*--how one continues one's living. In any situation the sage is in society but not of it.

*It seems much more difficult to observe the mind than, say, a vase of flowers.*

Observation is not outer nor inner. Your real nature has no outer or inner. Become aware in communication with your surroundings that what you take to be two fields, outer objects and inner thoughts and feelings, are only one field from the point of view of the perceiver, your wholeness. Let anxiety, nervousness, aggression appear in your observation like clouds passing across the sky.

When your observation also includes your psycho-physiological field you will become familiar with how you are in a chain of reactions. You will see that whereas you thought you knew a situation, you now see you only knew your reaction and that so-called action sprang out of reaction. Actions which are reactions create memory in you.

*What do you mean by that last statement?*

Because reaction is non-accomplished action. The residue of this

non-accomplishment remains in you as memory. Spontaneous action is not related to memory and leaves no residue.

*But memory is necessary in many circumstances in life. We need to know this is a table without looking first at the four legs and underneath it as a child looks. We need to know a tiger by his tail!*

This is functional memory, conceptualization. On the level of biological survival conceptualization is a tool. But we live too much in concept and not enough in percept. Conceptualization has become a dominant habit. There is a kind of laziness of the senses. When you live in your completeness the whole body wakes up and participates. When you smell a rose it is completely new. It is not reduced to the physical organ but belongs to your global feeling. When you touch a cat it is a first touch. No memory comes into play. Each perception is new-born because consciousness and its object are one in touching, in smelling or hearing. When you live in concept the sensitivity of all the organs atrophies. When you live in completeness conceptualization has a much smaller role.



I am happy to meet you. It is only in the absence of the I and the you that there is meeting. Let me explain. Meeting, togetherness, is love. The "I" and the "you" are superimpositions, concepts. They are identifications with body and mind. When you understand that you are not body, senses and mind, a doer, a thinker, you will be open to a new dimension of living, a world not furnished with objects and concepts. In relation from object to object, from personality to personality, there is no love, no understanding. There is only wanting, asking. Togetherness free from all representation of an "I" and a "you" is thanking, offering.

*Why are we always asking for something?*

When you take yourself for a personal entity, you live in restriction. In this restriction there is insecurity. So in this insecurity you feel the need to constantly demand, search. In our society there is only asking. Even apparent giving is asking.

*What is true giving?*

When there is no one who gives there is real giving. Our nature is giving, sharing. Real giving comes from a deep thankfulness to be alive to be.

*How can I empty myself of the sense of "I"?*

Body, senses and mind are tools, vehicles, instruments. There may be moments in daily life when there is no function but this absence of functioning has nothing to do with tranquility. Function and non-function alike appear in tranquility. Tranquility is the ground of existence, all perception. Very often what we call meditation is only the non-activity of the senses. Many people make a great effort to bring these tools to rest through various techniques. These methods of concentration are completely artificial procedures. The rest thus achieved is localized. Real tranquility is multidimensional. It is diametrically opposed to any centrum. It has no direction. It is openness, receiving. Tranquility comes naturally. All concentrated effort is a violation. A concentrated mind is never free. It is stiff with no subtlety.

See that in all effort to bring to a stop organs which by nature are meant to function, there will be fixation on the object. The natural state of the mind is movement so why impede its natural functioning? In real meditation there is no achieving, no controlling, because there is no one who meditates. When you let go of the doer tranquility immediately appears. Your existence in space and time appears within this tranquility. All existence is in tranquility but tranquility is not in existence.

*How can I break the conditioning of the mind which is based on past experiences? How can I be only in the present?*

As long as there is a reflex to take yourself as a center, a person, you live in the mind. The person is only memory. Memory maintains the idea of being a person. But when you don't think about anything, where are "you?" The person looks for security in repetition and patterns. Memory completes all your experiences in life. These flowers are new at every moment but you make them the same. In reality every situation is entirely new. There may be analogy between yesterday and today but there is no repetition. When you really understand this you will stop using old patterns to reconstruct your situations.



Memory prevents you from seeing the bare facts. What you take for facts, for a real experience, are only reactions based on memory. Until the center of reference, the "me" is completely absent you can never face facts. In multidimensional perception the situation unfolds and unexpected things come up. It is much more interesting! Without the psychological center you are receptive to the situation, present to it.

So believe me when I say that every moment is new. This will leave you open to the possibility of living without projecting patterns. When there is no longer a struggle for psychological survival, psychological memory which swings between a projected past and future, disappears. Functional memory remains, of course.

*Intellectually I understand you but when I look at this table it's the same old table. I can't pretend it appears new to me!*

Even when you see the rising sun you make it a concept. It is a new sun but you don't see it. You are not really aware of the pleasure that comes up in you in admiring. Everything is new, every day at work, or when you make your bed or polish your shoes.

When you are free of wasting energy in psychological reactions of like and dislike, criticism, comparison, anger, depression, etc., when there is no longer any psychological involvement, you will be awake to the moment, receptive to all that comes to you. Then you will come to an economy in your doing. Effort and expenditure of energy will be greatly reduced. You simply function, doing things that have to be done. You don't take yourself for a doer. You are simply present and then there is joy in the doing, in all your living. It is play, not a chore.

You can see your body wake up in the morning like the rising sun. It wakes up in your awareness. Feel the exact moment when you step back into identification with the old body. What you call your body is not your real body at all. It is fixation in your brain. So see how you take yourself for what you are not, how you reduce yourself to a pattern. As soon as you see it clearly there is some distancing from it and you are out of the process of gluing yourself to an idea. In this distance-feeling, this being out of the process, there is the fore-feeling of your autonomy, your freedom, beingness.

It is true that you may understand intellectually at first. But when the mind understands, you are open to a new dimension of living. It is an exploration, a discovery. So don't adopt any new religion or philosophy. All the peace, love and joy you are looking for is in you. Come to know your nearest surroundings. Don't look for it elsewhere.

You can never grasp it because you are it. Discover it for yourself. I am here only to point the way. For the moment you have to take it for granted, accept it as second-hand information. But never be content with second-hand information. I am not asking for blind faith. You must make it first-hand. It is like a scientist who adopts a formula, then proceeds to prove it for himself.

*Could you clarify a little more, "I am not a doer, only a function"?*

When you look deeply during doing, you'll see there is no room for an actor. There's only acting. It is only afterwards that the mind says "I am doing it." Consciousness and its object are one. There cannot be doing and a feeling of being the doer at the same time. It may appear so but there is a very rapid movement from doing to doer. When you identify with the doer you will become tired. The fatigue is psychological. We all have had moments when we feel very tired but the moment something new or astonishing comes up that takes us away from ourselves, we are full of energy.

*Is desire completely absent in tranquility?*

When we live in tranquility, the background of all appearances, desire is, I would say, fulfilled, accomplished. As long as you are not established in this background desire comes up. But when you examine desires there is only one desire: the desire to be desireless — call it love, joy, peace, freedom. It is a lack of discrimination not to see this. All superficial desires are dispersion and compensation, substitutes for the ultimate desire.

*I notice in myself a certain laziness so that I have a difficult time sustaining attention and seeing the facts of a situation even when I'm aware that I project images.*

See in the moment itself that you don't give time to the facts, that they race you to a solution. The person is impatient because it cannot exist without finding itself somewhere. It lives in insecurity and looks for a hold in repeated situations. When there is nothing to grasp the personality is agitated and anxious about its survival. So in the beginning it takes time to see the facts. Sustain your observation. Let the formulation come up in you without the mind interfering. Don't squeeze the situation like a lemon to extract its juice. Let the solution come. It

will come. Every situation has its own solution, you can be sure. The solution never comes from outside the situation.

*So is the sustaining a question of time?*

It is true. But when you become accustomed to it the conclusion appears very quickly. It is a conclusion from your whole being, not from the like-dislike, pain-pleasure structure. At first be lazy. Don't hurry. Hold off the reflex to conclude. Give the facts complete freedom to bring their own conclusion to you. Sustain the feeling of the situation unfolding within you.

*Then the quality of this sustaining, the listening, improves over time?*

Surely, surely. It takes a long time to come to unfurnished attention, an attention which is completely open without expectation and memory. The mind is a complicated jig-saw puzzle. There are many little pieces with which you build up your landscape. When you see how the mind functions in repetition you will lose interest in building the picture yet again!

Every situation has its own puzzle which is much more entrancing than the same old one you live in. Observe. Be alert, and you will see more than you know.

*Is the personality part of my mental puzzle?*

Yes. You have strangled the personality. It is a frozen picture. Let it thaw out. The real personality is fluid, subtle and comes up to meet each situation in a new way appropriate to the moment. The true personality springs out of tranquility when needed, and dissolves back into it when no longer needed.

This tranquility is consciousness, your wholeness. What arises and dies in consciousness is nothing other than consciousness. Consciousness is the only continuum.

*How can I come to greater alertness?*

It is a question of being interested when you look at and listen to things. When you begin looking and listening you'll start discovering and you will enjoy the discoveries. You will see that every situation, every moment in life, is a fathomless sack. But you make it a sack with

a bottom and put things in it. The moment you see that each situation is bottomless, much richer, much more alive than anything you have accumulated in your memory, then you spontaneously become more interested in life.

Begin with your surroundings, your lover if you have one, your husband, your child. Try to see them in a new way. But be careful not to take an attitude. I don't mean superimpose new qualities on your surroundings but approach them with your wholeness. The moment you free yourself from images of your surroundings you become really social. What people call socialism is not really socialism. Real socialism is looking at life free from memory, free from patterns. Otherwise you keep the people around you in prison. In seeing and acting free from memory you give your surroundings the freedom to be free.

*Ramana Maharshi used to say, "As thoughts arise question to whom the thoughts arise." The answer is of course "me, I." So then you ask, "Who is this "I"?" How does this relate to what you are saying?*

It is exactly the same. All perceptions belong to you because you are. There is no perception without you. The world is because you are. Otherwise there is no world for you. So all objects, all that is perceived, all existence belongs to you. But the mind must come to know this, otherwise it will never give up. The "I" is not a conceptual "I". It is what I call tranquility or stillness or consciousness. It is *being I*.

*How can I become familiar with this "I" behind all perception? Does it involve a loss of body-consciousness?*

At first you may have moments when you are completely one with your totality and then you will see that this tranquility is between two activities, two perceptions, two concepts. You say, "I see this chair now. Before I recognized it and called it a chair, there was only seeing." Once the chair has gone you are again back to seeing without seeing anything. So you are seeing before and after the perception. These moments are fleeting. But there comes a time when you are also seeing during the seeing. Do you understand?

*Do you mean that consciousness continues whether or not the object arises?*

Yes. Consciousness is a continuum. Waking, dreaming and dreamless deep sleep are superimposed on this continuum. In the

waking and dreaming states the object is present but in the deep sleep state there are no objects. Because you only know yourself in objects, in subject-object relation, you call the objectless state an absence. But consciousness is always present, "behind" the sleeper, dreamer, and the one who is awake. Consciousness always is.

I repeat certain things very often. And I say again that the mind must be informed. It must come to intellectual clarity in order to be open to a new possibility. It is as if you know only six directions and someone suddenly says to you, "There is a seventh direction." When the mind knows it even if you don't yet know it for yourself, you are already open to the new direction. Don't doubt it. The "seventh direction" is your heart.

Thank you for coming.