

A photograph of a tree with a mix of green and reddish-brown leaves, standing in a grassy field. The background shows more green foliage. The text is overlaid on the top half of the image.

THE ART OF DYING WHILE LIVING

Vimala Thakar

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VIMALA THAKAR

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VIMALA THAKAR

THE ART OF DYING WHILE LIVING

**VIMALAJI'S COMMUNICATIONS WITH
MUMBAI INQUIRERS**

**IN THE FESTIVAL OF FRIENDSHIP GATHERING
IN MOUNT ABU**

IN NOVEMBER, 1994

INDIA

VIMAL PARIVAR, MUMBAI

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FOREWORD

Vimal Parivar, Mumbai, is happy to present in this book Vimalaji's friendly communications on a very sensitive theme, 'The Art of Dying while Living'. Members of Vimal Parivar often expressed a desire to fully understand the various aspects and implications of this theme, which is vital to their living. J.Krishnamurti has expressed in many of his talks that unless one learns the Art of Dying while Living, one can not possibly live a fuller and meaningful life. Mumbai friends therefore selected this theme for their November 1994, Festival of Friendship Gathering in Mount Abu and requested Vimalaji to delve deep into this theme.

The words 'dying' and 'death' appear full of loaded meanings, traditional misconceptions and a positive dislike. Vimalaji systematically goes to the root of this misconception and indicates that what is implied in 'dying while living', is really the dropping away of all sense of attachment, belonging and dependency upon things, individuals, situations or circumstances. It is really the death of the psychological 'I', the 'me', the 'ego' and not the death of the body, the biological organ.

Vimalaji explores the myth of 'I', whether it is a fact or a concept, deals with the fear of the loss of one's identity and raises a very pertinent question, whether one is really a genuine inquirer of Truth at all? She points out that there is an aspiration of unconditional freedom in every individual and if only one would allow the myth, the unreal to drop away and the process of becoming to come to an end, then a peaceful and harmonious life is possible.

Such a life would result in a holistic growth of an individual and show him an alternative way of living.

Vimalaji's abounding love permeates her communions, her talks and her answers to questions. Her life is her living, a sacred 'Yajna'. Her words are her flesh and blood! One can only urge the readers to receive them fully in the receptacles of their hearts.

The transcription of the recorded talks was very painstakingly done by Shri Haridas Soni and Vimal Parivar is grateful to him. Shri Sudarshan Dheer, a renowned graphic designer has, as always, rendered his artistic touch in both the selection of the cover photograph and the cover page art - work. Vimal Parivar sincerely thanks him for his assistance.

May Vimalaji's blessings help blossom the 'Art of Dying while Living' in the lives of her readers.

15 August, 1996
Mumbai

Vimal Parivar,

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THE ART OF DYING WHILE LIVING

Hearty welcome to all of you who have launched upon an adventure. First of all for travelling to Mt. Abu, coming to the hills when winter is setting in and secondly, congratulations for the willingness to participate in dialogues on a very sensitive theme.

The theme that you have chosen - The Art and Science of Dying while One is Living - is an extremely sensitive theme. It is sensitive because the word dying or the word death is overloaded with traditional misconceptions, prejudices and a positive dislike. To objectify the 'I', the 'Me', the 'ego' and to look, without any attachment whatsoever, at the so called 'self', the 'me' and the 'ego', is not easy.

Need for Austerity

So, the theme is sensitive, and for the next six days we will have to cultivate an austerity of not getting hurt or depressed when we will be exposed, in the dialogues, to certain truths of life.

Truth is not a very smooth thing like velvet. Truth, like the rays of the sun, penetrates the darkness not only of ignorance, but also the darkness of preferences and prejudices.

It dispels them - the likes, the dislikes, the conclusions, the theories, the beliefs, that have been nurtured, cultivated, even pampered through 30, 40, 50, 60 years of life. When the penetrating energy of truth pierces through them and occasionally reduces them to small pieces, shatters them - it does not please us. So, truth makes you feel uncomfortable, and to reconcile the uncomfortableness, to reconcile the pain and the agony, requires the strength of austerity.

Truth is like freedom which snaps away all enclosures from you. All psychological enclosures are removed instantaneously when freedom dawns upon the heart, when truth penetrates the brain. One loses the sense of belonging to a family, to a caste, to a community, to a nation, to a race. These psychic enclosures are demolished with the dawn of freedom which generates a sense of insecurity. As truth makes you uncomfortable, freedom most often generates a sense of being insecure and that vulnerability, again, is not a very pleasing sensation.

That is why I request all of us to be alert and to be willing to get exposed to the uncomfortableness, the insecurity, the vulnerability, at least for the next six days while we are together. We are going on a verbal voyage, purifying our perceptions so that we are enabled to perceive the truth, to perceive the facts as they are and understand the truth concealed behind the fact or contained in the fact. It will be great fun and it will be a very interesting event of our life together, if we can take that voyage.

Life and Living

Before we plunge into the inquiry of what is dying while living, would you please look with me at the phenomenon of life and living? Would you accompany me? Let us see what we imply by the words life and living. Is the earth living? Has the earth life? Do the rivers live? The oceans, the mountains, the trees, do they only exist or do they live? Because you can look at the mountains, the oceans, the rivers, the trees, let us begin with them, and then turn the searchlight upon ourselves.

When we say that we are living in the cosmos and there is life around us, what do we mean? Most of you have been

students of J.Krishnamurti's teaching, and you might be acquainted with what the great revolutionary of the 20th Century, Krishnaji, says about living. He says. " To be related is to live." Does the earth have interaction with the rest of living beings? Has it only existence or has it life also? Has the earth got a language of communication and a way of interaction with you?

It seems to me that Physics has perhaps enlightened the human race about the life contained in the earth. The earth is a being, say the scientists of the 20th Century. It has creativity, creative energy. When it allows you to walk upon it, the earth is interacting upon you. I do not know if you have ever walked upon the earth, walked into the fields, upon the grass, with naked feet. It is quite an ecstasy to have an immediate, intimate touch of the earth, the soil, the clay, the hardness of the rocks, the soles of your feet interacting upon them. That interaction generates a different kind of energy. When we walk on cemented roads or the cemented floors or tiled floors of the house, that is not the touch of the earth, the living earth. It is dead matter, the tiles, the cement. I am talking about walking in the fields, the forests, the woods, the rocks, climbing them, running around, the touch of the morning dew on the grass, the interaction. I should not elaborate, otherwise, I will be accused of getting poetic.

But here is a person who has walked at least 8000 miles in different parts of India, in different seasons; drenched in the heavy rains of Kerala and getting scorched on the parched up rocks and deserts in Northern India; or climbing on the snow-capped mountains of Himalayas in India, snowcapped mountains in the Andes, in South America, Chile, Norway, the Alps in Switzerland. It is quite an ecstasy to have a living interaction with the earth.

Do the rivers live? Are they related with the rest of life? Earth has its own language of creativity, expressing that creativity by allowing the seeds that we sow into it to sprout and huge trees to grow. The earth nourishes the roots of the trees with its own existential essence. Forests are the language of the earth, the communication of the earth. Trees have their own language of communication - the leaves, the fruits, the flowers, their fragrance and so on - I am trying to share with you the fact that the whole cosmos is living, interacting with every other expression of life.

Let not the human race have the vanity of imagining that it only lives and it only has relationships. The whole life is living and there are events of relationships, interactions. Have you ever felt the liquidness, the coolness, the electricity contained in water? The interaction between the waters and winds and the emergence of ripples and waves and storms? That is the language of the rivers and the oceans.

Your friend Vimala was travelling by sea to the North Cape and the waves would rise upon the breast of the ocean - 50 feet high, frightening the timid hearts as if the ship would immediately turn upside down. The beauty of that terror was enjoyed by us in every pore of our being. So, oceans and the rivers have also their own language, a nonverbal language of communication. They have their own way of relating their creative energies with the other beings that come into touch with them.

I hope, you have contacted the emptiness of space in your life - the vastness, the emptiness of space.

So, living is beingness, communication, interaction. If that is the implication of the word 'living', what do we mean when we say we live, I live? What is living in you, or me?

If there is a 'who', we will inquire about it. We will probe, we will grope and find out if there is any 'who' that lives. But let us first find out what is it that is living when we say 'I live', 'I am alive', 'We are alive'.

Let us begin with the body the biological dimension, the physical aspect of it. The body lives. Which are the processes that manifest the livingness of the body? The breathing—you breathe in and you breathe out. That breathing in and the breathing out goes on. You are born with it. It has nothing to do with your volition. It is not a voluntary process. It is not the field of volition. There is seeing. There is the energy of sight contained in this body and the optical instruments incorporated in the physical structure. So there is seeing. Seeing goes on. No volition is required, no seer is required for the seeing to take place. There is hearing. It takes place - a non - voluntary movement. Does appetite depend upon your volition, your likes and dislikes? It is an energy that operates and consumes your whole body when you say 'I am hungry'. Thirst, sleep, sex energy - all these are not in the field of volition at all. They are the language of the biological existence.

Various energies are operating in this complex structure, the body, and they are living. They are related to the earth, the water, the fire, the space, outside of you. Constant interaction is going on between them. The appetite, the thirst, the sleep, the sex impulse - they are related to the cycle of the seasons. They are related to the solar energy and the lunar energy. They are related to the plan-

etary movement that is going on in the universe. Marvelous is the interaction and relationship between these operating energies — non - rational, non - psychological, non-volitional. It is living. The body contains the brain, the most sensitive part. It also contains the sensitive energy - the sex energy. The brain functions. It goes on expressing its own contents. There are millions of cells contained in what you call the organ - the brain, the cerebral organ. It contains what you call knowledge or experience or conditionings of the whole human race.

So, as soon as the biological seeing takes place, the physical seeing takes place or hearing takes place, it is correlated to the cerebral energy. The stuff that is contained in the body and the brain, gets provoked and it begins to project itself. What is called thinking or thought is nothing but the projection of memory, the stuff contained in millions of brain cells and body cells. So the naming of the object seen by the biological organism, the identifying of it, the comparing of it, the evaluating of it, goes on involuntarily. The seeing includes simultaneously the naming, the identifying, the evaluating and so on. Thus in the cerebral realm also, the projection by the memory of its own contents with every sensual movement does not seem to be in the field of volition. The movement of knowledge and memory flowing through the body does not require a knower. The movement of thought, the projection of thought, does not require a thinker. In spite of you it goes on and not because of you. So, the energies of the psychological movements and the biological movements are moving. Is it what you call living? Is this the implication of the word 'living' when we say we are living, we claim to be living?

Mankind invented the process of naming and identifying. It used the sound energy to coin words, the verbal

currency that we are using at this moment. So, converting the sound into a word is as significant as any invention in high technology like computerisation or cybernetics. So, the process of naming, identifying and then the process of converting a concrete event or experience into an abstract idea with the help of the word, the building up of ideas, concepts, composing sentences, drawing conclusions, formulating theories - this is what the human race has been doing with itself for millions of years. With the help of the process of naming, identifying we also built up another beautiful aspect of our life - measurements and symbols.

Time is a measurement and we measure life with that. We measure space with the measurements which we have created. We built up measurements. We constructed symbols out of the process of naming and identifying. We have built up the civilisation and the culture of which we are the products. We are the world. We are the content of what we call the world. We cannot separate ourselves from all that. So, with the help of this naming, identifying, mentation and forming concepts and ideas, we built the socioeconomic structures around us.

The idea, the concept of the State, then the mechanism of the Government to run the State and the laws and so forth - all this has been the panorama of modern life. We interact with those structures - the political structure, the economic structure, the social structure. We interact with those theories, dogmas, traditions. This constant interaction goes on between the man - made world and ourselves. Do we call that living?

When we say, we are living, are we implying our interaction with the known in us, interacting with the known outside of us? The knowable in us interacting with the know-

able outside of us? The measurements contained in us with the measurable outside of us? Is that what we call life and living? Because you and I have not personally created the measurements, the symbols, the words, their organised, standardised meanings, the dictionaries, We are not the builders of the structures into which we are born as we are not the creators of the cosmos into which we are born. So, the interaction of concepts with concepts, with ideals, with likes and dislikes, with conclusions, with theories, dogmas and traditions outside of us - is that the essence of what we call living?

Is Death of the Body the Ending of Life?

It is a very important question that we have to ask of ourselves - the validity of the claim that we are living. May be it is an illusion. The life we are acquainted with and the movement of constant interaction that is going on - at the biological level, the psychological level - has nothing of our own. May be they are the external crust of our being, and what we call life and living, have a different connotation altogether. This questioning of the validity of this whole phenomenon that we have been looking at rather elaborately this morning, is very relevant because the body is mortal. It is born and it has to die - like a tree that is born and has to die. May be a tree dies after 500 years and the body of a human being dies after 100 years, after 80 years, 70 years, but it has to die. There is an ending of the physical existence which is irreversible. All the psycho-physical energies which were moving, projecting themselves, creating the illusion of interaction, they will cease to move one day, one hour, one minute. So does life die with it? Or, is there some content in life that death cannot touch? Death implies snapping away of all enclosures, snapping away of all claims of ownership, of possession, snapping away of

the sensations of 'I' and 'Me', 'I' and 'Thou', 'I' and 'You'. Death snaps away all that.

If the psycho-physical movements are the content of living and life, then we will have to presume that life dies. There are schools of philosophy in India as well as in Europe which talk of Nihilism. They look upon death as the ending of life. But you have asked the question, 'Is it possible to die while we are living?' This question of yours, this theme of yours, indicates something very different. You and I, we together, are asking whether dying while you are living is possible. What does this question indicate? It indicates that there is some energy independent of the psycho-physical process, the repetitive mechanistic process of the mind and the non-rational instinctive processes at the biological level. Apart from this, independent of this, there seems to be some energy which is asking this question. The body cells are not asking the question. The body - the flesh, the bone, the glands, the muscles, the nerves - they are not asking the question. The repetitive mechanistic thought process is not asking the question. It is not asking if 'I' can die. There seems to be some sensitisation and awakening of a new energy or rather an independent energy in all of you which makes you pose this question, knowing full well that the body is to die.

So, one is very happy that there is a group of friends conducting serious inquiries, daring to ask whether dying is possible while we are living. We are laying out the canvas today. We are looking at the implications of the words before we plunge into the probing. So, now what does our theme boil down to? Is it possible to wake up into a state where there is a complete snapping with all psychological enclosures, with all sense of belonging, with the sense of having been attached to, and being dependent upon things

or individuals or situations or circumstances? Can all that be snapped away while the body is living, before the body dies?

Negation of All Identification

Now when we use the words, snapping away of all thought, memory or identifications, are we not implying a kind of total negation, a total negation of all identification, of the sense of belonging and of the sense of security? The body is alive, the non-rational instinctive processes are going on, the cerebral movement of exposing the stuff of memory with every sensual movement is going on. Living in the midst of all that, is death which is the total negation of all sense of identity, is death possible?

Psychological death implies - does it not - an absence of the sense of belonging anywhere, an absence of being enclosed by certain things, an absence of the sense of owning, possessing. So, could negation be the implication of the word death that we want to probe? We are not saying rejection. Rejection is the obverse of acceptance. We are not even using the term 'denial'. Neither denial nor rejection, but negation. We will go into that word tomorrow rather deeply. But we are proposing to find out for ourselves the possibility of the act of total negation - born out of understanding of the nature of psycho - physical organism, the structure, the energies contained in it, the mechanism, the methodology of its working. After having understood all that, is it possible not to belong, not to be of it though we have to be in it? Is it possible to negate all that? Negation without denial and negation without rejection is a tremendous act - the act of dying which we are seeking. We are trying to find out if it is possible.

It seems to me, my friends, that such unconditional, absolute negation could be the content of dying while you are living. Our relationships and our interactions are based upon non-verbalized acceptance of what is. We accept the traditions, we accept the concepts, the ideas, the theories of duality, non-duality, the idea of bondage, the idea of emancipation, the idea of transformation, mutation, and so forth.

We accept some definition of emancipation, transformation, freedom and then we base our inquiry and exploration on that acceptance. We accept the idea of God - one or many - male, female, neuter, and then we seek that defined Godhood. Please do see this. The human species has played this game for millions of years.

So, is it possible to wake up into a state of consciousness negating all the past, all the knowledge, all the experience inherited or cultivated by us? Is it possible to psychologically denude ourselves completely? If we are attached to the known, not only living through it, but if we are attached to it, if we are obsessed with it, if the sense of living itself depends upon the movement of that attachment to the known, then naturally the reaction would be fear. The word death, the word dying provokes fear, a very mute inhibition which makes you shrink inwardly and withdraw psychologically from facing the challenge. Does the word negation, total negation of the past contained in our body and brain, does that also stimulate the inhibition or fear? What remains of us, with us, within us, if at all the act of negation does take place? So, the sensitised intelligence or the sensitised energy that has posed the theme has to ask now of itself, 'What remains in case this is negated?' I need not explain that when we say negation we are negating the authority, the authority of the past, the authority of the cerebral move-

ment of exposing the stuff of memory in the name of thought and thinking, negating the equation that thinking is living, that if there is no thinking, there will be no living.

I hope we are aware that we have equated the act of living with the repetitive mechanical projection of the stuff of memory by the whole sensory system, the neurological system, the chemical system. We have equated living with that. Do we dare to negate that authority, and are we willing to see what happens in that act of negation?

I think, this introduction of the way we are going to inquire, we are going to probe and explore, should be sufficient for this morning.

Fear of Psychological Death

Let us keep the word dying aside for some time, because everybody has some inhibition about the word dying and death, even the death of the ego. Last September we were at Dalhousie. There were friends from many countries - from Africa, from U.S.A., from Europe, and there were two psychologists from Germany. The couple had come for the first time. We had never met before. There were also some friends from Australia and other countries. So, one day, the couple, who are both Doctors -perhaps at Frankfurt University - came to see me. I could see that they were nervous. They said, "Madam, what will happen if the ego dies, what will happen if the me, the self dies?" The lady was in tears because she had heard it. They had come from Madras, and they had been to Varanasi. That was their first visit. But they had read books on Indian philosophy. So they said, "Madam, what will happen to us if the ego dies? Why do the Indian people talk about the death of the ego, the self, the me? How will we know what happens to

us? There will be no possibility of experiencing anything” and so on. I said, “Do the words ‘dying’ and ‘death’ frighten you? Or is the fear based on some imagination?” No, no. Why do they talk of dying and death?” I said, “Okay, let us brush aside the words.” You know how we are addicted to words. The very word death stimulated fear and inhibition in them, because they have been busy and they are busy with adjusting the ego with the social structures correcting the imbalances of the ‘me’ and the ‘I’ and enabling the ego to fit into the socioeconomic structures. They have been busy with that. That is the way the psychoanalyst, the psychiatrist, helps the person suffering from chronic mental imbalances. So, we had long sessions for a couple of days.

So this morning I am trying to request all of us, let us keep the word dying aside, if there is fear. One should be reconciled to the fact of death, the fact of dying as an inevitable part of birth. Birth is the beginning of death and who knows, death may be the beginning of birth.

Is the ‘I’ a Fact or a Concept?

Let me conclude this morning’s conversation by saying that you cannot negate a fact. You can negate an idea, a concept. So, the ‘me’, the ‘self’, the ‘ego’—has it any factual content or has it only conceptual and ideational content? That is the question we will have to take up. Has the process of naming and identifying induced an illusion that within the body there is a subtle entity called the ‘I’, the ‘Me’, having some permanent time bound continuity? Can the movement of knowledge flow through your body without creating a knower and the movement of thought without creating a thinker? Are we identifying ourselves with that movement and calling ourselves the ‘I’, the ‘Me’ and

'Mine'? Please do see this. When you breathe in and breathe out, the vital Prana travels through your body and with exhalation it is out of the body. It does not belong to you. It travels through the cavities in the body, oxidises the body and goes out. In the same way, does the knowledge flow through you, energising, vitalising you, get activated in relation to challenges and end there? These are some very pertinent, very relevant questions we have to ask ourselves. So, when we meet again, may we explore if what you call the 'I', the 'Me' has a factual content or only a conceptual content?

The fact of this body cannot be negated, cannot be denied. It is there, you touch it, you see it, you hear the sound produced by it. Fact can neither be rejected nor negated. The idea, the concept, that which is put together by coining words and putting them in order, that verbal arrangement, that mental arrangement, that organised information is knowledge. There is nothing sacred about knowledge. Verbal knowledge is put together, like you construct bridges and buildings. Theories get built up, they can be demolished.

So, with your help and co-operation it will be necessary to probe whether the 'Me', the 'I' has any factual existence to which one has to die, or is the phrase 'death of the ego', 'death of the 'Me', the self' a figurative way, a code language implying something very significant which is nothing to be afraid of. So here the morning session gets concluded.

Mount Abu,
14, November, 1994

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Questioner : Let me see if we have understood the question properly. Though we know that the physical body is to stop functioning sometime, some day, in some way, we cannot accept it and therefore the word 'death' or 'dying' stimulates a kind of fear. There is another variety of fear and that fear is about the possibility of losing one's identity. Meditation or mutation might cause the complete unconditional liquidation of the identity. So the words mutation and meditation are pleasing on the one hand, very attractive on one the hand and yet on the other hand the very idea of the loss of one's identity generates a kind of fear. How do we go about setting ourselves free of it? Is that it? (yes).

Vimalaji : In our morning communication today we had seen that acceptance or rejection is not very relevant to the act of living. When we not only know but we see around us everyday that a creature that is born in time and space with a biological structure, some day enters into a state of total discontinuity of its movement and ending of its functional powers, then we call it death, we call it dying.

It is not a question of knowing intellectually or theoretically. We witness it. So it is not a question of accepting or not accepting death. It is a question of reconciling to the fact of death as a part of life. And we are reluctant to reconcile to the fact. Please do see. It is not a question of accepting death or rejecting death. It is a meaningless term. But we resist it, we are reluctant to reconcile to it. What does reconciling imply? It implies, does it not, that one should not be attached emotionally, depend emotionally upon the things that one uses everyday, the persons with whom one lives in the family or with whom one works at the office. One should be intellectually and emotionally equipped to meet the challenge

of irreversible separation with objects, with individuals, with circumstances. It is the attachment which provokes the illusion of indispensability. You feel that a certain person is indispensable to me or I am indispensable to my family, to my company, the business in which I work, the factory which I possess and so on. So, attachment provokes the idea of indispensability. I wonder if you have noticed that no one is indispensable to anyone else. The separation may cause suffering or misery — short-term or long-term. That is a different question, but no one is indispensable, nothing is indispensable. It is the attachment that stimulates the idea of indispensability.

So, one would like to tackle the fear of death which, in other words, is emotional resistance to the fact and reluctance to meet the fact as it appears before you. In order to equip yourself to meet the fact or reconcile to it, may be it is desirable that we learn to live with our bodies, the members of our family, the objects that we use, without getting attached or addicted to them. Have you not seen how life is a flux of change? Everything changes. A child is born. See the one day old child and see the child after a month or a year. See the changes which have taken place. Have you not noticed changes taking place in your own body? Have you not seen yourself as a child, as a young boy, as a handsome youth, as a mature adult proceeding towards the lovely consummation of maturity which is old age? Have you not seen the physical changes, the metabolic changes, the changes in your psychological attitudes, even in the terminology that you use, in your tastes of food, clothing, surroundings? As things change in your body, changes are also taking place around you. We are in the midst of change. There will not be addiction or attachment unless we harbour the idea of permanence and have an expectation that our relationship should be permanent, that it should have a

continuity, undisturbed continuity. Is not that the meaning of permanence? So this idea of permanency leads you towards attaching yourself to objects and individuals.

Those of you who might have travelled abroad, might have noticed that people in the West, men and women, are afraid of old age. They like to believe that their bodies are young. They would not like to show to the people any sign of maturity. Old age disturbs them emotionally and there are crises at the age of 40 or 60 and so on. People are afraid of change. Please do see with me. Will there be any fear if we understand the beauty of change? And you will excuse me, if I would say the beauty of natural death, the natural ending of that which had begun in time. Not the ending through your accidents in cities and towns, and not through the inhuman speed of living, the inhuman stress and strain through which the body has to pass with the brain and body over-exhausted in chronic fatigue and exhaustion. Deaths caused by stress and strain, by accidents or sheer fatigue, by over-exhaustion of the whole psycho-physical organism have an ugliness about them. But if a person lives naturally, spontaneously, responding to challenges as they come, not creating expectation which is a psychic want. Like psychological wants, we create psychic wants. The physical body has needs. The mind creates wants and sophisticated consciousness creates expectations of something that will happen after death, expectations about the other world. They build up an idea of immortality, permanency, eternity and so on.

So it seems to me that there has to be a total unconditional negation of the theories about death, theories about what happens after death, total negation of definitions of eternity and immortality. If the brain is loaded with those words and with the association of emotions attached to those

words, then obviously it is going to create a chemical disturbance. Emotion is a disturbance in the chemical equanimity of the body. A thought is a disturbance in the chemical equanimity of the body. A thought is a disturbance in the neurological system. It is a disturbance in the equilibrium. It creates tension. So, fear as a chemical disturbance aroused by the words and traditional associations accompanying the words could be eliminated when the consciousness is set free of the authority of those words. The words are lying in our body. The words are imprinted. This morning we had seen it rather clearly that the stuff contained in the brain cells, in the body cells is the memory. The knowledge, the experience of the total human race, is condensed in each human body as memory, and it goes on projecting itself whenever the body comes into a sensual contact with an object or with a word and so on.

So, the words lying inside the imprint, right up to the marrow of the bones cannot be destroyed. It is the authority appropriated to them, authority invested in them which can come to an end. Understanding eliminates the authority imposed by us upon words and ideas. It cannot destroy the past. The flesh, the bone, the plasma — they contain the past. So, ending the authority of the words and ideas or concepts represented by them could be one way of getting free of that resistance or reluctance to that which is called physical death. Obviously, it is not a pleasant idea. But pleasure or pain, agreeable or disagreeable, are sensual reactions — nothing more than that. So, it may not be a pleasant idea. Why should we always have pleasant ideas? The idea may have a bitterness about it. It may have a sharpness about it. Life consists of the sharpness, the penetration, the sweetness, the tenderness, the harshness. It is an organic wholeness containing all this. So you cannot handle fear and cultivate bravery as an opposite of fear. Brav-

ery is an attitude. So if you want to replace one attitude or one inhibition by bringing in another inhibition or attitude, that also can become a problem. So, eliminating fear is not a question of destroying it, replacing it, counteracting it. But it seems to be a question of meeting life as it is.

It is no use wishing that there should be no change. It is no use wanting to have a continuity, because time has no reality. Continuity, sequence, are all ideas useful for interacting with the socioeconomic structures, dealing with objects on the physical level. But realistically speaking there is no time. Time is a measurement invented by mankind. It is very useful as a mental currency to be used. Measurement has a relevance. But measurement does not mean that life is conditioned by that measurement. Unless you presume that psychological time has a factual content, you cannot impose or supergraft continuity or sequence or permanency on that. So meeting the reality of timelessness, meeting the reality that there is no continuity or sequence, one has to live in the timelessness and live with the changes that take place. Perhaps that understanding will eliminate this inhibition and enable us to reconcile to the ending of physical life some day, some where, some way.

Now the second aspect of the question was loss of identity — the ego-death causing loss of identity. What do we mean by identity? Are we referring to the image of a personality which one has to develop for living in society? You acquire verbal knowledge, you transfer the words printed on paper to the brain in the name of education. You feed in organised information into the brain so that you can interact with the socio-economic-political structures and earn a livelihood. That develops a personality — the personality of a Doctor, of an Engineer, of a businessman, of an industrialist, of a teacher, and so on. So are you refer-

ring to the personality, the talents that the personality has? Those talents, that “education” does not get destroyed by mutation or meditation. The personality cultivated systematically, developed, utilised, remains there, because it is an instrument for interacting with the society in which we live. The only thing that perhaps takes place is the disappearance of the illusion that within the body there is a subtle entity. The body has a name, the body has qualities including the brain. The conditioning fed into the brain have a quality, a cultural sophistication. That does not mean that there is an entity having an identity. The me, the self, the ego—all these words do not indicate the existence of an inner subtle entity within the body. But we have been told century after century that there is a Jivatma, there is a Super Self, there is the Atma and there is a Jivatma and so on. We have been told about it. We have read about it. We have heard about it. So we are convinced beyond doubt that the ‘me’ is an entity within the body.

I do hope that all of us sitting in this room are aware that what we call the mind is nothing but amalgamated, organised, standardised conditioning. It is a global human activity that has been going on for untold centuries. The conditionings have their own momentum. There is nothing like an individual mind having its own identity or entity. There is an individual expression, the expression through the individual of the global, of the collective and the individual has its own idiosyncrasies — temperamental, constitutional. So, expressions may differ with five individuals born and brought up in one and the same family. There may be differences. Expressions have innumerable varieties. But that which has gone into the human consciousness is something collective, something global. The sound energy is converted into words. Words are put together grammatically, linguistically, semantically. There is the formation of ideas, deriving con-

clusions from them, putting them up as theory and so on. It is a collective, organised, standardised activity. So, where is the question of a loss of identity when there is no individual mind or ego? The ego is a word. It is a concept. It is a monitoring agency, a verbal monitoring agency. The brain is the monitor of the nervous system in the body. Similarly at the verbal level the word 'I', the word 'Me', the word 'You' monitor and Coordinate verbal communication. So, there is no loss of personality. May be only the odour of vanity or pride would disappear and there would be a radically new tenderness of humility about the person. Along with the qualifications, along with the talents, the equipment, there may be the flavour of humility added to it. As there is no entity, there is no question of losing identity.

May I put in one more word before we proceed to the second question? When the authority of the past is totally negated, that action of negation, as one has seen in one's life, is one of the most creative actions a human being can be capable of. It appears to be ending the authority of the past, but in that very action of negating the authority, the new comes to life. A new energy which is not a part of inheritance, which is not a part of our acquisition, conscious acquisition or conscious cultivation, a kind of unconditioned energy, a virgin energy comes to life. The ending of the old and the emergence of the new are not two different events. If the ending is the bud, then the emergence of the new is the flower—flowering of the negation. They are not two different, two separate events — one contains the other. So, in the act of negating the authority of the total human past, the creative energy engaged in the negation brings forth a new dimension along with it. So one is not rendered helpless. One may be vulnerable but not helpless. One is not left in the ditch of loneliness. There is the serenity of aloneness but there is not the helplessness of loneliness.

Every pore of the being, every fibre of the texture of your personality gets filled with a new clarity, a new light, a new perception and understanding. So there does not seem to be the possibility of loss in any manner.

The conditioned mind is used to calculation, is used to preparing the blue print, is used to having a timetable. It calculates — this is the cause, that is the effect, that is the time between the cause growing into the effect. So it prepares the methodology, the duration, the timetable. We work it out. So, the conditioned mind wants to have a blue print that this is the negation, this is the dying of the ego and then there is the expectation that immediately, instantaneously or after a few minutes or few days that will happen. It wants an assurance, if not a guarantee. It wants an assurance in advance. Then on that condition it may negate the authority. Authority is the security. We have vested the sense of security in that authority.

So handling of fear is related to handling of the past. Freedom from fear, freedom from the inner resistance and reluctance is related to the authority by which we live. One does not want to be alone with cosmic Life. One wants to have safeguards. One wants to have someone to hold us by the hand and to take us step by step. May I say, one wants to be with the known, in the known, with assurances of the knowable. But my friends, life and living are a mystery. They are a romance with the unknowable, the immeasurable, the unnameable. The known and the knowable are a tiny bit of the organic wholeness of Life. Questioner : First of all, Didi, I would like to clarify that the two groups were not of youngsters and elders. They were of first-timers and repeaters. So, in the second group there were interesting discussions and there are two questions. One question has some sub-questions and the other question is

independent of the first one. In the morning talk, two observations were made : Freedom dawns in the heart, Truth penetrates the brain. So, in this context, are Freedom and Truth synonymous? If not, do the events take place simultaneously or sequentially?

Another sub-question is : Kindly explain what is meant by Heart.

And the second question is : What is meant by sensitised energy, because you mentioned that the theme has been suggested by sensitised energy of the Bombay group. So we would like to understand what is sensitised energy.

Vimalaji : Freedom is the perfume of Truth. So, in a way they could be called synonymous. The communion with Truth comes about through understanding what the words indicate. The words are like signboards. So, the Truth indicated by the words, contained in or concealed behind the words, is figuratively perceived by the understanding. The act of understanding is an act of perception. It is a perceptive sensitivity which sees the Truth indicated by the word. It sees very clearly that the word is not the thing. So through that perceptive sensitivity there comes about a communion with the Truth penetrating through the fact. A fact is something which comes about through sensual contact resulting in a sensation, getting converted into an electromagnetic impulse in the body. This is applicable to the whole human race, verifiable by the whole human race. When we say, the sun is a fact, the moon is a fact, we are talking about relative facts. They are verifiable. So, facts are verifiable at the sensual level, whereas the Truth resulting from the perception of what is indicated by the word depends upon the receptacle. Ten persons may be sitting in a room and a word or a sentence may be uttered. The dictionary mean-

ing is perhaps known to all the ten and yet the sensitised energy, the sensitivity, call it Intelligence, if you like tentatively, sees the Truth. That is why I said Truth penetrates the brain. Freedom is felt, Truth is perceived. The feeling part is connected with the chemical system. Your friend or your beloved or your mother touches you. Now the touch of a human hand to another human body is the fact. But the sensitivity appreciates the touch of the beloved, the mother, the friend, the son. It is felt. It is a kind of feeling and that feeling is experienced at the chemical level. Heart is symbolically the monitor of the chemical system, as the brain is the monitor of the neurological system. So, I might have said that Freedom dawns upon the heart. It is felt and when you get charged with that inner Freedom, you may not be conscious of it. But the inner Freedom brings about a change in the texture of your relationship with others and your dear ones or near ones notice a change in your glances, in your words, in your deeds. They realise that the inhibitions are dropped. A perfume, a tenderness, which is called love, is there. So, one might have said this morning that Truth penetrates the brain and Freedom dawns upon the heart. It can be expressed in other words also, but may be, this morning those words came to me. Not as a theory, just as a sharing, I might have expressed them.

Sequentiality of Freedom and Truth : It is very difficult to make a generalised statement about it. Human beings have different temperamental make-up. In some, reason and rationality are predominant. There are also different principles like Satva, Rajas, Tamas or Vaat, Pitta, Kapha. So different principles dominate in different persons and they are highlighted in their temperamental make-up. So, in those who are predominantly rational minded, reason predominating their being, the perception of Truth precedes the feeling of Freedom. But there are others also, specially in

this subcontinent, this India, this land of saints, who have sung and chanted and brought the Truth to the people, the illiterate people, through their devotional songs and dances and chantings. In this land, one has noticed that there are people who are dominated by the heart. They have a very refined chemical system. The man of knowledge may not have a refined chemical system and may not have the warmth of feelings in him. And a person of emotional richness, refinement may not have a very sophisticated brain or a brilliant brain. It is a question of predomination. So, in emotionally dominated make-ups of temperament, Freedom is felt first and as a corollary to the inner sense of Freedom, Truth is understood. So it depends upon the person in whom the sacred event of penetration of Truth or the dawning of Freedom occurs. They can be sequential, but both are the cause of each other and both can be called the effect of each other.

Questioner : What is meant by sensitised energy?

Vimalaji : I hope, my perception is correct. In the 20th Century a remarkably unique person called J.Krishnamurti visited the planet. He ploughed the human consciousness through most of the continents, through his discourses, dialogues, discussions, group-meetings, and his educational institutions. That work went on for more than half a century. Those who have been privileged, those who have come into contact with that consciousness, with that presence, with that personality, they have heard the voice of sanity and clarity, about a non-authoritative approach to spiritual inquiry, elimination of credulity and beliefs from the field of inquiry and exploration, education as the way of causing psychic mutation and so on. He has enlightened the human consciousness about what mind is, what Freedom implies, what is not love and so on. So, I thought and

I do think that the people whom I affectionately call the group coming from Bombay, seem to have exposed themselves to Krishnamurti's books and teachings for a considerable time. So, when you rub your consciousness against that voice of clarity and sanity, you rub your pride, your vanity against that crystal clear communication in flawless logic and poetic diction, something takes place. You may go there with a motivation of achieving Nirvana or liberation or whatever but all those motivations become irrelevant to the act of listening. So, due to such rubbing of confusion against clarity, indecision against certainty, callousness, casualness against the accuracy and precision of love and compassion the unconditioned energies in the person get sensitised. The questions or the theme that you bring up here and we discuss - as we discussed last year, year before the last, and now we are discussing here, if other people in India are not exposed to the teachings or communications of Krishnamurti, hear the theme, I wonder, if they would make any sense out of it. So, it is the sensitised energy which could be called flashes of Intelligence, touch and go. The energy of Intelligence is touched and it formulates the question, verbalised by the conditioned mind. Yet it has the touch of that Intelligence which is the sensitised unconditional energy contained in all of us. So, blessed are they who have been exposed to the teachings of Krishnamurti. If the sensitivity had not been energised, if the sensitivity had not become eloquent, if the flash of Intelligence had not touched the conditioned mind, how would you pose the theme of dying while you are living? To allow the event of psychological death to occur while you are quite healthy physically and also quite balanced psychologically, is not an aberration. Here I was referring to the friends coming from Bombay, but this is what one has also perceived in Australia, in Newzealand, in Japan, in South America, in North America, in Europe. May be they are a few thousand, but

they have taken the teachings seriously and they make an effort to understand it. They work hard upon themselves. They have the privilege of having that sensitised energy occasionally, frequently illumining or illuminating their enclosed conditioned minds.

It was perhaps in 1868 or 1870 that Madame Blavatsky had talked about the emergence of a new human race. So this new human race does not imply that the human beings will look different or they will have more sense organs than we have, but it refers to the quality of consciousness. The existential essence of the human beings is consciousness. So, the quality of consciousness will be new. So bringing out the old and bringing in the new at the level of perception, at the level of understanding, at the level of action — that is the way a new human race will emerge.

Mount Abu
14 November, 1994

QUESTIONING THE AUTHORITY OF THE CONDITIONED PAST

The Twentieth Century which is coming to an end has been one of the most turbulent and violent Centuries of human history. There have been a number of revolutionary discoveries and events in this Century, perhaps in every field of social, collective and individual life. The Century has seen two World Wars. The Century has seen the militancy of the State being counteracted by stray and organised insurgency of the terrorists. It has seen the rise and fall of the Communist Empire. It has seen the building-up of the Communist Empire and the dismantling of it. It has seen even the demolition of many Marxist theories and Lenin's theories. The Century is seeing the decay of consumerist capitalism. It has seen very drastic discoveries and changes in theories about physics, right from the Big Bang theory to the latest theory of creation being an explosion of condensed emptiness. It has seen revolutionary changes in the field of psychology. The Libido theory of Freud has been discarded. People are working upon the racial unconscious theory of Jung in the Jungian Research Institute in Zurich. In the field of Economics also there have been very fundamental changes. We have seen the ending of the Apartheid theory and the ending of the undemocratic Government in South Africa. We have seen the unification of the two Germanies. We have seen the extraordinary struggle that is going on in the Middle East and countries like Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia and so on.

In every field of life people are questioning the validity of traditional ways of living, traditional patterns of conditioning, theories and dogmas in the name of religion, spirituality. Everywhere questioning is going on. As far as the speaker is concerned, living in Twentieth Century has been an extremely thrilling and fulfilling experience surrounded

by challenges, sacred challenges everywhere. So, when we question the validity of accepting the authority of thought, we are responding to the changes that are taking place even in the Science of Psychology.

Inquiry about Dying to the Past

People have looked upon the mind as an individual property. The ego was an unquestioned authority. Psychologists were busy equipping the ego to fit into the social structures, disciplining it, controlling it and so on. Now they find in the last part of the Twentieth Century that an individual mind is a myth. It is a myth to be discarded. It is a psychological superstition which has to be discarded.

So a few of us who have gathered in this room here, are probing together how the authority of the past can be discarded. Can the movement of the conditioned mind discontinue itself on its own, of its own? The few moments that I have spent in spreading the global canvas before you, were motivated by the desire to share with you that this inquiry about dying to the mind, dying to the past while one is living, is not a self centred, petty inquiry. It is not born out of some personal ambition for Nirvana or emancipation or liberation. We are doing it on behalf of the whole human race. We cannot live in isolation.

If the technological, the economic, the political, and the scientific discoveries affect our lifestyle and have a deep impact upon our economic and political relationships, the questioning, the probing that is going on in the field of psychology, cannot be ignored.

The question of meditation or the unconditional free-

dom of consciousness is not a personal question. It has an impersonal global content and that is why this inquiry does not become a luxury of the privileged few, who do not have to worry about two meals a day. It is not an emotional entertainment or an intellectual provocation for the leisured class. Psychologically speaking it is a question of life and death. So let us look at it this morning very patiently and go together step by step.

Mind Games and Peripheral Changes

A sensitive and alert human being first indulges in the pleasures of the senses. With a little verbal, theoretical academic education, the field of pleasure changes from the physical, to the biological, to the psychological. The pleasure of knowledge, the pleasure of experiences, the pleasure of erudition, of scholarship attract us and we spend our energies, we focus our energies on these pleasures. When we see the limitations of psychological pleasures, we turn to the occult, the transcendental, the extrasensory. We try to acquire, practice and cultivate techniques and methods through Tantra, Mantra, Hath Yoga and so on for transcendental experiences, occult experiences. As the verbal knowledge, as the academic knowledge gives a polish to the brain, to speech and brings about some minor peripheral changes on the level of consciousness, this dabbling in the field of the occult and in the field of extrasensory perceptions and transcendental experiences also brings about some polish and some improvement, some changes on the peripheral level. Changes occur in the ways of behaviour, in the ways of verbal expression and because the transcendental exercises also awaken the latent and dormant energies in the body, it gives one a sense of power.

People learn to control, even to suppress their emotions. They try to sublimate the thought structure. They play very many mind games and that gives them temporary gratification, but very soon they discover that these changes are on the circumference. They are only peripheral changes, external changes. The verbal is also external. These changes do not cause a qualitative change in the inner being.

The powers of the mind are increased. The brain is sharpened, sophisticated. Memory is enriched with the spoken or the written words of the human race and yet at the core of our being we remain the same person - violent, lustful, greedy, charitable, petty. It does not end the inner suffering, the misery of pride, of vanity, of fear, of aggression. So one says to oneself, "These practices of suppression or sublimation, indulgence or denial do not take us very far. So let us turn to something else". Then one begins to sit down in silence - either chant Mantras or sing devotional songs or concentrate on some idol. We spend our time beautifully for an hour or a couple of hours and that practice, that withdrawing from the action field, pacifies the tortured nerves, soothes them to some extent. That quietness, that steadiness gives one a kind of pleasure which is different from the gratification through indulgence or suppression. So one feels, "Ah! There it is. Now I have experienced silence. I have experienced peace. I have known what is relaxation for those couple of hours". But then, one is back into the movement of relationships and one finds that gone is the peace. An incident which does not please me, which is felt unpleasant, disturbs me. A few words or gestures by some other person irritate me, annoy me, disturb me. If my work, my actions do not bring about the anticipated or calculated results, then I begin to worry. Anxiety, neurosis, worrying, brooding - all those recur.

Peace for two hours, relaxation for two hours and back again into the field of tension, inner conflicts, contradictions, inconsistencies and so on. So, gradually one notices that in the name of Sadhana, spiritual self-education, one is developing a divided personality. Seeking pleasure through those two hours of Japam, Tapam, concentration or silence or period of observation etc., non-reactional observation for a couple of hours and then 15 or 16 hours of conflict, contradiction and tension. There is a division in the personality. It is very important to notice this mild schizophrenia that is developed. Unless it is counteracted, unless one is careful to see that this division does not crystallize into a split. One can develop a hypocritical personality. One can pretend to oneself that one is religious, that one is spiritual. I am not yet talking about the world. I am talking about ourselves. We can cheat ourselves, we can pretend to ourselves. So, the division can crystallize into a split, and the mild schizophrenia can develop into acute neurosis.

My friends, the speaker has travelled for 40 years in very many continents of the world and with great sadness has seen schizophrenic persons who are called religious persons, spiritual persons. Their split gets justified in the name of religion, in the name of tradition. So, what does one do? Why is it that the authority of the past comes back, the burden of knowledge imprisons us, the traditional pattern of reaction enslaves us, or the association and standardized meanings of the words compel us to behave in certain ways? So, two hours or four hours of withdrawal into certain practices is not the solution.

One is inquiring how to be whole, how to retain the organic wholeness of our life, to remain a whole human being, not fragmented as an economic man, a political man,

a family man, a business man and develop various sets of values incompatible with one another. The codes of conduct and those sets of values filled in the bag of flesh and bone carrying that burden, surely, all that is not life and all that is not living. So this fragmentation, these divisions, these splits, have to be ended.

Repetitive Mental Movement

Religion is the ending of psychological misery and suffering. Spirituality as the science of consciousness, implies the ending of all fragmentation, all splits, all contradictions. So, if the practices, the techniques, the methods and periodical withdrawals do not provide any solution, what do we do with ourselves? You see, why the question of dying to the mind has come up? The Twentieth Century inventions and discoveries have shown us how the mental movement is a mechanistic movement. We are living with computers, electronic brains that can receive information, that can retain information, that can play around with the permutations, combinations of the data, that can reproduce it. So, the memory, very rich memory, does not surprise us any more. The cerebral function of receiving, interpreting, retaining, reproducing does not surprise us as it used to surprise the people in the 19th Century. The erudition, the scholarship, no more create an attitude of tremendous respect. We have seen that all these movements are mechanistic and when the information, the organised information, which is knowledge, is fed into our system, as it is fed into a computer and electronic brain, it conditions us. The 20th century has shown us that the stuff of consciousness is knowledge, thought, experience of the total human race, and it does condition us. So, we have seen the limitations of knowledge and we have seen the mechanistic repetitive nature of the cerebral movement, of the mental movement and we

have realized that there is no freedom as long as we live by the repetitive, the mechanistic movement of pleasure, pain, sorrow, momentary joy, honour, humiliation, prestige and so on. As long as we move through these repetitive mechanistic movements for 40, 50, 60 years, as long as we continue the repetitive movements in terms of economy or politics or we continue them in the name of religion and spirituality, repeating the so called sacred words, till that time there is no freedom.

Dealing with the Momentum of the Past

In every human heart there is an aspiration for unconditional freedom, uncluttered by the movement of the past and unfettered by the conditionings of the past. This aspiration for unconditional freedom has not to be taught. It does not come through books. Perhaps the non-human and human species are born with it. The aspiration for perfection, the aspiration for purity, the aspiration for beauty, the aspiration for freedom — they are all non-rational, non-cerebral content of our being. So, that content impels us, obliges us to ask of ourselves if the physical is limited by the biological laws of nature and if the psychological is limited and conditioned by knowledge, experience of the past then where is freedom? Is there freedom at all? Or is it a psychic Utopia? Is there anything called Satori, Nirvana, emancipation, Moksha or are they only empty word-shells without pearls? That is the question that comes up in the life of every intelligent, every sensible, every alert person even if he does not read any religious books or scriptures. These questions haunt you when you are tortured by the repetitive movement of the mind. One sees very clearly that the movement of the mind in any direction whatsoever— whether of indulging without any restrictions or suppressing or sublimating - any mental movement in any form, any

experience, at any level, conditions us, limits us. So, is there a way of probing and exploring where the activity of knowing and experiencing is not involved? Please do see with me.

If an exploration which would be non-cerebral, non-neuro-chemical has to take place, then what does one do with the velocity, the momentum of thousands of years contained in one's body? We have to analyse the challenge before we try to find its solution. May be, the analysis of the challenge contains the answer or the solution. We have to probe, we have to dig deep into it.

Now when we thus question ourselves, if it is possible to let the momentum of thousands of years fed into our whole being to discontinue itself, how can we go about it? The human-being is a multidimensional being and a very complex being. The complexity of human life is the real mystery. There is a wholeness, an organic wholeness in the contents. It is extremely complex. So it is a beautiful challenge that one is faced with. To live on the physical level having to deal with finite world and the socioeconomic structures which are the content of society and social life, one has to use knowledge, the experience of the past.

One cannot escape from the responsibility of utilising the past contained in our being. We cannot discard and throw away the heritage, the human civilisation, the human culture, the naming, the identifying, the comparing, the evaluating. The marvellous complexity of the civilisation and culture, is not to be thrown out of the window. It has to be used. So, at the physical level, the functional memory, the utilization of the thought structure is not only an inevitable thing, but it is something desirable also. Energy is contained in the physical and the psychological being. We are

the products of the past. You cannot run away from the existential essence of the being. So on one level, the thought, the knowledge, the past is to be used without getting addicted to it, without being obsessed with it, without creating an authority out of it. Now, why should we not create an authority out of it? What happens if the authority is created? Let us look at that.

Authority and its Consequences: The whole earth, the planet is a vast territory spacewise, and very many specimens of human race inhabit this planet. So, the conditionings have taken place regionwise, climatewise, flora and faunawise - conditionings in diet, conditionings in clothing, conditionings in physical and psychological patterns of behaviour, conditionings in the reaction patterns. They are a great variety. The global human community is a garden of so many designs of conditionings - the Hindu, the Muslim, the Christian, the Jewish, the Buddhist, the Jain, the Sikh, the tribal and so on. It is a vast garden with very many perfumes, very many flavours.

Now, if I create an authority out of the Hindu conditionings, the Brahminical conditionings, the Indian conditionings and all the people living in India create that collective sense of authority, the sense of authority will isolate me from you. The Hindu is isolated from the Muslim because he has also created an authority about the design of his conditionings. The Catholic Christian has his authority isolating him even from the Protestants, the Presbyterians, the Unitarians, the Methodists and so on. Authority exists even within the Buddhists, among the followers of the Mahayana, the Hinayana and the Therawada. Similarly it exists among the Swetambaras and the Digambaras in the Jain community.

You see, the moment you create a sense of authority, it is accompanied by a sense of superiority. Authority isolates you. You become a prisoner. Authority can lead you to an obsessive attachment to your pattern of behaviour, your code of conduct, your set of values and then begins the comparison, then begins the sense of superiority and inferiority. Such screens divide us. They do not allow us to relate to one another. Science and technology have created a compulsion that we share the globe, we share the planet. Now suppose I do not create a sense of authority. Then shall I be selective and select some conditionings and reject others? The Twentieth Century has played around with that also. Beautiful names have been given to that attitude, but we have no time for elaboration on that point. This artificially manipulated intellectual conviction that all religions are equal and therefore we have to live together and other similar attitudes do not take you very far. They can create a formal appearance of sharing life but within, you are divided, very much convinced of superiority of your way, your values and so on. That inner division, that inner sense of authority, that inner isolation which damages the very act of relationship, has to end.

Functional Memory and Psychological Memory

So, we have the responsibility of retaining functional memory, the functional use of the thought-structure, as we are doing now. We are using words from the English language. Both of us - the listener and the speaker - are using the past. With the dictionaries as reference books, we agree presumably on the meanings of the words. Therefore, a dialogue or communication can take place. So, we are using the thought structure. We are using memory. There is nothing wrong in using them. They do not do any damage. A mountain is called a mountain and the river is called a

river, an ocean an ocean and so on. But coming to psychological relationships, I retain the memory. This is 'my' life, this is 'my' husband. We are married and there is a relationship of ownership and possession. So as soon as I see my husband or wife, the word 'husband' or 'wife' or the 'son', the 'daughter' not only awaken, but activate the sense of owning, possessing. I feel I am morally entitled to dominate over my husband or wife, to possess my children and try to build up carbon copies, 'my' carbon copies, out of my children. My friend - he or she - should not turn to another and so on.

In psychological relationships, the memory of words inhibits us from looking at the person. Then you cannot look at them, at your husband or wife, as human beings. You cannot listen to the other person. He is or she is the client and I am the lawyer, the businessman, the consumer, the producer, the middleman. Then memory creates a sense of being entitled to utilise ownership and possession. Then I exercise that possessiveness. In business, in industry, I very skilfully pay loyalty to the theories of profit & loss. I want to gain more and more profit - not for a livelihood, but because earning more and more is a sign of prestige. I must own a greater and greater bank balance. So the economic job or profession, not only in industry, but even the work as a teacher or as a representative of the people in the legislature, does not remain at the level of earning a livelihood. It gets converted into grabbing by anyway and every way money for the sake of money, for the sake of pleasure. You see, how the words and the psychological memory damage the quality of consciousness. After all, money is to be earned for a livelihood at a decent level, a reasonably comfortable level. But today you cannot talk of earning a livelihood. You must talk of grabbing money and earn the money by hook or crook. Then

you say there is corruption and you appoint anti-corruption committees and so on. A ridiculous game that the human race is pathetically playing with itself! It is a heart - rending pathetic game of self-deception - individual and collective.

So, we ask, can the authority of the past, the authority of the thought-structure, the authority of the idea of the me and the not-me and decorating the me either with money or knowledge or prestige, be discarded at the psychological level and used at the physical level? It is a complex responsibility. You cannot run away from the emotional part of your being, by drying out all the emotions in the name of purity or celibacy or for any such other reason. You will then be depriving human life of its wealth of warmth and tenderness. You cannot run away from rationality and lapse back into the primitivity of beliefs and credulity. In the same way, you cannot run away, you cannot escape from the responsibility of using thought and knowledge at one level and not allowing them to function at the psychological level, much less at the trans-psychological level.

What is the trans-psychological level? Our relationship with the self-generated cosmic life, the self—propelled, the self-regulated cosmic phenomenon, the multi-universal life, interacting among dozens of solar and inter-planetary systems. So, when we have to discover our organic relationship, the nature of our relationship with that self-generated cosmic life, if we are burdened with words, if we are burdened with traditions, then we will try to measure that Divinity or that self-generated phenomenon of cosmic Life. We will try to measure it with our own words. We will try to measure it as either oneness and manyness. We will consider whether to call it Brahman or Ishwara, God or Allah. We will try to measure whether it is formless or with form. Our perceptions reflect our inner limitations but we will im-

pose them on that cosmic Life.

So, it becomes very necessary to set ourselves free of the authority of all measurements, symbols and words at the level of enquiry and exploration, just as we have to be free of those associations at the psychological level. Otherwise, we will never be able to look at each other out of inner space. Your words and memory of yesterday, either of praise and flattery, or of criticism and condemnation, will come in between you and me. We will be reacting according to yesterday's behaviour. There is no end to human misery and suffering if our relationships are governed, propelled, modulated and controlled by memories.

Using the Past Objectively

So, is it possible to utilise the past objectively, knowing its limitations, knowing its conditioned nature? Is it possible to use the past at the biological level, at the physical level, at the social level when we have to deal with man-made structures, man-made institutions and so on? If we are not attached, if we are not addicted to the past, then a beautiful self-restraint comes about, without abstinence, without insistence, without any dogmatic attitude. It is only the addiction that creates an inner imbalance and, my friends, imbalance is an impurity. Every imbalance is an impurity. So, we have to educate ourselves to use the past, the known in its relative field without the imbalances imposed by attachment, addiction, greed, lust or pettiness. Then turning to the other level, the psychological, is it possible to perceive the human being in the present, the today, be it the wife, or the husband, or the children, or the neighbour or anyone else? Is it possible to look at the person, without your perception getting fettered by memory? Can your perception be free?

We have a friend in South America, a Biologist - Dr. Umberto, who has written a book on the Chemistry of Cognition. What happens to the chemistry of your body when you see? Does the quality of your cognition affect the object that you see? It is a beautiful book. Dr. Umberto has participated in our seminars on the Synthesis of Science and Spirituality in Chile, in Argentina and also in some European countries. The Chemistry of cognition! Another friend, Fritjof Kapra, has written not only about the Tao of Life, but also about the dance of innumerable energies. He calls it the dance of Shiva. So, when the mind is free of the imbalance caused by memory, then there can be a communion between you and me. If we are chained, if our intelligence, our sensitivity is chained to memory, then obviously, the perception cannot be a factual perception. It will be distorted, slightly or acutely. A distortion in perception will result in a distorted reaction. It will not allow you to respond, because response is something which is free of reaction. Response is born in the space of inner freedom and reactions are the movement of the past in you. You are programmed to react in certain ways. So you do not react. The reactions use you for expressing themselves. Please do see this. We are dealing with the physics of consciousness. Spirituality deals with the physics of consciousness. As there is physics of matter, there is also physics of energy. Meditation is nothing but harmonizing all the energies, exercising all the energies without any imbalance. Then living becomes harmonious. Harmony is the song of life. Order is its expression in actual relationships, and love is its perfume.

So, this morning we have looked at the turbulent, violent Century, and seen how there has been turbulence in every field of life. We have also examined the questioning

of the validity of everything. It was done in a crude way by the Hippies and the Beatles. The questioning was done in not such a beautiful way by those who were exploring sexual freedom. It was done by the youth of Europe for consolidating the forces of rationality in the late sixties and the questioning was done by my friend Dubcheck in Czechoslovakia, questioning the very authority of the mighty Communist Empire. It was also done by my friend Lech Walesa in Poland. He became the founder of the Movement of Solidarity. This has been a very sacred question, shattering the projected images, shattering the screens of hypocrisy. They are lucky who have lived in the 20th Century. The questioning was also done by Mikhail Gorbachev, who talked of non-ideological coexistence of power blocks. That was in 1987. It is a beautiful, very thrilling Century, when the authority of mind, was questioned. The discovery was made that every mental movement is mechanistic, whether it is done in the realm of the physical, the psychological or the so called spiritual.

Mental movement itself is the projection of the past. It does not become pure just because it is directed towards the so called divine. The mind is the past. One can never reach the present through the past. This was one discovery of the 20th Century. The second discovery that there is nothing like an individual mind or ego. There are only cerebral patterns, neuro-chemical patterns of behaviour fed into the human being getting repeated, getting projected endlessly. These two discoveries in the field of psychology along with the discoveries of science and technology obliging us to live with the computers, the electronic brains, have compelled us, to question and find out whether there is anything more to us, to human beings, besides the programmed brains and the conditioned biological structures. Is there anything more at all? Is there freedom at all?

Well, sharing has no end. But the clock tells me that we should conclude the morning session. You have given me an opportunity to share with you the innermost perceptions and the sacred understanding with you. It is like sharing the flesh and blood of life. These are not talks. I am not an authority to give discourses or talks. I share with friends, and, this sharing is meditation.

Mount abu,
15 November, 1994

Questions And Answers

Questioner : This morning a very definite observation was made that the aspiration for unconditional freedom exists in every individual. It is inborn. So, there was a question that in some rare individuals this aspiration flowers and fulfils itself because they are very serious inquirers. In some others the aspiration is neither very serious nor very weak, but it exists and they are aware of it. In most cases, individuals are not even conscious that such as aspiration lies within them. What explains this difference in various individuals? Is it possible to intensify this aspiration consciously and transform it into an urgent immediate urge for unconditional freedom? There was also a sub-question : The desire for freedom is a desire like any other desire, then is it not contradictory that such an aspiration exists for freedom? Also it is stated many times that until a desire exists, Truth cannot penetrate the brain. So, even the desire for freedom has to be dropped at the ultimate stage. Is this interpretation correct?

Vimalaji : The question formulated by the group makes it necessary to look at the fundamental nature of Life. What we call Life, the cosmic Life, at the macrocosm level, seems to be uncovering its content, revealing its content endlessly. The movement of cosmic Life seems to be the movement of inexhaustible creativity manifesting itself through various forms, shapes, objects. We are born of that creativity.

We are not born of sin or in sin. We are born in the bliss of creativity. We share the creative energy with Life. So, when it was said this morning that the existential essence at the core of our being is the aspiration for unconditional freedom, — one could say unconditional love, truth, one could use other words also — when it was said that the aspiration is there at the core of our being, one wanted to

indicate that the creativity, creative energy has an urge to uncover, reveal or manifest itself. Unconditional freedom is the nature of Life. Truth is the nature of Life. Love and compassion are the nature of Life. All these are synonyms for Life's inexhaustible creativity. Because it is inexhaustible, because it is fulfilled by manifesting itself, in this country the ancient wise people used the term 'Divinity'. Life is Divinity itself, and at the core of our being is that Divinity wanting to express itself in the form of unconditional freedom, love and compassion. Unless that happens, there is not the peace, the invincible peace or harmony in ourselves.

You have rightly pointed out that people are not even conscious of it. People in Europe, in America, in Australia are not conscious of it, because they have been conditioned to believe that man is born in sin, of sin, and mankind requires a redeemer, a saviour to come and wash their sins with his or her own blood. So the consciousness of that essential nature or existential essence is not there in European countries. One would not say that about the Middle East or the Oriental countries. It used to be there. And even in India, till a couple of centuries ago, even the illiterate and the poorest of the poor had consciousness of the Divinity of Life in himself and out side of him. That consciousness has been suppressed in the last couple of centuries when the Western educational system became prevalent here. The consciousness of one's own essential nature or the essence of one's being is to be awakened through education. In this country they used to call it Sanskara. Who am I, what am I, what is life, what is death, what is this mystery of relationship — these questions were taken up in the families and the schools, not in the modern language of Physics or Psychology, but in a very simple language. But it is true that today, as we are, the consciousness has been covered up by the cult of materialism, the cult of consumerism, the cult

of sensual, psychological pleasures. But the essence being there, it is possible, through providing a proper atmosphere at home and in the schools, to arouse that consciousness. Swami Vivekananda used to say, education is for the manifestation of Divinity within. That is the purpose of education.

Now, some others are conscious of it occasionally, they are even aware of it, but that aspiration does not become an intense or deep urge consuming their whole being. It remains as a pious wish. It may remain as an intellectual ambition. It may remain as an acquisitive desire wanting to acquire, to obtain. But it does not become an all-consuming flame of an urge. Why is it so? If a person is intellectually convinced and understands the implications of meditation or transmutation or transformation, why is it that it does not become an all-consuming urge? We need not probe very deep to find out the cause, because the reason is very simple. There is not the willingness to pay the price for the consummation of that aspiration. If the urge really becomes alive and when one moves in the direction of the consummation of that urge, one is afraid that the status quo—social and economic—might be upset. One feels apprehensive, because the unknowable, the immeasurable, the unnameable, all-permeating creativity cannot be controlled, managed, handled by our cerebral activity. Thought cannot control it. Thought cannot dictate to it, command it. So one is apprehensive about the future. What will happen to me if really the psychological mutation takes place and if this present content of consciousness, the thought structure, its movements, its safeguards, its defence mechanisms — all those securities will vanish away? What will happen? There is not the willingness to let go the known unless the unknown and the unknowable can be charted out, worked out, planned out, so much today and so much tomorrow. So

the unwillingness to pay the price for the growth and flowering of that aspiration is the real obstacle.

Intellectually we may know that our senses and sense organs are not the last criteria of the truth of what we perceive. The impressions that the senses bring in, the sense organs bring in, are incomplete. They may be contaminated by our subjective moods and attitudes. We know all that and yet the sensual contact with the objective world, with the material world gives us a sense of security. We like to believe that what we see is the absolute real. We like to believe that beneath the change is something unchangeable. So there is an unwillingness to reconcile to the changes that are taking place. The revelation, the manifestation is a dynamic movement. The reality of Life is not static that it will be revealed once and that is all, there is an end to it. Even Truth is perceived infinitely, in new shades. Nuances of Truth not perceived this morning could be perceived this afternoon. Life being infinite, Truth being infinite, no one can claim that one has perceived and understood total Truth and has total Truth in his or her grip. We are used to having things in our grip. Even the verbal knowledge we feel we have possessed, we have it safe in our memory.

So when one realises that freedom cannot be captured by the mind, Truth cannot be measured and verbalised by us, freedom cannot be the possession of our personality, then we back out. We talk about freedom but we take care of the network of our bondages. We talk about unconditional freedom, absolute freedom and we preserve our sense of belonging. We are very vigilant about that. So it seems to me that the willingness to dedicate oneself to the truth one has understood, the willingness to live the truth the moment it is understood, without contaminating it by extraneous considerations, that willingness is not there for

many of us, for most of us. It is not that we do not understand it. It is not that we may not perceive it. But the path of aspiration is blocked by us intentionally or unintentionally. We see to it that it does not become an all-consuming urge. We see to it that the aspiration does not become the prime desire.

Let us come to the word, that beautiful word 'desire'. The aspiration is undifferentiated, non-individuated feel for Truth, for freedom, for love. When the aspiration gets converted into a desire and then into an urge, then it begins to operate upon us. Desire is activated aspiration. It seems to me that the energy of desire is used by us for moving away from ourselves. The objects around us, the individuals around us, money, power or pleasures are converted into the objects of our desire. We direct that energy of desire away from ourselves in the process of acquisition by obtaining, capturing or arriving somewhere, by reaching out towards the destination away from the fact of life, from the fact of my being. So, the desire which could have been an energy inside, dedicated to the exploration of that which is beyond the mind and brain and yet within ourselves, that which could have been used or could be used for pilgrimage within, that energy is spent in an outgoing movement of acquisition. That outgoing activity of acquisition has to function in a very comparative, competitive, may I say a brutal world, where corruption reigns supreme.

So one has to work hard for the gratification of that acquisitive desire. One works very hard and suffers the conflicts, the contradictions, the insults, the humiliations, the betrayals. So in the field of duality, in the tension of duality, moving away from the essence of one's being and trying hard to survive in the violent society around us, in the neurotic society around us, one gets exhausted. By the

time one gets 40 or 50, one may have earned money, power, have a family, prestige, but one gets exhausted psychologically. Everyday after working for eight hours there is no feed back of new energy or replenishment of the energy. The stress and strain take their toll on the sensitivity of the being. Supposing that desire is not for any external object, supposing that desire, that activated energy of aspiration is only for learning and discovering the nature of truth, then would it be an outgoing movement, would it be an acquisitive movement? If you have to become a Graduate or Post-graduate, then you have to indulge in an acquisitive movement. You acquire knowledge, you acquire degrees, you go through competitive examinations and so on. But learning cannot be surely an acquisitive movement.

The all pervading Truth is within me and I am surrounded by it, it is everywhere. So, it can be discovered within. So, the aspiration activated becomes a desire, if it is the only motivation behind the learning and discovering. A personal discovery of the Truth is the content of religion. So, desire to learn and discover for oneself could be the way out, but we have no patience, we have been trained to acquire. We read books for acquisition, we listen to talks for the gathering of ideas, then selecting, rejecting, comparing. So, knowing is more important for us than understanding. When one is busy in learning, then there is no storing of knowledge.

May I spend a couple of minutes in looking at the word 'learning' and how it leads to discovery? Let us take the word 'silence'. I have read about it, I have heard about it. Now how do I learn? Verbally, I have information, but that information, that knowledge is about silence. There is no direct touch with it. There is no direct encounter or touching, no intimacy with the fact of silence. The description of

silence is not the content of silence. The description is not the described, the word is not the thing. So I say, well, I have read so much about silence, now I would like to learn about it. So let me sit down. If the silence as I have read and heard, is the discontinuity of the mental movement, let me give myself an opportunity for that mental movement in me to discontinue. Let me give an opportunity. You cannot have a technique or a methodology or a formula for awakening silence. Silence is not the result of my will or my action. It is not the effect of a cause. It may be a dimension of life, as time is a dimension of life. May be silence is a dimension of life. May be sound is the extension of silence. So, how do I learn? I brush aside the books, I brush aside every authority and I devote some time to be alone with Life within me and Life around me. Allow it to happen. Then there would be the encounter with the movement of thoughts, movement of memory, movement of imagination, idea of the future, of the past. I will be confronted with that but I am sitting there to learn and discover. So, I will not be discouraged by the exposure of the contents, the stuff contained in the consciousness. I will sit relaxed and let the exposure take place.

So, learning requires an intimate contact or encounter with the fact. The word is not the fact. The word 'God' is not the Divinity. The word 'God' has not any holiness or sanctity sprinkled on it. So, when the flame of desire is not allowed to move out of the body towards an idea, towards an object, towards an individual, it is exercised for learning and discovery, then, there being no duality, there being no acquisitive movement, there is no fatigue or exhaustion. Remaining at the centre of our being, remaining with the flame of that desire, one is transported into a dimension of non-duality, non-division. So, desire as an energy moving outside towards external objects becomes the source of,

or becomes the cause of misery and suffering, and creates a network of bondages. But the energy of desire engaged in inward perception gets converted into an urge.

You know, we are afraid of freedom. We are afraid of truth, we are afraid of freedom, we are afraid of life, we are afraid of death. And this fear has been instilled into us, ingrained in us in the name of religion, in the name of ethics, morality, economic security, and psychological security.

So, intellectually we would like to be free. Emotionally we go on nurturing, nourishing the network of bondages. Shall we elaborate this point for a couple of minutes? I have seen that the mental movement is a repetitive mechanical movement. I have seen that it is a conditioned movement. I have seen that all knowledge consists of concepts and ideas supergrafted on the perception. This is our life. I have seen all that. Now, after having seen this, do those trappings drop away? If at birth there is humanness in me, then an Indianness, a Hinduness, a Christianity are conditionings. Is there a willingness to live that denuded humanness and relate to other human beings as human beings without preference and prejudice? Are we ready to get grounded in, to get rooted in that sheer humanness of our being, to relate with others from that point? To say on one hand that these are conditionings and on the other hand to continue using those preferences and prejudices as a safeguard in our relationship with others, do we not create a contradiction which sucks out your energy, your vitality?

We understand that the unit of family is a beautiful arrangement existing in human society since untold centuries. It enables human beings to have an outlet for the sexual impulse, to have a close unit where the 'I' ness, the 'Me' ness and 'My' ness can get satisfied harmoniously. To learn,

to adjust, to adapt, to give, to take - this is an arrangement made by society. But the husbandness or the wifeness, the fatherness, the motherness is not the absolute truth. It is a role that one has taken up. In the process of satisfying various impulses, the surroundings and the relationships have sprung up. Do we understand this? And can we look at the members of our family as human beings having their own personalities, requiring freedom, without wanting to dominate over them, to depend upon them? Just look at even the seekers of transformation, Mukti, Moksha, Nirvana. Just look at them when they are in family relationships. So, understanding of truth is brushed aside and we allow those conditionings to pollute our perceptions, to contaminate our responses. Then how can that desire for freedom or that aspiration for freedom and truth, love and compassion, how can that materialise, how can that consummate, flower? No, we say we will first get liberated and then we will drop these things away. We say let us first get into that transformed state, then this will be done. But when the intellectual understanding of the truth has taken place, then why do you create a time lag between the action and the understanding? The self-generated time lag between the perception of the truth and the living of that truth is the soil for all misery.

Today happens to be the death anniversary of Vinobaji with whom I have worked closely for ten years. When he realised that the heart was not functioning properly — his heart was not in a very good shape—he called the inmates of the Ashram. His brother Balkobaji and Dada Dharmadhikari happened to be present there. That was 1982, November 15, when he expired. But one week prior to that he called them and he said that I have consulted the Doctors. The heart cannot continue for long. So from today I am winding up the speech. In Marathi he said : from today

I will not touch even a drop of water and I will not utter a word. He realised the approaching death, and he wanted to prepare himself for the event of death. He did not want to be killed. He wanted to die. So, no food, no water, no speech. He asked for me. I was somewhere travelling, and cancelling all my programmes, I went to Pavnar. That was the fifth day of his no water, no speech. And on this day in 1982, in the morning, he said, "Rama, Krishna, Hari" and he sailed. He said, I am sailing. See the understanding of the truth and living of the truth. He lived gloriously and handed over the body to death.

So had died another person called Krishna Prem in 1965 in Mirtola, the Uttar Vrindavana in Himalayas. This is the way to welcome death. So was it welcomed by Socrates centuries ago, and when the poison was given to him, he started watching the effect of the poison in his body.

To say verbally, that we know death is a part of life and one who is born dies, and to have a willingness to welcome it when the symptoms of its arrival begin to proclaim themselves is another thing altogether. To know verbally that the Divinity permeates the whole being and permeates us also, is one thing and to allow that Divinity which wants to embrace one and all in love and compassion, to allow all the man-made frontiers and enclosures to get dismantled, to allow the truth to dismantle the structures that we have built-up around ourselves, is another thing. After seeing the false as the false, we do not allow the false to drop away. We hold on to it. That is why, though the aspiration is potentially there as the essence of Life in each human being, mankind up till now has systematically built up blockages, beautiful obstacles, in the path of that happening.

Lastly, Sir, we have been told for thousands of years

that we require a Guru or a Master. We have been told that unless you surrender to a Guru, to a Master, the Master, the Guru will not be able to bring about your emancipation. We have been told that it is not something that can happen to you, but it is something that will be brought about by the grace of the Guru. So, this idea, that it is the privilege of the few to be free and to bring about the freedom of others, the chosen ones, that idea also creates inhibitions within us. How can I be free? Can that happen to me? So the authority of that idea creates a kind of psychological disability.

Have you seen physically disabled people? But most of us do not realise that we are psychically disabled. So we think that the unconditional freedom, the Mukti, the Moksha is something to be craved for. We should yearn for it, and somebody else would give it to us, guide us towards it. So we think that grace is required. The authority of the idea of grace does not necessarily generate genuine humility, but it generates weakness, dependency. Please see, this is the stuff of our life which makes us run from one teacher to another, one theory to another dogma, one methodology to another technique. We are in search of techniques, methods, masters who will bring it about. We do not see that the perception of Truth itself sets us free. Freedom is not the result or the reward of an action. It is the perfume of understanding, unless you crush the understanding in the name of traditions, theories and dogmas. So it seems to me that to be a light unto oneself, to live in the light of one's own understanding, howsoever little that understanding may be, is the only way for the consummation of that aspiration.

Mount Abu
15, November, 1994

AN ALTERNATIVE WAY OF LIVING

I wonder how many of us are seriously interested in the act of living, in the quality of our consciousness manifested in that act, the quality of our relationship with nature and with our fellow human beings as well as fellow non-human beings. If one is not interested in the quality of consciousness manifested in the quality of life, then perhaps the conversation held here will not be of much relevance to one's daily living.

If we are only interested in bringing about a compartmental, partial change in our behaviour, if we are only interested in reforming here and there the pattern of our behaviour because our present behaviour does not bring us back what we want as the desired consequence or result, then the deliberations that are going on here will not have much significance for our daily living. We have been talking about a fundamental qualitative revolution in the content of consciousness, in the quality of consciousness, and in the dynamics of human relationships.

So, let us hope that we are seriously interested in what is living and what is dying, and what is meditation, which is mutation. I do hope we are aware that living is a movement as walking is a movement. You will not be at the same spot if you have been walking for an hour, half an hour or even a few minutes. Walking is a holistic movement. Physically you have holistically moved away from the spot where you were sitting or standing. You cannot be at two spots simultaneously. So, walking is moving away from the point where you were. In the same way, in mutation there is a holistic movement in the content of consciousness, in the quality of your movement in relationship, in your attitudes, in your approaches. It is not an intellectual assimilation of new ideas. Spirituality

is a science of life and living. It does not involve only cerebration, mentation, but it involves the whole life. Your relationship to your diet, to your body, to sleep, to your verbalisation, to everything. Intellectually committing ourselves to an ideology or to a pattern of behaviour, surely, is not the content of religious or spiritual life.

Reform and Revolution

So, let us be aware of the difference between reform and revolution. Religion is a holistic revolution. Spirituality is a holistic revolution. It does not have an emotional content —emotionally attaching ourselves to persons or theories or patterns or intellectually committing ourselves to certain ideologies, theories or conclusions. That is all a juvenile process. So, as responsible grown up human beings, let us look at the theme that you have taken up, from a slightly different angle this morning.

We will be going round the theme, doing 'Pradakshina', probing, digging, exploring so that the questioning yields solutions. Solutions are not ready-made. They are not stored in some book or some brain. Solutions are the by-products of an alert and attempted interaction with the challenges of life.

We are not the first group to question, to inquire or to explore. The human race, after transcending tribalism and having established a human society, has been searching for ways of ending psychological misery and suffering, physical starvation and pain.

In its search, the human race came across organised, institutionalized religions, techniques, methods, formulae for controlling the misery, the suffering, by disciplining the body,

the brain, the mind. Various ways of doing that evolved in Japan, in China, in Tibet, in India, in the Middle East, in Catholic countries and so on. But that has not helped us, the human species, to end psychological suffering and misery. The movement of relationship makes us tense. It generates inner conflicts and tensions. All our efforts to theorise about enjoyment or bliss or beatitude have proved merely futile. The human race is practically as violent as it was in the age of tribalism. It is greedy, it is lustful, it is petty minded. So, aggressiveness, violence, hatred, bloodshed go on in organised groups and also in non-organised stray individuals. Manoeuvring, manipulating for petty little self-centred interests, using money or power for exploitation—all this goes on. We may turn to countries, including India and we find that the human race is groaning even in affluence, miserable inwardly, even in affluence. So, the question of ending psychological misery and suffering in the midst of relationships, in the midst of socioeconomic life, is the crux of the issue. That is the crux of the theme.

So, let us look at the facts of our so called living. We are very sure that we are alive and we are living, but one wonders if we are living at all! For example, we get up in the morning and go through the travail of cleaning the body, bathing the body, feeding the body. Please do see whether these movements are gone through casually, carelessly. We identify them — this is the Gujarati way of doing it, the Marathi way of doing it, the Hindu way of doing it, the Brahmin way of doing it. Are we following a code of conduct fed into us and therefore inattentive, whether we are cleaning the teeth, whether we are bathing the body or feeding it? The relationship with those movements is not there, because one is moving out of habits which are engraved in our brain cells, in our memory.

The Past Projects Itself

So, it is the past that is moving. The past is using you and me to project itself at the sensual level, at the verbal level, at the mental level. When we speak, when we talk with one another, are we aware of the way we are talking? Are we aware of how we use the words, the intonation, the accent, the pronunciation, the pitch, the volume of the voice? Or are we throwing around words, out of family traditions, caste traditions, community traditions? Are we aware of what we mean? Do the words that we utter have harmony and consistency with the motivation inside? Are they in harmony with our outer, external actions at the sensual level? Or there is no consistency, no harmony, no relationship whatsoever between the motivation and the utterance, and between the utterance and the action? If we watch how we moved through the day, we will see that in the movement of relationship, it is only the past which is projecting through us.

We have motivations. We have been brought up in such a way that the codes of conduct, the criteria, even the motivation system, the defence mechanisms — all these have been hammered into us, fed into our system. We have accepted all that. So, when we meet one another, we have certain motivations, calculations. Relationships become counters for bargaining, manipulation, manoeuvring human beings. Obviously, no relationship occurs. No relationship takes place. We are guarding ourselves against each other, not meeting each other. It is a kind of defensiveness, moving cautiously. There is no spontaneity, no openness, no receptivity, because we have been told by our parents and teachers, "Be on your guard, people might cheat you, they might deceive you." So, even before we have met or interacted, the fear is there. So when you meet a person you

take a vantage position. That happens even in family relationships. Is that living? We can watch what is going on in all the fields and we will see that all the time the past is projecting itself. The motivations are the past, a projection of the past.

Reaction and Response

Let us now look at the reactions. We react instead of responding. As soon as the other person says or does something, the defence mechanism is alerted, and what we have been told and what we have read and what we have heard, comes up and we react to the words, the gestures, rather than to the total situation.

Response is to the total situation. It is born of an awareness of the whole situation that has brought us together. Reaction is a self-centred retort to the behaviour of the other person. That reaction can, even very mildly, very skilfully contain revenge. So, reaction is retorting, sometimes even revenging, sometimes dodging the issue, the challenge. Response is born of the awareness of the whole situation. So, ignoring the misbehaviour or the imbalance in the expressions of the other person, you focus your energies on the thing, the word, the job, the challenge that has brought you and the other person together, and you respond to that. Reaction is partial. It is born out of a part of you, but response is the movement of your whole being, your alertness, your attentiveness. So, the motivations, the calculations, the bargaining, which are the projections of the past, most often result in reactions, which are also a movement of the past.

So, when do we meet the present? Living is a communion with the timeless present. Living is a communion

with the eternity that appears in the so called present. Unless there is a communion with that timeless present which is eternity, how can we say that we are living? We only become instruments, human instruments for projecting and continuing the past. That is second-hand living. It is not first-hand personal living. And obviously, such second-hand living, such projection, such repetition, causes a tremendous wear and tear in the neurological system, in the brain. The person is always tired. Instead of getting refreshed through the feed back given by the present, we are tired. The movement of relationship, which is the content of living, tires us out. That is the pathetic side of our living. Please do see with me, the painful factual content of our daily living. And that defensiveness generates suspicion. We are suspicious of each other. We have doubts about the best of our friends. We are afraid of being betrayed. We are afraid of people turning away from us. We are afraid not only about losing money and power but what matters more is that our relationships become bitter because of suspicions, doubts and fears about people.

So, if you go to some so called holy or religious person and say, 'How am I to control my anger?' He says, 'Chant this Mantra, utter it ten times, then anger will be controlled.' We are interested in that. I am a very lustful person and ask, 'How can I cultivate celibacy?' Then certain techniques for manipulating the sex energy are shown, and we are satisfied with the techniques and the provocation of the manipulated state of celibacy. We do not grow holistically, but we are satisfied with partial results and changes. This complacency with temporary changes, this complacency experienced by changing patterns of behaviour, changing codes of conduct, changing techniques and methods, keeps you away from the urge for unconditional, total freedom. Unconditional total freedom, unconditional love and compas-

sion, unconditional vitality and passion for living, elude us because they require a transmutation, a radical, drastic, holistic transformation right from the way of sensual behaviour, verbal utterances, the ways of thinking and responding to every field — inner and outer.

How Our Own Conditionings Are Created

Now, let us look at the way we live daily. On the one hand, we allow ourselves to be victimized by the past and on the other hand, we go on creating conditionings. We go on conditioning ourselves. We go on limiting, conditioning, polluting ourselves, creating a new Prarabdham, a new destiny for ourselves.

How do we do that? See the very strange, the funny way we do it. We meet each other, and something has caused a hurt. One has been hurt by unpleasant words, insulting words. Now, it is very natural to feel hurt by such behaviour. But, the word was uttered, the sentence was uttered, and the expression had taken place in a fraction of a minute. It is over. My noticing the hurt, recording the hurt also happened in a moment, but I do not allow that to be over. I convert the happening, the event, into an experience, evaluate it, form a value judgment about the other person and convert the experience into memory. So, the residue of that one interaction causing hurt, remains.

Someone flatters, praises. It is very natural and healthy to feel pleased about it, as you felt the pain about the other. We are not rocks and stones not to feel the sensation of pleasure or pain. But after living the pleasure holistically, I convert the experience into memory — again a residue. So, next time we meet again, I have a prejudice, a kind of psychological withdrawal from the first person, and for the

second one, I have openness, receptivity. I would even seek the company of that person who has praised or flattered me.

So, out of that residue, the substance of memory, likes and dislikes develop. I like a person, I dislike a person. It is not a fact. Pleasure and pain are the sensual facts of life. They are unavoidable, and it is not even desirable to avoid them. They are the wealth of life. But we create likes and dislikes. This happens not with one person, but with so many persons that you have to meet. The so called modern, industrialised, technology oriented civilisation obliges persons to move on many different fronts simultaneously. The family man, the religious person, the economic person, the political person, is obliged to have occupational, professional contacts, business contacts, religious contacts and so on. So, by the end of the day, the psyche is very heavy. It is loaded with residue, the conditionings. They are converted everyday into likes, dislikes, then preferences and prejudices, then attachments and hatreds.

See, how the act of living begins to condition, because we do not know how to live. So, victimised by the past we create a network of conditionings into which we get entangled everyday that we live. By the time one is 50 or 60, there is a clumsy network of preferences, prejudices, attachments and hatreds. Is this living? We are normally satisfied with all this. We are satisfied by the techniques and methods of manipulating, using, handling so that people do not notice our manipulation. We do not mind what we are and what we do during the whole day — calculations, bargaining, manipulation, manoeuvring ourselves and others. Only if we are not satisfied with that kind of life then only the question of meditation or mutation has some relevance. Otherwise, it will become merely an intellectual exercise of

the privileged few, or an emotional entertainment of a very sophisticated nature.

An Alternative Way of Living

Now supposing we are not satisfied, then meditation is an alternative way of living. Spirituality is an alternative humane culture based on harmony, based on order. So, supposing we are really, genuinely interested in an alternative way of living, how do we educate ourselves for that alternative way of living? Not by accepting Ramakrishna's, Raman Maharshi's, Krishnamurti's or any X Y Z's teachings as ideology, not by trying to conform to certain traditions, whether old, or new or ultra modern traditions or patterns of behaviour, but by trying to find out for ourselves, if there is an alternative way of living. What will happen if we are not casual, careless about every movement of our life? Suppose we are alert and attentive — whether we are brushing the teeth or taking a bath, taking a meal, talking to a friend, looking after a cow or a horse, typing a letter, responding to our client. What will happen to the quality of consciousness if there is alertness and attentiveness? When we act out of habit, we are not attentive. It is an automatic mechanical activity. We talk to our husband, wife, children out of habit, out of tradition. The first-hand relationship even with the husband and the wife and the children is very difficult to come by, very rare to come by. They are all centres for the preservation and the projection of the past, not related to the dynamic present.

So, what will happen if I am alert and attentive? I do not require any habit, I do not require anything to be repeated. I am alert and attentive. So, I pour all my attentiveness, all my sensitivity in whatever I do. It is an experimental science. There is no question of agreeing or disagree-

ing with what is being said. If one is alert and attentive right from the moment that one wakes up to the moment one goes to sleep, what will that attentivity and alertness do to the quality of consciousness? Obviously, memory and habit patterns, the past, are not necessary. There is no necessity to refer to the past. The alertness, the attentivity puts you in communion with the present. You look at the person, you listen to the person. You do not listen to your own reactions, emotions, attitudes and approaches. And now how do I respond to what is being said? Then relationship is not a battle ground. Then meeting one another or living with one another is not warfare. So, when there is alertness and attentivity, then there is no casualness, no shabbiness, no callousness because you respect life. You respect every expression of life.

We had a very precious friend in Europe — Albert Schweitzer who went to Africa. Some of our friends also went there and worked under him, with him. One day we had asked him, "Albert, what is your religion?" He was a fantastically interesting person, bubbling with humility and friendship. So he said, "Reverence for Life is my religion." If you have reverence for Life, if you are grateful to Life that you have an opportunity to be alive, meeting people, interacting with them, responding to challenges, if that gratefulness is there, you will never be casual, you will not do anything shabbily, carelessly, callously, whether you are tying the laces of your shoes, or combing your hair. That gratefulness, that humility, that reverence revolutionises your attitudes and approaches alongwith the behaviour.

So, if one is alert, sensitive and attentive to whatever one does, then the reference to the past becomes unnecessary. In that alertness, in that sensitivity, in that attentivity, intelligence begins to work because you are not loaded with

the past—with the motivations, the calculations, the value standards, the value structures. You are not loaded with anything. There is space, that inner uncluttered space in consciousness and the intelligence, the organic intelligence, which was brushed aside intentionally or covered up by the load of habits, the past, the thought structure, gets activated. So, you look at the persons in quite a fresh way. You are not stale under the burden of the thought movement. The alertness, the attentivity makes you fresh. It is only in that freshness that there is a communion with the present. Then your perceptions are not polluted, not distorted, not twisted. You can see the fact as it is, you can listen to your friend, to your wife, to your husband, listen to their words, without mixing up your attitudes and approaches and value judgments. You know, we normally make a mess of this beautiful business of living.

A Sense of Fulfilment Leaves no Residue

When that attentivity and alertness is there, the communion with that which is, the communion with the factual content of life at that moment, gives you a sense of fulfilment. We are talking about an alternative way of living. The very movement of acting, expressing your attentivity, expressing your sensitivity and reverence for life, gives you a sense of fulfilment, whether the interaction with challenges, with people causes pain or pleasure, whether it causes honour or humiliation, whether it gives you success or failure in terms of social value structures. There is a sense of fulfilment in the very living of it. The act of living, the act of responding, the act of meeting the challenges gives a tremendous sense of fulfilment. You know, it is a benediction to be alive. It is a blessing to have an opportunity to live, to see, to hear, to interact. When there is this sense of fulfilment in the very act of living irrespective of

the consequences of the action, or interaction in terms of success or failure, wealth or poverty—that fulfilment results in a very fantastic event. That sense of fulfilment does not have any residue to be carried to the memory. You have lived and you have died. The sense of fulfilment is the dying.

So, you have lived and you have died to the pain, to the pleasure. There remains no memory to be stretched over to the next moment, to the next movement. So, the event taking place at one point in your psychological time does not cast its shadow on the next moment. What happens with us normally is that somebody says something in the morning and the whole day is spoiled. We drag, we stretch the memory, we carry it from the home to the office, from the office to the home, in the train, in the bus, in the car. Something annoying, irritating, disturbing does take place. Human beings are not made to our order. They are what they are. Innumerable varieties of temperament, innumerable idiosyncrasies, physical and psychological. So, something happens and we carry the memory, we nurse the memory, we store the memory. In the alternative way of living, the very opportunity to live and interact and the opportunity to manifest your attentivity, your organic intelligence, your sensitivity, gives a sense of fulfilment. Then there is an end to it.

So, this is being shared after having lived it. It is not a theory. It is a very pragmatic, practical way of living which keeps you clean. The dirt of memory, the crowding of very many memories makes the consciousness rather ugly. But this alternative way keeps it clean. That inner cleanliness is called innocency. There is nothing to defend, nothing to project. So there is the ecstasy of innocency contained in the inner cleanliness when your acts of living do not leave

behind the scars of memory. The consciousness has no scars of memory. It is clean and fresh:

It is not necessary for me to explain that at the functional level, when you have to perform as a member of society in the capacity of a farmer, a mechanic, an industrialist or a businessman, that functional memory, that sharpness of the brain, that skill in using the past knowledge and experience, is absolutely indispensable. We have to discriminate the functional from the psychological. It is the psychological part of it that exhausts us. It is the psychological part of living that causes misery and suffering, and those of you who are acquainted with Patanjali and his Yoga Sutras, may have understood this fact. At least you may have read the Sutra, "Klesh Nivrutti Kaivalyam". There is no other definition of Klesh Mukti, emancipation, transformation. Klesh Mukti is Klesh Nivrutti. Mukti is from the psychological suffering, misery. The physical pain, the physical agony, the physical sickness—they are the inevitable parts of life, but the physical pain and agony need not cause psychological suffering and misery.

Psychological Suffering and Physical Pain

I have shared with many groups a very significant and piercing event of J. Krishnamurti's life. It was 1982. The place was Ojai, California. Revered Krishnamurti was having his morning dialogue session. May be he had been talking about the ending of misery and suffering. As soon as his verbalization terminated, a person in the gathering stood up. He said, "Krishnaji, you can very well talk about the ending of suffering, this and that. I am dying of cancer. How can I end my suffering?" And Krishnamurti looked at him and said, "Sir, you are not dying, you are standing. Will you please sit down?" To some, it may look like a very callous

answer. It was not a callous reply. He was saying, "At present you are standing, please sit down. And the cancer is in the body. It has to be treated. It need not generate self-pity. It need not generate jealousy of others. If it is an irreversible disease then the end is near. Meet it, meet it like a man."

Well, that was his way of shaking the people, holding them by their shoulders, shaking them out of their drowsiness, passivity, waking them up to the reality of life. And this same person, J. Krishnamurti, suffering from cancer of liver and pancreas, was in a hospital in Los Angeles, a few days before his final separation from the planet. And there was an indescribable pain in the body. So the Doctor said, "Krishnaji, please allow us to give you a painkiller. Please take it." And Krishnaji looked at the Doctor and said, "Sir, is not pain a part of living? Let us live through it. Do you see what living is? Is not pain a part of life, Sir? Let us live through it."

Living requires fearlessness along with reverence for Life. Fearlessness is required to meet the challenge, not to dodge it.

Awareness of the Wholeness of Life

So, there is an alternative way. There is a sense of fulfilment. There is no effort to convert the experiences as a residue of memory. One can be inwardly clean, completely. So, with that grace of innocency one can move to the next relationship and respond to the pain or pleasure, the odds of life, without making an effort. Bravery requires an effort, but innocency is effortless. Alertness, attentivity, sensitivity also transport you into such an effortlessness. You are what you are, nothing to pretend, nothing to seek, nothing to bargain about. So there is an effortlessness.

My friends, relationships can become a movement of relaxation. If there is any meditation, this is it. One cannot stop the past, one cannot forcibly end the mental movement, but one can live in such a way that the movement of the past becomes unnecessary. You do not have to fight against it. How can you fight against the content of your own body? You do not have to strangle the "I" ness, the "Me" ness, suffocate it with your philosophy. You do not have to strangle it with your codes of discipline. So, meditation is a very skilful way of handling the past, meeting the present, and therefore, living life. This is what is meant by the words, "Yogah Karmasu Kaushalam".

To talk about the art and science of dying while we are living means dying to the past, dying to the conditionings. There is no killing and there is no losing. It is very important to see things as they are, to see the facts as they are. And be with them not in the traditional conformist way, not in the traditional mechanistic repetitive way, but in a dynamic alternative way.

The human race requires an alternative dynamics of relationship, a new base of human relationship, not memory as the base of relationship. It requires a new dimension of consciousness, a dimension of spontaneity or innocence. Physics, at the end of the 20th Century, says that unless there is awareness of the wholeness of Life, the organic wholeness of Life, the analysis of the minutest particle of matter will not reveal the nature of Life. This is what David Bohm has been expressing and explaining through his talks and dialogues. Sheldrake, Capra and many others are also doing it.

So, unless there is the awareness of the wholeness of human life, the awareness of only the particular in rela-

The art of dying while living

tionship, in the movement in relationship and trying to change merely the particular, will not help. The awareness of the whole panorama of human life, the panorama of human conditionings and what they do to us—unless that awareness is there, moulding, shaping or changing only the particular—does not carry you anywhere.

Mount Abu,
16 November, 1994

Question And Answers

Questioner : It was observed that if a person is alert, attentive and sensitive in the present moment, living in the present moment, then the past will not victimise him and any relationship or the after effects of relationship will not leave any residue.

There are two questions : One about the past and one about the future. Even if a person is attentive, alert, sensitive, he still has residues of his past experiences with him. In relationship he meets a person, and the previous memory stimulates a reaction. Now there are three or four ways in which these reactions will be manifested or will not be manifested. Most of us are inattentive, not alert. So, the reaction does definitely manifest itself and again leaves a residue. Now, suppose a person is alert and attentive, he knows that this reaction has arisen or is arising. On seeing that man, or again dealing with that person, that reaction, that residue is so strong, that in spite of his awareness that this should not happen, the reaction manifests itself and then there is regret, guilt. Those residues again come in.

Now another person who has experimented more, as you have rightly said, with this living in the present moment, is aware that this reaction has arisen but he does not allow that reaction to be manifested, that means that reaction is there but it is suppressed. That suppression will also remain as a residue. Now we understand that in the case of a person who is really attentive, alert and sensitive, even when past memory stimulates his reaction, he is so attentive that there is no suppression, but that reaction arising in his psyche is observed and then due to his attentiveness, alertness that reaction subsides by itself without any suppression. Does this happen? Is this the way in which the past does not victimise us if we are alert and attentive? This

is one question.

The second question also relates to such a person who is alert and attentive. An event of relationship takes place. Out of that event either there is a feeling of pain or of pleasure. Now the question is : Does the brain record the event, because then it will remain in the memory? Does the brain also record the psychological effects of that event? If this recording even of the psychological effects takes place, then events and the effects are both there in the memory. But will the sting be not there so that memory will not stimulate any reaction in future? What happens?

Vimalaji : One grows into the state of alertness and attentivity. Let us begin there. When you love something, say you love music or you love playing cricket or tennis, then effortlessly the alertness is there. The sensitive receptivity is there without your making any conscious effort. If you love swimming, then during that time of interaction with the waters of the river or the ocean, there is attentivity and alertness without any effort of the will, without any conscious effort. So it seems, does it not, that if there is love for life, love for the movement of living, then the alertness and the attentivity could be there without making any conscious effort. Secondly, the attentivity, the sensitivity, the alertness, require that our relationship to the body and the way we provide the needs of the body is scientific. If we over-feed or underfeed the body, if we allow the body to oversleep or under-sleep, if we do not provide necessary exercise to all the systems of the body - the muscular, the glandular or neurological and others, if we do not keep the blood oxidised by Pranayama or some breathing exercises, then the body and its organs, its autonomous systems inside the body become sluggish. They become sluggish not only in old age, they can become very sluggish even in the prime of youth. If

we do not live scientifically, if we live only following traditions credulously or live carelessly, if we indulge excessively in sensual pleasures or sexual pleasure, then the autonomous systems inside the body begin to grow rigid. The rigidity, the physical, the biological rigidity does not allow the alertness or the attentivity to get mobilised.

We may have the desire to be attentive and for a moment or two, there may be the state of attention, but alertness and attentivity as the natural dimension of consciousness requires a very pliable elastic body. It requires a harmonious relationship among the various systems of the body. Our abode is a very complex organism. That is the second factor. And thirdly, when we do not live according to habit patterns, tradition patterns, when we are not dependent upon them or addicted to them, then only this alertness or attentivity is possible.

Now in the question we are assuming that the alertness, the attention, the sensitivity are there and yet the tremendous momentum of thousands of years contained in the body overwhelms us and it obliges, it compels us to say something or to react. We know that it is the past, but the momentum overwhelms us. That is the experience of all the enquirers and explorers. So after that moment of reaction expressing itself, there may be regret, there may be repentance, but what is done cannot be undone. So, if that is the state in which one is living, what does one do? Besides the three factors which are to be taken care of, may be one could spend as much time as possible with oneself, as much as it is possible according to the situation in which one is living. One spends the time with oneself with no project of sitting down to know, to experience, to obtain, to acquire anything. Relax into the state of voluntary non-action for sensitising the organism. An energy other than

the energy of thought, an energy other than the energy of the effort is necessary, because we have read books, we have listened to talks, we have contemplated, we have reflected and yet the past overwhelms.

To cut down or even to remove the time lag between the awareness of the momentum and the action, we have to take perhaps the cooperation of some other energy and that energy may be contained in what we call silence. When you sit down and relax, allow yourself to be in a state of non-knowing, non-doing, non-experiencing, then all the tensions, the divisions, the conflicts, the contradictions subside of their own. Silence is the state of wholeness. In that state you are not clothed in any roles, the social roles that you have to go through -the role of the husband, the wife, the father, the engineer, the lawyer, the doctor, the businessman. We have to take upon ourselves so many roles in order to live in society. In those moments of privacy, of solitude, they drop away. Only your 'Is' ness remains. Only the humanness remains. So, spending more time progressively in that solitude or aloneness, in that total non-action or relaxation, may sensitise the whole system.

So, before the past, the thought content, the defence mechanism or reaction pattern bursts out of you into words or deeds, it gets contained. It is noticed that it is arising and that noticing itself has a dynamism to contain it. Supposing it is not contained then what does one do? If I were in that position and reactions would escape my lips or would get expressed through words or deeds, and I become aware of them, I would walk up to the person and say, "I am sorry I have not responded to you. I have reacted to your behaviour." I would, in a very modest way, in a very humble way, apologise. It is very difficult for modern human beings to have the humility to apologise. But if you walk up to the

person and say, "I am sorry for what has happened. You might have committed the mistake, but I have added to it." If you say that, then there is no guilt conscience left behind. It may be your servant. It may be your child. It may be your neighbour. It can be anyone in the world. Or you are callous and careless to the articles of your personal use and you throw them away. When you notice what is done, you immediately walk to it, pick it up carefully, gently and replace it - that is the way of apologising to the article.

So, if we are overwhelmed, let us learn to ask for forgiveness, not as a formality, not as a lip service, not as a ritual, but genuinely from the wholeness of our being. That is the way one can educate oneself. So, the past has subsided. It cannot be thrown away. It cannot be destroyed. It is there, but it is inoperative, defunct as it were, and after asking for the forgiveness, no guilt conscience is left behind. So there is no need for any residue. No sediments are left behind.

When one is overwhelmed and reactions manifest and one notices them and there is a sting of pain, remorse, repentance, will that sting of remorse or repentance become a residue? A very penetrating question. What happens in that moment of repentance or remorse? Is the ego wounded in its own eyes? How could I do this? I have listened to many talks, I have been observing, I have remained in silence, in meditation. How can this happen to 'me'? How was it done by 'me'? How could it happen to 'me'? You know, the focus is on the 'me' and not on the event. So, we have to analyse the nature of the sting. Is it remorse for what has happened, the imbalance? Is it remorse for the twisting, the distorting that has taken place? Is it remorse for the half truth, the half lie, that has taken place? Is it remorse or is it hurt-pride? The ego is extremely hyper-

sensitive. It has its own image, and it believes that it is not capable of doing such unbalanced things. So when it notices that such a thing has happened then it gets hurt. That hurt of the ego is not the sting of remorse. Please do see with me. We have to be mercilessly honest with ourselves. Like law, truth respects no person. So is it that the ego's pride and vanity are hurt in its own eyes? Is it self-pity? See, again it has happened, I have tried so many times and again I have failed. The self-pity is another manifestation of the hurt-pride or vanity. If one feels really sorry for what has happened, the sadness is not centred round the 'me' or the 'I'. But the sadness is focused objectively on what has happened the imbalance, the impurity, the indecency, the distorting, the twisting.

Suppose you are singing Indian Classical Music and you are singing some Raaga, and during that singing, without your knowing, you miss a note or you use a note that is not to be used in that Raaga or Raagini. Instead of Komal Rishabh in the Bhairav Raaga, or Komal Nishad in Bhairavi, suppose you use Shuddha Rishabh or Shuddha Nishad, then what do you do? Do you give up singing or do you correct it? In the same way, when one is overwhelmed, captured by the past and the reactions express themselves, one has to look at that event objectively and not subjectively. Then that remorse or that repentance has again a capacity to energise and sensitise you. Sadness or sorrow have tremendous dynamism in them — not the self-centred misery and suffering, but the sorrow, the sadness.

So, when there is the sting of remorse and one lives that, it permeates the whole being and gives an edge to your personality, and that is the end of it. It does not become memory. It does not leave a scar behind it. If it is self-pity, if it is hurt-pride or vanity, then it will surely become a

part of memory, additional memory.

Suppose there is alertness, sensitivity, attention, then what happens in that state? Are the events recorded by the brain? Yes, they are — because the movement of the brain is an involuntary movement. We are sitting in this room and the seeing of the walls, the roof, the lights, the windows takes place without volition. Hearing the sounds that come from outside is recorded like the light in the room is recorded. So, these sensory movements, the involuntary movements go on. Naturally, the brain records the events without registering them.

Now what is the difference between the recording and registering? They are recorded in the way it has happened. I am talking about the physics of consciousness. I am talking about spirituality as a science of life and living. And every science has its own austerity. So the impression of the event is recorded by the brain in the sense that after 5 years, 10 years, 15 years if something makes it necessary for you to recollect the event, that event can be recollect with the help of the brain, the functional memory. It has no emotional sting, no emotional overtones or undertones. It is only a record of the fact. But when it gets registered, we imply thereby, do we not, that it has happened to 'me', it has given 'me' pleasure, it has given 'me' pain. Something has happened to 'me'. Something has been done unto 'me'. When it is registered this way, then it is clothed in preference or prejudice. I liked it, I did not like it. Even a value judgement is formed instantaneously. The value structures and value judgements are fed into us. They are there. So when it is registered, besides getting recorded pathologically, physically, when it is registered emotionally, then it gets blended with likes or dislikes, or preferences or prejudices or even value judgements. That becomes a kind of

residue, a psychological memory. The recording need not be a psychological memory. It is the nature of our organism - an organism more sensitive than an electromagnetic apparatus. So everything gets recorded. If a child is in the womb of the mother, the events in the life of the mother get recorded in the consciousness of the child. The quality of the consciousness of the child gets determined to a very great extent in those nine months of pregnancy. So the recording cannot be avoided, need not be avoided. It is not a voluntary movement. It is not what you seek. It is something which you cannot avoid. When it is thus merely recorded and not emotionally registered, it does not encroach upon the emptiness of silence within. It does not affect the quality of consciousness.

So one has to begin if one wants to take a voyage into oneself, if one is interested in meditation, which is homecoming, which is a voyage from the conceptual ego to the factual essence of our being. If one is interested in that, then one may begin at the very beginning, become acquainted with the body. We know about the body. We may know physiology, hygiene, anatomy, but knowing is not being acquainted. Knowledge is only organised information about the body. For getting acquainted with it, you have to watch it, you have to be in contact with it, in communion with it. How does the body behave? What happens when one wakes up out of sleep? What has sleep done to the whole metabolism? What does appetite do, not only to the body but to the brain? What happens when there is thirst? What happens to your whole being when the sex impulse becomes powerful and wants to imprison you, in its grip? What is happening? One has to get acquainted with the body, with the kind of food that agrees with it so that one would not impose upon the body the food, the diet that does not agree with it. One would watch how the words spoken

or heard or read affect the quality of mind. What happens to you when you read suspense fiction? What happens to you when you read novels? What happens to you when you read serious essays in a philosophical treatise? What happens to the quality of the being when words enter the brain and the meaning reaches down to the chemical system? What is happening? The interaction between the words, the meaning and my system - we have never watched it. We are not acquainted with the body at all. So one must become acquainted with the organism. That is the first step. For that self-education, one has to find out which ways of self education will agree with oneself. There are many ways in which this education can take place. How much intake of food -solids and liquids - is necessary? What kind of diet is necessary for the body, is relished by the body? Life does not consist only of big theories and dogmas. It is the minute details and handling them with precision and accuracy of a musician, of an artist, of a painter, of a sculptor that enriches the act of living.

Then I would turn to the verbal level. How do I speak? How much do I expose myself to the chattering of other people? What does speaking do to me when I am chattering the whole day, gossiping, praising myself, blaming others, criticising others? What are we habituated to do? We are addicted to verbalisation. We will have to get acquainted with the process of verbalisation. The body is full of sound like the cosmos. It is all sound, a variety of sounds, and when a thought wakes up in you, the sound becomes a word, travels with your breath and comes out of the mouth. But before the sound gets converted into the word and before the word is articulated, it is a whole journey. Something has taken place, some energy has acted within you. Have you experienced how, if you talk for half an hour, an hour, extra heat, dry heat, is generated in the body? It is a

heat different from the heat, generated by physical labour like running around, jogging, working with your hands in the field and so on. That is a different kind of heat. When you talk too much or are temperamentally disturbed, annoyed, irritated, and you talk, then there is a kind of heat that is generated. If you go on brooding, worrying, brooding about the past, worrying about the future, then also there is an unnatural heat stimulated in the body which causes symptoms of psychosomatic sicknesses which may not be organic but may be functional disorders. So, to get acquainted with the body, with the verbalisation, to be precise in what you say, to mean what you say and to say what you mean - there is a beauty about it. Sound energy expressed through words is a very powerful energy.

We have also to get acquainted with the mind. We use the word, the 'mind', the 'I', the 'Me'. Have we ever watched how it moves? We know theories of psychology. But have we watched it? Do you know really what the mind is? Is the mind an organ somewhere located in the body like the heart, the lungs, the spine, the liver, etc.? Where is the mind? Is it an organ? Or is it an amalgamation of conditionings permeating the whole body? How does it function? What is thinking? We have not acquainted ourselves with the facts of these processes, these movements. We know about them, but we have not seen them, watched them, observed them. So it seems to me that getting acquainted with the help of watching and observation is an important part of self-education. Then the distortions are corrected, the imbalances are eliminated. You put all these movements on a very scientific basis. Spirituality is a holistic inquiry, not only an intellectual inquiry, not only an emotional flare-up.

So as a first step, we establish a scientific way of living. It will differ from individual to individual, differ with dif-

ferent age groups. You cannot have a steam roller code of discipline for the whole human race. Everybody has to discover the inner path and walk upon it. You are the path and you walk upon it. You are the inquirer, the student, and your alertness, your attentivity is the teacher which guides you.

Secondly, if one really wants to focus one's energies on the exploration and discovery of the nature of the ultimate Reality, on the nature of the essence of one's being, then one has to avoid unnecessary socialising, unnecessary exchange of meetings, talks, unnecessary responsibilities that one invites upon oneself due to ambition, due to the insistence of so - called friends, due to the ambitions of the members of one's family and so on. If one wants to focus all the energies, one has to be careful that the vitality is not dissipated in very many directions unwarrantedly. You keep the expenditure of the vital energy to the minimum so that when you sit down in meditation or silence, there is sufficient vitality, sufficient energy at your disposal.

It is not a question of the will, it is a question of your whole organism. It is a question of the preservation of one's vitality, the preservation of one's energy. We live so carelessly, so thoughtlessly! Not that Ramakrishna or Ramana or any other saint, Gnaneshwara or Nanaka or Kabir had more vitality than we have. But whatever vitality, whatever energy was at their disposal was focused without any lapse; it was focused on that act of discovery, on the act of exploration. So, minimisation of socialising, minimisation of secondary responsibilities are necessary. And mind you, this is the slippery ground. When one begins to conserve energy, to minimise verbalisation, socialising, the members in one's family begin to feel suspicious. What is happening? There is no demonstration of love. There is love but

there is no attachment. There is no sense of owning, possessing. Traditionally we believe that in a family, the relations or relationships should have that addiction or attachment, and that attachment should be pronounced time and again to make the other person feel that he or she is accepted and so on. You know the games that we play.

So, when there is self-restraint and not suppression, and when there is alertness and sensitivity, then when one is overwhelmed, one is not suppressing the reactions. The alertness, the attentivity is helped to become so powerful that it can contain the reactions. It is sensitising and energising the organism. It is not suppressing it. So this is a step which is surrounded by many risks and dangers. One is apt to be misunderstood, misinterpreted, and that is the time when one does not try to justify or defend oneself or to argue with the others. It is not a question of debating. One takes care of the family or the responsibilities — organisational, institutional, and others. One does not ignore. One is not indifferent. That self-restraint is such that there is no more emotional and intellectual excess. There is no exhibitionism. So, the self-restraint in the life of an inquirer, without any trace of suppression, any trace of indulgence, generates a power, a strength, a vitality. So the known becomes acquainted. The acquainted becomes understood. And one gets reconciled to what is. One is not in a hurry to change forcefully. One is not in hurry to impose compulsions or vows on oneself. One has patience. One lets the understanding and the sensitivity to flower, to blossom. It is a tender thing that has come about. Nobody has told us that understanding has the dynamism to bring about the transformation. Without our mental effort the action takes place. Ours is to perceive and understand. That step of perception, which is understanding, is the first and the last step. The rest is taken care of by the dynamism contained in the truth of the

fact and in the truth of your understanding. So there are ways of educating oneself. If by birth, genetically, the organism of one person has more physical strength or more strength of the brain, the intensity and the speed with which the education takes place is different from another person whose body is not gifted with that much intensity, that much vitality. So, even when the person understands, the warmth of the chemical system, the emotive part, the emotional part is not there. It is very much less than in the case of the first one. So, even though the second type of a human being perceives the truth and understands the truth, the living of it requires time, chronological time. It does not happen instantaneously.

In the case of those whose biological impulses are very strong and powerful, whose every movement, including the cerebral and the chemical movement of the body, is very forceful, the understanding and transformation, the understanding and mutation do not require a time lag. It can nearly be instantaneous. In the case of those who are not gifted with the intensity and the depth of the feeling part, the understanding part is just the same like that of the first one. It is clear. Yet the feeling part, the chemical system of the body does not respond. It cannot keep pace with the neurological system. Therefore there may be a necessity for chronological time in terms of days or weeks or months. But one should not give any importance to this chronological time. After all, time by the watch or time by the calendar is a human creation. It is for our convenience that we have created it. We wanted to measure eternity and we created the measurement of time. So, the days, the weeks, the months in the context of spiritual maturity have no significance, no importance. One has to understand what category one is physically, to understand what is one's temperamental make-up, because one may be slow in every-

thing that one does. So, it seems to me very vitally important to get acquainted with one's make-up and not become a very harsh judge of oneself. One should not feel that it happened there instantaneously but it is not happening to me. So, the relationship of acquisition is again stimulated in relation to the Truth, the Reality, the Divinity, which cannot be acquired. The revelations take time. That is all it means. So one has to have patience with oneself.

I have elaborated on these points because I see very many new faces in the gathering whom I do not seem to have met before. For their benefit, for bringing about a rapport between them and me, I thought of referring to some practical steps about how one can proceed. And the clock says enough for today!

Mount Abu
16 Nov' 94,

WHO IS A GENUINE INQUIRER?

We have to probe into our own being and question ourselves very honestly, perhaps even ruthlessly or mercilessly, if we would like the truth to reveal itself or the mystery of life to uncover itself unto us. So this morning, if you do not mind, let us ask ourselves individually and collectively whether we are genuine inquirers at all.

Inquiring and Seeking

Do we appreciate the difference between inquiring and seeking? Are we seeking something or are we inquiring about something? Is the basic motivation at the conscious as well as subconscious level that of achieving something, obtaining something, arriving somewhere? There is a world of difference between the movement of inquiring, exploring, learning and the movement of seeking, arriving, achieving. Have we ever looked at that the basic difference between these two movements in the name of inquiry? What kind of movement has been or is going on within me? Only the known can be sought. The Unknowable cannot be sought. The meaning of a word is not sought. It is to be understood and not sought. If there is a static destination at a specific location in space, then you can reach it or arrive there. Is the ultimate Reality, the Divinity, the Brahman, the Supreme Intelligence, static, located somewhere in the so called unknown where one is going to arrive? Is transformation, mutation or meditation an experienceable event to be achieved?

It is very important to ask these questions and be with them to find out the nature of our motivation behind the so called inquiry. May be, we believe that we are inquiring and factually we are seeking something. Is Reality knowable? Then you can move from one variety of knowledge to an-

other. You can move from the Vedas and Upanishads to Dhammapada. You can move to the Bible, the Quran-e-Sharif or to the modern teachers and their books. Is it knowable? Then you would be busy all the time trying to move from one variety of knowledge to another. Is it seekable? Then there have been sciences like Tantra Yoga, Mantra Yoga, Laya Yoga, Nada Yoga, Bhakti Yoga, Raja Yoga and so on, which can induce experiences without administering any chemicals into the body. Have those experiences of the experts in Tantra, Mantra, Nada, Laya, caused the transcendence of the ego-consciousness? Have they caused a dimensional transformation, which could be verifiable in manifested life? It is very difficult for a person born in India not to be influenced by the verbal knowledge about religious theories and spiritual scriptures. It is very difficult to escape the Vedas, the Upanishads, the six schools and systems of Indian Philosophy like Sankhya, Nyaya, Yoga, Vaisheshika, Mimansa, Vedanta. It is very difficult to escape the vast mythology put together by the Hindu community. All those words and ideas, theories and dogmas have been dumped into one's memory.

The contents of memory for an average person like you and me are very chaotic. Memory is all crowded with undigested ideas, unassimilated words and concepts. These words, these theories have never been applied in our daily life, have never been correlated to the act of living. They are lying there in memory in a chaotic way. Naturally, that chaotic crowd of ideas and theories, descriptions, and definitions create intellectual confusion and emotional disturbance. The contents of memory are very heavy for persons born in India. The psyche is heavily loaded. Being heavily loaded does not really create the problem, but it is also very unorganised, disorderly, chaotic. So, it is very difficult for an Indian, to whatever religion he or she might be-

long, to escape from the influence of that memory. So, we may be intellectually convinced, though we may not admit it even to ourselves, that there is a personal God that can be worshipped. Another person may be equally convinced that Divinity is the impersonal and abstract Brahman. We may be intellectually convinced that we cannot proceed without surrendering to a Guru, a Master. We may talk about non-authoritative inquiry. We may talk about unconditional freedom, but inwardly we may be seeking the protection of a Master, of a Guru. All these factors working at the subconscious level may be hindering the inquiry from having an integrity, a sincerity. Sometimes we may be conscious of it. But our selectiveness about the past does not help us very far.

So, are we inquiring or are we seeking? If we are seeking, we might get what we seek. But the path of inquiry, the path of learning and discovering the meaning of life, discovering the meaning of relationship, discovering the content of the mystery of interrelatedness of every expression of life, is quite different from the acquisitive movement of seeking, achieving, obtaining, arriving. It is very necessary, is it not, that consciousness is denuded of all its contents before we even begin to enquire or look around? For a scientist who may be conducting research in the field of Physics or Chemistry, Biology, or Genetic Engineering, the past is there, but he has no presumptions about the consequences or the results of his exploration and experimentation. There is no static destination towards which the scientist is proceeding. Inquiry cannot be an inquiry if the destination is defined, described, located, predetermined.

So, is it possible for us to say unto ourselves : Yes, the Vedas, the Upanishads, the Gita, the Mahabharata are there. The Dhammapada, the teachings of Mahavira and the Ten

Gurus of the Sikhs are there. They may be true, they may not be true. They may be correct, they may not be correct. Without rejecting or accepting them, can I begin to inquire and learn about the nature of Reality? Is it possible to put oneself in the state of non-knowing and non-experiencing? It is a very daring job to set upon learning and discovering the content of Reality by oneself. And how does one do that? By questioning the validity, the correctness of everything that one does from morning till night. What is the nature of my behaviour? What is the texture of my relationship with my body, with nature and with other people? The movements are to be watched and observed, looked into. Have we got the patience to do that? Or do we want short cuts? Do we want ready-made things? Ready-made pills and canned and tinned meditations and liberations? Are we looking for short cuts? Are we looking for peripheral, circumferential changes? It does not matter if it requires days and weeks to find out the content of our inquiry. One has to find it out.

If one is satisfied with the traditional and conventional approach of accepting the authority of the Vedas, the Bible, the Quran, one may proceed that way, but then one knows that one is following the past, one is seeking the known. As it has been known by the ancestors, I would also know about it. As it has been experienced by them, I would experience. Experiencing and knowing are activities related to the past.

Because the verbal knowledge at our disposal is very vast, we do not bother to study it. We hear about it, we read about it, but what is read may not be necessarily understood. What is heard may not be necessarily understood.

Teacher, Guru, Disciple

This morning one would like to take an example. If one has to study Sankhya, Yoga, Nyaya, Vaisheshika, one requires a teacher, because the ancient Sanskrit language of the Vedas and Upanishads is quite different from modern Sanskrit. Arsha Sanskrit, the Sanskrit of the Rishis, the Sages, is quite different. It has a different grammar. Even different from your Panini, Saayan or the Tikas and Vritis written by Prabhakara and so on. So, you require a teacher who will teach you the Sankhya Karika, the Yoga Sutras, the Mimansa, the Yagna, the Yaga. For studying these you require a teacher. If you want to study Hatha Yoga or Mantra or Tantra Yoga, you require a teacher, who has specialised in those branches of Yoga. Then there is a relationship of the teacher and the student. The point of contact is knowing about the philosophy or acquiring the technique and the skill, the technique of Mantra, of Tantra, of Yantra. It is very dangerous to cultivate those things without the guidance and supervision of a person, a teacher, a guide who has specialised, who has spent years experimenting with them, because these sciences are based upon different energies contained in the human body. The sciences teach how to channelise those energies for purification, for energising, for vitalisation of the whole being. So you need teachers and they teach you Shastra, the Science of Yoga, the techniques, the methods. They are not things to be acquired by reading books or commentaries on those sciences. But such a teacher cannot be called a Guru or a Master. There is a difference between a teacher and a Master. In our psyche we have the words 'Guru' and 'shishya', but one wonders if we have really looked at those words and understood deeply the content of what the words want to communicate.

The word 'Guru' is a code word in the science of spirituality, just as in the Upanishads or the Vedas there are

hundreds of code words which have to be deciphered, which have to be understood. We think a Guru is necessary and we begin seeking for one, hunting for one. And we seek a Guru with our conditioned mind, with our conditioned brain, perhaps to suit our psychological requirements. There is a difference between a psychological requirement and a spiritual aspiration. Spiritual aspiration is for freedom, for love, for truth. A psychological requirement can be for solace, for consolation, for protection, for getting temporary rest and relaxation from the stress and strain of living in a cruel and callous society.

So when we begin to look around and seek for a Guru, we measure the person with our conditioned mind and we form a value judgment, by evaluating consciously or unconsciously if our psychological requirements are gratified, are satisfied. Please see how we play a game with ourselves. It is something very serious. The word 'Guru', the word 'shishya' and the meeting of the two is one of the holiest and most sacred events that can occur in the life of a human being. But as one has not studied, one does not care to go into the depth of the word, its significance, its meaning, its relevance. So we drag the word down with the conditioned mind and seek. It seems to me that if the 'shishyahood', if the discipleship, if the integrity of inquiry is there, permeating your whole being, then you are concerned with learning, discovering, come what may. But if the truth disturbs you and upsets the status quo of your civil life, if the perception of truth denudes you of the 'I'ness and the 'Mine'ness, if it snaps away the sense of belonging to a family, a community, a caste, a nation, an ideology, then for many there is no willingness to learn, to explore.

However if the willingness is there, even the willingness to offer all the known and the experienced at the indi-

vidual and racial levels at the altar of exploration, then even before meeting a Master, you have become a disciple.

Please look into the Latin word disciple and its meaning. It is a great responsibility to become a disciple. A disciple is not a follower. A follower is in a hurry to conform, to imitate, to approximate his or her behaviour to that of the so called master of his. A seeker can become a follower very easily. An ambitious person can become a follower very easily, because then the follower does not have to take the trouble of exercising the capacity of questioning, probing, digging. The follower does not have to be vulnerable. He does not have to go through that period of insecurity or vulnerability. So it is easy to follow. And not knowing how to punish great persons for their greatness, fate punishes them with their followers, because then the teachings are distorted and perverted in the hands of the ambitious followers. The virgin vitality and the virgin purity of the teachings get damaged. I am sharing my agony with like-minded inquirers. Life is too precious to waste it in criticising or condemning.

Fearlessness and Humility

So when a person is permeated by the urge to have a first-hand personal encounter with the truth of Life, a contact with the mystery of wholeness and interrelatedness of Life, the unity and the wholeness of Life, then the life of that person gets charged with the energy of inquiry. That person becomes a living flame of inquiring, questioning. There is a marvellous humility in doing that, because it implies putting aside the known. It requires tremendous fearlessness to brush aside the known without rejecting or denying it. You are not satisfied with seeing the pictures of the Himalayas or the ocean at Rameshwaram or

Kanyakumari. You are not satisfied with reading the descriptions of Badrinath, Kedarnath, Amarnath. You want to go there personally. You do not say to yourself, "Thousands have gone before, why should I take the trouble of the Yatra, the pilgrimage?" You want to go personally. In the same way, this is a pilgrimage towards the meaning of Life, towards the reality of Life. So the result of what thousands have understood, known and experienced is brushed aside with all respect and affection, not with intolerance or impudence.

So, inquiring, learning, discovering require fearlessness and humility both. Thus there may be persons, individuals who had fearlessly allowed the ego-consciousness, the I-consciousness to go into abeyance, willing to go through all the risks and dangers involved in allowing the I-consciousness to retire into non-action, because the persons did not know what would happen. There is no blue-print.

Abeyance of the 'I' - Consciousness

When the monitor of the past, the ego, the I-consciousness, the identification with the stuff of I-consciousness, when all that is allowed to go into abeyance or non-action, we do not know what is going to happen. So the person in the process of exploring, inquiring has allowed that to happen. We cannot stop the movement of the 'I', the ego, the past, within us. We cannot force it into stillness. We are part of it. But we can allow ourselves an opportunity for the abeyance and the non-action to take place. You may call it total relaxation, you may call it silence, emptying, emptiness. You may use any word, but the content of that action is reduced to knowing nothing about the unknowable, knowing nothing about the nature of ultimate Reality. You do not know what is going to happen to you. The status quo may

be disturbed, may not be disturbed.

The non identification with the past may take one young man, Vivekananda around the world and it may make another young man, Ramana sit in the Virupaksha Cave for six years and live anonymously at Tiruvannmalai. Poles apart. It may take an Aurobindo Ghosh from Alipore Jail to Pondicherry and oblige him to engage in the exploration of integral yoga and write books on Divine Life or Savitri. The same non-identification may make Gadadhar, that illiterate man of Dakshineswar, carry on an exploration in a non-rational way—sitting as a Muslim outside the temple, probing into the life of Jesus of Nazareth, wanting to cut the image of Kali to pieces with the sword, sitting with Totapuri for finding out what is Nirvikalpa Samadhi. You know, there cannot be a blue print. It can take a Paul Brunton from Europe to Tiruvannmalai, India. It can take a Ronald Nixon to Lucknow University from London, from the British Air Force to Lucknow University and be there at the feet of the Yashoda Mai. So that is all unpredictable. Exploration implies, does it not, being vulnerable to the unpredictable. Predictions can be based on the known. How can you predict?

So, in the life of the person who has allowed the mystery to work upon himself, allowed the wholeness of Life to operate upon himself, the transcendence of the I-consciousness, of the ego-consciousness, the transcendence of the consciousness that 'I' am the doer, 'I' am the shaper of my life, 'I' am the experiencer—that consciousness is transcended. There is no knower, no experiencer, no doer. There the supreme Intelligence permeating the cosmos takes charge of that being, the life of that person. The transcendence is manifested in daily living. The words 'I', 'Me' and the 'Not-me' in the life of such a person have no psy-

chological reference or significance. Those terms are used only for reference to the physical. There is no identification at the psychological level. Such a person is called a Guru in this country.

The teachers, the specialists, the occultists are not Gurus. They may have cultivated occult powers. But powers, whether they are sensory, or cerebral or extrasensory, powers are powers. So, persons with Siddhis, persons with the capability to do Shaktipat on others, the specialists, the teachers are very different from the Master, the Guru.

Meeting of the Guru and the Shishya

A person whose personality, whose being, is captured by the cosmic or the Supreme Intelligence, by the Wholeness, by the mysterious interrelatedness in the complexity of that Wholeness, that person is charged with the energy of love and compassion, the energy of the Unity and Wholeness, just as the life of the inquirer is charged with the energy of questioning, probing, inquiring.

So, the movements of these two energies or these two persons, the inquirer and the emancipated one, the movements of their lives, seem to be regulated by cosmic Intelligence, and they are brought together. Without any conscious effort by either of them, they are brought together by Life. No genuine inquirer has ever remained without a Guru. As he offers his inquiry to the Master, the Master makes an offering of his understanding. If there is any surrender, it is mutual, it is reciprocal. If there is any dedication, it is reciprocal, mutual. There is no obligation, because both are fulfilled by that interaction.

There is a story about the life of Adya Shankaracharya.

The boy of five years walking from Kerala, coming to the North, to the banks of river Reva or Narmada, enters the cave where Govindpadacharya happened to be living at that time. And the Guru, Govindapadacharya asks, "Who is there?". And the boy says, "Your reflection". "Why have you come here?" "The reflection wants to see the original". I am not talking about mythology. I am talking about history, hardly 1200 years ago. So, the story proceeds that Govindapadacharya comes out and prostrates himself before Shankara and says, "By coming here to learn, you have blessed me."

So, the Guru and the Shishya and the meeting of these two energies, which has been rather vulgarized and made very cheap and commercialised in the last 30, 40 years, is something very sacred. I have brought up this subject this morning in order to point out that a person who starts the pilgrimage, the inner voyage towards his own Reality, his own existential essence, is never lonely. People are visited by fear, what will happen to us if the known, the past is brushed aside, kept aside gently, if not rudely. What will happen to us if we do not look at the present through the eyes of the past, where is the sight that will function through the eyes, function through the brain? They feel that the known can be equated with the wholeness of Life. The known is only a minor part of the totality of Life. Your unknown, occult, or transcendental is again a minor part of the Unknowable. Infinity, Eternity, Timelessness, Wholeness are not mere words. They are not definitions, but they are indicators.

So, I wanted to share with all of you this morning that the pilgrimage of inquiry that is done in the nudity of consciousness and in the humility of fearlessness, is not fraught with dangers. You are never lonely in this cosmos. If the

cosmic Intelligence, if your Parabrahman, if your Chiti or Samvid, if the Supramental Consciousness, if the Divinity of the Ramakrishna is all permeating, if the Samvid of Sankaracharya is all permeating, then one is never lonely. Loneliness is created by us, because we want life to respond to us on our terms. The physical form, the visible form, the words, the speech, the whole organism to which we are used, the Reality, the Truth must appear to us on our terms, at our demand. And the truth is, the Reality, the Divinity cannot be commanded, cannot be dictated. So it is only this state of discipleship that comes across the state of mastership or Guruness or Masterness. The meeting takes place and the transmission happens. The teachers can teach with spoken words, with written words, but the Guru and Shishya relationship is a relationship of a holistic transmission. The inquiry of the shishya, the disciple, the sadhaka, the inquirer activates the energy of love and compassion. The dynamism of understanding is activated. So, it is really the inquiry of the sadhaka which penetrates the understanding of the Master and returns to him in the form of Grace. The transmission is the bye-product of the interaction between genuine inquiry and genuine understanding. It is not an effort of the will, because the Master, the Guru has no will left. There is no mind in the sense that we know about it. It is an egolessness, it is a Wholeness. There is no division, no duality of subject, object, the doer and the doing. Then it is a non-divided, non-fragmented Wholeness condensed in the human body. It is something very sacred, as the inquiry is sacred. It is not an intellectual exercise, playing a game of words, ideas, throwing them around, discussing, debating, arguing about them.

When one comes to a point that one cannot live without the encounter, without the touch of the meaning of Life or the reality of Life, Life responds.

One more point before we conclude this session. The meeting does take place but there is no relationship between the two. This is another unpleasant aspect of reality. We want a relationship at the psychological level. This is my Master. I am his or her Shishya or disciple, my Guru, your Guru. It is a state of being. Guruhood is a state of being vibrating in the life of a person. My inquiry! There is nothing private or personal. It is the evolution of the human psyche and the inquiry is flowing through you. So there is no relationship. Relationship requires two. The inquirer may be at the ego level, the I-consciousness level, but there, in the life of the other person, there is a physical structure and there is a vocabulary using the terms 'I' and 'Me' for the physical functions. But they are meaningless words at the psychological level. How can a person have a relationship when there is no 'I' and ego as the centre or the source of perception or response? So, the meeting happens, the transmission occurs and there is an end to it. A candle is lit and the candle burns, gives light wherever its destiny takes it.

A Genuine Inquiry Blossoms Into Understanding

We started this morning by asking ourselves if we are inquirers at all or we are merely seekers. We analysed the difference between inquiring, learning, discovering without any predetermined destination, predetermined definitions and even descriptions. It is a romance with the Unknowable. We asked ourselves whether we are really inquiring or we are merely seeking the known, whether we want to arrive at the known, experience the known. Seeking, arriving, achieving, obtaining, keep you in the dimension of the known. May be it is on a very vast scale, a global scale, known to the whole humanity, but still it is the known, the experienced. We can go round and round that orbit, but

the quantum jump from the dimension of the known and the unknown to the Unknowable does not happen through seeking, arriving, achieving, obtaining. We analysed that at quite a length. We looked at the content of inquiry, the integrity of inquiry. Why does not our inquiry have a vitality? Because at the subconscious level we have our convictions, we have our definitions, very favourite ones, pet ones, and we are looking for all that in the name of inquiry. We are looking for the predetermined, seeking for that. That is why at the intellectual and conscious level, though we have hypnotized ourselves into believing that we are inquirers, that movement within us has not got the vitality, the passion, the momentum, the dynamism. And then, in the evening of our life, we say, "Well, that is for the privileged few. We have inquired and yet we are where we were."

It was 1966. The country, Italy. The place, Rome. J.Krishnamurti had invited some of us for a meal. I was in Rome for addressing War Resisters Conference, WRI Conference. Krishnaji happened to be there. So, after our meal, we were sitting around. Aldous Huxley was there and Yehudi Menuhin was there. I do not remember the others. So, Aldous says to Krishnamurti, "Krishna, we have been together since 1940. I have listened to so many talks of yours, but I am where I was in 1940." And one could see the depth and the intensity of sorrow getting converted into compassion in the glance that Krishnamurti cast at Aldous Huxley. They were great friends. And Krishnaji asks, "Why is it so?" Aldous says, "Because, Krishna, I refused everything with one hand and I caught hold of you with the other. I put aside the old authority of every manner because I was sure I had you in my grip and grasp." "Oh, is that it? Aldous, cut me down to pieces and throw me out of the window" Even while I am narrating, I can see the whole thing happening before my eyes. The humility, the unassertiveness,

and only the intensity of compassion was there. And Krishnamurti says, "Cut me down to pieces, throw me out of the window. But for Dickens' sake, be free." You see what inquiry requires?

So we went into the nature of integrity of the inquiry, sincerity of the inquiry. It is no use hypnotising ourselves into believing that we have the sincerity. We must analyse it, and see what it really is, because spirituality is a science of life. A genuine inquiry has to blossom or flower into understanding. The understanding of bondage does liberate. It is not a personal achievement. It is a consummation of human growth applicable to the whole humanity.

So, we looked into the integrity of inquiry. We looked into the content of transcendence of the ego or dying to the ego, and we looked into the event of the meeting that takes place between the state of being of the Guru and the Shishya and the transmission that takes place.

I felt it necessary to go into all this with your cooperation so that our path of learning and inquiring is cleansed completely without any self-pity, without any cynicism, because analysis should not lead to diffidence. Analysis of the truth or the factual content of our life should not result in any diffidence or a feeling of helplessness. It should provide us with fresh energy to stick it out, to carry on with the inquiry.

And the clock says the time for our dialogue is over. So, this morning's intense meditation through verbal communion comes to an end here.

Mount Abu
17 November, 1994

DIE TO THE PROCESS OF BECOMING

Are we aware of the nature of our relationship with our abode and our responsibilities towards it? I wonder if the questions where was I born and where do I live, ever attract your attention. Where is a human being born? In a village, in a city, country, planet — where is one born?

Homogeneous Wholeness of Life

You may be born in a small room of a house or an apartment somewhere in India. Then you say I was born in India, I am an Indian. India is a tiny part of the planet. So you could very well say that I was born on the planet earth. The sense of belonging is extended from the room, the house, the village, the city, the country to the planet. But where is the planet? The planet earth is a very tiny drop in the vast cosmos. Does it ever strike you that we are born in the cosmos, we belong to the cosmos, and the cosmos is our abode? It is a multi-universe cosmos. There are dozens of solar systems in that cosmos. So does it ever strike you that we are born in the cosmos and we belong to the cosmos? And the cosmos again is a word pointing out the fact of the wholeness of Life, a homogeneous wholeness of Life. Do you know what homogeneity implies? It implies, does it not, an organic inter-relatedness? So we are organically related to the whole cosmos, to all the expressions of Life in the cosmos. The cosmos was not put together. It has no parts. It has not been assembled together like your car or an aeroplane or a missile. It is not a totality. It is a wholeness, like a wholeness that you have in your body. The hands and feet were not sewn on to the torso. You are an organic wholeness. In the same way, Life of which the cosmos is a manifestation, is an organic homogeneous wholeness, of which we are born, to which we belong, to which we are organically related, towards which we have responsibilities. Un-

less this fundamental organic relationship is lived with the perfume of Awareness, it does not seem possible to have an inner equipoise and peace or bliss. Unfortunately, this organic relationship even with the planet is not a part of our education and nobody teaches it at home or in the schools. This basic fact of our belonging to the cosmos and the cosmos being our abode is not taught to us.

Now, in this cosmos or specifically on the planet earth, the human species is only one of many species. It is not the master of all other non-human species. Mankind has hypnotised itself into believing that it is the master of the planet owning, possessing the oceans, the lands, the forests, and even the space of the skies. That illusion of ownership has resulted in violence, in greed, in lust, in real human misery and suffering.

Living Simultaneously In Two Abodes

So, the human race, the human species has built - up a super structure on the planet earth, which is called a human society, a global human community. With the help of naming and identifying, comparing and evaluating, the human race has built-up many structures. The social, the economic, the political, the cultural, the religious structures, the hierarchies and their laws have been grafted upon the planet in the cosmos by human society. The species has developed the concept of the state, the nation, the government, the currencies and economy, the division of territories in the name of State and Nation. Have you looked at that drama? How many countries were there in Europe before the First World War? After the Second World War? And how many are there now? Where were Pakistan and Bangla Desh before 1940 or 1945? You see, the human species plays the game of building up, dividing territories, giving them

names, building enclosures and passing laws.

So this superstructure is the fact of our daily living. We have to live simultaneously in this superstructure built - up systematically and grafted on the planet by the human species, and also we have to live in that which is not man-made — the self-generated, the self-propelled, the self-controlled cosmic Life, which the scientists say, has innumerable energies. They have started calling it the dance of Shiva, the interaction of various energies. The interaction of various energies is the source of the formation of matter. So we have to live simultaneously in these two abodes, two worlds. The cosmic energies have their own way of functioning. There is an interrelatedness, a magnificent orderliness, a majestic harmony among all the energies, maintaining their identity without disturbing the homogeneous unity or oneness of Life, that is the cosmic Life. If you would like to call all this as the cosmic laws or principles, you may so call them. We are related to them. We have the responsibility to live that relationship, to discharge our responsibility of contributing to that harmony, contributing to that orderliness or at least not to disturb the innate organic orderliness and harmony which seems to be the principle of Life. In human terminology, you may call it love and compassion. Love is the breath of harmony and compassion is the perfume of orderliness, which are not put together by imposing disciplines or codes of conduct but which come into existence in the movement of interaction among various expressions of Life.

I want to share with you this morning something rather deep. Tomorrow would be the last day of our gathering and dialogues, and we do not know if and when we meet again. So, there is an urge to share with you the profound depths of my being.

The Process of Becoming

Now, let us come back to the immediate fact of being born in a human society which has various structures, their laws, criteria, norms, their codes of conduct, and so on. They are necessary. Words as psychological currency, money and paper and coins as economic currency, ideas, concepts, theories as psychological currency, are necessary. For living together and interacting, we require certain measurements, certain symbols. So in this human society one is born and the wholeness of one's being has the physical part, the psychological part and that which transcends the psycho-physical. The complexity of human being is not at all less than the cosmic complexity. Complexity is the grandeur of life. If we do not convert it into complications, complexity is the beauty, the grandeur of life. It is not a primitive, simple, one cellular life. It is a multi-cellular life, each cell having the same creativity that the whole cosmos has. You know, we are talking about the science of life, the physics of consciousness. We are looking at the minutest expression of life as they look at the minutest particles of matter—the electron, the proton, the neutron. They are probing the space between two atoms. They are probing the energies contained in the emptiness of space, trying to find out the relation of those energies to the energy contained in the atom. The science of physics is also in a crisis today as the science of consciousness is in a crisis. The context of life has generated a necessity that these sciences look at themselves from a fresh point of view and may be, integrate with each other, synthesize with each other so that the dividing line between Physics and Metaphysics gets eliminated completely, wiped out completely. One sees this happening around the corner.

Now, in this human society when I am born, the physi-

cal structure, the biological structure grows and I have the responsibility to feed it properly, to clothe it, to let it sleep properly so that the body becomes healthy, becomes strong. The process of becoming is applied to the physical. You educate your speech, your verbalisation. So, you educate the body. You help the body to grow. You do not grow the body, you only help. It is the creativity in the body which flowers into the phenomenon of growth. A child becomes a boy, a handsome youth or a lovely beautiful cute little young girl. You know, it is a process. It is flowering by itself. You give only a helping hand. In this process of becoming, the word 'becoming' is used. I want to become physically strong, have a symmetrical beautiful body. Then you have to educate the conditioned energy, you have to educate the brain. So you go to school, to college, to the university and you become literate. Society requires your services in different fields. So according to your inclinations and talents, you study Arts or Science or Commerce or Business Management or Electronic Engineering and so on. So you become not only a graduate, but you become an Engineer or a Businessman or a Doctor or a Teacher. There the process of becoming is involved.

It would have been simple if only that process was involved. But this human society has developed a way of living, a culture of comparison, competition, evaluation. Therefore, in the simple process of becoming, the factor of ambition gets introduced. It is a foreign element. The process of becoming does not require it but the parents want the child to stand first in the class, to come in the merit list at the University and so on. So we teach children to compare themselves. Look at the root of misery, the suffering that parents sow in the psyche of the children because it was sown in their psyche by their parents. The child is compared in every way. He is more clever than his sister, she is

brilliant, he is dull, she is beautiful, he is not handsome. Comparison all the time. That comparison contaminates the psyche by the time the child becomes 5 or 6. Can we keep the process of becoming from being uncontaminated by comparison, by ambition? If we allow the contamination, the pollution, there is no end to misery. Then, just as you wanted to come first in the class or in the merit list, you also want to become the richest person in the village, the town, earn more and more. If earning honestly is not possible, if you cannot become rich through honesty, then you learn to break the law skilfully, in a clandestine way, without getting caught anywhere. Though earning a livelihood is a necessity for relating to human society, if in that process of earning, the foreign element of comparison, ambition get included, then the process of becoming gets very much dirty. Though it need not be dirty, yet it becomes ugly, shabby, inhuman at certain points.

Comparison-The Root of Misery

So you and I who live in society, have to go through all this—get educated, earn a livelihood and so on. As spiritual inquirers, persons interested in religion with capital ‘R’-Religiosity or Spirituality—can we live in this human society without ever comparing ourselves with anyone else? A non-comparative approach to one’s life is the foundation of a religious life, because comparison is bound to generate ambition, and ambition is bound to make you ruthless, callous, insensitive. Ambition is bound to make you assertive which is the beginning of aggression —aggression in thought, then aggression in words and may be aggression even on the physical level.

I would like you to look at the phenomenon along with me, look at it, look the root of violence, the root of all misery

and suffering, the root of jealousy, hatred, wars. What will happen if you do not compare? Then I can live sanely in this society at this juncture, earning my livelihood for a decent, reasonably comfortable life—not for hoarding money, not with the anxiety to take care of three more generations after I am gone. Let the generations take care of themselves.

So, the process of becoming is necessary and to keep that process of becoming simple, not complicated, is the responsibility of a religious person. Unless the process of becoming is kept at the minimum with a non-comparative approach, I do not think there can be peace and equipoise—that spontaneous equipoise inside you, which is another name for invincible peace, which is another name for the state of meditation. What is meditation but a spontaneous, effortless equipoise within you in the midst of the movement of relationships? It is not the equipoise of sitting somewhere in physical isolation, whether in a room or in a cave, in the network of psychological withdrawals and escapisms. If at all there is any peace in such isolation, it is sure to be dead. It will not have any dynamism. A dynamic peace vibrating with creativity is possible only in the midst of relationships.

So, one is sharing this morning the responsibility to relate to society in the name of religion, in the name of spirituality. You cannot run away from the responsibilities, to Ashrams, to Maths, to Mandirs, temples. Begging your way through life in the name of Sanyas, has had its day. Collecting funds in the name of Ashrams and living a parasitic life, has had its day. Do you see the context that is changing not only in India but everywhere? Even the days of consumerist capitalism are numbered not only in India but even in U.S.A. and other countries. It is a question of

time, and that too is not going to be very long, looking at the global situation, both economic and political.

So, I do not run away, I am where I am. If you have looked sufficiently clearly to the point of keeping the process of becoming simple and not complicated or contaminated or polluted, please, look with me at another factor of our life.

Leakages of Vital Energy

Wherever you might be placed by birth, in a village, a township or a city, you will never have all the external factors supportive to your inner striving or inner Sadhana. Suppose you are born in Bombay, Calcutta, Delhi or Ahmedabad or such big cities. You are born there, you have to live there and you like the facilities of city life. You have a job and the colleagues in the profession may hurt you, may ignore you, may not accept you, may not like your company and so on. City life has its own travails. Now you have to sit down and ask yourself if you want to live in a city or move away to a smaller place. If your decision is in favour of city life, then one has to learn not to have friction everyday while travelling by car or train or bus or three-wheeler. One must learn not to indulge in self-pity by constantly thinking, what is this pollution, what is this city life and so on. You see, these are the leakages for the vital energy. Unless you plug those leakages, when you sit down in meditation or silence, you will find that you are exhausted, fatigued and within a few minutes you will become drowsy instead of silent. This inner friction, the sting of that inner friction makes you feel annoyed. You get irritated. If you have taken up a job, then within a week you will see what kind of colleagues are there with whom you have to work and what kind of boss is there. Either you do the job or you leave it. Now there are compul-

sions that you have to keep up the job, then you have to learn to ignore the secondary factors of the temperamental idiosyncrasies of the colleagues and the boss. You have to laugh things out and not cry over them, not torture yourself over them or pity yourself about them. Do you see my point? There is a way of living, an alternative way of living. Meditation is a holistic, alternative way of living. Nothing is outside the field of meditation, because you will be in that office of yours or place for 7 or 8 hours. If the neuro-chemical system is tortured by self-pity, annoyance, irritation, a grudge against the city, a grudge against the colleagues, a grudge against the job, a grudge against yourself, then how will you live? We are concerned with living, are we not?

So, one has to reconcile to the unpleasantness of the situation. Once you have reconciled, then there is no constant friction. Once you do not create a grudge or issue out of it, then you can relax and work. In that unpleasant situation where you have to be everyday for 7 or 8 hours, at least your neuro-chemical system will then be free of torture, from pressure, from tension.

One has also to move through betrayal by friends. The phrase "betrayal by friends" reminds me of the acid test of Mahatma Gandhi's life. Most of you know that he was against partition, division of India, partition of India. But he was not a member of the organisation Congress which he had lead. That Congress organisation and its leaders, discussing the issue with Mountbatten and others, did not feel that Mahatma Gandhi was any more necessary as a leader of the organisation. I do not name the leaders, but when they were with Mountbatten, they told him that they were willing to accept partition. Mountbatten says, "What about Bapu?" And one of the leaders says, "We shall

take care of him." Mountbatten writes a small note to Gandhiji and informs him of what deliberations had taken place. After that the note is lying with Gandhiji on his small desk. After a few hours, the three leaders arrived and tried to impress upon Mahatma Gandhi the inevitability of accepting partition and Gandhiji asked one suggestive question, "Have you committed yourselves to it?" "No, Bapu. No, no, no. How could we commit without you?" Gandhiji knew that they had committed and they told him, "No, no, we have not committed." So, Gandhiji says, "You need not wait for my approval. I am not even a four Anna member of your Congress." He did not show them Lord Mountbatten's note. Nonviolence is nothing but love and compassion, even when there are betrayals by friends, by colleagues. Can there be a bigger betrayal than this in your life or in my life? And we build up issues out of small phenomena.

Jesus of Nazareth had asked his twelve disciples to keep awake with him on that last night after the last supper. He knew what was coming and he started praying, but his colleagues slept away. They could not keep awake with him even for one night. And Jesus knew it and he said, "Peter, I knew that you would deny me thrice before the sun rises". This is the ground reality of life. You cannot demand and command life. There may be pleasure, there may be pain. There may be very faithful friends, loyal friends, and loving friends and there may be friends who will betray you. You have to live through such betrayals.

Gandhiji never said a word. After the three leaders left, he never complained to anyone. These are the facts noted by the inmates around him. And Jesus only said, "Father, forgive them. They know not what they are doing." This is the way of living. Dying to the ego, that could have created a grudge.

So I was saying that one has to first sit down and discuss with oneself. If you go to a smaller place, you do not have the facilities of the bigger one, and if you live in the bigger place, you cannot avoid unpleasant irritations. If the job brings you more money, then there are more complications to reconcile to also.

So what is the priority? I am suggesting it to you that one must find out the priorities of life in order to relate to the man-made world, man-made structures in the name of human society. You cannot run away. You have to live in their midst. So, one has to sit down with oneself, not deceive and cheat oneself. If you want riches and wealth, you have to admit that fact to yourself. You have also to pay the price for that. So, the alternative way of living requires elimination of the factors of comparison, competition, ambition, aggression, and elimination of the factors of self-pity, grudge and suffering. Do you see, this is a necessity. If this point is sufficiently clear, will you move with me to still another point?

Family Responsibilities

We have to cover a vast ground in a short time. The third kind of responsibility is the roles that we accept voluntarily because of our psycho-physical needs or requirements. Marriage is a psycho-physical necessity. Nothing to feel shy about it. Nothing to be ashamed about it. If one feels it, then one has to be aware of the implications of married life which is a joint adventure. Human beings cannot be carbon copies of one another. They are going to be uniquely different —temperamentally, conditionally, physically. So, do I want to launch upon that joint adventure and live with a life partner? One has to sort out things for oneself and not accept anything because it is a tradition, a

convention, because then you will be passive, you will not feel that you are responsible for what you do, and you will sow the seeds of many a misery and suffering.

Now, If I accept married life, a joint life, then the role of being a husband or a wife is accepted by me, with all its limitations, its assets, its difficulties, its dangers, its risks. Every relationship limits freedom. It enriches life in the name of more security. But you pay the price for security by curtailing freedom. Do you see the dance of life? So, one must be aware of the implications of curtailment of freedom once you accept being a husband, when you accept being a father or a mother. It is a psycho-physical need of having my children, my family. Nothing wrong with it. But then you have the role of the father or the mother and the responsibilities involved in parenthood. It is meaningless to create a grudge and a friction. 'These children behave this way and they take all my time, they are unmanageable. I have no time for my Pooja, my Japam'. Oh! the human travail ! Please do see this. You want to be practical? This is the practical religion, the practical meditation I am talking about. Then one has to grow with the child. The parents that do not grow with the child psychologically do not evolve, do not blossom, because the children can teach you a hundred things. By defying you, they teach you humility. By sometimes insulting you, they are teaching you tolerance. The child is not only the father of man but the teacher of man. It is beautiful when children disturb you. But you get upset, then again there is a friction, a grudge and self-pity. Do you see, how we invent self-misery? Misery, psychological suffering is self-inflicted, self-generated. You want to play the role of parents and of a husband, a wife but you do not want the responsibilities involved in it. You cannot have both. So, the process of becoming in relation to human society can be kept simple so that the damage done to you in that

process of wear and tear can be kept to the minimum.

Relationship with Cosmic Life

Now let me turn to the other — the organic relationship with the real abode, the cosmos or the cosmic life, where the process of becoming is completely irrelevant. The process of knowing and experiencing is helpful to an extent. You have to know about the cosmos — the relationship between the sun, the moon, the earth and the other planets, their action upon you the moment you are born, the interaction between your temperament and the movement of those planets and stars and so on. So life is beautifully complex.

So, now one has to live one's organic relationship with the cosmos. The cosmic energies are moving. They do not depend upon human thought, human calculations. They have their own order and they have their own harmonious movement, holistic movement. You may know about it through words, astronomy, astrology. You may know about what is matter and energy with the help of Physics. You may know about what is human mind or thought structure with the help of psychology. That verbal inquiry, that academic theoretical inquiry is helpful for the foundation. You lay the foundation through verbal inquiry but the foundation is not the construction of the building. After having laid that foundation, what do I do? I have known verbally about the vastness, the infinity of the cosmos, the timelessness of Life. Then what do I do? I do nothing.

Please do see now. The movement of knowing, i.e. the acquisitive movement of knowing, experiencing the wholeness of Life, has to stop. The desire to become emancipated, liberated, the desire to live in Samadhi leading you

towards the process of becoming through Tantra, Mantra, Hatha, Raja Yoga, Laya Yoga, Nada Yoga and so on has to stop. The process of becoming has to come to a halt. They are irrelevant to the communion with that which 'IS'. Every mental effort will take you away from the fact of that which 'IS', because you are trying to touch it with the word, with the idea, with the technique. And the Divinity, the ground reality of Life, eludes the touch of your words. So, no mental activity is relevant to the communion with that which 'IS'. You have to live the relationship with the cosmos, the organic relationship with the cosmos and that relationship can be lived only through the non-action of the word, the thought, the concept. Effort is a psycho-physical activity. Now your effort was necessary for the process of becoming in the human society. Here, effort is of no relevance at all, because every effort creates a disturbance in your neuro-chemical system. Thought creates a tension, feeling creates a pressure on your chemical system. The equilibrium, even the metabolic equilibrium gets disturbed by the slightest effort. So, it is very necessary, vitally necessary to see that all psycho-physical efforts have no value whatsoever. Fullstop. The process of knowing, experiencing, becoming, has to end completely. The verbal inquiry, the cerebral, non-cerebral explorations, have to cease unconditionally, in case one would like to commune with Life. Only when the psycho-physical efforts discontinue, the metabolic system evolves a receptivity towards that which 'IS'.

As long as we are cluttered with thoughts, ideas, concepts, and we are busy with practices, the metabolic system closes down within itself. When the inquiry ceases, when the explorations cease, then the metabolic system becomes receptive to that which is outside the body, to space and the innumerable, unconditioned energies contained in space. Receptivity opens the door, and what we call silence,

what we call cessation of verbal inquiry, cessation of the movement of the conditioned mind, opens the door for the other to enter. Then the descent of the Supramental or the Unconditioned, or the Divine takes place. For the meeting and the blending of the two, the cosmic energy contained in this individuated single human body and the cosmic energy, undivided and unindividuated outside of you, the human body is the meeting place. Whatever is contained in the microcosm of the human body, is contained in the macro-cosm of the cosmos.

So silence becomes the place in which the meeting takes place and the blending take place. You do not blend it with the blender of human effort. You are not there. The 'you', the 'I' cannot become liberated. The 'I' is the monitor of the past. It is a concept, it is an idea attached to the past. And every effort is the continuity of the past.

So, when that effort ceases, then all effort is surrendered at the altar of effortlessness or naturalness of your life. Even the word 'spontaneity' stinks of some manipulation because it implies being the witness or being spontaneous. You know, the word is so lame, the verbal communication is so imperfect, that the more I indulge in it, the more the weakness of the word is manifested. ... And it is our destiny to communicate through words.

Living in the State of Communion

So, getting rooted in the effortlessness, getting rooted in the cessation of the movement of the conditioned mind, is the only way to get related to that which 'IS', to the Divinity, to the self-generated mysterious phenomenon of Life. And that communion is meditation. Living in that state of communion is living in Samadhi, living in that dimension,

that abode and working from that abode on the psycho-physical level. Then your perception has a different quality and your response has a different flavour. They are not born of the stress and strain of thoughts and ideas and calculations and conclusions. It is the communion that breathes through you, it is the state of communion that sees through your eyes. And, please, I am not being poetic. I am just verbalising the simple truth. But life is poetry, what can I do? Life is music.

So living in that state of communion, living from that state of communion and relating to the man-made world from that state of communion, is possible, my friends. It is possible for everyone of us. The consummation of human growth lies in that direction and not in the horizontal extension of property, wealth and power. That may be a requirement for living in a human society. But if you forget that you are a member of the cosmos, that the cosmos is your abode and if you disturb the cosmic principle of order and harmony and interrelatedness, then all the wealth in the world will not give you inner peace and equi-balance.

Dia to the Process of Becoming

So die to the process of becoming. Dying to the process of becoming, being aware that you are organically related to the Wholeness, you are never lonely, never helpless. You have the protection of the cosmic energies which nothing can take away from you. I said, spirituality is the awareness of your own abode, awareness of the nature of your relation with that abode and your responsibility towards it. We are so much aware of social responsibility, responsibility to the family. But what about your responsibility to the Divinity? Being and Becoming — these are the two mutually supplementary and complementary dimensions of our

life. We are multidimensional creatures. The dimension of communion and the dimension of communication and the interaction between them — you have to live in both the dimensions simultaneously. Having your abode in one as you have your abode in the self-consciousness, in the thought consciousness. The dimension of self awareness can be extended to the cosmic awareness and planetary consciousness.

A radical mutation in the quality of human consciousness will take place. We are concerned with preparing the ground for the emergence of a new human race. Freedom from the known, is the challenge for the whole human race. We are working upon ourselves on behalf of the human race. And by our success, we are inserting some new energy into the orbit of the human psyche. Probe and go deeper and deeper into the orbit of the human psyche. Probe and go deeper and deeper into the theme of dying while one is living. Dying is dying to the process of becoming, dying to the movement of comparison, competition, assertion and aggression, dying to the movement of withdrawal, escapism, self-pity leading towards depressive psychosis, dying to every experience as you live and go through it, dying to the pleasure, the pain that you go through. Die to it the moment you have gone through it. It is possible. It is possible not to create new Prarabdha or new conditionings. When you do not allow any residue to be left behind, then the new destiny or the Prarabdha or conditionings are not created.

When you live through the collected conditionings, the biological inheritance, the psychological inheritance, when you live through them without getting attached or addicted, they get terminated in this very life. Dying of the ego is terminating the Prarabdha or the collected conditionings

The art of dying while living

that are represented within us through biological and psychological inheritance. Do you see, there is nothing fearful about it. Remove the word 'dying' and replace it by 'negating'. Total negation. Then it has a different quality, a different perfume. It is great fun.

Mount Abu

18 November, 1994

BONDAGE AND FREEDOM

In this festival of friendship, with your permission, I would like to pay my homage to General. B.C.Joshi, the Head of the Indian Army, who expired yesterday. Right now his body is getting consumed by flames in Delhi.

The Indian Government has lost one of the most efficient, competent and vital Army Officers at a very critical juncture of national life. The Indian people have lost a genuinely religious nationalist head of the Army, and I have personally lost a very precious friend. B.C. Joshi had come to meet me in 1992. He had studied the teachings of Ramakrishana, Vivekananda, Shri Aurobindo, Maharshi Ramana, Shri Krishanmurti. Somebody happened to give him Vimalaji's books. He studied them for six long months and then flew from Delhi to meet us. We spent two long hours together. He had come to discuss the problem of how to introduce the study of mind and meditation in the syllabus for training army jawans. He was a very brilliant person and nearly a scholar, a transparently honest inquirer. At the end of our dialogue, he said, "Perhaps after my retirement I will come and spend some days with you." After six months of that meeting, to which some of you present here have been witnesses, he sent his Deputy to Dalhousie. To my great surprise and joy, The draft of the changed curriculum and the training course was sent to me. But that is life! In the last two weeks one has lost two very precious friends. On the 7th of November I lost my friend Prembhai of Vanawasi Sevashram, Mirzapur, U.P. He and his wife had worked with me, and he had come to Delhi on 16th of October to meet us, to discuss certain issues. But that is life for you! It is urgently necessary to learn to live, because unpredictable death accompanies you.

We were discussing for the last few days the issue of freedom, truth, love and compassion. This morning shall we look at the fact of bondage rather than the idea of freedom or truth? Is the inquiry of freedom based upon the realisation and awareness of the nature of bondage, the content of bondage? Are we aware why we have an urge to be free? What has deprived the dimension of freedom from us? Why is there not love, the elegance, the tenderness of love in our lives?

The Urge For Freedom

My friends, understanding the nature of bondage is the beginning of freedom. Understanding the content of bondage gets converted into a factual urge for freedom. We must be very clear whether we genuinely want freedom, liberation, emancipation, Mukti, Moksha, Nirwana, and what have you. Do we really want that? Or, are we turning to religious inquiry because we are born in the land of India and it is fashionable to do so because Mukti, emancipation is a must and everyone must turn to it? We have read about it, we have heard about it. So do we want to conform to a tradition and turn to it out of the desire to conform and be with the majority or is it because the most fashionable religious talk is to talk about Nirwana, of emancipation, of Samadhi?

Do we turn to Sadhana or inquiry because of the passive acceptance of that which has been hammered into us by parents, by schools, by religious centres, books, the so called saints? Is it a passive acceptance? My dear friends, if we turn to Sadhana due to a passive acceptance, due to the authority of tradition, there will not be a vitality in the process of inquiry. Vitality comes when there is a genuine personal first-hand urge to discover freedom for the sake of freedom and not because it is holy or sacred or it is a

must or it has to be done, must be done. Acceptance of authority erodes all vitality. Do I turn to religious Sadhana or inquiry, do I turn to it because my marriage has failed and that failure pricks me everyday? So I turn to some religious Ashram, some Swami, some Bhagawati, some Bhagawan. Is it a reaction to the failure in married life, to a failure in business? Religious inquiry, spirituality is not a refuge. It is not a network of escapes. It is not a refuge to be sought after failures. Then the momentum and vitality in the inquiry will depend upon the momentum of the reaction. Supposing you come across someone who suits you psychologically, then you will get into a sense of self-complacency, of having got or having arrived. So reaction cannot be mistaken for the urge. The habit of traditional conformism should not be misunderstood for an urge to discover freedom. So, one has to look at the fact of one's life and find out what is missing, where is the bondage, how did it come into existence, how does the bondage survive? After having known that it is there, why and how is it allowed to continue? We must come to grips with the facts of life.

Disorderly Living

So I turn to myself, to my daily life, the texture, the fibre of my relationship with others and watch it in order to understand it. I keep aside the talk of peace, silence, meditation, freedom. I say, let me come to grips with facts. Where is the bondage? What am I calling bondage? Why is there no freedom? And do I, after watching that daily living, do I really understand that the haphazard, the disorderly, the shabby way of living, is the bondage? I do things the way I like, when I like, how I like — whether it is taking meals, going to bed, talking to friends, spending the holidays. What is my relationship to living? Is there order in my life? If I find that there is no order, there is disorder, there is chaos, there

is anarchy on the physical level, do I justify that, or do I see that, that is bondage? Every disorder generates chaos. Every disorder leads to emotional anarchy and intellectual chaos. There is no rhythm in living. Order and rhythm go together. Not the discipline of taking a vow and following the vow or obeying the vow. That is not order. Order is the perfume of understanding. Order has the elegance of spontaneity, effortlessness. So, do I understand that this chaotic, shabby, disorderly living at the sensual, at the verbal, at the mental level is bondage? Do I really see for myself—not because religious books have called it bondage—do I see for myself how it deprives me of a spontaneous initiative in living? You know, freedom is having the initiative—undamaged, unmutated initiative. But the habit pattern, the disorderly way of living, generates its compulsions, stimulates impulses, and my behaviour becomes impulsive. Impulsiveness generates impatience. Impatience leads to imbalance in behaviour. It is very simple.

So, do I realise that impatience, that imbalance is bondage? Or do I justify that? Please do see this. Because mere observation will not be a supportive measure unless we realise its contents and genuinely understand the implications. Unless the bondage, the sting of the bondage hurts you deeply, there will not be the urge for freedom. Then you will say, "Yes, I have seen it, it is bondage." And the matter ends there. People have been living that way. That is the way of living. Our forefathers have lived that way. You know, the defence and justification come up every moment. We defend what we do, we justify what we do—the way we talk, the words we use, the attitudes, the approaches that we have. So if we go on justifying the bondage, defending the bondage, and if we go on feeling secure in the bondage, how can there be any inquiry or exploration worth the name? So, if and when I have understood the nature of

bondage and it hurts me to have those chains or fetters on my psyche, when that imbalance and impatience expressed in my behaviour hurts the sense of dignity and decency in me, then out of that lovely sorrow, that sharpness of sorrow, the urge for Sadhana, the urge for inquiry will have substance. Otherwise, it will have only an emotional flare-up, a verbal existence or an additional neurological tension in the name of Sadhana. Please do see. We do not want to add to the tensions and pressures that we have. God should not be an additional problem. And we ourselves create a problem. Whatever we touch, we create a problem out of it.

So, the last day, before we depart, a friendly hint, that one should proceed with Sadhana if and when there is that first-hand personal urge for it — not as a reaction to something that happens, because freedom is a very dangerous thing. It is vulnerability to life in every sense of the term. It is dropping the sense of exclusive belonging to enclosures in the name of family, community, country, ideology. It is a defencelessness. It is vulnerability. You can belong to the all inclusive Life or you belong nowhere. There is no exclusiveness in the sense of belonging which closes you in, instead of opening you up.

So freedom is a dangerous thing. One cannot play around with it casually. Truth is both creative and destructive. It flashes across your consciousness. It destroys your illusions about yourself. It demolishes all the images that you have built about yourself. It is not always pleasant, It is not always comfortable. The dawning of truth can be painful.

What Do I Do?

Supposing I have seen that it is a dangerous explora-

tion, that it will shatter all the images that I have built about myself or people around me have constructed around me, then what do I do?. We live in the cages of our images — built by others, accepted by us and built by us also. Supposing there is the genuine urge and there is no fear of vulnerability or defencelessness — innocence is defencelessness — then what do I do? Where do I begin? If all these points are taken care of, if I were in that position, then I would not bother about freedom or meditation or Samadhi. I would tackle every thread of bondage every moment. That is to say, I would educate myself in an orderly way of living, in an orderly way of talking, in an orderly way of thinking. Elimination of chaos, elimination of anarchy is the generation of order. Order cannot have a blueprint, but I can trace the disorder and say, well, from today there will not be this shabby disorder, there will be no postponement of doing things. I will see that proper things are done at the proper time, in the proper way. Who will decide what is proper? I will decide for myself, because I know the situation in the family, because I know my job and its compulsions upon me, and because I know my physical idiosyncrasies. So, I have to discover what is proper — the proper way and the proper things to be done in the proper manner.

Sadhana Is A Supportive Measure

Every person has to carve the path of Sadhana out of his own past. There cannot be a steamroller of Sadhana universally applicable. That is possible when you have to study Mantra, because you are dealing with sound energy. It is possible when you practice Tantra, because you are dealing with sex energy. So when you are dealing with Hatha Yoga, Tantra, Mantra Yoga, other practices and disciplines, there it is possible, because you have the discipline given by the Shastra, the science and you have to follow it. But

here, with every individual, the past has a different design. The conditionings have a different model, a different design. So one has to carve a path of Sadhana out of one's own being —like a piece of sculpture. It depends upon whether the material is stone or bronze or whatever else. When you know the material then you can tackle it properly.

So, I will find out what my conditionings are — born in a Hindu family, a Vaishnav family, a Jain family, a Muslim family, a Buddhist family. What is the soil on which I stand? What is the nature of my conditioning? I have seen the disorder, now I want to do away with the disorder, the chaos. So I turn to my conditionings, which have caused the disorder — the tendencies, the stresses, the inheritance, both biological and psychological, the habits inherited and the habits cultivated by me. So I turn to all those conditionings. I also turn to my temperament, the temperamental make-up. Supposing I have an emotionally powerful temperament, then, may be, I could take the help of sound energy. I could chant something, sing something, recite something so that the emotions scattered in various directions are brought together and the restless mind, the impulsive mind is soothed and quietened. I use the sound energy in whatever forms are available to me according to my conditionings. I may play the Sitar, and by playing the Sitar merge all the restlessness and unsteadiness of the mind into the music of the Sitar or the Flute. If I cannot play it, I might listen to it. I use that. If I am a painter, then I will take the brush and the colours and sit down so that the mind gets focussed on one point. The dissipated energy, the energy scattered in various directions gets focussed on one point. So, what is the supportive measure for quietening the mind and helping it to go into non-action, will differ from individual to individual.

My friends, all Sadhana is a supportive measure. That is the value of it, because inwardly there is nowhere to go and nothing to achieve. Inwardly there is only to understand what life is, what you are, and live the understanding. Spirituality is not a field of becoming, achieving, arriving. It is being what you are. So the supportive measures are taken out of my conditionings. I use the past skilfully, I convert the bondage into a supportive measure. This is the art of revolution, psychic revolution.

Many of you might be aware what Mahatma Gandhi used to say. He used to say, "I am an artist of revolution. I convert difficulties into opportunities." If the past is the substance of my neuro-chemical being and if it cannot be thrown away, the only option for me is to use it for freedom. So, I will decide what kind of supportive measure is going to help me to smooth the tortured nerves, pacify the tortured mind, relax the mind, get all the energies together, and focus them on non-action.

What Price Am I Willing To Pay?

If that point is clear, I would proceed and ask myself how far am I willing to go on this path of freedom, truth and love? What price am I willing to pay? You pay the price. You go to schools and colleges for 10, 12, 15 years for securing a degree, for securing a job. You pay a price when you get married. For the comfort and security of married life, you pay the price by curtailing your freedom, adjusting, adapting yourself to the temperaments of other members of your family. What is this business of paying the price and to whom? To none else than yourself. But what is the price? The price is living the truth the moment you understand it, irrespective of the immediate consequences and inconven-

iences caused by the living of it, irrespective of the misunderstandings and misinterpretations of my behaviour by the near and dear ones, because truth is to be lived. It is not a verbal description of an idea. It is your relationship with life. It has to be lived. Am I willing to live the truth in daily living, in the daily travail of life?

Let me take an example. I had a friend who also is no more. He was a very honest person, a Government Officer. Your friend Vimala has very close friendship with Government Officers and politicians and musicians and sinners and saints and so many others. So whenever he would meet me, he would complain, how there was corruption in society, how he was pained and hurt and what has happened to the moral values of this country, what has happened to the so called religious country. He would complain every time. And I would say to him, "My friend, the best and the most you can do is to live those values. Why do you look at others? Why are you concerned about improving and changing them? For retaining your sanity, live the values that you would like others to live." And our discussion would go on. Unfortunately, one of his sons misappropriated money to the tune of some hundred thousands, some lakhs, and went home to father. So, the father, who was complaining about the corruption, the deterioration in moral values, did not see his son as a citizen of India, and did not refuse to cover up his corruption. He tried to help him by selling the jewellery in the house, cashing the unmatured deposits and so on. He did not see in that young man a citizen of India. He did not see the moral deterioration. He saw the son. He did not live the truth that he was talking about for years with me. Do you see what is paying the price?

If you see that national boundaries, State boundaries

are man-made, can you identify yourself with the country India and say, "I am a nationalist, I am an Indian." Or would you say, "I am Indian by birth. But I have transcended those identifications and I am a human being belonging to the whole global human family?" If I say I am a nationalist, will I live that nationalism in my living, in my daily life? Or when it comes to marrying my daughter or son, I will turn to the caste. On one hand I would say that casteism, communalism damages nationalism, but when it comes to marrying my son, my daughter, I look to the caste. Do you see? That is a kind of hypocrisy, my friends, if you would forgive me. Living the life of a hypocrite in different fields—economic, social, family, religious, etc., and then talking of a spiritual inquiry would be a meaningless thing.

So, the moment I understand the truth, I have to live it, paying the price for it. Otherwise, truth is a very destructive force. As the light of the sun destroys the darkness, the penetrating energy of truth will destroy the illusions inside, though you may not accept that outwardly. It will prick you and it will make your life miserable. You do not want to add to the misery of life. Religiosity is the ending of psychological misery and suffering. We do not want to add to it. So, one may talk about unconditional absolute freedom, talk about meditation, samadhi and so on, but am I prepared to live that? I will get reduced to nobodyness and nothingness. Maybe, meditation points out to me that life is nothing but nothingness, emptiness. It is a vast emptiness, and you are organically part of that emptiness and nothingness. Do I want to be somebody in society? Then the truth dawns upon you that there is nobodyness, that this identification with the name, the body, this identification with the qualities, the actions, their results is just a man-made game. It has no reality. It has a social utility but no reality. If that is pointed out, then what happens to the inner stuff of con-

sciousness? The inner stuff of consciousness is the awareness of nobodiness, the awareness of nothingness. Silence clothed in flesh and bone. Not very pleasant, is it?

Relationship And Aloneness

Now, let us come down to a still more pragmatic approach to daily living. I live in relationship. Life is relationship. So, I have to move through various relationships everyday — as a husband, as a father, as a mother, as a client, as a lawyer, as an industrialist, as a businessman and so on. Relationships. And there is a dynamics of relationships. I handle it sanely, rationally, logically, without self—deceptions, without cheating of others. I live very sensibly, as a responsible person. I live all that. But relationship is one dimension of life. Aloneness is another dimension of life, because when I was born, I was neither a husband nor a father, nor a mother, nor a businessman, nor a teacher, nor a farmer. There is a substance to my Is-ness which is absolutely not related to all these roles that I have to play through life, and to all the relationships that I have to go through. That is an outer crust, a protective crust. But the aloneness — What am I when I am not a Hindu, an Indian, a male or a female, a mother, a child? When all those additional roles of my life and relationships are brushed aside, what remains of me except the humanness which is the form Divinity has voluntarily taken upon Itself? Divinity has clothed itself in a human form, a beautiful human form — the most evolved complexity of life.

So, relationship is one aspect, one dimension and aloneness is another. Denudation of the sense of relationship is aloneness, solitude. Do I live that solitude? Because freedom is spontaneous equilibrium, equipoise. That aloneness and the movement of relationship will have to

be balanced, a harmonious balance between the two. Not a contradiction, not a conflict, not a tussle between the two. They should not be incompatible. They should be supplementary and complementary to each other. Do I spend any time in that aloneness or do I say, I have no time? We are used to talking, addicted to verbalisation. We talk even in sleep. Speech which is carved out of sound is itself an extension of silence. You draw a point on a paper and you stretch it. It becomes a line. Sound is the extension of silence and speech is the manipulation of sound energy. Now I go on talking throughout the day and hearing others also talking throughout the day. What about that silence, the source of sound and speech which is also the substance of my being? Do I live at that source? Do I have any relationship with the wordless, word-free sound and sound-free silence? I never have time to spend there. I am moving all the time—physically at the sensual level, at the verbal level, and at the mental level. Movement or motion is one dimension of life and motionlessness is another. Our lives are lop-sided, one-sided. We are concerned with speech, with movement, with relationship and not with the non-motion, the silence and the solitude. As soon as these two dimensions are balanced harmoniously, freedom would be the by-product of that, peace would be the by-product of that. Peace cannot be sought. It does not live in a vacuum. Freedom does not live in a vacuum, not in a void. These are all the by-products of our relationship to Life.

Living The Supreme Priority

So I would educate myself in relating to silence, to solitude, to non-motion—physical, verbal, psychological, intellectual. Have I got the time to do that? I have a job, I have to cook my meals, I have to take care of my husband and children. I have no time. Or, I have to take care of my wife

and children. There is intellectual priority but in daily living that is the last thing. That is the pathetic condition. If the intellectual priority becomes the emotional priority, and that becomes the priority at the sensual level then you live that priority. If the sense of urgency to live the priority is not there, then inquiry does not flower into understanding. The priority has to be lived. If you say mutation is my supreme priority, Mukti, Moksha is my supreme priority, and then sixteen hours a day you are dealing with money and are anxious, worried about that. Or you are worried about family. So to live the priority one has to organize one's life.

Let me come to the last point. One has to organise the life, one has to organise the day. The supreme priority has to be lived everyday. You live it as you bathe the body, you clothe the body, you feed the body. You live the relationship with your family, your job, your factory, your business. Living the relationship with the Divinity — no postponement, no procrastination. I will do it today, tomorrow, day after tomorrow. Now today I have a guest, day after tomorrow I have a headache or I am too tired after that. We find excuses and therefore the so called inquiry remains the prisoner of intellection, mentation, ideation. It remains imprisoned at the intellectual level, occasionally at the emotional level, but nothing happens. If we are concerned about its happening in life, then inquiry has to be lived at every level of life, correlated to everything that you do. It is the correlation of knowledge to the act of living that results in the phenomenon of understanding and then you carry the perfume of awareness in whatever you do.

Lastly, my friends, there is tomorrow, the day after, the next month, the next year for organising life on the material level, on the physical level. You move with chronological time. You move also with psychological time. But when it

comes to the discovery of the nature of Reality, the mystery of Life or the meaning of Life, there is no tomorrow. The relationship with tomorrow is on the psycho-physical level, but at the level of that which transcends the mind, the brain, that which transcends knowledge, at that dimension of our life, the currency of psychological time has no value. Tomorrow has no value. There in the field of inquiry, the moment one says to oneself, I will do it tomorrow, then at that very moment I am sanctioning the habit pattern to continue till tomorrow. I shall do it tomorrow means I shall continue what I am doing till tomorrow. Please do see this. You sanction the continuity of the past. You provide fuel to it when you say tomorrow. For buying things, for organising the material things at home, provisions and so on, for doing, discharging social responsibilities, there is a tomorrow. It may be necessary for such functions. But for psychic functioning, for the functioning of inquiry, for the movement of inquiry there is no tomorrow, because it is only an idea.

Whatever is to be done, is to be done in the timeless present, which is only the emanation of Eternity.

I do not know, what has been spoken through me and by me since the 14th. Those of you who have come for the first time, may have found uncomfortable intensity on my part and perhaps an unpleasant sharpness or straight forwardness. But every meeting with genuine Sadhakas, Mumukshus, inquirers is treated by me as the last meeting. I have never depended upon tomorrow. So, when I saw so many of you from various cross-sections of society, travelling all the way from Maharashtra, from Bombay, from different parts of Gujarat, coming here, there was no desire to spare you.

I am grateful to you for giving me the opportunity of

sharing the innermost core of my being as far as it was possible through words. If anybody's sensitivity has been hurt, Truth is responsible for it, not me!

Thank you all, thank you all.

Mount Abu,
19 November, 1994

THE ART OF DYING WHILE LIVING

The Art and Science of dying while one is living is an extremely sensitive theme. It is sensitive because the word dying or death is overloaded with traditional misconceptions, prejudices and a positive dislike.

So what do we mean when we ask whether dying while living is possible?

It seem to me that the total unconditional, spontaneous dropping away of all sense of identity, is the content of dying while one is living.

My friends, it is possible, while living, to be in such a state where there are no psychological enclosures, where there is no sense of belonging, no sense of being attached to individuals, situations or circumstances.

Vimala Thakar