

# **The Mystery of Silence**



**Vimala Thakar**

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**THE MYSTERY OF SILENCE**

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## FIRST TALK, JUNE 5th 1976

We have to pass from non-verbal communion to a verbal communication. When we are together in a space, free of verbalization, untouched by the thought-movement, there is a beauty and a wholeness in that togetherness. When we have to touch that space with words, there is a sense of hesitation and there is a haltingness, a cautiousness that makes one go very slowly into the realm of words, thought, knowledge, experience, and so on.

One is extremely glad to see so many here for the week-end, there will be talks and discussions about silence.

Life is a mystery that contains silence which is free of movement. Silence is the total negation of movement. Life contains that silence, that stillness, that state of unconditional freedom from movement or motion, and it also contains mind which is constantly moving.

Mind is energy. Some part of the energy has been conditioned, trained, cultivated by the human race, and some part of that energy is not conditioned, is unconditioned. The conditioned part of that energy, the conditioned part of the mind, has a frame of time and space, as a painting or a picture has a frame into which you fix it. The conditioned part of energy seems to have been fixed into the frame of knowledge, experience, and inheritance. It is framed in time and space. The movement of that energy through time, through space, through thought - that is word - has many patterns, many designs.

Mind has conditioned and unconditioned aspects to its being. The conditioned part of the mind; the energy, moving outward from the centre of the body; touches the forms, colours, sounds, things, shapes, the inanimate, the animate things, the mountains, rivers, trees, animals, the human beings. That energy moving from the centre of the body may move through your eyes, through your ears, the nostrils, your breath, through the skin. It has many doors and windows through which it can move outward, away from the body to touch something, to feel it, to react to it.

With the help of this outgoing movement of the mind, man has created civilization, society, sciences,

technology, literature, philosophy, theology, a. s. o. - a huge panorama of concepts and ideas. And we teach the children to use that energy in certain cerebral ways. The child is trained to move through a thought as a response of memory; feeling as a response of conditioning. The children are taught knowing, experiencing, and these are cerebral ways of behaviour. Now the fundamental characteristic of this outgoing movement of energy is that it brings something back. When it moves out through any of the sense-organs, when it touches something through some sense-organ or the other, it brings back either a piece of information or an experience. There is an immediate result of the movement that can be indicated. You feel that you have acquired something through it: you have acquired knowledge, you have acquired experience. That is one characteristic of the movement.

The outgoing movement has another characteristic; it can do something to the objects around it. It acquires and brings back knowledge or experience, or it reacts to the situation, to the things, to the beings, and it does something to them. It can operate upon them according to the ways that are taught. So either you acquire or you operate. You bring back something which you can own, which you can possess, or you can change, you can mould, you can control, you can react to.

So this outgoing and ingoing movement of conditioned energy, conditioned mind, has a framework of total human knowledge and experience. It works in that. And very easily one equips the whole movement of life with this tiny bit of the movement of conditioned energy. Because this gives immediate results: you can acquire money, prestige, power, knowledge, experiences, you can react upon people, you can change them, own them, possess them, force them. So you feel this is the movement of life, this is living.

The behaviour in ways of conditioned energy have been equated with the whole of life. We always feel that to live is to move through the mind; to go out, to bring back something; or to go out and act upon something, react to something. If you are not doing that, then we say that the person is indulging in something negative. This moving through the mind is called positive, and the other is called negative. That is how the division comes into existence. There is nothing positive and

negative as man has coined these words in the context of his own concepts and ideas. The world is not limited by man's knowledge about it, the world is much vaster. But this is what happens in the visible, the audible, the world with the forms; that is how mind moves. We are not going into the details of these movements.

There is another aspect: this conditioned energy can move inward as well as it goes outward. When it moves outward, it deals with the known, the experience, with that which has a form, a shape, a name, a colour, a sound. It can turn inward, and man has been trained to turn inward and be with the invisible, the conditioned energy moving in the invisible world. Theologies, philosophies, metaphysics, psychology, spiritual discipline, and so on, have conditioned man also to turn inward, and with that mind to deal with the invisible, the occult, the hidden. The forms that are existing outside are not occult, they are not hidden, they have names, they have been defined, have been described, man has been taught how to react to those forms, situations, ways of behaviour, and so on. Man has also been taught to turn inward, and to move into the astral, the occult, the invisible, the inaudible. There is a movement there too. So this conditioned mind turns inward and cultivates the techniques, the methods to acquire something from that invisible, the inaudible, the hidden waves existing. So there also the movement is acquisitive. As the conditioned mind is trained to move outward from the centre of the body and acquire something, it moves inward with the same acquisitive tendency to acquire experiences, to acquire power. It is the same conditioned energy, the conditioned mind, the thought-structure, with the help of concepts, ideas, with the help of time and space; only it has turned inward, to acquire from the invisible, the inaudible, the formless, the occult, the astral, the hidden; but to acquire in the form of an experience, to acquire the feel of that which has not been described. The first movement was in the world of the known, the defined, the chartered, the mapped out reality. The second, inward movement is with the unknown. It has not the rigidity that the outer world has got. You deal with things in the outer world, which has relatively static forms, but inward is a nebulous

realm of life in which forms are not rigid, in which the sound-waves are not crystallized: the sound, the light, the whole realm of life there. So you are with the unknown, trying to capture the unknown, the invisible, with the help of the conditioned mind. Moving from the centre of the "I", the "me", the "ego", the inward movement takes place: I experience the sound, I had an experience of light, of scent, of colours that I had never seen, or what you will - you know so many experiences. But it is the "I" that experiences, that identifies with the help of the known. Or it says it cannot describe it, it has only the feel something tremendous happened. But the centre is there.

In the outward movement there was a centre, and there was a periphery, the circumference of human knowledge, inheritance and experience.

In the inward movement the centre is still there, only the circumference is not rigid. It is limited. It is limited by the earth, the globe, its relationship to the sun, to the moon, but the circumference, the periphery is not as rigid and as limited as it is in the outward, the objective, the world of forms, colours, shapes, sizes, objects, a.s.o.

As long as there is a movement from the centre of the body, the senses, the sense-organs, the movement from the brain, the movement from the I-consciousness - whether the movement is outward or inward - there is no silence. As long as there is the movement of acquiring something, knowing, experiencing something, there is no silence.

So for the silence to be - the total movement of the conditioned mind has to come to an end, voluntarily, without any violence being used against it. The total mental movement outward and inward, with the known and with the unknown, has to come to a stop, has to discontinue voluntarily. That is the prerequisite of silence.

Silence is the realm of the unknowable, there is not the duality of the known and the unknown, but it is the unknowable. There is not the duality of that which has been defined and that which is not defined, it is something unnamable, immeasurable; not that which has been measured, and is yet to be measured; that duality exists on the mental plane. But silence is a realm, where knowing and experiencing become

irrelevant, because life is something that is unknowable, unnamable, immeasurable.

So one may gather all the physical and psychological outgoing activities, and sit down in a room. It does not mean that one is sitting in silence. One may close one's eyes, sit down in a corner, but may be the centre, the I-consciousness is waiting very eagerly to experience something in the invisible world, to see, to recognize, to acquire something: according to Christ, to Buddha, to Lao Tse, to Confucius, according to some master, but it is waiting. The centre may be quiet, waiting patiently, decently, but this does not imply elimination of tension, you still carry the tension of acquiring something. You're looking forward, you are still with the sense of time. You are waiting for the time to help you to acquire something which the outside, the external world could not give you. You are rooted in the I-consciousness, deeply attached to the centre, and as long as one is attached to that centre, the "I", the "me", the "ego", one is attached to the past, the known, the experienced. There that centre has a ceaseless, involuntary movement, a tremendous momentum. That centre needs time, immemorial, that centre needs the whole thought-structure, and inside the brain, the tremendous momentum of the total human past is wound up. The moment it gets the chance the centre moves, keeps on moving; acquires something, reacts to something, changes something, moulds something, says something to someone else, or hears something, reads something, looks at something; it wants to be in touch with something, otherwise it feels that it is not living.

That is why one said: "life has been equated with the movement of the conditioned energy, that is the fundamental error". Unless the psyche is purged of that error one cannot talk about silence. So silence is not abstention from verbalization, silence is not turning inward and waiting for something to happen, some experience to take place. For silence to "be", one has to understand the mind and its ingoing and outgoing movement, the mechanism of mind, and its incessant movement. One has to see that in oneself. One has to discover that in oneself. It's a first-hand personal acquaintance with the movement of the conditioned energy that might open the door to the



other.

But if I have not finished with the conditioned mind, if the movement of the conditioned mind attracts me, if I feel that there are so many things that I can acquire from the world; if I am attracted by the idea of competition, of comparison, of social prestige, power, money, sensual pleasure, if I am attracted by all this, and I feel them as a need of my psyche, then there is no possibility of my being in the realm of silence, because I am not finished with this, I have not seen the futility of this, I have not seen the pettiness of this movement. If I still feel obsessed with the pleasure and pain that mind can give me, let me live on that level; see the pleasure and the pain that thought and feeling can give me, go through them with my total attention, so that some day, that total attention makes me see the repetitive and the mechanistic nature of pleasure and pain. It makes me see how respectability is put together by human thought; it has no reality. Some day, if I live through the pain and the pleasure that the body and the mind can give me, if I live through them with total attention, they will open and enter into a dialogue with me, and show me their frontiers. So it's no use hiding my pettiness, if I am interested in all this, and I enjoy spending my time, energy and everything in that, let me live there. Anyway civilization has taught man to spend three fourths of his life in an acquisitive activity: on the material plane, the intellectual plane, to go on acquiring, storing, owning, possessing and that's how you all react to it.

But when one sees the pettiness of the mental movement, the inherent limitations, when one sees the frontiers of the movement, what happens? Does one give up all that movement? It is not possible. One has to use the mind, one has to have food, shelter and clothing. So one uses the mind but one has seen the repetitive, mechanistic nature, one has seen the inherent limitations, one has seen the dependency of this movement on time and space, so one does not worship it anymore. The relationship to the mental movement changes with understanding. The movement is there, the memory is there, you use it, you speak, you communicate, you earn a livelihood, you live in a family, in a society, but your relationship to the mind, to the movement, your relationship to

the pain and pleasure, changes.

Then there is an urge to find out what is beyond the known and the unknown. There are some who turn away from the known, but they are terribly fascinated by the unknown, the occult, the astral. There are ways, means and methods of moving into the occult, the astral. The Orientals have worked very hard upon that, and now all those methods and techniques are available to the total human society, to the global human family. There are people who are fascinated, and they spend their lives in the adventure with the unknown: awakening of the kundalini, awakening of so many powers and transcendental experiences and what more you have. That's not silence, that's not meditation. Even if and when one has seen the limitations of the unknown as posed against the known, when one has seen the mechanistic nature even of those experiences, that's not silence, that's not meditation.

Wherever there is experiencing there has to be a response from the memory, otherwise you will not be able to identify the event, recognize it, and react to it. For converting an event into an experience, one has to identify, recognize, and then react. Experiencing is an activity rooted in the known, it is a movement of the known, in the known, with the known. It still uses time; it's a time bound movement.

One has to see the repetitive and mechanistic nature, even of experiences in the other, the unknown. The invisible is not necessarily the infinite; the occult, the astral is not the infinite. Let us see this. Outside is the finite world, the limited world; inside also there is the finite and the limited, though it is invisible, but it is still finite, the visible, the invisible. When you penetrate through the invisible, when you don't get stuck up there, then there is the infinite: that which is free of time, free of thought, of motion, of movement: all together.

I mention this because we have come together for a very serious investigation. One would like to go into fundamentals, the two days that we are here. One has to see that the mental movement whether it is an outgoing movement from the centre of the body, or an ingoing movement from the centre of the "I", it is still in the realm of time, the known, the past. There is no silence, and there is no freedom. So, when

one does not feel an attraction, a fascination, a temptation, an ambition for the mental movement of both these - one uses the mind wherever it is necessary but the mental movement otherwise is not felt as a need - then only one can talk about silence, because silence is the negation of total mental movement. The movement of mind has no value there. It has a value outside; when I have to take care of the body, when I have a family, a job, when I have to talk with you I am using memory to find out the words, I have to use the brain, the memory, and so on, but when it comes to understanding the mystery of life as it is, then the movement of mind has no value whatsoever. The movement of the I-consciousness with all its knowledge, all its content and experience is absolutely meaningless and irrelevant there. Do I see this, do I understand, and am I willing to let go the mind, to let go the time?

When one says: "Do we see it and is there a willingness to let it go", one would like to clarify the implications. The implications are very serious. If one has seen the nature of the mental movement and how it moves through acquisitiveness; how acquisitiveness leads to comparison and competition, leads to aggression and violence, then one does not enter the mad race that is going on in the world for power - power of any kind. One does not enter into the race of earning, acquiring more and more and more. One who has understood the nature of mental movement will arrive at the non-comparative approach to one's own life, and shall never compare oneself with anyone else in the world: in the religious, the political, the economical, the cultural field, one will not compare one's needs, one's standard of living, with others. The implications are far-reaching.

If I accept the authority of the mind and the mental movement all the twenty-four hours and keep myself busy with the value structure of society: I behave as an acquisitive, competitive, comparative, aggressive, violent human animal - then I may sit down for ten hours a day, close my eyes and say: "Let my mind come to a standstill", it doesn't happen. One does not turn or run away from society, one does the job, is in the family, in society, but is not a captive, not a prisoner of the value structure, the order of priori-

ties, the competition, the attitude of aggression. Inside something is dropped completely, because one has seen the futility, one has seen the falseness of the whole game. And when you see the false as the false, the false drops away.

So when we say: "Are we ready to see this?", we are asking ourselves: "Are we willing to apply our understanding of the mind and the mental movement in our daily life?" Or are we going to create a split in ourselves and understand these things verbally, theoretically, discuss them theoretically and academically when we come together, and carry on our way of living as the society is carrying on? Then there will be a permanent split there, then you will make an adjustment: there is so much time for the competitive and comparative activity, acquisitive tendency, and so much for going beyond the known. Do you see how serious a split we create in ourselves?

If I see the movement of the mind and understand it, then my relationship to the mind, to its movement, and my relationship to the society will change. I'll be there, but the nature of relationship, the texture of relationship will radically change. Does that happen to me if I am an inquirer? It happens! Then my sitting down quietly, closing the eyes, and going through the yoga-asanas and pranayama has some meaning, otherwise this becomes a new, sophisticated acquisition, and added to the old one. The mental movement then, when one has thus understood, is reduced to the minimum. You use it whenever it is necessary. You move the centre of the I, the content of the past, when such a movement is inevitable, necessary. You move from the centre of the body when that movement is necessary, but it gets minimized without your struggle to do so. Understanding transforms the quality of your attitude and approach, and therefore the change in the attitude and approach gets reflected in all that you do from morning till night. You don't have to make an effort: "here I have understood, now how do I apply it?" Application of knowledge requires a method, a technique, and a schedule. Understanding flows easily, naturally into your life. Understanding is like a mountain stream that breaks through the rocks and dances, making its own way. You don't need to make an effort, when

understanding dawns, it finds its own way: through your sense-organs, through your habit patterns. It penetrates, as the gentle water penetrates the rocks, and as the mountain streams have a tremendous force; understanding also has that irresistible force. No habit pattern or conditioning can obstruct the momentum of understanding. It just penetrates and throws the conditioning to the winds and makes its own way. You don't have to do a thing to the understanding. So when one has understood, the nature of the mental movement, the conditioned energy, its relation to time, knowledge, intelligence, etc. then the daily living changes: the stiffness, the rigidity in the daily living, the tension of competition, the conflict that ambition creates, the jealousy and greed that comparison leads to, all that disappears.

As the dirt has been washed up, washed out and washed away, the inner being gets cleansed. You can't say that there is understanding, and still the dirt is there. It doesn't happen my friends, it doesn't happen that way. So there is a new pliability, a new tenderness in living; the newness is getting born in every relationship from morning till night. You are outwardly the same person, but inwardly the change is permeating your physical, biological, verbal, psychological behaviour; and what has brought about the change? - the understanding of the nature of mind, and its movement inward and outward. When that has come and when there is no more fascination of the acquisitive tendency, no more fascination with the activity of knowing, no more obsession with knowing and experiencing, then there is a relaxation. Then one can sit down. The negation of knowing and experiencing, the negation of acquiring and acquisitiveness takes place in that relaxation. So, without any tension of expectation, without any tension of waiting for new acquisition or experiencing, there is this indescribable soothing and pacifying relaxation. You relax into it, so totally, so completely, that the awareness that you are relaxing also disappears. We will deal with it tomorrow.

This evening we spent some time in a non-verbal communion, and then we made an effort to come together to the world of knowledge, languages, verbalization. We said life contains silence which is free of movement, free of time, and life contains this

energy that we call mind. This energy seems to have some part conditioned, and it seems to have another part or aspect of its being that is unconditioned. We went into the details of the movement of conditioned energy, outgoing and ingoing, and then briefly we have seen that unconditional negation of the total mental movement, ingoing and outgoing together, leads to silence. Then we analysed the implications of this, and I think this is enough for this evening. Thank you.



## SECOND TALK, JUNE 6th 1976

Those of us who were here last evening, might have seen along with the speaker that the total cerebral movement has voluntarily to discontinue functioning, for silence to become alive. We have seen yesterday that the cerebral organ has been trained through untold centuries to move inward and outward. From the centre of the body, in which are incorporated senses and sense-organs, the brain moves to get into contact with the outer - with forms and colours through the eyes, scents and perfumes through the nose, with sound through the ears, through the skin to touch - to acquire an impression and information about them, to find out ways of interpreting them. The brain moves outward to acquire information of experience, which gives it the satisfaction of owning something, owning knowledge, possessing, experiences. It can also move outward to react to the things and beings that are existing independent of the body, to react to them, to operate upon them: to change, to control, to regulate them. This is a dual movement; outgoing from the centre of the body, and the inward movement is into the realm of the invisible, the inaudible, the formless. From the centre of the "I", the "me", the "ego", the cerebral energy moves into the unknown. But the unknown is also limited and finite. The occult, the astral, may be unknown to the conscious mind, but in the unconscious we contain the experience of the total human race with the astral and the occult. So when the cerebral energy moves inward into that realm of the unknown, which is finite and limited, which hasn't got gross forms, it can also have the pleasure of acquiring experiences of the invisible, acquiring experiences of the so-called unknown. The unknown is the content of the unconscious. It is there. When we say: "It is unknown", it is unknown to the conscious part of our energy, the surface layer of our consciousness. But the unknown is part of our consciousness, it is the part of the so-called unconscious. The known moves on the surface. It is a movement in the consciousness on the surface. The movement of knowledge is the movement of the known on the surface of consciousness. The movement of tendencies, desires, passions, lusts, is the movement of the subcons-

cious, but in the known. And the astral and the occult have got a movement in the known, but with the so-called unconscious.

It is very necessary to see this clearly, not as a piece of information, but in one's own life. To watch it.

We have seen yesterday, as long as there is a desire to move in the known, whether it is an outgoing, outward movement or an ingoing, inward movement, there can't be silence. As long as there is the desire and ambition to acquire knowledge and experiences, to compare one's experiences with others, there is no possibility whatsoever of silence coming to life. When one wants to probe into the unconscious, into the secrets of the invisible, the conscious mind, the knowledge, the theories, the conclusions, the ideologies, may voluntarily become quiet in order to enable the cerebral organ to deal with the hidden, with the invisible. It is a partial and compartmental quietness. A part becomes quiet in order to enable the other part to move and function. That is not silence. It becomes quiet in order to acquire experiences in a new realm. Silence is not a compartmental quietness of the brain. It is not a quietness and peacefulness that is out of choice; it's not fragmentary and partial. It is a voluntary but choiceless non-action; a total non-action.

Beyond the known and the unknown, beyond the visible and the invisible, lies the area of silence, the unknowable. The unknowable is absolutely and fundamentally different from the known and the unknown. That which has never been named, mapped out, chartered, that which never has been measured and shall not be measured by the human mind, do what it will, -there lies silence. The negation of total mental movement, cerebral movement, is absolutely necessary to understand, to encounter, to live and to have one's being in that silence - limitless motionless.

I have really gone into last evening's topic briefly, so that we can proceed this morning easily without any difficulty into the theme. It is not easy to talk about silence. One has to be aware all the time that the word silence is not the thing that is silence. The dictionary meaning of the word silence is not the content of silence. When you point out a branch and



say on that branch is perched a beautiful bird, your word branch is not the branch of the tree, nor is your word the beautiful bird. It is a dangerous game to deal with words. So when you communicate about silence you have to be aware that the word can indicate only the branches, can point out to the branch and the bird, but the word cannot catch the branch, cannot catch the bird, however learned the word might be, however poetic the diction could be, however clear, crystal-clear the expression would be, the word is not the thing; that's the beauty. If the word were the thing, there would be no possibility of personal discovery of Truth, there would be no possibility of the joy of personal discovery of Life. Every discovery has a newness and a uniqueness - when a person discovers some meaning, that meaning is virgin. It has not been touched by another person. Discovery is always virgin, chaste. Now, if silence is total unconditional negation of cerebral activity, how does that happen? How can the brain voluntarily go into total negation of movement? That is the question that one would like to take up this morning.

Now, the brain, the cerebral organ, has a mechanistic movement, a repetitive movement, it has to work with words, it has to work through time, through thought structure. But though it has a mechanistic movement, it is not a machine, as an electronic brain is.

The electronic brain is conditioned to behave in certain rigid ways: it can absorb and assimilate patterns of behaviour, it can manipulate with that which has been taught or fed into it. But the electronic brain is not a part of life, it is not alive. In certain ways it is dead.

The human brain as it is, attached to the biological organism, is alive. It's a part of cosmic life, and it is not dead. Though it has been conditioned to behave in certain ways, though it has been accepting patterns of behaviour, conforming to them, repeating them out of habit, it is not dead. That is the hope for the human race. It has a pliability to unlearn, but not to destroy what it has acquired, it has the capacity to see the nature of its action. The brain has a capacity to understand, not only to acquire, to conform, to repeat, but it has also the capacity to learn, to under-

stand. Fundamentally different from the movement of acquiring, knowing and experiencing is the movement of learning, discovering and understanding.

The human brain is capable of doing that and therefore such talks, gatherings and dialogues have a meaning. Otherwise it would become meaningless, futile. This human brain, a rich, complex and terribly sensitive machine, can see, can understand, it has the choice to act, or to enter into non-action, it has the pliability to do all this, to contain all movement, and to relax into non-action. We have seen that there is a possibility for this human brain, either to repeat that which has been fed into it, or to see the nature of repetitive mechanistic action and to hold back, without being whipped into it, without being forced into stillness, without being mutilated, destroyed. Beautifully, gracefully, charmingly it can go into abeyance, non-action.

So the human consciousness has self-consciousness. It can move and simultaneously see how it is moving, it can act and simultaneously be aware of how it is acting, why it is acting, to see the motivation, it can see the nature of movement, and be aware of the results of the movement, a. s. o.

This consciousness is a multidimensional thing, it can move in a multidimensional way. Now, if it is understood that there still is a possibility for this brain though it is conditioned, cultivated, cultured, trained to behave, that its whole content is a variety of habit patterns, to become quiet, to go into abeyance and non-action, then we proceed further.

The voluntary cessation, non-action of movement, can become possible if the brain, the cerebral organ, is not a restless, disorderly, chaotic brain. Before we even talk about silence, we have to see that the brain becomes quiet, peaceful, that it doesn't function in a chaotic, disorderly, or confused way. One doesn't have to begin to learn how to be silent, but one has to begin with learning to function in an orderly, clear, unconfused way. Every cerebral movement has to be clear, precise and accurate - whether it is walking up to this room for the talks, going for breakfast, walking through these beautiful woods, looking at the sunshine - that is the beginning of orderliness: accuracy and perception in receiving and in responding. Accuracy, precision, is the breath of orderli-

ness. You can't be casual, absent-minded, distracted, half-hearted. If I am half-hearted in doing something, absent-minded in one moment - may be the whole eternity is condensed in that moment - I create a wrong precedent for further movements. It is the "now", the "here", the so-called "this moment" and "this movement" which is to be corrected. I can't say: "I'll go on, this is the way I have been living", and I correct it when I sit down quietly in my room. That is not the place to learn. The place to learn is in your home, your kitchen, your drawing-room, in the street, in the buses, with your neighbour, with the animals; these are the opportunities to learn, to discover precision, accuracy, orderliness. Life means all that. Spirituality and spiritual things and meditation have become an intellectual game, an academic, verbal, theoretical entertainment, or a new field for the ambitious and greedy mind, a new sensation for the mind that is tired and worn-out with sensual pleasure.

Meditation is not that. It is something much more serious, much more fundamental. Meditation has a measureless depth. So I learn to be precise and accurate. There is no method and technique for this, I will have to watch and observe how I do everything: whether it is casual, whether I am doing it inattentively, whether I am doing it passively, mechanically, or I am doing it in a living, vibrating attention. When you are attentive there is accuracy; when you are inattentive, then there is lack of precision and accuracy. There is a lack of order when you are inattentive, distracted or absent-minded. So, in learning to be precise and accurate you learn to be totally present with everything that you do. The total energy, total attention gets focussed on the particular. That's one way of learning orderliness.

Secondly, the brain is a very sensitive machine; the slightest sensation stimulates the memory and the reaction of the memory - you can't avoid it. We have been taught to react, as if the movement of reacting is living. We have been conditioned to react to everything: to measure, to compare, to evaluate, to judge, to formulate opinions. Everything that touches the brain brings about the stimulation in memory and then the reaction. Now if the reaction were only the movement of memory, it would not be so harmful,

but memory contains motivation-forces and defence-mechanisms, not only the past ways of behaviour, individual and collective. As soon as the memory is stimulated, the motivation is also stimulated and the reaction is a complicated reaction. According to the conditioning it is qualified and modified by the motive as that.

Please do see the beauty of this complication. The reaction comes up according to the conditionings: religious, political, nationalistic, etc. That's the past, but the past has already extended itself and formulated motivations and defences. So, when the memory is stimulated, that past also gets stimulated and the reaction gets related to the motivation at that moment, then it is modified and qualified. According to the motive you calculate, you bargain, you see what kind of result you would like to achieve out of that relationship, and then you react. This goes on the whole day, whether the reaction is warranted or not. This game of reacting goes on and that tires you out. Every thought, every feeling, every sentiment has this dual nature: relation to the past conditionings and relation to the present defences and motivations. So naturally you get torn, tired, worn out and exhausted. One can work in a field for four hours and one won't get so much tired and worn out as one gets while dealing with people even for half an hour, because the whole complicated panorama begins to operate and it is too much for the nerves to stand. The nerves have to stand the excessive strain of the modern civilization, the nerves have to stand the strain of society - its economic, political compulsions - the constant coexistence with machines, the gadgets, and the noises that they make. The nerves are already overtaxed, the nerves have to stand and fight against the constant invasion of information dumped upon them through the radio, television, literature, etc. So we are tired and every moment in the process of reaction the brain gets tired because it has to go back to these two sources and bring back a reaction.

Now what do I do ? Unless I help the brain not to get overworked, overtaxed and overtired - I cannot buy energy, vitality and passion from somewhere, and pour it into the brain - If the leakages are stopped, if the overtaxing is stopped, then the energy is already

there.

When one has to deal with the cerebral energy, one will have to learn to reduce the area and the duration of reactions seeing the futility and seeing the harmfulness of this constant game of reacting, evaluating, comparing and judging. It has to be gone into for some time, you have to live, to feed the body, clothe it, shelter it, and you have to be with other people. You reduce your contact with the past and bring it out of the past. You reduce your rapport and contact with the past: the memory, the knowing, the conditioning, the motivations, the defences.

How can that be reduced? It's in a very beautiful and simple way. If one would be with nature, even half the time that one is with human beings, machines and gadgets, there would be an opportunity to enter into a non-reactional observation, a non-reactional attention. Then the brain would get some rest, when you are with nature: the birds, the lakes, the sunsets, the beautiful moonlight, when you are with the aloneness of the woods - then the comparative evaluating process has no scope. The motivations and defence-mechanisms become absolutely irrelevant and meaningless when you are with nature. So if a person learns to spend every free moment with nature - not passively going to the woods, stretching oneself on the ground and lying there lazily or sluggishly - but by looking and listening to nature there is the non-reactional attention. The reactional pattern has no function, and yet there is observation. So the cerebral organ grows into a new faculty of non-reactional sensitivity. Today the brain is sensitive and very alert, the more cultured you are the more sensitive the brain becomes; but it is sensitive to the impression-sensations, and because of its sensitivity it reacts. Before you have known, it has reacted, it has become hypersensitive, and it reacts in a self-protective way. There is never the moment of total abandonment, of innocency that stimulates intelligence, there is never the moment of humility when you do not look to acquire something, but you are looking just for the joy of it, when you listen, not to get something out of that listening, but just "being with the sound-waves".

If a person can educate himself in companionship with nature that is not man-made whatever little is

left to us because we have destroyed the beauty of this earth in the process of so-called progress and scientific advance and what you will, when at home he can grow something, be with the plants and vegetables, watching a seed sprouting and the sapling growing, watching the bud blossoming, then there is the scope for a non-reactional attention, observation, and a non-reactional response out of love, tenderness, innocency and humility. A response that is born out of the space of emptiness of your being, response that is not born of the past; but born of the space untouched by the past. Then all that has become benumbed by the noisy society begins to fade away and there is a total sensitivity, a new sensitivity that grows. If you watch the stars on a clear night, the beautiful darkness and solitude, the cool shadows in the wood, to be "with" them: they have life, they have something to give us, they have something that holds a non-verbal dialogue, a non-verbal communion with us, there is a blessing, there is a benediction that they have to confer upon us.

There is nothing to conform, to acquire, to repeat, to calculate, and experience, the whole human being is in the denudation of thought-structure. So the brain learns to be quiet. It is alert, it is sensitive and yet quiet.

So, accuracy and precision in functioning is one way of learning orderliness, and the second is exposing oneself as much as one can to nature, to the universe, that is not man-made. That has always been there and that shall be. The races might come, visit the globe and disappear, and yet nature shall be there. When you expose yourself to the timeless majesty of nature, it creates an expanse within you. It widens the horizons of the silence within you.

There is still another way of helping the cerebral organ to be orderly, sensitive, alert and tremendously powerful and energetic - not tired and worn-out, but ever fresh.

In a couple of days one cannot deal comprehensively with all the ways of learning and discovering, but I am sharing with you, who are serious enquirers, only a few ways as a sample, a few points, as much as I can find the words to convey to you.

The third way is: never to argue with one's own understanding, when it visits you suddenly, uninvited,

in the midst of suffering, pain, pleasure, success, failure. You are busy, in your relationships, with your jobs, problems, fears, loneliness, and there comes the whisper of understanding, the whisper of intelligence in your heart and it points out to you, it says to you: "You are cheating yourself, you are telling a lie, you are deceiving yourself, you are postponing something, you had promised to do this, and you are not doing it; you are lazy". The whisper of intelligence is always there, whatever you do. But we neglect it. We argue with the intelligence, with the understanding, and say: "This is not the time. What you say is true mr. Intelligence, but this is not the time. I will act according to you after ten years, when I retire from the job. I will act according to you, but not today, five years afterwards". The intelligence visits suddenly, abruptly, as the breath of silence. It whispers, it wants to communicate. It's the voice of silence. But we neglect it, we are in a hurry with the social compulsions of the relationships, with our motivations, desires and greeds, we are here to achieve, to arrive, to obtain, to own, to possess, to find out ways of being secure. And we have borrowed the definition of security from society, and we have accepted the authority of those definitions, knowledge and experience. So we neglect that. We don't strangle the voice, we are not that violent, but we neglect it, we push it aside: "Not today, tomorrow!" The tomorrow can be after one day, one year, next life. "Tomorrow", and the tomorrow never comes.

If you create a time lag between the whisper of intelligence and understanding in you and your action, then you are preventing the cerebral organ from growing into a new dimension. When you argue with intelligence, when you postpone acting according to understanding then there is confusion, the brain gets confused. Every time it wants to bring up the voice of clarity we push it, because we are bargaining, we are calculating, we have the idea of results that we want. We are busy manipulating the behaviour of other people, or our own behaviour. So we have no time for that. That whisper of understanding is something inside you. How can you rely upon that? You can rely upon what the other people have done, act according to that, so that you get something

similar to what they have. There lies the idea of security for us. We are busy accepting authority, conforming. The voice of understanding, the voice of intelligence has an insecurity about it. How do you know that it is the right thing? If we do it half a dozen times, two dozen times, then the voice doesn't come anymore. It just gives you a feel, un verbalized feel. From the specific whisper, verbalized suggestion, hint of pointing out, it recedes into the background and only sends up a vague feel. When you do something wrong, then you get a feeling of uneasiness. It is easy to cover it up. So, the brain cannot be orderly, competent, accurate and precise if you do not listen to it, if you have no respect. We are so busy with the outside world, and its compulsions, that the world that is inside us does not command that respect and reverence, that care and concern from us. We look into the inside only, when we want its help, we require its help to achieve something outside, it is always when we are in need, but we never look upon it as a part of life.

So one has to be a disciple of one's own understanding, look upon that understanding as the master. Sometimes one may commit a mistake, it might be the whim of the ego and we might mistake the whim, the wish of the ego for the voice of silence and intelligence, but that we have to discover. Unless you commit mistakes, how do you learn to discriminate between the false and the true? In learning there is bound to be a little insecurity, a possibility of committing mistakes. Why should one be terribly afraid of committing mistakes? Growth is not something ready-made like instant-coffee, or instant-rice. Growth includes the painful and the pleasant; growth includes in its fold risks, insecurity, possibility of failures, but you are carrying within you the whole human race. When you learn to discriminate, and when you discover something, you have taken the human race one step further.

What I am trying to say is, one begins to learn. Instead of accepting the authority of habits and conditionings, while one is moving one watches, and when there is a suggestion, a whisper from within, from one's own intelligence, one does not neglect, ignore, or insult that. To eliminate the time lag between understanding and action is the way to grow



into spontaneity.

We have seen accuracy and precision in every cerebral movement; exposure to nature where one can be non-reactional and non-evaluative; then learning from the voice of intelligence and silence, that visits you sometimes at night, sometimes in wakefulness, in the midst of your relationship sometimes with a child, sometimes in sorrow, in joy, in the midst of pleasure it comes - it is there. It is unique. So, to listen to it and to have the humility to act upon it, to have the fearlessness to allow mistakes if they take place, the humility to enter into insecurity in order to learn, to discover.

The fourth way, before we disperse this morning, is to keep the body and the brain, the cerebral organ, which is a very sensitive, highly strung, complex instrument, very rich in its conditioning, sensitive, alert and sharp. It consists of thought-waves and innumerable impressions, that it has absorbed, assimilated, inherited and also purposefully acquired. In order to have an alert, sharp and sensitive brain, it is necessary to keep the body sensitive, alert and sharp, to feed it and to clothe it correctly, properly, to give it a chance to go through exercises which will mobilize not only the muscles, but also the nerves and be careful that the body does not become sluggish; to feed it correctly - not over - nor underfeeding it - to allow it to have sleep, necessary for its health - not to over-nor under-sleep - not to expose it to too much brooding, worrying, anxiety, which are impotent ways of wasting energy, not entering into excesses of indulgence and not denying and suppressing in the name of austerity, religion or discipline, because the cerebral organ, the brain is woven into this biological structure. If you allow any part of the body to become stiff, rigid, it is going to affect the blood circulation in the brain. The wrong way of sitting, of sleeping, of eating affects the cerebral organ; if being the most sensitive part, it is the first to get affected. That's why self-education becomes so necessary. One has to find out what kind of diet agrees with the body, not to make a fuss about it, not to make it a subject for propaganda or preaching. This is only a suggestion that one learns to find it out. It is terribly important, because in a sluggish body, in a lazy body, you can't

have a sharp, sensitive, alert brain, which would voluntarily go into non-action. So one gives attention to all that, to the sensitivity of the body as far as one can. If I have inherited a crippled body, if my body has already some disease which is incurable, then I reconcile to that state, and do my best. Self-education is vitally necessary in order to enable the cerebral organ to function in an orderly, quiet way. When there is order, there is a quietness; an orderly person hardly gets excited. It is disorder that leads to excitement, enthusiasm, depression which is the other side of excitement. passivity which is the obverse of enthusiasm. An orderly life is hardly passive, inert or terribly enthusiastic. There is a quietness, a seriousness. Quietness has a depth. Excitements, enthusiasms and depressions are very shallow. When one has arrived at that orderliness in daily living, in whatever one does, then only one can talk about the brain voluntarily, relinquishing the outgoing and the ingoing movement, relinquishing voluntarily the hold upon the known and the unknown, the visible and the invisible, so that the infinite could be. Beyond the visible and the invisible is the infinite, beyond death and immortality is the "isness" of life, beyond knowledge and experience, knowing and experiencing, is the grandeur of innocency. But about that silence we might talk tomorrow.



Q How far are the yoga exercises useful, and when and where do they become dangerous?

V. First of all, we will have to qualify and modify the term yoga. Yoga is a word that takes innumerable things in its fold. Maybe the questioner is referring to Hatha-Yoga asanas, exercises. The exercises in Tantra will be different from Hatha-Yoga; exercises in Mantra-Yoga will be different from Tantra-Yoga, and so on. There is a variety of techniques that are known as Yoga. The science of Yoga is a vast science. Now, Hatha-Yoga is a science and art of purification of life. It is an education in purifying the physical and the psychological aspects of our being. One does not begin with asanas or the yogic exercises if one would like to learn Hatha-Yoga; Yama, Niyama, Pranayama, Pratyahara. One has to begin with education in diet: diet through the mouth, the eyes, the ears, diet through the skin; whatever one receives is called diet. So one has to enter into a process of purification. Education is called in the ancient terminology a process of purification. When one has done the Yama and the Niyama, then only one can begin with Pranayama, that is to say breathing exercises.

If one is not careful about the diet that one takes in through various sense-organs, if a scientific approach is not applied there then, if you begin straight away with breathing exercises, it can be dangerous.

Among the breathing exercises or Pranayama there is a variety of methods and techniques. If the person from Europe, America or Australia comes across the gentle and non-violent way of Pranayama, which is going very slowly, beginning with taking a deep breath, retention of the breath as long as it does not make you uncomfortable, without using any force, compulsion or violence to retain the breath, and then exhale as gently and slowly as one has inhaled, then there is no danger that he might strain the nerves of the heart too quickly, too vigorously. The oriental physiology has been conditioned to this pranayama and they can begin vigorously, briskly, quickly. You are asking me "Where does the danger begin?" So I begin with the breathing exercises. For example, in the breathing exercises there is a pranayama

called **Bhastrika**. **Bhastrika pranayama** is done with both the nostrils simultaneously; you breathe in with both the nostrils, retain and exhale also through both; not one at a time. And that is an extremely dangerous thing for those who have not been brought up in the East. For quick results many people recommend such a vigorous pranayama through both the nostrils. They are not careful what it will do to the people, what it will do to the body. This is only one example.

If we turn to the **Yoga-Asanas**, one has to begin with the simple ones. You can learn them in a month or two, but when you actually do them, you have to do them very slowly, very gently. If you attain one posture, one asana, say **Halasana** or **Salabhasana**, any of these postures, you get into that posture gently and sustain it as long as you can. If you can hold that position, that asana, say for one minute, one and a half, two minutes, breathing gently in and out while you are holding that asana, then there is no danger. But if you do the asanas very quickly, fast, because you have seen someone doing it, and the body is not used to it, then there is a possibility that you may twist a muscle here, or a nerve there. So the **Yoga asanas** can become dangerous if they are done too quickly, too vigorously.

Secondly, you may learn all the 84 asanas that are recommended in the **Patanjali Yoga**, but they are not necessary for everyone to do every day. If you have to become a yoga teacher and you want to specialize in that, then you may slowly do these 84 asanas for one hour, two hours: say 48 in the morning, and the rest of them in the evening. But if you are not specializing, then for the health of the body it is not necessary to do the asanas for more than 20 minutes; say, 8 or 10 asanas for 20 minutes gently, and then lying down for rest in **Shavasana** (the asana for total relaxation) and then you go back to your work. If you do the asanas for 20 minutes, you will have to rest for 15 more minutes before you can go back to any physical hard work. Doing the asanas stimulates all the layers of your being: the muscles, the nerves, the glands, the tissues, the cells; it increases the blood pressure. As **Yoga asanas** are a kind of tonic - that works on your system - the pulse goes a little fast, the blood pressure rises a bit - afterwards you have to

rest for 10 or 15 minutes. It increases the heat, so a person who does the Yoga asanas in the Orient will always be recommended to drink plenty of milk, or use plenty of curds (yoghurt), not immediately, but throughout the day, to counteract the heat that is stimulated by the asanas. If that is not done, then the heat generated by the asanas might upset the chemical balance in the body: you may lose your appetite, you may lose your weight so suddenly, that you may begin to feel tired and worn-out.

There is a way of doing these things. If you take a plant from Holland and want to grow it in India or Sri Lanka or South-East Asia, you will have to take special care of the plant. If you want to bring something over from the Orient and grow it into your body or mind, then one will have to be very careful, gentle, and not force the thing violently on oneself. Is that clear?

Q. When you work and you are with people, you live with them, it is difficult to be in silence.

V. When you give me information about driving a car, you give all the information about its mechanism, and show me how to drive it. You sit with me in the car and allow me to drive a bit, and then after a few days I say to you: "It's extremely difficult to drive a car. I have to pay attention to the steering-wheel, the hand-brake, the foot-brake, the gear, the accelerator, I have to pay attention to the traffic, the road, to so many things simultaneously". Then you will say to me "You have to learn and you have to do it". The knowing is not sufficient, the doing is required.

In the same way, if I get information about silence, the "word", and I spend a few days in a camp or a week-end conference, I find it easy there, because all people are doing the same thing. There is a collective mind that is focused on one point, the collective energy is focused in one direction, so the atmosphere is charged with intensity, depth and vitality; you find it easy. But when you go back to your work, to your home, to the people, it is difficult, because you have to pay attention to the work that you are doing, to the people around you, their reactions and to be aware of one's own state. That's why one says that one has to educate oneself. One has to expose oneself to nature, where non-reac-

tional attention and observation is possible, and every day one has to expose oneself to a state of voluntary non-action, till one has learned it. In the beginning when you sit down quietly, it is there for an hour or so after the period of silence, and then it disappears. Once you have grown into it, there is no question of disappearing. You have grown into a dimension where there is no centre, no circumference, and you find intelligence, a non-cerebral energy, functioning, operating through you. The duration of learning is still the moment of the activation of intelligence. With one person it can be an hour, a day, and with another person it can be weeks or months. You cannot set or write down a period that is needed for learning observation, learning to expose oneself to non-action or relaxation. It differs from one person to the other: to the person's integrity of enquiry, the person's physical idiosyncrasies, temperamental idiosyncrasies; it differs from individual to individual. So, if you say: "It is difficult", I agree, I understand. The difficulty is, when you are with other people: maybe they are functioning from the centre of the "ego", they may not be enquirers, they may not be interested in all this. They may be interested in money, in power, in prestige, in sensual pleasure, in so many other things, they have a different approach, and you are interested in something qualitatively different. So the first thing: the gap between the others and you. There is no cooperation, there is no appreciation of what you are doing, of your attitude and approach to life. So you are in a different world altogether. You understand the others, what is happening to them, because you have observed your own mind, but they can't understand you. That is one difficulty.

Secondly, as the dimension of intelligence and silence is very tender, as it is recently grown in you, there is the new thing sprouting in you, but when the other people react, or they come and create a situation, or a challenge for you, then the habit-pattern, the known, the experience comes over and it wants to take up, to control your behaviour. It pushes the intelligence or the silence into the background, it overwhelms you with the momentum of the past and makes you behave, react, in certain ways. Before you are aware that you have reacted out of the past

the expression has taken place. Because you are in the transitory period you have become aware of the limitations, the inherent defects and shortcomings of functioning from the past and you have become aware of the new. But there is a transitory period, the new has not permeated your whole being, and the old is seen, understood, but it is not dropped. So it comes over, it makes you react and then suddenly you become aware "goodness me, it's the same old game, the trap of the mind, I have reacted again out of the ego".

And the third is, when you respond out of the emptiness of silence, you are not calculating the consequences, you are spontaneous, straight forward, simple, direct, and the other people do not understand it. You respond out of silence, you act out of it, and the other doesn't understand, or misinterprets it and that makes you sad, so there is a kind of strain, when you are not understood, or misunderstood, misinterpreted. There is a pain, when the past and the habitual momentum overwhelms you, and you lose the grip as it were on something new that was growing. So, it is bound to be difficult, as the questioner stated. I have to work upon myself.

Once it is there - choicelessly, the non-cerebral energy, the energy of the intelligence - and your whole being is soaked into it, then there is no question of any difficulty, you live in it, you breathe in it, you move out of it, rather, it moves through the brain, and through the senses. If I am in a hurry that other people understand, appreciate, or at least do not misunderstand me, if I am in a hurry about the results of movements from silence, then it's going to be difficult.

If I am in a hurry, whenever the past overwhelms me and makes me react, if I get annoyed, irritated, with myself, saying: "What's the use of my meditating, attending the talks, reading the books; here again I am acting out of the past", then I expect too much of myself, I want to measure my growth into a new dimension by time, having an elastic measurement of time, then only the difficulty is there. If one is interested in growth, discovery and being with the new, irrespective of the consequences that it brings in, then it goes easy.

Have I said something relevant to the question?

Q. What do you mean when you use the term 'from the centre of the body'?

V. The outgoing movement, the mind, the cerebral energy moves through the sense-organs, and the sense-organs are incorporated in the body. When you look at something, you look through the eyes, the optical nerves, the particular condition of the brain in which it is at that moment, the cerebral energy contained in it; the motivations, desire, greed, jealousy, ambition, are forms, expressions of that cerebral energy.

Now it moves through the eyes and touches the colour, the form. When you hear something, the cerebral energy is moving through the ears. So one said that the outgoing movement, the outward movement is from the centre of the body. Let me put it in a different way: the body is the centre from which the movement goes out. When you move inward, it is the I-consciousness, the "me", that is moving inward, there are no sense-organs there through which you move. You move through the concept, the thought, the feeling, the word, you move with the help of the sound, the idea. The centre, the source of the movement from which it springs, is the I-consciousness and its content. And the outgoing movement requires the physical body and the sense-organs incorporated in the body: to touch, to look, to listen, and so on.

The questioner says "why do you say mind is energy?"

I wonder what the word "mind" conveys or implies to you? Your thoughts, ideas, values, conclusions, theories, all your knowledge, experience, whatever you have inherited, this is the content of the mind. As the body contains the bones, the blood, the muscles, the tissues, what you call mind consists of thoughts, feelings, patterns of reactions, sentiment, the whole memory - individual, family, collective group memory, memory of the total human race - and so on. It consists of that. The substance of mind is thought, it's the thought-structure, and thought is energy. It is moving all the time. This thought-energy has been measured by man, it has a form, thoughts have colours, they have velocity, momentum. So one says: "Mind is consciousness, mind is energy".



V. With a great sense of responsibility I would like to say that there is no hope of saving the modern civilization as it is. The international situation in Europe, Africa, Middle East, Asia, is the culmination of a process that has begun thousands of years ago, and the contradictions hidden in those processes have now matured, they have become ripe. They are tearing the fabrics of economic and political life, power balances that were woven very skilfully in the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth century. The affluent countries have seen the loop-holes, the missing links, the mistakes, the imbalances, that have occurred in the process of applying science and technology, to social, economic and political problems. But there is that vast Africa, the starving millions, the Middle East again illiterate and starving, and continents and sub-continents like India, Pakistan and South-East Asia, that have seen colonialism, slavery, that see to-day illiteracy, poverty, starvation, a. s. o. They have no patience to look at the mistakes committed by the European or the American countries. The anti-pollution conferences may write down agendas, they may hold conferences in Nairobi and Mexico and what you have, but the third and the fourth world, the developing and the underdeveloped countries are not going to listen. They have in their eyes the ambition, the lust for affluence. They feel that you have had it, they haven't had it, and now you come and teach them "don't apply science and technology this way, don't have big cities, don't have mass scale production, decentralize, a. s. o." We are not going to follow this, we are going to first have the affluence. They are much larger in number and population than the European countries and the Americans have been or are. So I don't see any hope. They're not learning from the two world wars, whether it is the Arab countries, the Middle East or the South East Asian countries, India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Indonesia, Thailand, Birma, a. s. o. Man is so slow to learn. When you ask me about the international situation, you may have an other organization like the United Nations, they may postpone the catastrophe, but there is no solution because the process is culminating and converging on one point.

In the affluent countries there is a realization, and there is an effort to have a new approach, especially the younger generation is working very hard with that.

So one appeals to the individuals. The individual is the reality. This is not a luxury what we are doing here, it is not self-centredness. Man is condensed cosmos. You and I carry within us, within our consciousness, the knowledge, the experience of the total human race. Every individual carries the collective or the racial psyche in him or her. If you can understand the intricately woven fibre - the fabric of conscious, subconscious, unconscious - the fabric woven out of knowledge, experience, etc., if you can see the conditioning as conditioning, understand them, then in that very understanding you set yourself free of the authority. You don't destroy the conditioning, you don't have to. You don't have to destroy the knowledge, the experience - it is there as the colour of your skin, it is there in the substance of your psyche - but you do not accept its authority to interfere with your present movement of attention, of relationship; your responses to the present are freed of the authority of the past. The past is there, but you are no more a slave. Your responses are not coloured not blocked, not prejudiced by the conditionings. It is the response that is set free; - not that the conditionings are destroyed.

So you appeal to the individual and persuade him to see the futility of remaining a prisoner of the cerebral energy, the cerebral movement. You persuade him to see that there is a possibility of growing into another dimension where without using the conditionings, you can respond, you can perceive. So such gatherings are meant to appeal to the individual, because in the individual you can touch one end of cosmic life. You are the world, you are the world problem. What you call the international problems you carry within you: the violence, the greed, the jealousy, the wars, you cannot tackle them on the international level, but you can tackle them within you, in your daily life. So we asked ourselves the question: "Is it possible to live in our daily relationships totally free from fear, greed, aggression or violence?" If one individual can learn, if one individual grows into that total freedom, then that individual

becomes the nucleus, the living cell. It is possible to expand how working on the collective level is possible; what kind of political, economical structure could be helpful for setting the man unconditionally free; what kind of economy the economic structure can help; but that will be a subject for a separate week-end. What are the ways of applying science and technology which will help us to have a society where we do not indulge in mutual exploitation, where we do not have to create an acquisitive, competitive or comparative society.

The theme for this week-end as was given to me, was "Silence". And therefore we have been talking about the cerebral movement and silence as the negation of that total mental or cerebral movement.

Q. You mentioned that we must go into nature, but we are living in big cities.

V. What can the speaker do about it? If I see the vital necessity, the urgency, then I may find out ways of moving away from that big city, away into the country, finding out some way of maintaining myself, or having a livelihood from the countryside. Half a dozen of such individuals, coming together, can find out a way of moving from monstrously huge cities where one can't be in company of nature.

It's the whole way of living that requires a change. Meditation, mutation, transformation, is not an academic, theoretical or intellectual pastime or entertainment. It's a challenge for going into a new way of living.



### THIRD TALK, JUNE 7th 1976

This is the last meeting of the week-end and we will have to be very careful with the time we have, the words that we use, the way we speak and listen to the words.

There is peace only in freedom. One who lives in slavery knows no peace. Slavery stimulates restlessness, uneasiness, which is the essence of disharmony and disorder.

The world we are living in to-day is full of suffering, misery, uneasiness; expressed in aggression, exploitation of one another, and violence. Individually and collectively, at home in the family, and there at the periphery of collective life on the international level, our life is a story of mutual fear, aggression, and violence.

Man has been busy trying to put an end to violence, put an end to mutual exploitation, politically, economically, socially, culturally and for this purpose man, the human race, has been using thought, the thought structure.

The human race has been busy using the mind with all its faculties of knowing, of feeling, of experiencing, of reacting, all the faculties of imagination, ideation, conceptualization, of deducing theories, constructing, ideologies, constructing collective structures, patterns of behaviour.

If we look at the history of mankind for the last 5000 years or so, if not more, we will see how thought structure has been utilized, and this thought structure has given a lot to man.

The inventions and discoveries in natural sciences - especially in physics, chemistry; leading to nuclear physics, - have enabled man to land on the moon. To travel from one end of the earth to the other is a matter of hours. Communication from the moon to the earth, is a matter of a few moments. In science and technology thought has enabled man to do fantastic things. A physicist in England who works with the BBC was telling me while I was there, that it will be possible in a very short time to have the television pictures in your room, without having the television set, without the box, without the screen; you just have the beams and the beams construct the images. You see the whole drama. You see the human beings

constructed out of the beams; sitting in a corner of your room, giving you the information, enacting the play, giving you the concert and so on. Just working with beams, materialization of forms and their movements, controlled through sound and light energy. So thought has given you science and technology with its fantastic achievements, philosophies, theologies, metaphysics. Sentiments, feelings, emotions have given music, art, sculpture and drama. The thought structure has enriched man's life by giving him a world of symbols, languages, science of mathematics, geometry, engineering a. s. o. You and I live in that world created by thought. We have to live in it. That which has a form has a thought, and you have to move through the thought which keeps you always with the word, the meaning of the word created by the human mind, and the sound of the word. So while waking or while sleeping if you are in dream consciousness, you are with the word. That is one part of our life.

In spite of the fantastic achievements of the thought structure, it has not enabled man to discover his own totality, to uncover the mystery of life that is around him, life that is all-inclusive. Thought leads to choice, to exclusive activities, to a perception that is identified with a name, with a word. Thought leads to knowing and experiencing.

Thought can never take into its embrace the wholeness of life. Life is an indivisible homogeneous whole. Thought can look at pain, it can look at pleasure and imagine a tension between the two, it can never take into its sweep that which contains pleasure and pain as supplementary and complementary to each other. Thought can give exclusive experiences, fragmentary information, it never enables you to be with the whole, to be with the wholeness of life, to be with the totality of life. Thought keeps you busy with the word and the word is not the thing, and to live is to be with that mysterious thing, that life, to be with that is-ness, the such-ness, the totality, the wholeness, the indivisibility, the all-inclusiveness. Mind you, these are not words, empty shells, one is trying to convey something that one has seen and one has lived and one is living.

It is the life that liberates, not the description of life. It is the wholeness that heals, not thought about the

wholeness. It is love that stimulates harmony and order; not feelings, sentiments and emotions. It is absolutely necessary that one learns to set oneself free from the snare and trap of the word, the thought, and time that thought has created.

It is vitally necessary to be with life, to be in the fact of that organic relationship that one has with the universe. We may read that one is organically related to universal life; if we don't live that relationship then it is not going to enrich my life. Information and knowledge never enrich life. They may add more stuff to the memory. Enrichment of memory is not the enrichment of life.

When one says one has to learn to set oneself free of the movement of mind which is the movement of thought, which is the movement of time, one is not advocating an escape, or the luxury of isolation; one is only indicating the possibility of an inner revolution that can take place in the individual psyche.

We have experimented with the outer, the individual and the collective, we have experimented with change, with reform, with qualified and modified changes, changes in individual pattern of behaviour, and changes in the nature of structures: the economic, the political a. s. o. That gives you an external polish, but that does not touch the core of your being and does not enable you to be free, to live that fact of freedom which is the essence of our being; hence such gatherings and hence such efforts at verbal communication to indicate something which cannot be communicated through the word. Verbal communication is an effort towards non-verbal communion. The word is not the thing, however beautiful and precise the words may be: from the Bible, the Vedas, the Zend-Avesta, the Quran, the Dhammapada, the Chinese Patriarchs, the Zen monks and masters, a sutra, an aphorism. To see the word, to understand its meaning, and yet to be free of the word, that's necessary. To be able to use the symbols as they are, knowing full well the limitations of the symbols, sets you free of this trap of the symbols.

So I have to learn to be with life as it is, without identifying myself or life with any description of life given to me by scriptures in the past.

So, soundlessness is life and I have to learn to be with that soundlessness. Timelessness is the nature

of reality and I have to learn to be with that reality. This sitting in silence, being with nature, these are only tender ways of self-education. Silence is not something negative, it's not absence of verbalization, it is the substance of life. Relationships have their beauty, their ugliness, their challenges, but relationships are the extensions of relaxation, the extensions of solitude or aloneness.

So, one has to be alone to be with silence, solitude, and must give at least half of the time which you give to the earning of your livelihood to this self-education. The difficulty in doing this is, the fear that we suffer from. The movement of thought gives me a sense of security, and when the thought does not move, the feelings and emotions do not stir, when there is no pressure of emotion and no tension of thought, when there is that indescribable stillness, then one feels insecure. There is no other obstacle but this fear of being insecure.

We feel secure with the known and we are afraid of the unknown. We would like to find out if there is something called Divine, God; if there is something like Infinity, eternity. We would like to discover that and yet we are afraid of it. We are afraid of being with the infinity and eternity without the word. We would like to be with eternity but not the naked eternity, the naked is-ness of life as it is. I would like to be with it, when it is clothed with some description, but then you remain with the description, and the golden screen of words prevents you from looking at it as it is.

So we want to look at it and we are afraid to look at it. We want to be with it and we are afraid of being with it. This inner split, this inner contradiction has to be resolved. We would like to be free and we are afraid of freedom. If we are honest and watch ourselves we will find in the deep recesses of our mind fear of freedom, fear of the all-inclusiveness of life. I would like to take a voyage on the vast oceans and yet I do not wish to leave the shores; I would like to have something that will keep me connected with the shores. I don't want to be bound to it, I would like to be on the waters, but I would like to take with me something, some kind of rope, that will keep me connected. The moment I want to come back, the rope, the connection, will bring me back to the shores.

O no, I don't wish to leave my welfare in the hands of life with a capital "L". I would like to keep it under the control of the I-consciousness which knows what is the best for me, because I have calculated, analysed and planned it, it's only a question of projecting those ready-made results.

My dear friends, to live is not to project calculated results. To live is not to extend your motivations and move on the periphery of human knowledge, the circumference, and go back to the centre the moment you feel afraid of it.

To live is to be vulnerable to the movement of cosmic life around you. To live is to be vulnerable to the movement of totality of which you are a part, without creating a nest for yourself, without creating a refuge for you somewhere. To live is to be totally insecure and vulnerable.

It requires humility to be and to let the life operate upon you. You know the problem? We want to control all the movements, not only of ourselves, we would like to control the movements of life and how it has to operate upon us. That is the content of our bondage.

We would like to move around in the world, in the world of thoughts, philosophies, religions, metaphysics, what you will, as long as we can control the consequences of the movement, we can see the blue-print, we can see where it is going to lead. So we want to move from a centre with a direction pre-chosen by us, with an assurance of certain results and consequences that we can identify. Please, let us be very honest.

This can work in economic life. This can work to a very great extent on the material plane, the physical plane, to some extent on the mental level. But that which is non-mental, non-cerebral, that which is non-personal, non-individual, how can it be controlled by thought, by the me, by the ego?

Well, if I don't want to control it by this ego, this self, I create a higher self, the soul, the Atman. I am busy, in the realm of the unknown, creating a new entity which will travel through birth and death, and which will have the same individuality and characteristics and which will reincarnate itself and so on. One doesn't like to see the nothingness of oneself. One doesn't like to see the immensity of life as it is and



confess to oneself that we are simply nothing, that is to say: we are not the controlling, regulating, moulding centre. When you say you are nothing, it means you are not the centre which can control the movements around you. It requires humility to be nothingness, to have no centre, to have no direction. To be vulnerable is to have no direction, no purpose, no motive. That is the content of spontaneity and innocency. - These are only words for us.

When I have to walk or to drive from here to Hilversum, I need a direction because Hilversum is situated in a certain place. It's static. So it would be foolish saying: "Oh, I don't need to know the direction", but if you know the direction it saves you time and energy. So in the world of forms and objects you need a direction, you need a technique, a formula. So there is a relative field of utility for the thought structure, for the capacity to know, to experience, to choose, to select directions, a. s. o. It's a tiny part of our life, the movement with the form, with the name, with the colours, with the beings, a. s. o. That's one part of life.

But there is the other part, to be with life that is not made by man. There is a man-made world in which we live and there is the universe untouched by man's mind, unpolluted by man's thought; and we are related there organically as we are related mentally to the man-made world.

To be born in a human form is a great responsibility, because there is complexity. You have to be simultaneously in two fields: the man-made field, and that which is not touched by man. You have to live in the timeless with the awareness of timelessness, and handle the time as a symbol that man has created. You have to be with the silence, the soundlessness that is the substance of life, and also to use the sound, the word, the language; to have the grip over the particular and have the awareness of the total.

To have the awareness of the total, to have the awareness of silence, one has to be with it, in it. You have to plunge into it. You may read dozens of books about swimming and if you don't take a plunge in the pool, then you can give a discourse on how to swim without ever having experienced the ecstasy of being in the waters, the joy of it. Then your words

will be empty shells. You have to take a plunge into it. You have to take a plunge into that which thought has not touched. That is silence. One has to take a plunge into the vulnerability of innocence, vulnerability and insecurity of silence, where things will happen to me and I, the centre, will not be able to operate upon it.

So in the non-action of the conditioned mind, in the non-action and non-movement of thought structure, life moves, it operates, it fills my being, it charges my being with a new vitality. It gives a depth to the being and charges it with vitality or energy that is neither physical nor psychological. When the being is flooded with that energy there is freshness, not till then. There is a rejuvenation. In the freedom from thought, rejuvenation of the being takes place. So silence rejuvenates, it heals the worn-out and tired mind. When the being gets flooded with intelligence or a new sensitivity that also refreshes the intellect, sharpens your capacity, heightens your sensitivity. This has happened to everyone who has taken a plunge. This is not the privilege of the few.

Why am I so much afraid of letting life operate upon me, letting silence operate upon me? Could it be that when life operates upon me, I cannot know about it. I cannot identify what is happening to me and describe it to myself.

To-day when something happens to me there are those ready-made words. Every movement of the brain has been registered, recorded, identified, given a name: this is fear, this is greed, this is anger. The movement of the energy has been given a name, as you give names to places - this is Blaricum, this is Laren - you give names to places, rivers, mountains, lakes. The movement of cerebral energy has been given names, its chemical effects have been analysed.

The psychological structure is a mapped-out area; immediately you can come out with a theory. If you experience jealousy; well, "Freud says this", "Jung says that", Patanjali says that" and therefore it is explained, and I'm satisfied. And if you feel jealousy, "do this": says ethics, morality; Hinduism, Buddhism. Catholic religion, Protestant religion. They give me the remedy: either the religious, the

psychiatric, the homoeopathic, the Ayur Vedic remedy. The feelings are given the names, the consequences are analysed, and the remedies are supplied; how nice, we feel secure. I'm not saying this in a derogatory sense. Let us see the facts as they are. But when you plunge into silence, silence has not been measured. You, the centre, the I, the me, the ego, does not move there, it has gone into non-action. The movement that takes place there, has no centre and no circumference, you don't know how to give it a name. The habit, deep rooted into the very blood, is to identify every movement, register it, react to it. And there is a movement where the centre is helpless, does not move, cannot move. So something is happening to the whole of your being. There is no fragmentary or partial movement. There is the movement of your totality in the totality, with the totality outside of you. It's one whole movement. So, no name, no possibility of reacting, and that frightens you. The awareness that you cannot identify any more and you cannot react to it, makes one feel helpless.

So this addiction to the measured, calculated movements with names, labels - addiction to that, identification with that - prevents you from having the pliability to denude yourself of all these and just be with the being-ness of life, with the is-ness of life. Let it happen. Let it operate. The inability to cash the happening into words and to trade upon it by communicating as an experience! So the I is jolly well aware that there will be no verbalization, no possibility of verbalization there. It holds back, it comes to the frontier of the word and stands there stay put. So it can talk about the other, and talk about the known, the unknown, but just be on the frontiers. Intellect makes a coward of a person. Freedom is not difficult. Freedom, peace, harmony are there in the universe, still untouched by man; but one is afraid to be of it, in it, with it. Supposing there is the willingness to take a plunge and I do spend some time in learning, educating myself, but then, whenever I am alone, the thoughts within me move, the feelings move, the memories come up. Let them come up, it is their nature. When I say "the thought comes up", it is the mind that is moving. I see them moving. That is to say, the mind

is divided now; one part is observing, seeing, and the other part is getting exposed.

Sitting before the mirror, you see your own reflection. The reflection has a form; you are seeing yourself, but there is that reflection in the mirror. When you sit silently, and you see the movement of the mind, you are seeing your own reflection there, and there is nothing to be worried or to get disturbed about the movement.

As you see your own reflection in the mirror, you see the reflection of the stuff of the mind; the psychological structure, it moves and you see it.

If there is no impatience to change it, to control it, to wish it away, to explain it, to interpret it, if there is the humility just to look at it, then that movement being a finite movement subsides on its own; without my doing anything to it, it subsides.

If you have ever been sitting before a life-size mirror - in the beginning you are looking at everything: you look at your body, at your hair, your eyes, the shape of your figure, the fall of the clothing, your feet, you look at every detail. When all the details have been looked at and you are aware of the whole, then the eyes see and you are not looking at anything. The looking comes to an end there is only the seeing without the seer. You are not looking at any particular, all the particulars have been looked at, there is only the seeing and awareness of your whole being. There is an awareness of the reflection, and of that which is reflected. When you were looking, you were looking at the reflection, you were busy with the reflection. But the looking comes to an end, and there is only seeing and awareness which is the movement of that perception. There is a motiveless seeing, and the moment the perception is free of motivation, there is awareness.

So when I am there and the movement comes: the thoughts, the memory, the experiences, I look at them; the observer and the observed. When the contents have been looked at in humility, the looking, the observing comes to an end, the observer and the observed comes to an end. What is left is only seeing or perception without the centre. So one arrives at awareness, awareness of the whole mechanism of mind, the movement of mind, and awareness of that which is free of the mind.

I wanted to point out this morning that the vastness of life has not been captured by human languages. The vast infinity of life has not been captured in the word, in the thought structure. That which is outside the thought structure and free of words, is as much the substance of our life as the mind and the biological frame are. We are a complex being. We are organic parts of the mystery of total life. So there is an analysed and mapped-out part of our being and that too is not mapped-out completely. We don't know the whole of even the biological structure. We don't know what death is. We are discovering how little we know of ourselves, even biologically, but to some extent the biological structure, the psychological structure, is described, analysed, defined, organized and standardized. That is one part of our being. We are busy with it, but we are getting tired of moving all the time in the prison-house of thought and memory. There is no freedom there; the freedom is in the other, which has not been touched by thought.

In silence there is freedom. In innocence there is love, and in humility there is intelligence. Silence brings you directly in communion with the thing as it is, it doesn't keep you busy with the word, the description. It brings you directly, intimately and immediately to the thing as it is, to life as it is. So my friends, being with that solitude of silence, being with the limitless, nameless, measureless reality, creates a new balance, it refreshes the worn-out mind, and washes you clean of every manner of fear.

You go back to your daily relationships innocently, tenderly; meeting the pain, the ugliness, the harshness of life, as you meet the beauty, the affection and the warmth of friendship. You have to meet both. Without any inhibition of imposing theories upon the facts, there you are, with the facts of life as they are. You go back to that; and when there is pain there there are tears, and when there is pleasure there are the smiles, flickering like a blade of grass, that could be destroyed the next moment; but when pleasure visits you smile, and when pain is there you go through it. You don't try to hold yourself back in the framework of theories, ideologies, values, norms and standards. With total abundance you meet the

movement of life with a new balance, and that's what we need.

The inner contradictions contained in modern civilization are beyond repairs. The organizations, institutions are crumbling down under the burden of the ideologies on which they were founded. In the east and the west, everything that was put together by man in thousands of years, is tumbling down.

Not man. Man has got tremendous potentiality. He has the conditioned as well as the unconditioned in him. The humane and the divine both contained within him. So nothing shall destroy man.

But the organizations, structures, institutions, the ideologies, the ways of behaviour, the ideas about relationships that we have built together, are beyond repairing. They are collapsing, tumbling down, and we have to witness their tumbling down. It hurts the ego. We would like to find out some justification why man had created it. The individual ego can inflate and identify itself with the global human ego and it wants to find out some justification and defence. It feels hurt when it sees the destruction all around.

Not that one is justifying the violence. One is only stating a simple fact that the destruction we see around us was inherent in the processes, because there was something missing in the process; they were fragmentary, they were partial.

So internationally one may do things here and there. It doesn't mean if there is a famine don't help the people and if there are earthquakes you don't help the people. We do what is required intelligently, but being aware that the whole way of living that man has created in thousands of years requires a total transformation. Reforms are not going to help. The very foundation of perception and the very source of response requires a total change, a mutation. Through the ashes of destruction a new quality of human approach has to be born, and that's why those who are serious, who would like to find out the nature of psychic mutation or an inner transformation, gather together and say: "Well, it's no use complaining about the darkness, can I kindle a small light in my heart and live enlightened by that light", otherwise the darkness, the violence, the chaos surrounding

us will depress and lead us to self-pity, melancholia, cynicism and bitterness, it will just push us down into passivity and inertia.

One who does not want to be bogged down into bitterness, cynicism or a psychology of helplessness says "Let me find out what is beyond thought, beyond symbols, be there, grow into a new dimension and live and move from that".

Through these three talks and the dialogue or discussion last evening, one has tried to put across as much as words could carry, the existence of the other, the measureless, the nameless, the timeless, the substance of our being of which we are not aware. One has tried to point out that it is possible while we are in the midst of our jobs, homes, relationships and responsibilities, to explore the other and grow into it. That is the consummation of human growth. The awareness of the totality is the consummation of intelligence. Man is the individual consciousness to the universe. Then you never feel lonely.

You live with the people, you live with the word, you use the symbols and live in their limitations, and when there is no necessity to use any of the symbols and there is no necessity to move through the thought, - you are alone with your Beloved, with Life. You are never lonely, the darkness of fear no more hangs heavily on you. So the fearless love, manifesting itself as compassion and friendship, radiates and emanates. All this sounds like poetry, I can't help it. Life is poetic.

The understanding of the limitations of the mind is the beginning of awareness of the limitless. The understanding of the nature of bondage is the beginning of the awareness of one's freedom. And it is only the human beings living in the fact of freedom, who will create a new society.



### TAKEN FROM THIS BOOK:

The movement of the I-consciousness with all its knowledge, its content and experience is absolutely meaningless and irrelevant when it comes to understanding the mystery of life.

For silence to "be", one has to understand the mechanism of the mind and its incessant ingoing and outgoing movement. It's a first-hand personal acquaintance with the movement of the conditioned energy that might open the door to the "other".

One may sit down in a corner, close one's eyes, it does not mean that one is sitting in silence. You still carry the tension of acquiring some thing, you are looking forward, you are still with the sense of time.

When the understanding of the nature of mind and its movement - inward and outward - has come, when there is no more fascination of the acquisitive tendency, no more fascination with the activity of knowing, no more obsession with knowing and experiencing, then there is a relaxation.

You have grown into a dimension where there is no centre, no circumference, your whole being is soaked into it, and you find intelligence, a non-cerebral energy functioning, operating through you, through the brain and through the senses.

Without any tension of expectation, of waiting for new acquisition or experiencing, there is this indescribable soothing and pacifying relaxation; so completely that the awareness that you are relaxing also disappears.